

INSPECTION REPORT

SMALLTHORNE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Smallthorne, Stoke on Trent

LEA area: Stoke on Trent

Unique reference number: 123987

Headteacher: Mrs P Broadley

Reporting inspector: Mr P Mann

23219

Dates of inspection: 19th to 23rd June 2000

Inspection number: 189486

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of

people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Regina Street
Smallthorne
Stoke on Trent
Staffs

Postcode: ST6 1PW

Telephone number: 01782 235265

Fax number: 01782 235266

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs B Dunn

Date of previous inspection: September 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Phil Mann	Registered inspector	Religious education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards?
		Music Physical education	How well the school is led and managed?
Ros Wingrove	Lay inspector		Standards – Attitudes, behaviour, personal development, attendance
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Wendy Jenkins	Team inspector	English	How good are curriculum and other opportunities?
		Children under five	
		Art	
Kuldip Rai	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are curriculum and other opportunities?
		Geography History	
Sue Dutson	Team inspector	Science	How well are pupils taught?
		Information technology	Special educational needs
		Design and technology	

The inspection contractor was:

Primary Contract Services Ltd
14 Inkerman Drive
Hazlemere
High Wycombe
Bucks
HP15 7JJ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	8
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	10
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	12
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	17
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	21
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Smallthorne Primary School has 289 pupils on roll, aged 3 to 11. It is located in the outskirts of Stoke on Trent and most pupils live close to the school. The original school buildings date from 1876 and have been extended to include the infant and nursery classes. There is a small grassed area and two playgrounds. The average class size is 26 pupils. The school serves an area of social disadvantage. Thirty three per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above average. There are no pupils from homes in which English is an additional language.

At the time of the inspection, there were 32 children under five in the nursery and reception classes. As a result of the good progress made in the nursery class, pupils' attainment is about average by the time they are of statutory school age. Fifteen per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs. This is about average. Most of these are at the early, school-based stages of assessment and provision. Currently, there are two pupils with statements of special educational needs and eight pupils receive support from outside agencies.

The school's current aims and priorities are very appropriate for the circumstances of the school. The school is making good progress towards the targets that it has set to raise attainment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective. It is well led and managed and provides good value for money. The quality of teaching is good and as a result pupils achieve good standards at aged eleven. The headteacher provides clear leadership, based on a realistic evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Relationships around the school are very positive and, as a result, the ethos for learning is good.

What the school does well

- Standards in mathematics, science and information technology at the end of Key Stage 2 are above what is expected nationally and pupils in this key stage make good progress in developing skills in writing.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good because of the positive relationships within the school. Standards of behaviour continue to be good.
- Teaching throughout the school is good overall and a significant proportion is of high quality. As a result, pupils make good progress in many subjects
- The curriculum is well planned, providing good opportunities for all pupils.
- Teachers know their pupils very well and parents appreciate this level of support.
- The headteacher and senior staff provide effective leadership for the school.

What could be improved

- Pupils' standards in design and technology across the school.
- Rates of pupils' attendance.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There is a strong commitment to improve standards amongst the staff and as a consequence, all the key issues identified in the previous inspection have been successfully resolved. The school's level of improvement is very good and its capacity for further improvement is good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	C	B	A
Mathematics	E	D	B	A
Science	D	E	C	B

Key

well above average A
 above average B
 average C
 below average D
 well below average E

In the 1999 National Curriculum tests in these subjects at the end of Key Stage 2, attainment was above average in English and mathematics and average in science. Overall, attainment generally improved between 1997 and 1998 with the best progress being made in mathematics. This trend of improvement continued in 1999. When compared to schools with similar circumstances, attainment is well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The school is making good progress towards achieving its published targets for this year.

Inspection evidence indicates that standards steadily improve throughout the school following the good start made in the nursery. By the time pupils leave at aged eleven, the current standards of attainment are average in English, and above average in mathematics, science and information technology. Pupils also make good progress in their writing at Key Stage 2 with sufficient numbers of pupils working at the higher level 5 in Year 6. Standards in speaking and listening are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and effective implementation of the literacy strategy is ensuring that most pupils achieve nationally expected levels in reading and writing. As a result of consistently good teaching, numeracy skills are being developed well and many pupils are confident with numbers. These skills are further developed through a range of investigations in both mathematics and science.

Standards are in line with national expectations for information technology at the end of Key Stage 1 and above at the end of Key Stage 2. Progress is particularly good at Key Stage 2 and the use of portable computers throughout the school is having considerable impact on the development of pupils' computer skills and in the quality of pupils' writing overall. Pupils are making at least satisfactory progress in nearly all subjects across the school. Progress is particularly good in history and music at Key Stage 2 as a result of good or better teaching and the frequent development of a range of skills. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are also making good progress in physical education. This is because gymnastics lessons are effectively planned and there is a very good emphasis placed on skill development. Whilst some interesting and appropriate examples of design technology were seen, overall attainment in this subject at both key stages is unsatisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are very keen to come to school. Attitudes in class are very good in the vast majority of lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour everywhere in the school is very good. The nursery school children behave particularly well in the dining hall. Pupils in the playground can be boisterous, but respond quickly to instructions given to them.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and adults and between pupils themselves are very good indeed. Pupils' personal development is carefully monitored by teachers and opportunities are provided for to perform responsible duties on a daily basis.
Attendance	Attendance is still below the national average and is a cause for concern. A slight improvement has taken place in recent months but the school needs to

	address this problem.
--	-----------------------

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Good, high quality teaching is a strength of the school. Four fifths of the lessons observed were good or better of which 21 per cent were very good and two per cent excellent. Only five per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. Since the last inspection the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has fallen from 20 per cent to its current level of 5 per cent. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and a significant strength of teaching is the consistently high quality maintained across the school. The teachers have good subject knowledge and they use this successfully to match their questioning to the different abilities of pupils. In almost all the lessons seen, pupils had a clear understanding of what was required of them. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they make good progress. Teaching of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is good and appropriate opportunities and links with other subjects are identified and utilised effectively.

In the small number of lessons that were unsatisfactory in both key stages, teachers sometimes lacked the necessary strategies and experience to manage the challenging behaviour of a few pupils in their class. Unrealistic expectations were set for pupils in their writing and science at the beginning of Key Stage 2 in particular. As a result, some of these pupils lost interest and behaviour becomes difficult to manage.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced except in design and technology where planning is inconsistent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school makes good use of links with parents and outside agencies to provide effective support for its pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is very good overall. Very good opportunities for personal, moral, social, and cultural development contribute well to the school's ethos. The personal, social and health education provision and initiatives with the wider community are strong features. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, but there are missed opportunities in assemblies and some lessons to improve this further.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers know their pupils very well and provide a high level of care for their academic and personal development. Procedures for assessing pupil progress are good, enabling teachers to plan effectively for the next stages of pupils' learning.

There is a good relationship between the school and parents. Many are supportive of the school and as a result substantial sums of money are raised to buy resources such as portable televisions and music centres. Parents recognise the school as being safe and caring. They praise the efforts made by the staff to help children achieve their potential and to look after those who have problems of any sort.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is an effective manager who provides clear educational direction for the work of the school. She is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher, senior management team and subject co-ordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very supportive of the school and are fully aware of its strengths. Several have undertaken training and consequently improvements have been made in the way they manage their duties. These are fulfilled to a satisfactory standard.
The school's evaluation of its performance	All staff are committed to raising standards. The headteacher and other senior staff effectively gather information in order that targets can be set to raise standards further. The quality of teaching is monitored well by senior staff and governors have made a sound start in evaluating the work of the school.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are adequate for most subjects. Particularly good use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. Currently the governing body has no coherent plan to improve the fabric of the school and the outside play areas after the demolition of redundant buildings.

The school is well led and all staff are committed to raising standards within the school. The governors and staff seek best value for money in their spending decisions and grants are used wisely and to good effect. There is a good level of resources within the school but the hall-based library has an insufficient number of books for the number of pupils in the school. Levels of staffing are good and represent a wide range of experience and ability. The buildings and grounds are in need of refurbishment, but the school makes good use of extra facilities within the community to enhance the overall provision.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are pleased with the progress their children make. • Behaviour in school is well monitored. • Challenging behaviour is dealt with quickly, if necessary involving the parents. • Teaching is good and teachers are very approachable. • Parents receive plenty of information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings at times more suited to their working lives. • Class sizes to be smaller. • More extra curricular activities especially for the younger children. • More notice of school activities and parents' meetings.

Inspectors agree that children are making good progress as a result of good teaching. They have observed that good behaviour in class and around the school is a very strong feature in the success of the school and appreciated the way that parents and visitors are made to feel welcome. Parents concerns about class sizes are understandable, but the school is making the best use of the teaching spaces available and using classroom support assistants where numbers of children in a class are large. Good efforts have been made since the last inspection to keep parents better informed about meetings which they can attend and the school's activities generally.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Assessment on admission to the nursery shows that most children's knowledge, skills and understanding in language and literacy and mathematics are well below those of children of a similar age. Fine motor skills are broadly average, but personal and social development is poor. These children make a good start in all aspects of school life and the sound standards achieved in the last inspection have been maintained and improved on. Children are attaining appropriately for their age in all areas by the end of the nursery year and are in line to meet the nationally recommended 'Desirable Learning Outcomes' by the age of five. They make very good progress in personal and social development. They also make good progress in language and literacy and mathematical development as a result of good curriculum provision and a very positive learning environment. Progress is sound in knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative and physical development. By the time reception children reach statutory school age their attainment is broadly average.
2. Standards steadily improve throughout the school and, by the time pupils leave at the age of eleven, standards of attainment are average in English, and above average in mathematics, science and information technology. Pupils also make good progress in their writing at Key Stage 2, and there are sufficient numbers of pupils working at the higher level 5 in Year 6. Standards in speaking and listening are broadly in line with national expectations at both key stages and effective implementation of the literacy strategy is ensuring that most pupils are achieving appropriate standards in reading and writing. Numeracy skills are being developed well as a result of consistently good teaching, and many pupils are confident with numbers. These skills are further developed through a range of investigations in both mathematics and science.
3. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests in these subjects at the end of Key Stage 2, attainment was above the national average in English and mathematics and average in science. A good feature is that an above average number of pupils attained the higher level 5 in these subjects. Overall, attainment generally improved between 1997 and 1998 with the best progress being made in mathematics. This trend of improvement was continued in 1999 to achieve good standards overall. When compared to schools with similar circumstances, attainment is well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The performance of girls and boys is inconsistent with national trends. The performance of girls is generally below the national average at both key stages. Boys are however, performing above the national average in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 but below average in Key Stage 1. Inspection findings indicate that boys respond well to the high proportion of male teachers in Key Stage 2 and that non-fiction books have been used effectively to promote reading for this gender group. The school has recognised these patterns of underachievement and is currently targeting groups of girls and boys effectively within Years 5 and 6, to raise standards in these subjects.
4. Standards are in line with national expectations for information technology at Key Stage 1 and above at the end of Key Stage 2. Progress is particularly good at Key Stage 2 and the use of portable computers throughout the school is having considerable impact on the development of pupils' computer skills and in the quality of pupils' writing overall. The provision for information technology in the school is impressive. A good feature of the school is that computers are being used effectively to support learning within other subjects. This is enabling pupils to make good progress in a range of skills, such as word processing in both key stages and control technology at Key Stage 2.

5. Pupils are making at least satisfactory progress in nearly all subjects across the school. Progress is particularly good in history and music at Key Stage 2, as a result of good or better teaching and the frequent development of a range of skills. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are also making good progress in physical education. This is because gymnastics lessons are effectively planned and there is a very good emphasis placed on skills development.
6. Whilst some interesting and appropriate examples of design technology were seen, with good use made of cross-curricular links, overall attainment in this subject at the end of both key stages is unsatisfactory. Resourcing is poor and is insufficient to enable delivery of the full breadth of the National Curriculum. Teachers are managing to incorporate some aspects of the subject into their planning, but the scope and range of what pupils can do is very limiting.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress at both key stages. The special educational needs co-ordinator is very effective and ensures that pupil's needs are clearly identified and that appropriate support is provided in lessons. Pupils with statements are monitored regularly and external agencies are used effectively to support this process. This good level of provision ensures that pupils make good progress in their learning and skills development in literacy and numeracy.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils at Smallthorne Primary School behave very well. By the time children have been in the nursery for six months, they have learned to work quietly together and to give their attention to what the staff are asking them to do. Their responsible attitudes to work, and the good relationships which pertain throughout the school, are quite evident, and result in the high level of achievement of most of the pupils when they move on to secondary school.
9. The very good behaviour and consideration for other people are obvious from the moment when pupils file into school in the mornings. All of the Key Stage 2 pupils have to pass through the school hall and know that they must only walk around the perimeter so that the central area, which is used for physical education many times during the week, remains as clean as possible. This rule is observed by pupils and adults alike. Children from the nursery were seen to behave impeccably during their lunch in the dining hall. They sat well at the table, were quiet, waited patiently for one of their teachers to bring their lunch, and used knives and forks correctly. They are a credit to their school. Pupils respond very well to the agreed school and class rules displayed in the hall and classrooms and as a result behaviour is very good around the school. Instances of anti-social behaviour, and bullying in particular, are dealt with very quickly. If bad behaviour persists, parents are invited to school to discuss the remedies and a few children currently have behaviour diaries.
10. Parents confirm that their pupils enjoy school and are very keen to be there so that they may take part in the wide variety of experiences and learning available to them. Plenty of good work is displayed around the school and records are kept in some classes so that every pupil's work is displayed during the term. Pupils respond very well to the good range of after school activities. More recently, the school has become involved in the European Comenius project and it has recently opened its own website. As a result, older pupils enjoy communicating with European schools via the Internet.
11. Pupils respond very well to the opportunities for day visits and residential trips. They are eager to talk about their experiences and achievements in conquering their fears, all of which helps to boost their confidence, independence and personal development.

12. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and, when they are in their classrooms, they settle to work quickly. Most stay very focused on their teachers and are not distracted by others. This remains so, even when there is noise from other areas; for example, when pupils are working in the library section of the hall and others are in assembly, having music lessons or doing physical education. Pupils learn from an early stage not to call out in class but to raise their hands to answer or ask a question. Pupils greatly value the rewards for good behaviour and special efforts in learning and are pleased to take them home after school.
13. Relationships between pupils are very good. Consequently, most pupils co-operate well in groups or in pairs, get on with their work quietly and make good progress. This was clearly demonstrated in a religious education lesson for a class of Year 1 and 2 pupils. In this lesson the pupils co-operated very well in small groups to plan improvements to an imaginary nature reserve. Boys and girls play well together out of doors where relationships between pupils are also good although they could be more understanding of the difficulties of others. Pupils show respect for their teachers and respond with enthusiasm to their lessons. They are courteous to visitors and to the other adults working in the school who, in turn, express their fondness for pupils.
14. Pupils respond well to the good opportunities provided for them to take responsibility. For example, Year 6 pupils, in particular, act as monitors and are present when pupils are entering school to make sure that they go to the cloakrooms and classrooms in a sensible way. Teachers give responsibilities in class, such as collecting and returning registers to the school's secretary. In their lessons and discussions, pupils become aware of hardships experienced by people in other countries and they take part in charity activities. For example, they collect tins of dog food every year for an animal charity and have already exceeded their target of 1,200 tins.
15. Attendance levels give some cause for concern although the number of unauthorised absences is broadly in line with the national average. At the time of the inspection, the 'Potters' Holiday' was about to begin. This historic holiday time when once schools, mines, steel works and potteries would close down, means that families tend to go away together and consequently the numbers of children in school drops noticeably at this time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. During the inspection the quality of the teaching varied between excellent and unsatisfactory. Four fifths of the lessons observed were good or better, of which 21 per cent were very good and two per cent excellent. Only five per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. This represents an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection where 20 per cent of the lessons were judged unsatisfactory.
17. Major strengths in teaching include very good relationships between staff and pupils and good behaviour management. These ensure a calm, settled learning environment where pupils are motivated, enthusiastic and gain enjoyment from their learning. Weaknesses in teaching are connected to inappropriate behaviour management and a poor match between the work planned and the ability of the pupils.
18. The quality of teaching is good in English, mathematics, science, information technology, geography, music and physical education. During the course of the inspection, insufficient lessons in history, art and design technology were seen to enable inspectors to make a judgement in these subjects.

19. The promotion of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is good and is a strength of the school. Teachers encourage writing skills particularly well in science and geography. The use of portable computers to allow pupils to practice and reinforce their keyboard skills enhances their confidence and promotes and encourages writing across the curriculum. Pupils' listening skills are well developed, but the incorporation of speaking opportunities into lessons is underdeveloped. Teachers are good at identifying numeracy opportunities, some of which are planned and some arising spontaneously through classroom discussion. For example, in a design technology lesson, some Key Stage 1 pupils were making puppets where they were required to cut fabric shapes by turning card templates to fit on the cloth provided
20. The quality of the teaching in information technology impacts on the whole of the curriculum. Teachers continuously motivate the pupils and require them to consider, vary and improve the presentation of their work. Teachers either have or are supported by very good subject knowledge in information technology, they use clear instructions to demonstrate what pupils should do, transmit enthusiasm for the subject and have a very high expectation of the pupils' commitment and attainment. As a result pupils strive for high standards in this subject, they enjoy their work and make rapid progress. This was particularly noticeable in an excellent Year 6 lesson using the information technology facilities at the local high school. These pupils were required to retrieve information relating to their autobiographies from their file, select background animation and sound, import a digital camera image of themselves and save the chosen effects so that they could make a multi-media presentation to the group in a subsequent lesson. This high quality teaching ensures that all the pupils make very good progress and attained standards well in advance of the national expectation for their age.
21. Teaching of the under fives in the nursery and reception is satisfactory, Teaching in half of the lessons observed was judged to be good, and for the remaining lessons it was satisfactory. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection report when the quality of teaching for children aged under five was judged to be sound with some good features.
22. Throughout the school, teachers plan carefully to produce interesting lessons with activities that motivate the pupils. The best lessons have two strong features. They involve the use of activities that are at the right level of difficulty for most of the pupils and they allow pupils to understand the subject content of the lesson. Teachers achieve this by providing clear, detailed explanations and by using a variety of innovative recording ideas that allow pupils to show what they can do and do not rely too heavily on too much written work. Work sheets, when they are used are carefully chosen or designed, by the teacher for a specific lesson.
23. The majority of classrooms have relevant and well-designed displays. Teachers use information technology very successfully to produce good quality labels, banners and vocabulary prompts. This approach enhances literacy across the curriculum by promoting subject-specific vocabulary, supporting spelling and informing classroom discussion.
24. The approach to marking and spelling is inconsistent. Teachers mark pupils written work conscientiously, but the most effective marking is subject-specific rather than a comment about presentation. Frequently spelling errors are unchecked and sometimes, worse, they are marked as being correct. Pupils are not always made to refer to the highly prominent classroom vocabulary lists.

25. In the vast majority of lessons, teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Teachers' secure subject knowledge allows them to ask challenging and thought provoking questions and pupils respond positively. Pupils are well behaved, anxious to be involved in classroom activities and enjoy the company of their teachers. Unsatisfactory teaching at the beginning of Key Stage 2 was the result of unrealistic expectations of pupils' writing and caused pupils to lose interest and motivation so that behaviour became a problem. In a science lesson about plant growth in this class, too much of the written requirement was abstract, no vocabulary prompts were provided and all pupils found it difficult to understand or complete the set task. In the unsatisfactory reception lesson, pupils lost concentration when they were required to work in groups on an activity that was too difficult for them. Also, noise from the children and from the teacher shouting, did not make for a calm and productive learning environment.
26. All staff ensure that they give equal attention to boys and girls, and to pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with special educational needs are included in classroom lessons. They benefit from the well pitched, varied and clearly explained lessons and are able to make good progress, their learning being effectively supported by nursery assistants and classroom support assistants who have good questioning skills and are organised and well directed by class teachers. This is strength of the teaching, enabling pupils of all abilities to make gains in their learning.
27. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is very small and they are well catered for. Consequently, all pupils are well integrated in the school. The needs of the lower and higher attaining pupils are generally well catered for through matching activities to their stage of learning, and through grouping pupils according to ability for English and mathematics in Year 4. In Key Stage 1, pupils in Years 1 and 2 mixed-age classes benefit from being taught English and mathematics in single-age groups.
28. Provision for homework is appropriate. It is set occasionally and often in the form of spellings or reading. The approach to homework is informal and negotiated with individual pupils rather than formalised.

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

29. Three key issues were identified in the previous inspection in relation to the curriculum. These were;
 - to develop a consistent approach to planning, assessment and recording so that greater continuity and progression in pupils' learning could be achieved;
 - to ensure that appropriate opportunities were provided for pupils to acquire both independent and collaborative research skills including investigation, recording, hypothesising, testing and evaluating;
 - to devise and implement a system for monitoring curriculum planning and the allocation of time to each subject.
30. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection, and addressed these issues successfully. As a result, the current approach to planning, assessment and recording promotes continuity and progression in learning. Pupils are provided with sufficient opportunities to acquire independent and collaborative research skills. There are good arrangements for monitoring curriculum planning, and all subjects are allocated sufficient amount of time to teach the National Curriculum.

31. The curriculum is good overall and meets statutory requirements. All National Curriculum subjects and religious education, together with personal, social and health education, are taught. The curriculum is broad and balanced in all subjects except in design and technology. The governors meet their statutory obligation in relation to the curriculum, including sex education and drug education. A significant strength of the curriculum, is the provision for personal, social and health education. All pupils receive a weekly lesson on a wide range of well-planned topics.
32. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, have equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. In conjunction with its partner institutions, the school has produced a sound policy on equal opportunities which is well supported by a very brief multicultural policy. These policies have been fully implemented. The school makes good provision for the study of different religions and cultures through its programme of religious education, art and geography. Consequently equality of opportunity is a strength of the school.
33. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils' individual education plans are given careful consideration and pupils' needs and progress are assessed thoroughly and regularly. As a result, all pupils with special educational needs progress well because they are able to access the subject content of the curriculum. They also benefit from the school's policy of inclusion and make significant gains with their social development.
34. The school has implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy successfully. This has increased the confidence of the staff to teach literacy and numeracy effectively. The school closely monitors the impact of these national strategies on standards. There are nominated governors for supporting and monitoring the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies. They have attended appropriate training, although so far only the nominated governor for numeracy has been able to carry out monitoring through classroom observations.
35. The school has agreed schemes of work for all areas of the curriculum except for design and technology. They provide clear guidance for teachers' planning and provide for continuity and progression in learning. The planned curriculum caters well for variations in overall attainment and size of different year groups. For example, in Years 1 and 2 where pupils are taught in mixed-age classes, they benefit from being taught literacy and numeracy in single-age groups. For other subjects, teachers carry out separate planning for each year group except in art. In two Year 4 classes, 'setting' of pupils into attainment groups for literacy and numeracy ensures that teachers match tasks to pupils' prior stage of learning. Where pupils have to be taught in mixed-age classes, there are generally sound arrangements for avoiding the repetition of work.
36. Overall, there is satisfactory provision for extra-curricular activities across the school. There is good range of clubs, including sporting activities, a computer club, a dance club and a music club. The number of pupils attending these clubs is good.
37. The school makes good use of the local community, the environment and visits to various places as a resource for learning. For example, the local vicar, visits the school regularly to work with pupils. During the inspection week, a member of the community shared her experiences of the Second World War with Year 6 pupils who were studying Britain since 1930. There is good provision for visits, including a residential visit in Key Stage 2. Last year the various places visited by pupils included Green Hall, Macclesfield Museum, Victoria Hall and the New Victoria Theatre.

38. Relationships with partner institutions, are a strength of the school. For example, there are good opportunities for teachers to observe best practice in teaching in link schools as well as within the school. There is also good provision for pupils to participate in local sporting competitions, such as athletic events, swimming galas and six-a-side football. Good curriculum links with the local high school help to prepare pupils for the next phase of education in several ways. For instance, high school staff visit Year 6 pupils at the beginning of the academic year and talk to pupils and staff. In July, pupils spend a whole day in the high school as part of their induction. Pupils who achieve level 3 in English are able to attend the summer school in the high school.
39. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained and made improvements in the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is especially so in cultural development, which has improved from satisfactory to very good. The school's aims clearly reflect values, which create a very caring and orderly community with a positive ethos.
40. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Collective worship is satisfactory overall and meets with statutory requirements. Assemblies are appropriately viewed as the context for recognising and reflecting on important issues. Many assemblies relate to topical or current themes such as when Year 6 reflected on the story of the marathon before the sports day they participated in with other schools. Year 4 learned about conditions for children in a country they are studying for geography and art. However, some class assemblies do not make a clear delineation between assembly and the next lesson and opportunities are missed to engage in meaningful discussion or reflect in depth on the issues raised. Music is not used to enhance spirituality in assemblies and at some assemblies the hall continues to be used while collective worship is taking place, distracting pupils and preventing concentration. Spirituality is evident in some lessons especially in religious education, music and literacy. For example, Year 5 pupils listened in rapt wonderment and reflected well on the story of 'The Gangster who Cried'. Pupils in a Year 4 literacy lesson clapped spontaneously when two of their classmates read their radio advert. Younger pupils talked excitedly about the walk they had just experienced when they had touched and compared aspects of the outside environment.
41. The school's provision for moral development is very good. Staff encourage pupils of all ages to consider the principles of good behaviour and each class has devised a list as a reminder of what is expected. Pupils are encouraged to take a pride in their achievements and to respect each other. Teachers are good role models and are committed to valuing pupils' work. The well thought out programme for personal and social education is a highly effective provision and impacts very powerfully on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. This was demonstrated well in a lesson in which pupils were invited to rank crimes in order of seriousness and record their opinions on breaking rules. In a Key Stage 2 assembly, the visiting governor related the story of Pentecost to incidents in his own life, and made links with moral issues.
42. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils are given responsibility from the earliest years. For example, in the nursery class, children are given the task of carefully pouring out and serving the juice at break time, to develop their social skills. Pupils in other year groups have jobs as monitors, which they take very seriously. In Year 6, provision is made to take on more whole school responsibilities such as ringing the bell at the start and end of lessons and keeping the hall and cloakrooms tidy. All pupils are encouraged to be thoughtful, polite and treat each other and all adults with courtesy. Pupils have a real awareness of community and citizenship through the many opportunities provided, such as participation in local sporting events and residential visits. Personal development and self-esteem are further supported by the use of personal planners which most pupils in Year 6 use effectively to further independent learning.

43. The provision for cultural development is very good. Pupils exchange letters with a school in the south and visit places of interest including Port Vale, the New Victorian Theatre and the Millennium Dome. They took part in a high profile initiative to design millennium plates in conjunction with a local museum. These were subsequently displayed in the Dome. Presently, the school is to be involved in the 'Tate Ten' project in which the pupils will respond to Kandinsky's 'The Swing'. They worked well with GCSE art students to make three-dimensional art and sculpture. On a more practical level, the school recently won a competition for the best design on milk cartons. All these initiatives contribute to very good cultural provision. Multicultural provision is equally very good. It permeates every aspect of the curriculum from the nursery onwards. For instance, the nursery children recently celebrated Japanese Children's Day by painting kites and Japanese writing characters. Evidence of poetry in the style of Japanese 'Haiku' is displayed throughout the school, and high quality multicultural experiences are provided through literacy, history, geography, art and music.
44. The link with schools in Europe through the Comenius project is a particularly strong feature. For instance, teachers have visited Germany and France to look at the systems in their schools and recently a European breakfast took place, in which pupils participated, to launch the school's website. Joint initiatives for the project include, for example, exchanging e-mails and home-made books with a school in France, and the collaboration between Smallthorne and Erlangen, in Germany on a calendar for the year 2000. The pictures drawn by the Smallthorne pupils, give a good indication of the historical aspects of the town, including Ford Green Hall, bottle kilns and the Josiah Wedgwood factory.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

45. At the time of the previous inspection there were concerns about the assessment of pupils' progress and whether sufficiently challenging work was set for pupils in Key Stage 2. These shortcomings have been addressed successfully.
46. Parents recognise the school as being safe and caring. They praise the efforts made by the staff to help pupils achieve their potential and to look after those who have problems of any sort. In particular, they appreciate the way teachers make certain that pupils do not leave the school premises without being collected by their parents or carers. This is most important when pupils return from events or visits and on occasions teachers have accompanied them home so that they do not have to walk alone.
47. The school makes good provision for the personal support and guidance of pupils. For instance, they are able to spend time in school with their parents before they eventually join the nursery or reception class. There are books to help parents prepare their children and the nursery staff make home visits. Pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for the transfer to secondary school. They go regularly to Haywood School for information technology classes and have other opportunities to visit schools and meet future teachers. These teachers are frequent visitors to Smallthorne School to meet Year 6 pupils and particularly to work with children with special needs.
48. Teachers know the pupils very well. Those pupils with learning difficulties are identified at an early stage and efforts are made to help their learning. The very dedicated support assistants work alongside the teachers and as a consequence pupils with special needs make good progress.

49. There are very good systems in place to monitor and eliminate oppressive behaviour. The school has a good policy on behaviour that has been underlined recently by the 'Home/School Agreements', which are endorsed by teachers, parents and pupils. It is involved with other schools in the area in anti-bullying strategies and is known for the good behaviour and kindness of its pupils. There are a few pupils who disturb lessons for others, but those who do are being monitored and their parents are involved in discussing measures to stop this happening. There have been no exclusions.
50. Health and safety checks are made regularly by the school's site supervisor, who is responsible for the school. In addition, one teacher and one governor look after health and safety matters and have recently attended a training session on this subject. There are some very poor and dangerous areas of paving in between the school's buildings. The playgrounds and field have some uneven areas, however these matters will soon be addressed when the outside toilets are removed during the forthcoming holiday and other works are carried out on the site. As yet the governors have not developed a plan for improvements to the site beyond this but they will need to ensure a higher level of safety in future.
51. Provision for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development is very good. For example, pupils learn about the human body, personal health and hygiene in their science lessons and also discuss important issues in the personal health and social education lessons. The local police have led discussions on issues such as drugs awareness, stranger danger and road safety. An evening for parents to receive information on drugs awareness was highly successful and well attended.
52. Good quality hot meals are brought to school every day and served in the dining hall, but many pupils bring their own food. Parents and staff run a tuckshop that is open earlier in the day especially to help pupils who have had little breakfast.
53. Procedures for child protection are good. Implementation of policy is the responsibility of the headteacher and she has made the remainder of the school's staff aware of these important issues and how they should be alert for signs of distress in their pupils. If there were problems, other agencies such as Social Services would be brought in to help, but it is some time since this has been necessary. The school works closely with the Education Welfare Officer in making sure that children attend school regularly and arrive on time. Some children, who have experienced difficulties in other schools such as bullying or poor attendance, come to Smallthorne School particularly because it has such a caring ethos. They settle well and make good progress. No child is denied a place on a school visit because their parents are unable to afford the cost and all trips are subsidised from school funds.
54. Teachers monitor and assess pupils' progress effectively as a result of whole school initiatives. A more rigorous system of assessment, tracking and target setting is being introduced. Clearly displayed records are available to every teacher to show what each pupil can do. Procedures for predicting what pupils can achieve are being set for the pupils, beginning with those in Year 6 and gradually extending through the school. Parents are now better informed about the progress their children are making. The pupil planners in Key Stage 2 are good feature. Pupils have 'planners' which are printed so that they can write in their achievements for the week, make a note of homework and spellings, acknowledge where they have had difficulties and write out their targets for the following week. In this way pupils are aware of their own targets. Schoolwork is marked and often the attached notes are helpful, but this is inconsistent as is the setting and marking of homework.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

55. Lack of information for parents was a criticism in the previous inspection. Great improvements have been made since then and parents agree that they are now well informed.
56. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good. There is a good relationship between the school and parents. A recently formed, parents, teachers and friends association, helps to promote this as well as raising substantial sums of money. As a result, resources in the school have been kept up to date. There is also very good support for the school from some local companies and the recent launch of the Website at a European Breakfast allowed some of these sponsors to visit the school and to be entertained.
57. Parents feel welcome in the school and, before the morning session begins, some parents seek out teachers to discuss issues, which may be worrying them or their children. A few parents are able to help in school and parents of the youngest children stay with them in school for a while when they begin. Some parents have taken advantage of a good scheme called 'College in the Community', which has enabled them to come to school in the mornings for computer studies for beginners. As a result some are going further to re-educate themselves now that they have the confidence of modern technology.
58. Good information for parents is sent out in regular letters. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have reading diaries into which parents and teachers write messages. Key Stage 2 pupils can communicate through very good 'planners' that also allow two-way messages and have a space to state on which days letters are being sent out. The governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus are informative, but do not meet all legal requirements in the information that they give. For example, there is very little about provision for pupils with special needs and facilities for disabled pupils.
59. Parents are provided with good information overall about their child's progress. Each child has a record of achievement book into which they place work that they have done during the years. Teachers advise them what to include. End-of-year reports refer to each subject, studied but the paragraphs are brief. They do give an idea of the child's progress in the curriculum but most do not set targets.
60. Parents respond fairly well to questionnaires but attendance at meetings, such as the governing body's annual meeting, is poor. However, larger numbers of parents support the school for fund-raising, sporting events and concerts, but many parents find it difficult to attend afternoon or evening meetings because of working arrangements. Although most parents listen to their children read at home, there is little other set homework. Currently, there are few opportunities for parents to become involved in their child's learning. This is improving already as far as communications technology is concerned with the establishment of computer classes for parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

61. The school is effective. It is well led and managed and provides good value for money. The headteacher provides clear leadership, based on a realistic evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. She is capably supported by an able deputy headteacher, effective senior management team and subject co-ordinators. In particular, pupils' individual progress is closely tracked from year to year. The monitoring of teaching has improved in quality and there has been a significant decline on the number of unsatisfactory lessons observed in the previous inspection.

62. There is a strong commitment to improve standards amongst the staff and, as a consequence, all the key issues identified in the previous inspection have been successfully resolved. For example, there is now strong evidence of significant improvement in pupils' standards and in many aspects of the school's overall provision and a very positive and purposeful ethos for learning.
63. Subject co-ordinators are enthusiastic and well informed in guiding the development of their subjects. For instance, in information technology, there has been a significant rise in standards since the previous inspection due to the leadership of the subject co-ordinators. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is effective, enabling support staff to work efficiently to impact favourably on the progress of these pupils.
64. The governing body is very supportive of the work of the school. It fulfils its statutory duties satisfactorily and it is beginning to improve its committee structures. For example there is now a finance committee that meets regularly and monitors the budget appropriately. Governors are fully involved in the identification of areas of improvement within the school but currently they have no coherent plan to improve the fabric of the school and the outside play areas after the demolition of redundant buildings. The governing body's procedures for overseeing the school's work are satisfactory and expenditure is planned in line with agreed educational priorities. The governing body is extending its role of monitoring and evaluating the school's provision, as seen in the work of designated governors for literacy, numeracy and special education needs. The school development plan identifies clear targets for development over a three-year period and governors are sufficiently informed about its progress.
65. Financial planning is good. The school makes careful and effective use of its resources and seeks best value in its spending decisions. Specific grants and additional funding are used to good effect to raise standards, as seen, for example, in the provision of 'booster classes' in literacy and numeracy and use of portable computers in the classrooms. The attainment of the pupils is closely monitored and the school is setting clear targets by which to measure further improvements. Day-to-day organisation and administration are very good, ensuring the smooth running of the school. Financial control is good but some issues related to administration procedures identified in the last audit report have yet to be implemented. Technology is being used very effectively within the school to support pupils' learning and assist with administration of the budget and the monitoring of pupil attendance. Support staff are deployed effectively in most lessons, but sometimes they are not use efficiently to support pupils' learning at the beginning of lessons. Learning resources are used well to support learning in all subjects.
66. The special educational needs co-ordinator is very effective and ensures that pupils' needs are clearly identified and that appropriate support is provided in lessons. Pupils with statements are monitored regularly and external agencies are used effectively to support this process. The headteacher has responsibility for the co-ordination of equality of opportunity and carries out this responsibility effectively. This impacts positively on the ethos of the school where all pupils are valued and shown respect.
67. The school is well staffed with qualified teachers, some of whom have taught in the school for a number of years and others who have joined the school in the last two years and have brought new ideas and enthusiasms. This good balance of experience and youth has been brought together into an effective team by an experienced headteacher. Good opportunities are given to staff to attend courses and the more recently qualified teachers are very well supported and advised by all the staff and by the deputy headteacher in particular. Good use is made of the part-time teachers for music and special educational needs. The full-time support teacher works closely with class teachers in planning lessons, but is not always effectively used during parts of some lessons. Other support staff, including nursery nurses, work effectively in classes and with pupils with special

educational needs. The school has an excellent secretary and a team of dedicated dinner assistants, cleaners and a janitor.

68. The school site is large enough for the number of pupils. There are hard play areas as well as a football pitch and a field. However, these are not well maintained and have potholes and some dangerous paving and steps. Classes were seen to share the netball court for athletics, giving too little space to run.
69. The main building is Victorian and there are portable buildings for the nursery, Key Stage 1 classes and the separate dining hall. The nursery is well provided indoors, but outside it has a very small area for play under cover and an inadequately equipped outside play area for under fives. The condition of the main school is not good. Although the classrooms and hall are light and airy, the access to them is problematic. The hall is a busy thoroughfare and children have to pass through one classroom to get to another. Internal access to the staffroom is through a busy classroom. Cloakrooms, wash areas and storage are adequate but there are no spare teaching areas for group work.
70. The hall, cannot accommodate all the school for assemblies, without difficulty and part of it is used as a library and part for display of artefacts, both of which could be hazards when a large class is using the hall for physical education. There is also noise disturbance when the library area is used for teaching small groups, often those with special needs.
71. The condition of the toilets in the main school, and Key Stage 1 building, is very poor. These are to be replaced during the summer when the outside area is cleared of redundant buildings.
72. Resources for most subjects are adequate. They are, however, insufficient for design and technology and there is a shortage of books and artefacts for religious education. Information technology is well resourced, particularly by a recent purchase of portable computers that give pupils in all classes experience in using keyboards, visual displays and printers. More conventional personal computers are linked to the Internet. There are insufficient books in the hall library area. Sets of books are housed in classrooms, but since the library room had to become a classroom, the existing library is not well provided or well used. There is good equipment for physical education considering the restricted area available in school. This is supplemented by the use of a nearby gymnasium, a swimming pool and, on occasions, a first class running track at the town's sports centre. During the inspection over 50 Key Stage 2 pupils competed against 16 local schools in an athletics meeting at this centre.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To continue to develop the effectiveness of the school and further raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- Improve standards in design and technology by;
 - Ensuring planning is consistent across the school;
 - Improving the level of resources;
 - Appointing a subject co-ordinator.

Paragraphs 6, 35, 72, 124, 128

- Improve levels of pupil attendance across the school.

Paragraph 15

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs 50, 58, 64, 72, 98.

- Develop a plan for the maintenance and enhancement of the building and site.
- Improve the quantity and quality of books in the library.
- Statutory requirements regarding the governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

62

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

38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	21	58	15	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	263
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	96

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	42

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	31
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	25

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	23	8	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	17
	Girls	7	7	8
	Total	22	22	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (79)	71 (94)	81 (73)
	National	82 (80)	83(81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	18	17
	Girls	7	8	5
	Total	23	26	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (80)	84 (80)	71 (80)
	National	82 (81)	86 (79)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	18	18	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	14	14
	Girls	15	13	14
	Total	28	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (63)	75 (47)	78 (53)
	National	70 (65)	69 (69)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	15	15
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	28	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (62)	83 (62)	83 (69)
	National	68 (71)	69 (65)	75 (65)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	286
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22:1
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	97

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13:1
--------------------------------	------

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	493,930.00
Total expenditure	494,300.56
Expenditure per pupil	1608.89
Balance brought forward from previous year	48,685.00
Balance carried forward to next year	48,314.44

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

289

Number of questionnaires returned

37

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	39	54	0	7	0
My child is making good progress in school.	32	68	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	39	4	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	54	4	7	7
The teaching is good.	57	43	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	46	0	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	18	0	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	32	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	35	57	4	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	43	46	0	4	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	43	10	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	25	21	4	18

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

73. Children are admitted full-time into the nursery class from the age of three. There is a twice-yearly intake in September and January. There are 25 children in the nursery class, of whom, twenty-two will be transferring to the reception class in September 2000. The reception class curriculum follows the areas of learning for children under five during the autumn and spring terms. The national curriculum is then followed from the beginning of the summer term when the majority of the children are five. The planned curriculum for this term is judged to be appropriate to the needs of these children.
74. Assessment on admission to nursery shows that most children have knowledge, skills and understanding in language and literacy and mathematics that are well below those of children of a similar age. Fine motor skills are about average on entry but personal and social development are poor. The children make a good start in all aspects of school life and the sound standards achieved in the last inspection have been maintained and improved on. Children are attaining appropriately for their age in all areas by the end of the nursery year and are on line to meet the desirable outcomes by the age of five. They make very good progress in personal and social development and good progress in language and literacy and numeracy as a result of the well planned curriculum. Progress is sound in knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative and physical development.
75. The nursery is staffed by two competent nursery nurses under the direction of the headteacher. Teaching is sound with good features. The management of pupils is very good and teaching methods and planning are effective, as is the teaching of basic skills. The result of this is that the children work in a calm orderly atmosphere on purposeful activities in a well- planned curriculum. A particular strength is the use of a weekly theme. Imaginative activities generally permeate every aspect of the curriculum in a natural way and provide a cohesive framework in which children learn well. The nursery provides a bright and stimulating environment in which children's work is obviously valued. The nursery nurse and her colleague work well together and have clearly defined roles.
76. Relationships between staff and children are very good. The staff know the children well and are very caring; for example in making sure that the children are protected from the sun and have plenty of drinks on a very hot day. There is an appropriate balance between teacher-directed tasks and activities that children select for themselves. Occasionally there is over-direction by staff and the structure of the day prevents children from sustaining an activity for an extended period of time. Learning activities are well thought out and the children become very engrossed in them, especially in role-play opportunities. Children feel very secure and this has a good effect upon progress. Good attention is given to early speaking and listening, reading, writing and numeracy skills. The children respond particularly well to these opportunities showing delight in experiencing the coherent curriculum on offer.

Personal and social development

77. The children make very good progress in developing personal and social skills. They come happily into the nursery each morning and usually leave their parents without concern. They use the equipment with great care, take turns and tidy up well. They are able to undress and dress sensibly when changing for physical education and are independent in putting on painting aprons and hanging up their own coats. They are polite and well mannered in all activities. A good example seen is at lunchtime when children wait patiently to be served, use a knife and fork competently and say please and thank you. They take turns in acting as waiters. Staff provide many other opportunities, such as children handing round the mid morning drink to develop children's social skills. They speak confidently to adult visitors, invite them to participate in their play and confidently explain that the flowers will cost '20 quid'.
78. Most children are sensitive to each other's needs and help each other in the high quality role-play experiences provided. Many begin to respond to their experience of the world as when they show concern when a dog is 'trapped' in a lorry in a television programme. They show relief and pleasure when the tension is resolved and relate this incident to their own lives.
79. Children are attaining above average levels in personal and social development and make very good progress because of the staff's clear objectives, high expectations of behaviour and good example.

Language and literacy

80. All children make good progress in all aspects of language and literacy because staff plan a good variety of imaginative situations for children to use and apply their developing speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. Role-play is of a particularly high quality because staff model the play as in beach and aeroplane scenarios. Children continue to play spontaneously when staff move away and are reluctant to stop when drinks time approaches. They 'talk' into the phone when ordering flowers and instruct their classmates to put on their seat belts before the plane takes off at the 'airport'. The staff have set up the role-play to provide meaningful opportunities to read and write for a purpose. Children make marks on paper to order flowers and find their passports by recognising their name and photograph. They make cards, which are accepted by the staff with appreciation and delight. Some children write their name without their name card forming most letters correctly and they recognise many of the sounds in their name. Many children know other sounds such as 's' and 'p'. All children enjoy books. They behave like readers, by turning the pages carefully and saying 'the end' when they finish the book. They listen attentively to stories read by adults. A few children retell a storybook accurately, lifting the flaps on a 'Spot' book and use an appropriate voice for the actions they describe. Two high quality features, which help children to make sound progress, are the 'Parents as Learners Scheme' and taking home the 'teddy bear' each evening. These also provide good links with parents and help to emphasise the partnership between school and home. Staff help parents to use reading techniques which will be effective with their children by demonstrating story reading to parents and providing good quality books from which parents and children choose each week. Parents take the diary, which accompanies the teddy bear home each day, very seriously and write long accounts of teddy's adventures that evening. Their child usually contributes by drawing a picture. Staff read this out at drinks time and show how they value this link by their good questioning and interest in the parents' narrative. Many displays in the nursery reflect the emphasis that staff place on literacy. Three storybooks are represented and children have their own little books on display. The room is a rich environment for literacy and many captions for other areas of the curriculum are displayed. Home made books on visits and nursery activities are of a high quality and set good examples for the children's own work.

Mathematical development

81. The children make good progress. The staff plan a variety of tasks for children to experience in sorting, comparing, matching and counting. There is a mixture of focused teaching and opportunities for practical investigation to develop pupils' numeracy skills. The staff also pick up on spontaneous opportunities to further mathematical understanding such as when the nursery nurse counts the 'bouquets' of flowers brought to her by a child. The staff teach mathematical language such as 'first' and 'next' and children show their understanding by placing the objects correctly and sequencing the story.
82. Many children count beyond ten and recognise numbers to ten. They count out objects to ten and collect the empty beakers in sets of four. They are able to build the correct number of cubes in colours to match a seaside picture. They sort cars into colour sets without adult supervision and use the number pad on the telephone touching the buttons accurately as they say the numbers during role-play activities. Through practical activities, such as sand and water play, children experiment with capacity and volume. They begin to understand the concept of time through discussing which day of the week it is and a few children know that Thursday comes after Wednesday. Work carried out using number songs such as 'Five Little Speckled Frogs' further emphasises and enhances children's progress.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

83. The children make sound progress in this area of learning. Children become aware of the world around them through a sound range of experiences provided by the staff. For example, they have planted seeds and are able to watch their broad beans grow by using the magnifying glass available. Flowers grown from seed by the children brighten up the garden area in the nursery grounds. Photographic evidence from work earlier in the year shows that the children went on a spring walk to experience the change in the season, and they have studied the life cycle of a frog. They enjoy using the computer and handle the mouse with dexterity, moving shapes across the screen into the correct place. They concentrate and persevere for long spells of time at the computer. In geographical activity they complete a daily weather chart and watched a television programme about moving house, chatting to the nursery nurse about their own experiences as the programme developed. This activity extended the children's horizons and caught their imagination but opportunities were missed to further the learning because children then had to go for their drinks. Evidence from previous activities shows that this aspect of knowledge and understanding is developed through visits to places such as a flower shop and through visitors to the school such as firemen complete with fire engine! Opportunities for developing technology skills are implemented through playing with construction kits, making playdough and occasional activities such as baking. No child initiated model making using recyclable materials was seen during the inspection.

Creative development

84. The children make satisfactory progress in creative areas of learning. Children explore a range of media including paint and glue. They make collages, paint pictures and play with modelling clay. For example, under the direction of the nursery nurse children made a three dimensional scene of the seaside using materials such as card, shiny paper and sand. They made recognisable shapes of fruit using playdough. Children show an increasing ability to use their imagination through art, role-play and music. Through musical activities, all of the children are increasing their awareness of sounds and are developing their ability to listen. During a music session they explored the sounds and qualities of different instruments and knew the names of some including the triangle, drum and tambourine. They played these sensibly when it was their turn. Staff use opportunities

in other areas such as physical development to sing songs that are relevant. This provides a good link and demonstrates how music can enhance the under fives curriculum.

Physical development

85. An adequate range of organised experiences, are offered to the children supported by resources and equipment to enable children to make sound progress in this area of learning. The exception is for aspects of the outdoor curriculum where opportunities are underdeveloped. Children are developing skills well in cutting, sticking, holding and using a pencil. They use space well, for example in PE, where they stretched, walked and acted out a seaside scenario appropriately. Not enough opportunity was provided to move vigorously or to sustain actions such as 'swimming' in the sea. Staff demonstrated effectively but did not use the children to demonstrate movements, and the activity was over-directed. The wet weather during the inspection prevented the children from using the outside areas as frequently as usual. Staff wisely kept children inside or in the veranda's shade on a very hot day. On a day-to-day basis children use the veranda space to play with a small range of equipment but are unable to move into a wider space unless an adult is available to go outside. The use of staff and resources for this issue is unsatisfactory because it prevents the full implementation of the physical area of the curriculum

ENGLISH

86. Results at the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum Tests in 1999 were above the national average in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving the national target of level 4. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 5 was also above the national average. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance was well above average. Over the last four years boys' performance in English was above the national average while the performance of girls was below. Inspection findings indicate that, by the end of both key stages, the attainment of pupils is in line with expectations in all aspects of the English curriculum and that all pupils make sound progress except in writing where progress is good at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs attain well at their own level because, in the majority of lessons, work is well matched to their needs.
87. Results of the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum Tests in 1999, were well below the national average in reading in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving level 2. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 3 was also well below the national average. In writing, the results were well below the national average. However, the proportion of pupils reaching level 3 or above was close to the national average. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance in reading was well below average and in writing it was below average. Over the last four years the performance of boys in reading has been below the national average but close to the national average in writing. The performance of girls in reading has been close to the national average and well above in writing. The results of the 2000 tests were better than in 1999, but no national comparisons can yet be made. The 1999 results can partly be explained by the fact that the most of the group tested were lower-attaining boys and also that there were fewer pupils of above average ability in this year group.
88. Standards in speaking and listening are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages as they were at the previous inspection. At the end of Key Stage 2 many pupils are eager to join in and contribute to the lesson. Pupils use specific vocabulary such as 'colloquial', 'italics' and 'connectives' when they are enthused by the carefully phrased questions of the teacher, but a minority is slow to respond in spite of well worded, probing questions. Progress is satisfactory. When the teaching is very imaginative pupils speak well, as in a Year 4 lesson in which pupils made up radio adverts and performed them for their classmates in a confident, unselfconscious manner. They used music and exaggerated voices with obvious enjoyment, even making a clever pun as in 'Doughnut go to any other company' in selling their cake product. In another very good lesson seen in Year 5, pupils confidently discussed and compared routines and the lifestyles of others in relation to their own. At the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils listen

attentively, but some pupils are more reluctant to offer suggestions or answer questions unless specifically targeted by the teacher. Progress is sound. Good speaking and listening skills, for example, were observed during a religious education lesson. During this lesson pupils worked collaboratively in 'brainstorming' a list of items to put in their nature reserve and they listened to each other well in the plenary session. However, pupils were struggling to offer ideas during a whole class story-making session in spite of the teacher's good questioning techniques and encouraging, supportive manner.

89. Standards in reading are sound in both key stages and the satisfactory levels of the previous inspection have been maintained. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils read with enjoyment and above average pupils read with interest and correct use of intonation, tackling words such as 'polaroid' and 'familiar'. Most readers self-correct text at their own level if the narrative does not make sense and blend sounds at the beginning of words to help them to pronounce them. Some pupils at all ability levels state preferences for particularly stories, such as fairy tales or books about animals, and all are beginning to understand the difference between fiction and non fiction. Generally, good use is made of the home-school link book for reading. Many of these books contain well-focused comments by teachers and parents. Progress is sound. Teachers pay good attention to the development of phonic skills in the literacy hour and pupils make sound progress with this although some pupils are not yet transferring this knowledge to their individual reading. Good teaching in a Year 1 lesson, concentrated on the sound formed by blending the letters 'o' and 'a' resulting in pupils increased the understanding of phonics in the middle of words. A good feature during the literacy hour is the guided reading session. Teachers use effective strategies to improve pupils' learning. These include key words from the text put on to individual cards and pupils are encouraged to read at their own pace to a particular point. These strategies help pupils to build up their sight vocabulary and provide opportunities to recall and explain what has happened in the story to the rest of the group.
90. Reading continues to be taught satisfactorily in Key Stage 2 with the result that, by Year 6, most pupils read fluently and confidently. Pupils recount in detail the story they are currently reading and name favourite authors. Many of them like one particular author because they have encountered her at school. Pupils say her stories are humorous and describe characters who are 'real'. Pupils are beginning to show understanding of significant ideas, events and characters and use inference and deduction as a result of focused teaching on authors and their styles. Pupils in Year 6 identified the difference in styles of the authors Jacqueline Wilson and Gillian Cross as a result of good questioning by teachers. In one session to review learning at the end of a lesson, pupils of all abilities consolidated their learning by recounting that the previous day's author had used italics, bold and the first person, as part of her informal style. They concluded that the current author's formal style, was defined by connectives and other grammatical conventions such as commas, in the complex sentences she used.
91. Progress is satisfactory. All pupils read a range of books accurately at their own level and show understanding of the main points of the story they are reading. Some pupils find the analysis of adverts challenging in one lesson seen, but make a reasonable attempt at identifying the important characteristics, such as punchy slogans and attractive layout. The previous inspection indicated that research skills at Key Stage 2 were not well developed. The school has understandably prioritised the use of information technology to develop research skills. This limits the role of the library and prevents the good development of these skills, although higher attaining and pupils of average ability understand and use the Dewey system of book classification and can find information using the contents and index pages.
92. In writing, pupils are attaining satisfactorily at both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils use capital letters and full stops and higher attaining pupils are beginning to use speech

marks. Pupils write for varied purposes and in different forms, including character descriptions, stories and poems.

93. Progress at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and pupils write stories which have some sentences demarcated with capital letters and full stops. Word processing skills are well used to help pupils with their writing tasks. For example, interesting lists of playground equipment were tabulated/produced by Year 1 pupils. Presentation and spelling varies. Although there are structured handwriting and spelling programmes, pupils throughout the key stage do not always transfer the skills learned in handwriting and spelling lessons into their written work. Some writing is untidy, with words crossed out, and common words such as 'said' are misspelt. While the use of portable computers provides additional motivation for pupils, their use does not necessarily result in better work. For example, in one of the lessons observed, higher-attaining pupils using the computers did not produce text of a better quality than that drafted in their books by pupils of average ability. Sometimes word processing and spelling errors are not corrected before work is displayed on the classroom walls. This does not help pupils to improve their spelling.
94. The previous inspection identified that improvements needed to take place in the range of writing at Key Stage 2 and that pupils were not given enough opportunities to write independently. These issues have been acted on well. The range of writing offered is now a strength of the English curriculum. At the end of Key Stage 2, the higher attainers use punctuation correctly, including commas, apostrophes and inverted commas. Simple and complex sentences are organised into paragraphs. All ability groups write a wide range of work, including poems about their millennium dome visit, writing on hobbies and evaluations on cereal boxes made in design technology. A formal style of writing is used to explain the dangers of smoking and extended writing based on the book 'The Silver Sword' is neatly presented in pen, although common errors such as 'there' instead of 'their' go uncorrected.
95. Overall, progress is good for all pupils throughout Key Stage 2, including those pupils who are part of the nationally funded additional literacy support programme, because of the stimulating, focused teaching. All pupils write recipes, adverts, newspaper reports and character sketches. In one exercise on the use of similes, the Iron Man was described as having 'hands like knitting needles' and an amusing poem about 'nits' by a Year 5 pupil was published in a local newspaper. Extended writing sessions are used well. In Year 5, pupils use the portable computers effectively to write a story in the style of James Berry. They give interesting titles for their stories such as 'The Haunted House' and 'The Other World' and adopt the short sentence style of the author. Most pupils use punctuation consistently. Pupils make good progress in handwriting because of the systematic teaching. Styles become fluent by the end of the key stage. There is inconsistent use of pen, with some work produced in pencil but most pupils write in a clear legible style with letters correctly formed. In the two lessons seen in both key stages progress was unsatisfactory. Pupils did not complete the tasks set because the work was not matched appropriately to prior learning.
96. Pupils have positive attitudes to work. They sustain interest throughout the lessons and listen attentively. Pupils work together in paired activities and respond well to the imaginative and interesting activities planned by teachers. Occasionally, pupils in both key stages are off task and noisy and do not complete their work because it is too difficult for them or is not sufficiently motivating.
97. Teaching is good or better in over 66 per cent of lessons. Teachers make good use of the guidelines from the nationally recommended Literacy Strategy and plan together carefully and imaginatively. This provides high quality learning opportunities for pupils and aids good progress. Teachers make good use of teaching resources such as the overhead projector, tape recorder and stimulating texts. They have high expectations of their pupils, both in academic and personal development. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, as seen at the beginning of Key Stage 2, planning does not take account of the different ability levels of pupils. Throughout the school there are

some good examples of helpful marking which enable pupils to identify areas for improvement. Teachers and support staff work well together so that additional help is well-focused in lessons. The overall good quality of teaching enhances pupils' capacity to learn. The school plans the Literacy Strategy very effectively. Literacy skills are taught within other subjects. This is a strength of the school. Pupils' reading and writing skills are used particularly well in religious education, history and geography and personal, social and health education. Words permeate the ethos of every classroom. There is a wealth of high quality display, throughout the school, which contributes effectively to all aspects of literacy.

98. The English curriculum is good and the subject is well co-ordinated. There are good procedures for formal assessment of what pupils know, understand and can do. The school has undertaken target setting and tracks pupils throughout their time at school to maintain progress and improve individual and group performance. Resources to support teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Some in the classrooms are good, in particular the books bought for the Literacy Strategy and for individual reading. However, the hall-based library area has a low focus within the school. Some of the books are out of date and of poor quality in comparison with books in classrooms. The library has an insufficient amount of books for the number of pupils in the school. Information technology is a good resource, especially the portable computers. These are generally effectively used to enhance the English curriculum. Detailed development and action plans inform the well thought out scheme of work and the medium and short term planning. Issues identified such as introducing the additional literacy strategy and integrating information technology into literacy planning are being implemented well.

MATHEMATICS

99. Results of the 1999 tests at the age of eleven show that the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above was close to the national average. However, the percentage of pupils achieving level 5 was above the national average. When compared with results of all schools nationally, attainment overall was above the national average, but when compared with similar schools, it was well above average.
100. The 1999 test results for pupils aged seven show that the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 or above was well below the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving level 3 was also well below the national average. When compared with results of all schools nationally, attainment overall was well below average, and it was also well below average when compared with similar schools.
101. Test results indicate that attainment at Key Stage 2 has been rising at a good rate since 1996, with a particularly sharp rise from 1998 to 1999. At Key Stage 1, there has been no significant change in attainment since 1996, and it has remained well below average since 1997.
102. Inspection evidence indicates that Year 6 are on course to achieve standards which are above national averages by the end of Key Stage 2. However, Year 2 pupils' attainment will be in line with nationally expected levels by the end of Key Stage 1. This is good improvement in attainment since the last inspection. The reasons for this include the successful implementation of National Numeracy Strategy, the improvement in the quality of teaching, the setting of pupils in attainment groups where appropriate, and teaching pupils within mixed-age classes in single-age groups.
103. In Year 6, pupils' numeracy skills together with mental calculation and rapid recall are developing well as a result of consistently good teaching. Most pupils know their multiplication tables well which they use confidently in solving problems. Pupils' computational skills are good. Most pupils have a good understanding of place value, which they use successfully to multiply, divide,

add, and subtract numbers. They add and subtract numbers with three or four digits, and those involving decimals. Many pupils can multiply three- or four-digit numbers by those with two digits. They understand the effect of multiplying or dividing a number by 10 or 100. For example, they know that, when a number is multiplied by 10 or 100, the digits move one or two places to the left. Pupils can generally carry out long division to divide numbers with three digits by those with one digit. Most pupils understand the proportion of a whole, using fractions and decimals to describe them. Pupils can collect data and organise it in a frequency table. They construct and interpret line graphs. Pupils' knowledge of shape, space and measures is developing well. For example, they know how to calculate the perimeter of regular and irregular shapes, and the area of squares and rectangles. They know that the sum of angles of a triangle is 180 degrees. Pupils are provided with regular opportunities for using and applying their mathematical skills, although the school recognises that this area needs to be developed further.

104. In Year 2, pupils' numeracy skills are satisfactory overall. Most pupils can recognise, read, write and count numbers up to 100 and beyond, and they can count on and back starting from different numbers. Pupils show a growing understanding of place value, and can order numbers to 100. Their understanding of addition and subtraction is developing satisfactorily. The higher attainers can add a two-digit number with another two-digit number. They understand that multiplication is repeated addition. Most pupils know the names of most two-dimensional shapes, and can describe their properties, including numbers of sides, faces and corners. However, they are less aware of the names and properties of three-dimensional shapes. Pupils are gaining good understanding of symmetry, with most of them being able to identify lines of symmetry in a range of shapes. They can gather information and communicate their findings in block graphs. Pupils are beginning to make appropriate use of mathematical language when discussing their work.
105. Progress is good in both key stages as a result of consistently good or better teaching. This good teaching also ensures that those pupils with special educational needs also make good progress. This is an improvement on the last inspection when pupils generally made sound progress in Key Stage 1, and they made mainly sound and sometimes good progress in Key Stage 2. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop and consolidate their number skills by regular practice. The daily mental arithmetic sessions aid their thinking and recall of number facts well. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their problem solving skills and for helping them to explain how they solve problems. In both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
106. In Key Stage 1, pupils make a steady start in numeracy in the reception, with most of them being able to count numbers to 10, and order them correctly. They use their fingers accurately to represent these numbers. In Year 1, pupils extend their numeracy skills, including mental calculation strategies. Most pupils can count up to 20, and many to 100 and beyond. Pupils are able to double numbers, and most of them are able to solve simple problems involving money. Pupils know the names of common two-dimensional shapes and can recognise them. By the end of Key Stage 1, progress is good, with pupils having a good understanding of number, and shape and space. The higher attainers are able to explain confidently the way in which they solve problems.
107. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to consolidate and extend their understanding of number, handling data, and measures, shape and space. For example, most pupils in Year 3 can quickly double numbers up to 50 and many of them up to 100. They add two 2-digit numbers using doubling as strategy for addition. In Year 4, pupils use standard units of measurement in a range of contexts. They learn to identify number sequences, and begin to construct formulae in words to show relationships in those sequences. In Year 5, pupils find proportions of numbers such as 100 or 1,000 in fractions and percentages. They apply previously learned facts to new situations; for example, they develop the 12 times table from the 10 and 2 times tables. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils use all aspects of mathematics confidently

108. Teachers plan satisfactorily for the development of mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum. For example, in history, pupils make use of dates, illustrating passage of time on a timeline. In geography, they use their knowledge of co-ordinates to find places on a map. In information technology, pupils construct and interpret pie charts.
109. Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject. They listen attentively and are able to sustain tasks for long periods of time. They are very well behaved, persevere with their tasks, and work sensibly as a whole class, in pairs and individually. Pupils are courteous, and have good relationships with each other and adults.
110. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good, with a significant proportion of very good lessons. This is a better picture than was the case in the previous inspection. Teaching has improved because with the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy: lessons are well structured and pupils are informed at the beginning of lessons about the mathematical skills and knowledge they are to learn. In two classes in Key Stage 2, the 'setting' of pupils into attainment groups ensures that teachers effectively match tasks to pupils' prior stage of learning. Similarly in Key Stage 1, pupils in Years 1 and 2 mixed-age classes benefit from being taught in single-age groups. Across the school, teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject, they are able to engage pupils in learning, their explanations and instructions are always clear and they make good use of questions to check pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts and to move them on. These factors impact positively on pupils' involvement and motivation in learning, and increasing their eagerness to try new techniques. Where teaching is very good, which was observed in both key stages, teachers are able to challenge and inspire pupils. Their expectations are particularly high, the pace of work is maintained at a high level throughout the lessons and particular attention is paid to the teaching of mathematical vocabulary. Examples of these features in teaching were observed in two lessons in Year 2 about symmetry and properties of two-dimensional shapes, and in a Year 5 lesson in which pupils applied previously learned facts related to timestables to new situations. There were no significant weaknesses in teaching.
111. The school follows the nationally recommended 'Framework for Teaching Mathematics' to meet the needs of its pupils. It provides good guidance to teachers in carrying out planning on a long, medium and short-term basis, and provides a clear structure for developing pupils' skills continuously and in a step-by-step way. Assessment is good. In lessons teachers make good use of questions to assess pupils' understanding and knowledge, and build on their previous knowledge. Pupils' work is generally marked regularly, but there are inconsistencies in its quality. The range and quality of resources are adequate across both key stages, and they are well used. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 used different, commercially produced schemes of work, which did not promote continuity in learning. This is no longer the case, with this issue having been successfully addressed. The co-ordinator provides good leadership in the development of the subject. He has effectively monitored the teaching of the subject, and given feedback to teachers. He has also analysed results of the national statutory tests for Years 2 and 6, and optional tests for Year 3, 4 and 5 to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Mathematics has a high profile, with pupils' work well displayed across the school.

SCIENCE

112. At key stage 1 standards of attainment in science are in line with national averages, at the end of Key Stage 2 they are above average.

113. Results of the 1999 national tests indicate that standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 were similar to the national average for pupils reaching the expected level 4 and for pupils reaching level 5. Pupils' performance in the science tests was above average in comparison with schools in a similar context. Over the last 4 years pupils' attainment in science at the end of Key Stage 2 has fluctuated with low scores in 1998, and scores, until this year, consistently below national expectations. Results of the 1999 teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level 2 was well below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. However, the percentage of pupils attaining level 3 was broadly in line nationally but above average when compared with similar schools. Judgements are supported by analysis of pupils' work, lesson observations and discussions with teachers and pupils, all of which confirm that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have continued to rise and in the light of the most recent evidence are now above national expectations. At the end of both key stages there is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Close scrutiny by the school of the 1999 assessment tests has confirmed this for Key Stage 2.
114. Key Stage 2 pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress in all aspects of science because of the good teaching and well-planned curriculum. At the end of the key stage they are able to talk confidently about pollution, acid rain, photosynthesis and plant respiration. They have a good understanding of the need for a test to be fair when carrying out investigative work. Year 6 pupils planned, organised, tested and recorded an investigation including the setting up of a 'control sample' to find the effect of simulated acid rain conditions on the growth of cress seedlings. They were able to interpret their findings and compare them to their predicted outcomes. Pupils have a good awareness of methods for recording their work and they are able to use reference books, CD-ROMs and the Internet to find answers to questions that arise during the course of their work. Pupils in lower Key Stage 2 devised a method for testing the strength of different adhesives for joining the seams of paper to make a paper container. This lesson, whilst providing an excellent opportunity for pupils to carry out an investigation, also encouraged pupils to collaborate whilst planning, discussing and comparing their work. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards are in line with national expectations and progress is satisfactory. Year 2 pupils know the parts of a plant and are able to talk about the function of the flower and the root. They can record similarities and differences between a variety of plants by examining the flower, root, stem and leaves and they are able to record their findings on a chart and on close observational drawings made with the use of a hand lens.
115. The quality of teaching is good. In over 80 per cent of lessons it is good or better. In response to this good teaching, pupils' attitudes to science are positive and enthusiastic. They are well motivated by investigative work and are keen to ask questions, share ideas and work collaboratively. Teaching is good when lessons are arranged so that all pupils can understand the science content of what they have to do, questioning is challenging and the recording requirement is manageable and does not inhibit pupils whose literacy skills do not match their science ability. In the one unsatisfactory lesson at the beginning of Key Stage 2, unrealistic expectations were set for pupils and as a consequence some lost interest and their behaviour became difficult to manage. Teachers mark pupils work regularly, but marking is inconsistent and generally lacks a subject specific focus. In some of the work analysed, inaccuracies in spelling and in the drawing and labelling of diagrams have been marked correct. This is a weakness.

116. Inspection evidence indicates that current standards of attainment have improved since the previous inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2. Leadership in science is now very strong and the two co-ordinators share a clear vision for the management of the subject. Key stage planning for subject content is good, makes effective use of lesson time and ensures that all pupils are able to enjoy science lessons at a level appropriate to their science ability. Investigative work is well planned and works successfully for both pupils and teachers. Teachers now feel sufficiently well supported by the co-ordinators to set up investigations where the 'answer' is not known and pupils really do have to find out for themselves.
117. Assessment of the knowledge content of science is satisfactory and teachers use it to help with their planning. Assessment of pupils' investigative work is underdeveloped and does not allow teachers set clear, focused learning targets for their pupils. Some classrooms have displays and collections of clearly labelled science materials and all classrooms have sets of word-processed science-specific vocabulary to raise the profile of science and to support pupils' writing. This is a strength. Pupils record their work in large-format, well-kept books that give science status and value in addition to allowing a wide range of recording ideas and styles.
118. Science resources are adequate and effective. The range is limited, but carefully chosen, and allows full access to the requirements of the national curriculum including cross-curricular opportunities. Good links are made between science and information technology. Pupils can record their results in graphical form and they are encouraged to interrogate sets of data relating to their science activities. Support staff are effectively deployed and have a positive effect on pupils' learning. All pupils benefit from the schools' policy not to withdraw pupils with special educational needs from lessons and this enhances the quality of the contribution that science lessons make to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

ART

119. Very little teaching was observed during the inspection because of the timetabling arrangements. Judgements are supported by an analysis of this academic year's work, a scrutiny of displays around the school and discussion with the art co-ordinator. The standards reported at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained. Overall, pupils continue to attain satisfactorily and all pupils, including those with special educational needs make sound progress.
120. In the Year 1 and 2 lessons observed, pupils decorated African masks made from papier-mâché, which they had been making over a series of lessons. The pupils remembered the process well and used materials imaginatively from the good range provided. They were absorbed in the activity, concentrated hard and co-operated together in exchanging items to use. They handled tiny objects such as split peas with good control and used the glue sensibly. The teacher encouraged the pupils to evaluate their masks and they commented on the bright colours using subject-specific words such as 'design'. Support staff ably supported the learning by encouraging and supporting individual pupils. Sketchbooks are used by Year 2 upwards. These contain examples of techniques and skills practised, but very little observational drawing.
121. There are many displays to celebrate pupils' work in art. These include textile printing based on African art in Key Stage 1, in the style of Clarice Cliffe's work, Indian floor designs and a stimulating teacher-initiated display based on Rain Forests in Key Stage 2. All displays show pupils' work to be of a sound standard.

122. The subject is well led by the knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator who has been in post since the beginning of this academic year. She has not yet had time to make a significant impact on attainment, but there is the capacity to improve further. She has made a good start on improving resources and updating the scheme of work. Aspects of this are well planned. The unit on art from different cultures is a strong feature and is already beginning to impact on the curriculum. However, the curriculum at Key Stage 1, although on a rolling programme, does not yet take account of a clear skills progression within the unit, with the result that both Year 1 and 2 are doing exactly the same work. Visits out of school and visitors to the school enhance the provision as do the several imaginative initiatives that are taking place. These include the millennium plate project in conjunction with Henley Museum, the 'Tate Ten' scheme in which pupils will respond to Kandinsky's 'The Swing' in conjunction with high school students, and the application for an artist in residence to work in school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. Very few lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements are based on the analysis of pupils' work, observation of some lessons and talking to staff and pupils.
124. At Key Stage 1 pupils learn how to cut and join a range of materials to make glove puppets. They can talk about what they are doing and explain how their work will be used a part of a story-telling activity. At Key Stage 2 pupils are able to use plaster based materials as a mouldable material to cover a scrunched paper shape to make an elephant as part of a cross-curricular geography activity. They are able to explain what they are doing and they can evaluate and improve their work by using pictures from reference books on which to model their animal shape.
125. Two lessons were seen during the inspection; both were of good quality and both provided pupils with excellent opportunities to discuss and continue with their work whilst chatting quietly with their friends. Both lessons seemed to be isolated by their individual success and more attributable to the interest and enthusiasm of the teachers than to the fact that there was any cohesive plan to develop design technology.
126. Some teachers keep photographic evidence of design technology activities that pupils carry out. Information was collated in well produced books and included a range of tasks such as food tasting, the making of jewellery from recycled materials and the use of construction kits to make a children's playground. In a Year 5 class, pupils made cardboard cars from nets and then 'crash tested' them under controlled conditions.
127. Whilst some interesting and appropriate examples of design technology were seen, with good use made of cross-curricular links, overall attainment in this subject at both key stages is unsatisfactory. This is because resourcing is poor and is insufficient to enable delivery of the full breadth of the national curriculum. Teachers are managing to incorporate some aspects of the subject into their planning, but the scope and range of what they can do is very limited. The subject has the disadvantage of not having a co-ordinator, the policy needs updating and implementation of a scheme of work that looks at the identification and teaching of specific skills appropriate to each year group is needed as a matter of urgency.

GEOGRAPHY

128. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress in lessons. However, analysis of their previous work indicates that their progress in geography over time is satisfactory both key stages, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to make some observations on the human and physical features of their locality and Kambatamwa, a village in Kenya. They begin to discuss some of the similarities and differences between the two localities. They make use of appropriate geographical terms in their discussions. Pupils' map skills are satisfactory, with most of them being able to interpret simple maps.
129. In Key Stage 2, Year 4 pupils are studying human and physical features of a village in South India. Using secondary sources such as a video and books, they successfully compare its human and physical features with those of their own locality. Pupils recognise that both these places have similar and different characteristics and are able to present their findings in writing and pictures. In Year 5, pupils begin to identify and explain different points of view held by people about environmental change, in the context of the topic on environmental issues. They are able to offer suggestions for improving their own environment as they discuss the need to construct a by-pass in their town. They are able to make good use of scale in their map work. In Year 6, pupils show sound understanding of location in understanding places as they study rainforests. They are able to describe physical features of the rainforests, making appropriate use of specialist vocabulary. Pupils know about the location of the rainforests and can give reasons for their location on either side of the equator.
130. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They discuss their knowledge of geography with enthusiasm. Pupils are very well behaved and are able to sustain concentration. They have very good relationships with each other and their teachers and other adults. They are able to support each other and work independently.
131. The quality of teaching in geography is consistently good. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject, and they plan lessons well. Their instructions and explanations are very clear. They have high expectations, and they use time and resources well. They listen to pupils' responses carefully, and build on them to steer pupils' towards new learning. Teachers revise previous work at the beginning of lessons, and sometimes help pupils to formulate hypotheses, which they check out as they acquire more knowledge. For example, in a lesson in a Year 4 class, the teacher helped pupils to carry out a 'brainstorming' exercise on what they thought schools would be like in India before watching a video film. After seeing the film, pupils were guided to confirm or refute their hypotheses. Although there were no significant weaknesses in teaching, sometimes pupils are asked to carry out tasks independently, for which they have not been sufficiently prepared during the introductory part of the lesson.
132. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership in the management of geography. The curriculum is broad and balanced. The current documentation, which is in draft form, provides for continuity and progression in geographical skills, which was not the case at the time of the previous inspection. The range of resources is satisfactory, and they are very well used. Overall, the provision for geography has improved since the previous inspection.

HISTORY

133. Owing to the school's cycle for the teaching of history, it was not possible to see any teaching in history in Key Stage 1, and only two lessons could be seen in Key Stage 2. Judgements on progress across the school are based on an analysis of pupils' previous work and discussions with a sample of Year 6 pupils. These indicate that pupils' progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when pupils made satisfactory progress in both key stages. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrate an awareness of the differences between past and present in their own and other people's lives. They use terms concerned with the passing of time such as 'now' and 'then'. Pupils show factual knowledge and understanding of the aspects of the lives of people beyond living memory, such as Dr. Barnardo. They have opportunities to use 'timelines' to develop a sense of chronology. Pupils are able to present their work in writing, producing short accounts, or by labelling pictures.
134. In Year 6, pupils demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the topics they have studied in the past, for example the Tudors, the Victorians and Britain since 1930. They offer views on the effects of these changes on the lives of people, for instance as they talk about the Second World War. They use a range of relevant sources, including the local community. During the inspection week, there was a good example of the school using the local community as a resource for learning. As part of the study unit on Britain since 1930, the school invited a member of the community to talk to Year 6 pupils to share her experiences about the Second World War. This provided the pupils a good opportunity to formulate and ask historical questions, and to learn about the past. Pupils express their learning through photographs, drawings and well-structured writing. They know that history can be divided into periods of time, and can identify similarities and differences between them. They give reasons for, and the effects of, the main events studied. Their knowledge of technical terms and dates of important events in history is developing well.
135. Although only two history lessons were seen during the inspection, discussions with pupils and analysis of pupils' work indicate that teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and teachers explain new ideas clearly. This helps pupils to gain suitable understanding of the work they do. There are opportunities for pupils to study history from different points of view as was seen in a Year 5 lesson on Tudors. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning history. They respond to questions well and are able to sustain tasks.
136. The subject is led well. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the subject and has prepared good quality documentation, which although currently in draft form, supports teaching well. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and lines of progression are clear. The arrangements for assessment are satisfactory. Resources are adequate for meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum. The previous inspection indicated that the amount of time allocated to history was insufficient to teach the subject in depth. This is no longer the case, with history now being given enough time. Since the previous inspection, the provision for history has improved overall.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

137. Pupils' attainment in information technology is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and above the national average at Key Stage 2. Progress is sound at key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2 as a result of good teaching and development of individual skills. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is particularly good in the development of their literacy skills as a result of the frequent use of the portable computers. Information technology provides a significant contribution to pupils' literacy skills as well as allowing them to make contact with the high school and establish secure links before transferring into Year 7.
138. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils can use a word processor to obtain information from a CD-ROM to explore topics in science. They can use the Internet to search for information and by the end of the key stage, using facilities provided by the local high school, they are all able to use a multi-media presentation to collate and present information in a format that allows them to consider the chosen audience. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can communicate information using text, create pictures using a drawing program and they can use simple data handling procedures to obtain pictograms and graphs. Pupils in the reception class are encouraged to use information and communication technology equipment in everyday life: they can use a tape recorder well and are able to select and listen to stories whilst following pictures or text in a book.
139. Not enough teaching was observed during the inspection to allow a judgement to be made at Key Stage 1. Very few teachers were using a computer during the inspection to support pupils' learning. However, there was evidence on display, which showed that work is being done to extend pupils learning in science and English; for example, in using the computer to present results or using the portable computers to produce good quality printed text. Teachers and pupils had also downloaded information from the Internet and printed out text and pictures. The quality of teaching in a Key Stage 2 lesson that was observed was excellent. Pupils in Year 6 were taken by coach, to use computer facilities at the nearby high school. Teacher expectations were very high and the quality of the teacher's explanation and awareness of pupils' progress from previous weeks was outstanding. Pupils responded positively, with excitement and enthusiasm. Every pupil attained the desired outcome to produce for the following week's lesson a multi-media presentation, incorporating his or her autobiography, stored on disk.
140. Many pupils are able to use computers to develop understanding in other curriculum areas as a result of good planning by teachers. In one class room pupils had used e-mail to contact friends in other schools and in another class pupils were using computers to research their topic on acid rain.
141. The school has updated its resources through effective use of government initiatives and grants and with the help of the local education authority. The school is now adequately equipped to deliver all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Portable computers enable pupils to develop word-processing and keyboard skills whilst freeing up the PC's for more complex procedures. Computers are also used by both teachers and pupils to produce high quality word labels, that highlight and emphasise subject specific vocabulary.
142. Pupils enjoy using computers and they have a mature approach to their use. Teachers are committed, enthusiastic and prepared to try out new ideas. They feel well supported by the newly appointed co-ordinators who are confident, have good subject knowledge and skills and provide a very solid foundation for the development and use of information technology across the curriculum.

143. The school policy is well written and provides a very good range of activities and subject linked contexts for using information technology from the nursery through to Year 6. At all levels expectation of pupils is high and for every subject a range of specific software is identified and listed, together with ideas and possibilities for its use.
144. Pupils are also offered opportunities to work with a local professional football club, which runs a computer club with accompanying training. Response from pupils is good and the impact on their computer literacy and awareness is significant.
145. The subject co-ordinators have a long-term vision whereby they hope to raise the computer literacy of parents, encouraging them to participate in training sessions arranged by the school. For example, by allowing pupils to take the portable computers home with them and use their Internet access facility for downloading and researching information.
146. Since the previous inspection pupils' attainment in information technology, particularly at Key Stage 2 has improved. Pupils are now able to access the full range of software to enable them to meet all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils have recently designed and set up a school web page that incorporates regularly updated information and school details

MUSIC

147. Standards have risen since the previous inspection as a result of the very effective teaching of pupils in Key Stage 2 by the part-time peripatetic teacher and a well-planned curriculum. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress in lessons in Key Stage 1. All pupils in Key Stage 2 are making good progress in a wide range of music making skills.
148. There were limited opportunities to observe the teaching of music lessons during the inspection. No lessons were observed in Key Stage, 1 but analysis of teachers' planning, talking to pupils and listening to singing indicates that progress is satisfactory. In Key Stage 2 progress is however good, and pupils singing is clear and joyful. For example, pupils in a class for Year 4, sang a Spanish song from Chile with great enthusiasm and those in Year 6 sang a 'round' about a band very successfully. These older pupils can sing in two parts and the maintenance of rhythm and pitch is satisfactory. All pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 can play simple tunes on a recorder and their ability to read a graphic score is satisfactory. Many pupils in these lessons displayed a good ability to make music using a wide range of simple instruments, responding to the direction of the teacher. Further evidence indicates that they are able to compose a range of simple pieces and record these in their books or in the form of a chart.
149. There is good evidence of progress in the acquisition of skills and knowledge across the school. Teaching in the lessons seen was very good and the teacher provided an interesting variety of activities and used a wide range of resources to bring the subject to life. Effective interventions ensured that pupils understood what they should learn in the lesson. The quality of learning in both lessons seen in Key Stage 2 was very high and consequently these pupils made good progress.
150. Pupils enjoy listening to music and playing instruments. The younger pupils' display pleasure as they take part in lessons and sing in assemblies. All pupils are keen to play and sing. They think about their parts in performance and are very aware of the need to share instruments and respond to each other. Older pupils listen thoughtfully to music and find great pleasure in creating their own music.

151. The curriculum is satisfactory and a complete scheme of work provides appropriate guidance for teachers' planning. There are sufficient commercial materials to provide staff with effective support in lessons. The provision for extra-curricular activities is limited, but satisfactory overall. It includes a recorder club organised by parents, and at least one pupil has begun to learn to play the flute. Listening to, and appraising, the work of composers is an integral part of Key Stage 2 lessons but there are missed opportunities to develop these skills in school assemblies. The quality and range of curriculum resources are good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

152. Due to the school's participation in a local athletics championship there were insufficient opportunities to observe lessons within Key Stage 2 during the inspection week. Consequently no overall judgement on these pupils' achievements can be made. However, standards in gymnastics at Key Stage 1 are above what is normally expected for pupils at this age as a result of consistently good teaching and effective use of the local gymnastics centre. This is consistent with the findings of the previous inspection. All pupils achieve the standard expected nationally at the end of Year 6 in swimming.
153. Pupils in Key Stage 2, including those with special educational needs are making at least satisfactory progress in a good range of physical skills. This is because of a well-planned curriculum and wide range of sporting activities with a strong emphasis on skills development. Nearly all pupils in Year 6 will achieve the expected competencies in swimming by the end of the key stage as a result of effective use of the local pool, and good teaching input from teachers and instructors alike. For instance, in the one lesson observed for a lower ability group, the pupils worked hard to develop their basic water skills. They clearly made progress in being able to swim a few strokes unaided within the lesson, as a result of good teaching. At Key Stage 1, pupils respond quickly to their teacher's instructions and show confidence and enthusiasm for physical activity. Standards of dress are good and pupils take a pride in their work. Pupils in year 2 display good levels of agility when travelling and creating a gymnastic sequence. Their ability to maintain a controlled balance is good. Higher attaining pupils in this year group are able to demonstrate their skills effectively to the rest of the class and consolidating their learning further. Their ability to appraise the work of others is more limited as they are given insufficient opportunity to do so.
154. The overall quality of teaching is good, with some examples of very good teaching. For instance, in a gymnastics lesson for a class of Year 2 pupils, the very good teaching of gymnastic skills provided good opportunities for pupils to develop their ability to travel and create a balance with control. In turn, these skills were further extended through their application in a sequence of gymnastic movements. Planning for lessons is very detailed and clearly linked to the schemes of work. Teachers dress very appropriately for physical education. They provide very good opportunities for warming up and cooling down at the end of lessons and as a result, pupils are developing a positive attitude to physical activity. All teachers demonstrate exercises effectively to the pupils during these warm-up sessions and consequently pupils are able to improve their own skills. Teachers are aware of pupils' abilities and monitor their progress accordingly. They effectively use classroom assistants to observe pupils in lessons in order that a record of pupil progress can be maintained. Teachers have established a very good rapport with pupils and as a result, they manage pupils well, maintaining good levels of discipline and control. Good use is made of pupils to demonstrate skills learned and to assess progress, but opportunities for the pupils to appraise the work of others is underdeveloped and consequently pupils are not fully involved in assessing their own learning.

155. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator, who has clearly had an impact on maintaining and further raising standards within the school. The quality and range of resources are satisfactory but very good use is made of local facilities to support the teaching programme. There is good provision for competitive sport and the school provides a wide range of extra curricular activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

156. Standards are in line with the local expectations at both key stages and pupils' learning fully meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
157. At the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils are familiar with several stories from the Bible and can retell them in their own words, such as the birth of Jesus and the miracle of feeding the five thousand. This was satisfactorily demonstrated in the analysis of pupils' work and in a lesson for Year 6 pupils. In this particular lesson, pupils clearly demonstrated an understanding of the meaning of symbolism with reference to the ceremony of baptism. Their ability to reflect on the meanings of the stories told and record their thoughts through writing is good. This is because planning for the teaching of religious education is regular and linked to the scheme of work. Discussion with pupils and analysis of their work demonstrates that their knowledge of Christian places of worship is satisfactory. This is because the school makes regular visits to the local church as part of its teaching programme. Many pupils are also developing their knowledge of the nominated faiths identified within the strands of the locally agreed syllabus such as Judaism and Islam. They are developing a sound knowledge of the characteristics of these faiths and display a good level of enquiry for a greater understanding of the faiths of others. The effective teaching of a personal, social and health education programme is clearly supporting the teaching of religious education at this key stage.
158. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, are satisfactorily developing their understanding of religious issues and the nominated faiths, through listening to stories and taking part in class discussions. Teachers make good use of these occasions to provide opportunities for reflection and discussion on a range of moral and spiritual issues. This was clearly demonstrated in a lesson for a class of Year 1 and 2 pupils. Here the teacher effectively developed the pupils' ability to discuss the issues related to designing a nature reserve. Regular teaching, combined with opportunities for pupils to record and reflect on the stories told, is developing the pupils' understanding that all people are of value and that there are a number of faiths other than Christianity.
159. Attitudes to learning are very good at both key stages and pupils listen with great interest to teachers. They make sensitive comments about the stories and issues discussed. Most pupils complete their written work with care and thoughtfulness.
160. The quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages and there is a consistent approach to planning, content and the frequency of lessons within year groups and across the school. This is resulting in satisfactory progress across both key stages and appropriate standards of attainment and achievement at eleven. Where teaching is best, aims and objectives are clear and teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. All teachers provide a good atmosphere for learning in which all pupils are able to make a positive contribution to the class discussions. Teachers in both key stages provide good opportunities for extended writing and, as a result, skills in literacy are being effectively reinforced.

161. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The newly appointed co-ordinator is currently reviewing the scheme of work and there is sufficient guidance to support teachers' planning and to provide a clear identification of knowledge and concepts to be covered across the school. This clear structure allows for the progressive development of knowledge and understanding and appropriate coverage of all the nominated faiths. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment are unsatisfactory. They are currently based on teachers' individual observations and there are no whole school systems for measuring pupil progress against the levels of attainment described within the locally agreed syllabus.
162. Management of the subject is good. The subject leader has a clear plan for improvement and her co-ordinator file provides a good record of some management activity. The monitoring of standards and the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. The quality and range of curriculum resources is satisfactory overall but there is a need for training and support of staff to raise subject expertise.
163. Resources are used appropriately to provide interesting and informative displays around the school. There are, however, insufficient children's Bibles and artefacts to support the teaching programme. Some use is made of visitors from other faiths to enhance the curriculum and there have been some visits to other places of worship, such as the local synagogue. Links with the local Muslim community are underdeveloped.