

INSPECTION REPORT

**FLASH LEY COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Stafford

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124205

Headteacher: Mr D I Lewis

Reporting inspector: Mr Peter Mathias
21945

Dates of inspection: 31 January – 4 February 2000

Inspection number: 189489

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hawksmoor Road
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Helen Varey
Date of previous inspection:	September 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Peter Mathias	Registered inspector	Science Music	What should the school do to improve further? The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching Leadership & management
Alison Birch	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Shirley Duggins	Team inspector	Under-fives Art Special educational needs & language unit Design and technology	
Clive Whittington	Team inspector	English	Curriculum and assessment How well does the school care for its pupils?
Anne Newman	Team inspector	Information and communications technology Geography History	
Ian Hancock	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Mathematics Physical education Religious education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This school is a bigger than average primary school for boys and girls aged from three to 11 years old. It has 338 pupils on roll, which includes 44 children who attend the nursery on a part-time basis.

Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is well below that typically found nationally. Within the school there are 62 pupils who are considered to have some degree of special educational needs, of which 25 are between Stages 3 and 5 of the code of conduct for pupils with special educational needs. Most of those between Levels 3 and 5 of the Code of Practice have moderate learning difficulties. These figures are higher than those in most schools. In addition the school has a speech and language unit for up to ten Key Stage 1 pupils who are considered to have specific speech and language disorders. Their education is funded separately from the rest of the school. Many, but not all, pupils come from homes with some degree of social and economic disadvantage. Almost 26 per cent of pupils are considered eligible for free school meals. This is above the national average. A very small number of pupils come from non-European backgrounds and two have English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Flash Ley is a school which has improved significantly since the last inspection. Currently it is well placed to improve further.

In the most recent national assessments standards are rising sharply at the end of Key Stage 1 in English, in reading and writing, and in mathematics. In science, at the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above average and have remained above the national picture over the last four years. In mathematics it is close to the average for similar schools. In science, results are well above average for these schools.

The quality of teaching is good at both key stages and very good for children under five. Across the school very nearly all teaching is satisfactory or better. In only a very small number of lessons it is unsatisfactory. The leadership and management of the school have some significant strengths; for example, in the way the quality of teaching has been improved and in the way the school now has a strong sense of direction. Staff morale is high and there are good working relationships between staff. The headteacher sets a good example in this. The roles of the deputy headteacher and subject managers are not fully developed and gaps in the curriculum in religious education and music are not addressed. Taking all factors into consideration the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching for children under five is very good. In the rest of the school teaching is good.
- Standards in literacy and numeracy are rising across the school.
- Standards in science are above average at the end of Key Stage 2 and have remained high over the past four years.
- Pupils who attend the unit for speech and language make very good progress and provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Generally pupils attain well and have positive attitudes to each other and their teachers.
- Teachers manage their pupils well and relationships between teachers and their pupils are good.
- There is a very positive attitude amongst staff and a strong commitment to raise

standards further.

What could be improved

- Not enough time is set aside for the teaching of religious education and music, and these subjects are not taught consistently across the school.
- Standards in religious education, music and information and communication technology are low. However, they are currently rising in information and communication technology as a result of an exciting new initiative.
- Arrangements to foster an understanding of spirituality and an awareness of the richness of cultures with a non-European origin are unsatisfactory.
- The governing body is not fully effective in fulfilling its responsibilities. It is not sufficiently involved in drawing up priorities and judging the success of the school.
- The roles of the deputy headteacher and subject managers are underdeveloped. They do not have sufficient opportunities to work alongside colleagues and address any weaknesses in the curriculum.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent and is sometimes overly abrupt and unhelpful.
- There are not enough planned opportunities in mathematics for pupils to investigate and apply their learning.
- Procedures for monitoring good attendance are slow to be put into effect.
- Teachers do not record pupils' personal development consistently.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When it was inspected in September 1996, Flash Ley was found to be a school which provided an environment in which pupils felt secure. The quality of education provided by the school required substantial improvement, and standards achieved by pupils, the school's climate for learning, and the management and efficiency of the school required some improvement.

The key issues for action were about improving the quality of teaching, the provision for children under five, leadership and management and curriculum planning.

Since then there have been substantial improvements and most, but not all, key issues for action have been addressed successfully. The results achieved by pupils in national tests at the age of seven have improved significantly faster than the national trend. Results in science for 11-year-olds have remained high and have improved in line with the national picture.

The quality of teaching overall and particularly for children under five and in Key Stage 1 has improved significantly and is now a strength of the school. A significant turnover in staff has occurred in these areas of the school. The increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills has begun to raise standards in these areas and there are now good opportunities for pupils to apply those skills in other subjects. Lessons now have clear objectives. Work is generally well matched to the needs of individual pupils and is carefully planned. The teaching of children under five is very well related to the areas of learning considered desirable for children of this age.

The headteacher has established thorough procedures to evaluate regularly the success of teaching and learning. This initiative has been successful in raising the overall quality of teaching. The school development plan is now a useful working document. Money identified for all pupils with special educational needs is used appropriately. However, while the governing body is now involved much more in the life of the school, there is still some way to go in developing its role as a 'critical friend' of the school and in its becoming involved in deciding priorities for the future. The role of the deputy headteacher has been

increased so that there is now in place a procedure for the deputy headteacher to look at teachers' plans. However, there are insufficient opportunities for the deputy headteacher and subject managers to see how these plans are put into effect.

Generally the curriculum is well planned, and school policies and schemes of work are detailed. There are some very good arrangements to assess pupils' progress and use that information to help them in their future learning; for example, in science. However, the school does not follow the locally agreed syllabus in religious education consistently, and arrangements for the teaching of music are haphazard. Notwithstanding these shortcomings, the school is well placed to improve further.

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	D	A	E	E
Mathematics	C	B	D	C
Science	B	B	B	A
All subjects	C	A	D	C

Key

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

This table shows that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have varied over the last three years with the exception of science. In the most recent tests standards in English were well below the national average. In the tests taken the year before (1998) they were well above. In mathematics, standards in the most recent tests (1999) are below the national average. In the 1998 tests standards were above the national average. These changes are related to the above average number of pupils in Year 6 in 1999 whom the school considered to have some degree of special educational needs. Their achievements were in line with their abilities in English and mathematics. In science they were higher and were above average.

At the end of Key Stage 2 when compared with similar schools, results overall were well below average in English. They were average in mathematics. In science they were well above those in similar schools. When taken in total the results were average for similar schools.

Results over the last four years indicate that, although standards in English have fluctuated, the trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for all core subjects is broadly in line with the national trend. Comparison of the figures above with the attainment of pupils when they enter the nursery shows significant improvement.

The school has set realistic targets for improvement based upon an analysis of records and is on the way to reaching them.

Currently standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. In religious education, information and communication

technology and music, standards are below those expected nationally. In information and communication technology standards are rising fast.

In art, standards are at expected levels and above those levels in design and technology, geography, history and physical education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good – pupils are very enthusiastic and like coming to school. Most take part in a good range of extra activities, generally of a sporting nature. Relationships between adults and pupils are positive.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good – pupils show respect for each other and their teachers and for other members of staff both in classes and at breaktimes.
Personal development and relationships	Good overall – there is a strong atmosphere of care and concern where individuals are valued. Provision for pupils' spiritual development and for an understanding of non-western cultures is underdeveloped.
Attendance	Below the national average. However, the attendance procedures are satisfactory and carried out consistently by all teachers.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall (82)	Very good	Good	Good

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

Teaching in English and mathematics is good. In very nearly all lessons teaching is at least satisfactory; in seven out of ten lessons it is good or very good. In only a very small number of lessons is teaching unsatisfactory.

Particular strengths of the teaching observed were careful planning so that the lessons moved forward smoothly and pupils built successfully on what they knew and could do, good subject knowledge, an appropriately high level of challenge, positive encouragement, praise and a sense of enjoyment in learning which was passed on to pupils well.

Areas of improvement are maintaining the good pace of learning for the whole of the lesson, having higher expectations of pupils and making those expectations plain, challenging the higher attainers more, gaps in teachers' knowledge and marking which is sometimes unhelpful and abrupt.

Pupils with special educational needs both in classes and within the language unit are taught well. The quality of teaching in the nursery is very good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Provision for under-fives and in Key Stage 1 is good. However the quality and range of opportunities offered to pupils in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. Religious education is not taught in line with the locally agreed syllabus. Music is not taught consistently across the school. There is a wide range of sporting and other activities offered particularly in Key Stage 2.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good across the school and in the speech and language unit. Pupils are very well supported in class and encouraged to mix well with each other.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall, provision for moral and social development is good, provision for spiritual and cultural is unsatisfactory. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to reflect and to be aware of non-western cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	<p>Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory. There are good arrangements to promote positive behaviour and discourage unacceptable behaviour. Arrangements for judging pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. There are some good arrangements in place to help pupils achieve better standards. Arrangements for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory.</p> <p>There are effective links with parents. Links with parents of the children in the nursery are good. The home/school reading link is beginning to gain results.</p>

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	<p>The leadership of the headteacher has some strong features. Many but not all the key issues of the last inspection have been addressed successfully. A particular success has been the improvement in the quality of teaching so that now it is good. There is a commitment to raising standards and to good relationships between teachers and pupils. The headteacher sets a strong example in this. The deputy headteacher and subject managers do not play a significantly influential role in ensuring that policies are put into practice; for example, in marking and in the teaching of religious education and music. Staffing levels are adequate and pupils, including those with some degree of special educational needs or specific learning difficulties, are well supported.</p> <p>Resources in most subjects are good. In science they are very good. In music the resources are inadequate and defective. As a result older pupils' learning is unsatisfactory because the pupils do not have enough opportunities to perform and</p>

	compose or the resources to do so. There are insufficient resources for pupils to develop an understanding of a multi-cultural nature of society and of the art, music and literature of non-western cultures.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The role of the governing body has been strengthened and the school development plan has been transformed into a useful working document, but there is still some way to go. Governors are not sufficiently informed to judge the school's success and to be involved in decision making.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has set appropriate targets for improvement and introduced strategies for tracking them. The school has improved significantly since the last inspection and is well placed to continue to improve.
The strategic use of resources	The school is now just beginning to apply the principles of best value for money. It has established good ways of judging the success of its development plan. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school. • Progress is good. • Behaviour is good. • The teaching is good. • They are confident about approaching the school. • The school expects their children to work hard and do their best. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps their children to be mature and responsible. • There is an interesting range of activities outside lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quantity of homework set. • The amount of information they receive about how their children are getting on. • Their links with the school.

The evidence of the inspection generally confirms the positive views of the school. The information provided by the school for parents is satisfactory, as are the school's links with parents. The quantity of homework set including regular provision for pupils to take home reading books, is appropriate.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Standards within the school are average and there are no significant variations in the relative performance of boys and girls in the work observed. However, in the most recent assessments of 11-year-olds, girls achieved below-average results in English, whereas the results of the boys were close to the national average. In other areas results were very similar.
2. In the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, standards in comparison with those in schools nationally were well below average in English; in mathematics they were below average and in science they were above average. When compared with the situation in schools which are considered to have pupils from similar backgrounds, performance in English was well below average. In mathematics it was broadly in line with the standards reached by schools of this sort, and in science standards were well above the average for similar schools. In the last four years the performance of 11-year-olds in English has been erratic. For example, in 1997 results were below the national average; in 1998 they were above and in 1999 below. In mathematics, results for 11-year olds were about average in 1997 and above average in 1998. They were just below average in 1999. In 1999 a higher than average number of pupils within that year group had special educational learning needs, their performance bearing this in mind was as expected by the school. In science, however, results have remained consistently above the national average from 1996 to 1999.
3. The school's results at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with the national trend. In the 1999 national assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, when compared to those in all schools nationally, standards in English were average in reading and above average in writing. In mathematics standards were average. Results in reading and writing were well above those in similar schools. In mathematics results were above the average for these schools.
4. At the end of Key Stage 1 results in the last four years show a dramatic improvement. In 1996 results in reading and mathematics were very low. They have improved consistently year on year and are now much closer to the national average. In writing, standards in 1996 were just below the national picture. Since then, standards have risen sharply and are now above the national average. Over this period there has been a considerable change in teaching staff in this key stage. At the time of the last inspection in 1996 standards of teaching in this stage were unsatisfactory and sometimes poor. Teaching in this key stage is now much more effective in raising standards of achievement and has closed the gap with schools nationally.
5. The school's recent emphasis on literacy and numeracy has helped to raise standards, particularly at the end of Key Stage 1.
6. Children enter the school in the school year in which they will be four. They begin in the nursery on a part-time basis. In general they have levels of basic skills well below those expected of children of this age. They receive a good start in the nursery and in the reception class in the areas of learning considered desirable for

children of this age. By the age of five they are ready to begin the National Curriculum.

7. Standards in English are average. Standards in speaking and listening are average at both key stages. In reading, standards are average. In writing, standards are average and standards in spelling, handwriting and grammar are good, which reflect the emphasis now given through the implementation of the national literacy initiative. In the previous inspection standards in English varied. There has been an improvement and standards are continuing to rise.
8. In speaking and listening, pupils listen attentively and make positive contributions to discussions. They are eager to express their ideas and even those with less well-developed speaking skills try hard and are confident. In reading, pupils talk confidently about what they are reading and are able to compare different stories and talk about their favourite authors. Many have well-developed reference skills and know appropriate strategies to de-code words by making the sounds of the letters. In writing pupils are developing a neat, joined style of handwriting. There are good opportunities for them to write for different purposes such as in science and history.
9. Standards in mathematics are average at the end of both key stages, which is the same as at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils can add and subtract to 20. They can count to 100 confidently. They can measure length accurately in centimetres. Most can identify properties in two and three-dimensional shapes.
10. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of shape and symmetry and can handle data appropriately, using information technology to do this. They can employ a range of methods to add and subtract, multiplying and dividing accurately. Many pupils are developing a secure understanding of fractions and decimals. They can use four-figure co-ordinates confidently. Standards in numeracy are average and the National Numeracy Strategy is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' learning. The skills of numeracy are promoted appropriately in other curriculum subjects such as science, geography and design and technology.
11. In science, standards are average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. This represents a significant improvement at the end of Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. It reflects the successful way in which the subject is now planned, resourced and taught at this key stage. Pupils in Key Stage 1 know something of how forces push and pull. They are beginning to understand the importance of making sure that a test is fair. They are beginning to learn how to classify objects by their different characteristics. Within Key Stage 2, pupils know how to establish a hypothesis before they investigate and can record their findings scientifically. They use their skills in literacy well when recording their work. They can use information they have gathered to predict likely outcomes.
12. Standards in religious education are below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus because this subject is not taught consistently across the school.
13. In Key Stage 1 pupils know some of the stories of the Old Testament and from the life of Jesus. They know about Christian festivals and are familiar with the major events of the Christmas story. They are beginning to understand some of the customs and celebrations in Judaism. In Key Stage 2, pupils learn about the symbolism associated with Christianity and know that other world religions have

different religious buildings; they know something of Islam. However, their learning is haphazard and not carefully planned to follow the locally agreed syllabus in a systematic way. This is the same overall picture as at the time of the last inspection. Standards have not risen and remain low.

14. Standards in information and communication technology are below those usually found at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. They were higher at the time of the last inspection, when they were in line with standards generally expected. However, recent initiatives have led to some exciting developments. The network computer suite which has recently been completed is having a very beneficial impact and pupils are rapidly building up their confidence and learning. Within Key Stage 1 pupils are able to use a word-processing program to write simple sentences and they have sound keyboard and mouse skills. However, they have no opportunities to control robots. Within Key Stage 2, pupils can enter text at a basic level and pupils in Year 6 are beginning to work effectively with spreadsheets. They are beginning to create files and enter information into them. They are building their competencies in searching the network for information. However, because in the past they have had only limited opportunities, the standard of their work is not as high as it might otherwise be; for example, in different ways of controlling and presenting information.
15. In art, standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. In music they are at the standard expected and usually found amongst pupils at the end of Key Stage 1. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are below expectations. This is because the subject is not planned or taught in a systematic way. In design and technology, geography and history standards are higher than those usually expected of seven and 11-year-olds. In physical education nearly all pupils either reach or exceed the expected standards in swimming by the age of 11. Standards in other aspects of physical education are high and are helped to be so by the good opportunities provided through a good range of sporting activities, clubs and carefully planned coaching sessions.
16. Since the last inspection the school has improved standards in art, design and technology, geography and history. In music, standards have declined. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards in music are now below those expected.
17. The school has set realistic targets for improvement and is making good progress towards them, particularly within Key Stage 1. Their improvement over the last four years has been a very strong feature.
18. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress across the curriculum towards the targets set for them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

19. The attitudes of the pupils are good. They really enjoy coming to school. They also enjoy lessons and show a good level of interest in the activities they are involved with, working productively in both small groups and independently. They are confident and well-motivated learners, concentrating on their tasks until they are successfully completed. They are anxious to please their teachers through demonstrating high levels of enthusiasm in accomplishing their work. Pupils also respond well to their teachers by actively listening and answering their questions readily. Examples of this are most evident in mathematics, in science, in the literacy hour in English and in information and communications technology. Pupils are used

to the routine of the school, return the registers to the school office immediately after registration, and readily prepare classrooms for lessons such as art.

20. The behaviour of the pupils is good, as is the absence of oppressive behaviour in school. There are no pupil exclusions for misbehaviour. Pupils behave very well in lessons, move in an orderly manner around school and behave well at playtimes and lunchtimes. They are polite and courteous towards each other, their teachers and other adults. They have a high respect for property, especially when working in the science laboratory, where resources are treated with care. The behaviour policy is comprehensive and places a greater emphasis on incentives for rewards than on applying sanctions. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The implementation of this system results in a feeling that the pupils have a contribution to make, as seen in mathematics, resulting in them taking a greater pride in themselves. The pupils contribute to the school rules and abide by them. A particular strength of the school is the manner in which pupils are tolerant of each other, especially of those from the speech and language unit, who confidently participate in lessons. In these lessons the pupils treat them as equals, and are tolerant and understanding. There were no incidences of oppressive behaviour observed or experienced during the inspection. Any misbehaviour is handled promptly and effectively.
21. Pupils form very good and constructive relationships with each other, their teachers and other adults. Pupils work and play very well together. Their personal development is good. Pupils reflect on and understand the importance of good behaviour, being courteous and helping those less fortunate. The older pupils take pride in helping younger pupils to read. From Year 2 upward, pupils are involved in setting their own targets to achieve in their work, and this adds to their sense of personal responsibility.
22. Attendance levels are below the national average. However, while the school's attendance procedures are satisfactory, complying with the requirements of the local education authority they are slow to be put into effect. They are carried out consistently by all teachers. Pupils who arrive late follow the sound procedures for late attendance. The education welfare officer liaises well with the school, supporting its efforts to improve pupils' attendance. The headteacher and the education welfare officer are very active in attempting to encourage all pupils to attend school. Despite this, attendance is still low.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was reported as unsatisfactory within Key Stage 1 and satisfactory within Key Stage 2. Across the school, in very nearly all lessons, teaching is at least satisfactory. In seven out of ten lessons it is good or very good. Within Key Stage 1 all lessons are at least satisfactory and two out of three are good or very good. There is nearly the same picture within Key Stage 2. This high proportion of good and very good teaching is a significant strength of the school and has a good impact on the way pupils learn and upon their positive interests and enthusiasm.
24. Changes for the better are closely linked to the appointment of a significant number of new teachers to the school and the impact of the headteacher in regularly reviewing lessons.

25. In all lessons the teaching of literacy is at least satisfactory and often good. It is well planned to meet the structure of the literacy hour, and resources are effectively used. In this teachers show a secure understanding of how to teach reading. They have made a purposeful start to the implementation of the numeracy strategy.
26. The quality of teaching for children under five is very good. The teachers have a clear understanding of how to plan appropriately for children of this age, and the areas of learning considered desirable for these children are thoroughly taught. A particular strength is the way in which these staff use the information they gather about the children's progress to plan future work.
27. Across the school, where teaching is good or very good, lessons are carefully planned so that they move forward smoothly and pupils' previous learning is carefully built upon. Also, the teacher has good subject knowledge; for example, in a science lesson designed to see whether materials are good conductors. Questions are carefully directed and their purposes clearly explained "so I can see where your blank spots are". Pupils are challenged in a friendly but effective way to think out what is likely to happen. They are cleverly reminded to be aware of safety issues when they work. Generally, in the best lessons, teachers adopt a calm, encouraging manner so that pupils are made to feel that their contributions are valued. Teachers set good examples in the way they speak to and support individual pupils. All pupils are given a clear understanding of what is expected of them and the work they have to complete to reach their objectives. There are good links with other subjects so that, for example, some work in science and art is closely linked. Support assistants are given good guidance on what part they should play. Teachers very effectively help pupils with significant learning difficulties to work confidently alongside the rest of their classmates.
28. Withdrawal sessions for pupils with special educational needs are suitably planned so that these pupils have full access to all subjects of the National Curriculum and, in Key Stage 2, to extra-curricular activities.
29. In the lessons which are satisfactory and in the very small number of lessons where teaching is unsatisfactory, while these lessons begin well with a clear sense of purpose, the pace of learning is allowed to slow and the teacher fails to give sufficient emphasis to the achievement of high standards. Tasks set for pupils are mundane and unchallenging for the most able. In some circumstances the teacher's knowledge of the subject being taught is insecure; for example, when talking about aspects of the Muslim faith in religious education.
30. All staff are aware of individual needs and are able to provide good, regular individual help. Pupils, including those with some degree of special educational needs, are invariably helped in a supportive way and encouraged personally. However, the quality of teachers' marking is variable and does not always provide sufficient guidance to pupils about what they need to do to improve. At best, the quality of teachers' marking is very good, recognising warmly what has been achieved. At worst the marking is abrupt and negative in comment.
31. Homework is set regularly in English and mathematics and in other subjects from time to time. There are sound reading links between the school and parents which extend throughout the whole school so that parents are actively involved in teaching their children to read.

32. In nearly all the lessons seen pupils are eager and anxious to learn. They follow the clues given by their teachers to think things out for themselves and try hard. Many complete the tasks set in time and look for additional work enthusiastically. They share their teachers' sense of enjoyment in the subject and sustain their concentration well over the period of the lesson. Many are well aware of what is expected of them personally because the key objectives are clearly set out by the teacher and they are regularly reminded of them; for example, by indicating that "this is what you need to do by the end of this lesson". As a result pupils learn well and often make good progress in their lessons.

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

33. The school meets nearly all statutory requirements, including those for children under the age of five, and takes account of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. Satisfactory use is made of resources within the community, and a number of different activities enrich pupils' learning. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. Some opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility, they work well together and they understand the difference between right and wrong.
34. However, the overall quality and range of opportunities offered to the pupils are unsatisfactory. In mathematics insufficient attention is given to using and applying mathematics. Religious education does not meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. There is an imbalance of curriculum time within Key Stage 2, where religious education accounts for only 2.5 per cent of possible time (compared to a recommended five per cent), while physical education has over ten per cent. The previous inspection criticised the school for its lack of curriculum balance. This is still the case. In addition, the spiritual and cultural dimension of the curriculum is undervalued, particularly in assemblies. Music is not taught consistently and regularly in all classes. For these reasons, the breadth, balance and relevance of the whole curriculum are unsatisfactory. However, there are many strengths within the curriculum, particularly in links between subjects and in the extra activities arranged. Following the previous inspection, the school was praised for the range of extra-curricular activities which enhanced the quality of education for those pupils who took part. This range has been maintained, and there are a wide variety of sporting and other activities offered. A good number of pupils and staff participate, although as the activities are directed at pupils in Key Stage 2, there are few extra-curricular opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 1. Other statutory requirements such as sex and drugs education are met.
35. Following the previous inspection there were a number of key issues associated with curriculum planning. These have been addressed, except that relating to the need to meet requirements for religious education. Planning is much improved to ensure progress as pupils move through the school. Day-to-day planning is generally good. Assessments of pupils' work are made regularly but little attention is given to them in the daily planning.
36. The planning for the teaching of literacy and numeracy is at least satisfactory and often good or very good. The planning is specific and closely related to teaching and learning objectives. Lessons are purposeful and the pupils' progress is often good.

37. Pupils have equality of access to the curriculum. Withdrawal sessions for pupils with special educational needs are suitably planned so that they have full access to all subjects of the National Curriculum and, in Key Stage 2, to extra-curricular activities.
38. The community makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. The school has forged good links with the school nurse who conducts sex education and the local police who teach drugs' awareness. The school includes other health issues, such as healthy eating and health issues in the science curriculum, and pupils know about the choices they can make about their own health. The nursery has forged good links with the local library, and regularly displays their work there. This creates pride in those parents and children who visit the library. The visits to the school by theatre companies and historical experts further enrich the pupils' educational life. All pupils have the opportunity to visit local places of interest. The community police visit the school to aid an understanding of the pupils' local community. A local priest and ministers attend school to lead assemblies and invite pupils to attend the local church.
39. There is a good relationship with the educational welfare officer. Links are very good with the local playgroups and nurseries. The secondary school is in the process of developing stronger links with the local cluster of schools. To aid the transition a number of pupils attended a literacy summer school run by the secondary school, and during the inspection the secondary school assisted by releasing a Year 9 pupil to play the piano in assemblies. There are strong links with local businesses; for example, one business which has donated funds for football kits and goal posts. A local garden centre has donated plants for the garden area. The school also raises funds to support a local hospital.
40. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. There are few opportunities for pupils to reflect on spiritual issues or to develop a sense of awe and wonder, particularly at Key Stage 2. An exception to this was where a teacher taking the assembly in Key Stage 1 used this occasion for everyone to reflect. A programme is drawn up for assemblies, but this is inconsistently applied. Pupils' spiritual development is not sufficiently planned as part of the overall curriculum. For example, there is little evidence to show how other areas of the curriculum are used to help pupils reflect upon their personal experiences, and to search for meanings and values.
41. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school teaches the principles which separate right from wrong, and pupils are aware of what is acceptable behaviour, fostering positive values such as honesty, fairness and respect for truth and justice. There are school and class rules displayed, some written by the pupils. The pupils understand these. The points reward system is used well to reinforce positive attitudes to work and behaviour.
42. Pupils' social development is good. Pupils are encouraged to relate effectively to others. During lessons, most work happily in pairs and small groups. Pupils listen well to each other, respecting and appreciating what they have to say. Many help and support each other and most appreciate the efforts of others. Pupils treat resources with care.
43. Provision for pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Although there are good links in history with local culture, little priority is given to the world beyond. Art is biased towards the white European

influence and there is little evidence of music from other cultures. A good lesson in Year 5 was seen celebrating Eid, children in the reception class celebrated the Chinese New Year and the nursery has good links with a similar class in Tanzania. These and other opportunities are insufficiently followed up throughout the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The school makes satisfactory provision for child protection and pupils' welfare. The school receives very good support from the educational welfare services. Health-and-safety policies and procedures are in place. Teachers actively ensure that pupils are aware of hazards to their own and others' safety and welfare; for example, first-aid procedures are satisfactory, with a large number of staff trained in first aid.
45. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are satisfactory but slow to be put into effect. The school does not look into unexplained absences until a week has gone by. Recording and reporting attendance is carried out consistently by all staff and complies with the school's procedures. The school actively seeks to improve attendance through stressing its importance in agreements between home and school, in newsletters and in awards for good attendance. The pupils eagerly await these awards.
46. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour which is much more consistently applied than at the time of the last inspection. Sanctions are used sparingly. A greater emphasis is placed on rewarding good behaviour. Parents state that the school provides a pleasant atmosphere for their children and they are right in this. Pupils help draw up school and class rules. There are no indications of oppressive behaviour. There are, however, appropriate procedures to deal with any such incidents should they arise.
47. There are detailed procedures for judging levels of basic skills when children enter the nursery. The results of national tests are analysed carefully to see where there are weaknesses in teaching and learning, and regular testing is carried out, particularly in Key Stage 2. The results of an English test is used to band pupils from Year 4 for all subjects except mathematics, where a mathematics test is used to identify suitable sets. Generally day-to-day assessment is carried out which is well used to plan appropriate work for each group of pupils.
48. The quality of marking is inconsistent. While most teachers mark neatly and give helpful and supportive comments, this is not always the case, and large, untidy red lines devalue some pupils' work. The awarding of complicated grades, such as 'B++', makes the process unwelcoming.
49. The recent introduction of reading records is having a positive impact on the standards of reading throughout the school. Regular assessment of pupils with special educational needs is used effectively to plan the next step in their learning. Individual education plans for these pupils set realistic targets within a programme of work that reflects the needs of the individual. Specific achievements and problems are regularly identified at the end of lessons. Overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school.
50. The use of assessment to guide curricular planning is generally satisfactory. A key issue following the previous inspection was to review curriculum-planning procedures by including assessments in the planning. This has been addressed

successfully in some subjects – but not all; for example, in mathematics teachers do not have a collection of pupils' work to indicate the standards pupils should achieve.

51. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. Guidelines for retaining evidence of academic achievement is a useful document, although it concentrates rather more on the acquisition, than the application, of skills. Targets for some individual pupils are set in Year 2 and for all those in Year 6. Pupils are actively involved in these and parents are kept informed of progress. Teachers refer to these targets regularly and they have a positive impact on learning because the pupils know what they need to do to improve their work.
52. There are sound procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Pupils in the nursery and reception classes are effectively assessed in the areas of learning considered desirable for children under five. Parents rightly consider that the teachers have a full picture of their children's strengths and weaknesses. These are discussed with parents at the parents' evenings held twice a year. Older pupils evaluate their own achievements in the annual reports to their parents. The school monitors the academic achievements of different groups of pupils and consciously plans to meet all their needs. However, although the staff and governors strive hard to develop the pupils' self-esteem and confidence, there are no records of pupils' personal development and achievements.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. The parents' views of the school are positive. Parents are pleased with the school. They think that there is a pleasant and effective atmosphere at school. Parents feel that their children settle in well and are happy to go to school. They consider that the values taught at school are good, and that their children are encouraged to behave properly; for example, one parent interviewed considers that her child has excelled in this school environment.
54. However, a minority of parents felt that they were not well enough informed about their children's future work. In Key Stage 2 this is the case. However, the nursery clearly notifies parents regularly about the work and visits to be carried out over the following half term. This procedure is beginning to filter through to the infant classes.
55. The school's links with parents are satisfactory. Parental support in helping their children's progress and learning is very good. Parents are welcomed into school to help. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in discussions of their children's progress and where necessary in yearly reviews.
56. Parents' responsibilities are well emphasised. This results in sound parental involvement in the work of the school. There are particularly good links with parents in the nursery, where they are actively involved when their children first arrive. They are informed of their children's progress and are encouraged to visit the nursery. There have also been successful computer-training sessions to help parents become more confident in working with their children. There have been informative meetings for parents, explaining the literacy and numeracy strategy.
57. The information provided by the school for parents is satisfactory. Parents are informed regularly through school newsletters, letters, leaflets and notes posted on the parents' noticeboard outside the nursery. The availability of teachers and the

headteacher for discussion is good. The arrangements for parents' meetings, especially the ones that follow the annual progress report on their children, are considered effective by parents. Although the parents consider that the annual reports are good, these reports are not sufficiently related to all the subjects of the National Curriculum, so that parents can know what their children have achieved. The information provided for and the support given to parents whose children have English as an additional language are good.

58. Currently the contribution of parents to their children's learning is sound; for example, the initiatives to pursue this are just being developed, as are the opportunities for more parents to contribute to their children's learning. The home/school reading scheme has recently been successfully introduced and the parent-teacher association is very active in raising funds for school resources.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The leadership and management of the headteacher have some strong features and the quality of leadership shown by the headteacher is good. Overall the quality of leadership and management in the school has improved significantly since the last inspection, when it was judged to be unsatisfactory, with some particularly weak aspects. Since then there have been some important changes for the good. For example, at that time the senior management team did not monitor and evaluate the quality of education provided. Now there are well-established procedures for the headteacher to look regularly at the way teachers teach and pupils learn and formally to discuss with teachers their strengths and areas for improvement in their teaching. Records of these reviews are extensive and detailed. As a result, and following a changeover of some teachers, the quality of teaching is much higher than it was. It now has a clear impact on the standards being achieved in lessons. The deputy headteacher, Key Stage 1 co-ordinator and subject managers regularly review teachers' plans. However, these teachers are insufficiently involved in supporting the headteacher and working alongside staff in their classrooms. As a result issues such as the current inadequate arrangements for the teaching of religious education and music are not addressed.
60. A major weakness in the last inspection was that the management of the school lacked clarity, cohesion and direction. Since then the headteacher, staff and governors have worked hard and successfully to address most of these issues. The school development plan is now a detailed and effective tool which is used well to plan for the longer term. It has accurately focused on the needs of the school. It now has criteria to judge the success of initiatives, timescales, costings and the identification of those with specific responsibilities. Staff training needs are closely linked to it.
61. Funds and resources for special educational needs are now used effectively. Previously this was a weakness. Currently the co-ordinator for special educational needs is very conversant with the Code of Practice and relevant procedures. Documentation is well organised, up to date and easily accessible. Support staff and assistants are effectively deployed and familiar with their responsibilities. Children under five now benefit significantly from a good range of resources to support their learning within those areas of the curriculum considered desirable for children under five.
62. Currently there is a strong sense of direction and purpose which is shared amongst staff. There is a positive attitude to raising standards. As a result the school is well

placed to improve further. For example, the school has recently put in place good procedures to look carefully at how individual pupils are achieving in comparison with their previous performance and to identify those pupils who may need additional support. In science, for example, the co-ordinator has established good procedures to review how well pupils have learnt a series of lessons and has put in place good strategies to address appropriately any areas of weakness.

63. Generally the staff work together well as a team and personal relationships between staff and between staff and the governing body are positive. Pupils and adults generally treat each other with respect. The headteacher sets a strong example in this. There is a purposeful commitment to high standards and to making pupils well aware of their own responsibilities in this. However, while there is an agreed marking policy, it is not interpreted consistently by all staff. As a result some marking is helpful and supportive, giving clear indications of what has been achieved as well as what needs to be done to improve; while other marking is brief and comments are unhelpful and abrupt.
64. The governing body meets regularly and is very supportive of the school. The chair of governors visits the school regularly and there are effective arrangements for a "governor of the month" to spend some time in the school looking at the pupils at work and discussing relevant issues with subject managers. The governing body is well informed of financial issues. The finance committee of the governing body works closely and effectively with the headteacher in predicting the school's financial needs for the year ahead. Arrangements for the governing body to be involved closely in working alongside the headteacher and staff to identify and plan strategically are unsatisfactory. Governors are not included sufficiently in the initial phases of deciding the long-term needs of the school. While they are well aware of the targets the school is setting for itself, they are insufficiently involved in determining whether or not these targets are appropriate. As a result the governing body's role as a critical friend of the school is limited and governors are often over-reliant upon the advice and guidance they receive from the headteacher.
65. The headteacher has successfully encouraged the staff, including those who have only recently been appointed, to feel they have a significant contribution to make. Subject managers generally discharge effectively the roles given to them. For example, the management of the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies is good and recent plans for physical education are well assembled and give good guidance to staff. However, while many managers show initiative and work hard, they have limited opportunities to give support and advice to teachers in their lessons. In general subject managers have little responsibility for setting or managing funds set aside for their subjects. In the management of religious education and music, support for teachers is inadequate.
66. Sound arrangements for the appraisal of staff are in place. Procedures for the induction of newly qualified and newly appointed staff are appropriate, with a senior member of staff assigned to provide help and guidance.
67. The day-to-day administration of the school is good and conducted in a cheerful and friendly way which gives a clear message to those visiting or dealing with the school that it is a purposeful and outgoing place.
68. Overall there is an adequate match of teachers and support staff, some of whom carry significant responsibilities; for example, in the nursery. Their qualifications and experience are appropriate to meet the demands of the curriculum.

69. Generally resources are good. In some subjects they are very good and reflect the school's previous life as a middle school; for example, in science, and design and technology, pupils are able to take full advantage of the laboratory and workshop facilities, some of which have been recently refurbished. In music, however, the lack of good quality tuned and untuned instruments in working order restricts the curriculum, particularly in Key Stage 2. There are very few resources for pupils to appreciate the music, art and literature of non-western cultures or to understand the multi-cultural nature of society.
70. The school is only beginning to apply the principles of best value. This the school has recognised as an area for priority and has made plans for senior staff and governors to receive training to discharge this duty.
71. Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment that are well below those typically found. By the time they leave, most attain average standards by the age of 11. They make good progress. Taking this into account and notwithstanding some shortcomings in the overall quality of education provided, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

72. The headteacher, staff and governing body, with the support of the local education authority, should:
- (i) Strengthen the curriculum by:
 - a) providing a curriculum in religious education which is closely related to the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and ensure that it is taught consistently and on a regular basis across Key Stages 1 and 2 in line with national guidance; (Paragraphs 12, 34, 162)
 - b) providing all pupils with regular opportunities to be taught music for an appropriate amount of time and in line with national guidance; (Paragraphs 15, 34, 152)
 - c) reviewing the progress all pupils are making in information and communications technology. (Paragraphs 14, 144)
 - (ii) Strengthen the role of the governing body so that it is more able to work alongside the headteacher in determining the priorities for the school and in judging the progress the school is making. (Paragraph 64)
 - (iii) Plan opportunities more consistently to assess what pupils have learnt and put in place procedures in Key Stage 2 to ensure that the marking of pupils' work is supportive, giving pupils a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve. (Paragraphs 30, 48, 63)
 - (iv) Increase the roles of the deputy headteacher and subject managers so that they have a better overview of the curriculum and a better appreciation of how teachers teach and what pupils learn in lessons. (Paragraphs 59, 65)

Other issues which should be considered by the school:

- providing more opportunities for pupils to use and apply mathematics in problem-solving activities; (Paragraphs 34, 113)
- increase planned opportunities for pupils to reflect and gain a greater sense of spirituality and an understanding of other world cultures and traditions; (Paragraph 40)
- deal promptly with issues of attendance; (Paragraph 45)
- make more consistent the recording of pupils' personal development. (Paragraph 52)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	82
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	23.1	45.1	30.4	1.2		

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)	22	294
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	-	68

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs		12
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	62

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	49
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	39

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	6.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	1.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	28	25	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	24	26
	Girls	22	22	22
	Total	42	46	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79	87	91
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	23	22
	Girls	22	22	22
	Total	43	45	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81	85	83
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (84)

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	35	26	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	23	28
	Girls	11	13	17
	Total	28	36	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	46	59	74
	National	70 (65)	68 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	22	31
	Girls	17	14	17
	Total	38	36	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (62)	59 (91)	79 (91)
	National	68 (N/A)	69 (N/A)	75 (N/A)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	1
White	266
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	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)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	22.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	71.35

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22

Total number of education support staff	2.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998-1999
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	£
Total income	541,112
Total expenditure	536,925
Expenditure per pupil	1,491
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,200
Balance carried forward to next year	17,387

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	175
Number of questionnaires returned	90

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	27	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	41	1	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	41	2	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	39	11	1	9
The teaching is good.	66	31	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	46	9	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	27	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	30	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	52	37	11	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	51	37	11	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	41	1	1	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	41	1	1	6

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

73. Children enter the nursery on a part-time basis in the school year in which they will be four years of age. There are two intakes of children into reception class, one in September for children who are five in the autumn term and in January for those five in the remainder of the school year.

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

74. Attainment on entry into the nursery is well below that expected for children of this age. However, as a result of the firm foundation laid in the nursery and reception class, children make good progress and are on line to meet all areas recommended in the desirable outcomes for children's learning by the time they are five.
75. The previous inspection found that standards in the nursery were satisfactory but unsatisfactory in reception classes with few opportunities for children to develop skills acquired in the nursery. Reception classes gave insufficient prominence to speaking and listening. The quality of teaching in the nursery was satisfactory and on occasions good where as in the reception classes it was unsatisfactory as objectives were unclear and activities organised to occupy children rather than to promote learning. Resources were poor with no large items of equipment, particularly in reception classes where the environment lacked stimulation.
76. Substantial improvements have been made. Standards in the reception class have been effectively raised to bring children in line or above the attainment expected of children of five. The quality of teaching in the nursery and reception has improved. It is often very good. Good liaison between nursery staff and the reception teacher ensures skills acquired in the nursery are sufficiently nurtured and developed to promote effective learning. Planning is well structured with specific learning objectives that give clear focus for assessment. Daily assessment is used purposefully to plan suitable work and activities to take the children forward. The accommodation for these young children is sufficient and stimulating. Areas are thoughtfully set out to encourage effective interaction between adults and children through a wide range of experiences.
77. Wide ranges of suitable activities are presented in both classes with appropriate emphasis on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies for reception children. Photographs record experiences and events through the year. Work samples provide a focus on progress and the next step in learning. All staff in both classes know the children very well.

Personal and social development

78. Children respond well from their earliest time in school to an ethos that promotes good behaviour and care for each other. They settle very quickly to the rich range of activities and respond readily to adults. Most children can take turns and offer help to each other. They are beginning to initiate ideas as they play with construction sets, and use the outside play equipment imaginatively. They can solve practical problems on their own when they tackle putting on coats, doing up buttons and persevering with zips before going outside to play.

79. Children in reception answer teachers' questions clearly and show an understanding of right from wrong. They enjoy participating in practical activities and tidy away their materials efficiently as they finish.
80. The quality of teaching in this area of learning in the nursery and reception classes is very good. All staff work well together and provide very good role models for the children. They create very stimulating learning environments for the children to become excited by learning.

Language and literacy

81. Children make good progress in this area of learning in nursery and reception classes and are well on their way to begin the National Curriculum by the age of five. Many make good progress in speaking and listening. They talk with increasing confidence in a range of informal situations, using an increasing range of vocabulary. They listen attentively and contribute to discussions in an orderly way. Children handle books confidently and correctly. They know that pictures and writing convey meaning, and show an enjoyment of books. They enjoy sharing books and discussing pictures. Many older children recognise key words from the reading scheme. Nursery children use pencils with increasing confidence to make marks. Reception children copy their names with many children writing them independently.
82. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good. The teaching is clear and precise. Staff intervene carefully with perceptive questioning to make teaching points and use expressive story telling skills.

Mathematical development

83. By the age of five most children are well on their way to be ready to begin the National Curriculum. They have a sound understanding through play of full and empty. Children use the computer successfully to match and sort objects, they have a sound understanding of simple mathematical vocabulary; this is evident in activities where they position a figure in a specified position such as inside, outside, in front, behind, on, under and next to. They confidently count to ten and can add on one using numbers to six. They are developing the ability to take one away and successfully sing number rhymes to support their learning.
84. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good. Activities are nearly always practical and sustain the interest of the children well. The activities are chosen to fit in with the theme in the long-term plan, and appropriately match the children's abilities. Teachers often capitalise on opportunities that arise from children's self-chosen activities to extend their counting skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers successfully exploit opportunities in the school day to use mathematics in a meaningful way, such as counting fingers on gloves when considering clothes worn in winter.

Knowledge and understanding

85. By the age of five children are well on their way to begin the National Curriculum. They are developing a growing awareness and knowledge of the world through a very well-planned programme of topics. Children know about their immediate surroundings and develop a sense of location and direction. They learn about living things through practical experiences, such as feeding the birds on the bird table in their outdoor area. Children confidently use binoculars and quietly watch the birds from inside the classroom, getting very excited when they come. Children use the

computer with confidence. They open and close computer windows when matching objects, successfully using direction keys and space bar. When considering melting ice, children make good progress in understanding that materials can change and that by observing experiments these changes can be predicted. During a study of the Chinese New Year children show awareness that food eaten by other cultures is different. They make choices and indicate clearly what they like and dislike.

86. Teaching is very good and well planned to address all aspects of this area of learning.
87. Children are excited by the colourful and imaginative way their work is displayed for example about the planets and their links with "Tigger Tots" in Tanzania.

Physical development

88. By the age of five children's physical development is appropriate to begin the National Curriculum. Children take part in outdoor activities using large apparatus confidently in the secure outdoor area for the under-fives. They have good physical skills when peddling and manoeuvring tricycles and other large toys. They show good control and regard for safety. They can catch and kick accurately. They are beginning to use space well and show awareness of others. They are beginning to respond well to music and with appropriate movements interpret 'snowflakes'. Older children, with limited assistance, change into T-shirts and shorts for physical activities in the hall. They have good awareness of space and can hop, skip and jump responding immediately to teachers' instructions. Children move confidently with increasing body control and use their imagination when performing.
89. The quality of teaching is very good. Lessons are planned well to teach skills progressively with choice provided in activities. A positive learning environment is provided by calm, firm discipline. The school is suitably equipped with large and small apparatus of an appropriate size and type for young children but limited for climbing activities. Very good use is made of all adults in these sessions. They willingly share in activities, show a good understanding of the objectives of the lesson and ensure children participate fully. Continual suggestions effectively promote children's skills.

Creative development

90. Children's creative development is fostered well. Children use paints and clay confidently to explore and express ideas. They have good manipulative skills, making clay owls, cats and bears to illustrate a story. They paint good representations of themselves confidently using brushes and a range of colours. Older children can confidently clap to repeat rhythms of complexity. They name musical instruments such as triangle and tambourine. Children notice differences between similar instruments and differences in sound. Opportunities are used effectively to develop communication skills by describing instruments. When introduced to the guiro children say 'it talks' and one says it is like 'brushing your teeth'. Children draw good representations to support their writing work. They use simple tools confidently and with an appropriate degree of accuracy for activities across the curriculum.
91. The quality of teaching is very good. All adults support children in their learning and ensure they gain from activities through discussion as they work. The early years' staff provide a wide variety of imaginative activities to stimulate and to challenge the children. Good displays of children's work help foster positive and confident

attitudes and create a colourful environment in which all children are highly valued as individuals.

Speech and language unit

92. A speech and language unit in the school provides education for up to ten Key Stage 1 pupils. At the time of the inspection nine pupils were placed there for assessment of their needs because they have specific Statements of Special Educational Needs. All these pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need stating that they have a specific speech and language disorder. None of these pupils are disapplied from the National Curriculum. A teacher in charge, a qualified nursery nurse and a speech therapist meet their needs well. Pupils make good progress.
93. At the time of the previous inspection concern was raised in respect of the funding for the unit. Funds identified for the speech and language unit were not all used for the purpose and there was a lack of resources. This has now been rectified and money is now used effectively for resources to support the work of the unit.
94. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. There are good opportunities for these pupils to work alongside other pupils in the school such as in art, physical education and design and technology. Pupils who are returning to their original schools after their seventh birthday are well prepared for the challenge and successfully worked alongside other pupils and participated well in answering orally questions.
95. Teaching in the speech and language unit is very good. All staff have very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of the pupils in their care. Throughout the day all opportunities are effectively used to nurture, consolidate and extend pupils' skills. Staff use clear diction and appropriate expression at all times providing good role models for the pupils. Good strategies are used by the teacher to interest and motivate the pupils in their learning. Questions are well suited to the age and ability of the pupils and resources are effectively used. Staff work competently as a team in the interests of the pupils. They have clear understanding of expectations and work at an appropriate pace. The very good relationships in the classroom provide a confident and positive atmosphere. Pupils' work is assessed thoroughly, constructively and used effectively to plan the next step in learning. Pupils' individual education plans are detailed working documents and identify the good progress pupils make. Records are neatly kept and documentation is in line with the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs.
96. Pupils are tolerant and show mature understanding of the difficulties of others. They listen attentively to what others have to say and do not interrupt. They are eager to participate and apply great effort to their work. They grow in confidence and self-esteem and take pride in their endeavours.
97. As most pupils are taxied to the school on a daily basis daily contact with parents is made through the home/school book. Parents are always kept well informed at the successful parents' afternoon once a term when parents work in class with the pupils. Parent evenings are held twice a year. Parents are appropriately involved in the annual reviews of their children's future needs.

ENGLISH

98. Overall standards of attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with the national average. The 1999 test results for seven-year-olds show that attainment in reading was in line with the national average, while that for writing was

above. Trends over the past three years show a sustained rise in standards. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are in line with the national average. The national tests for 11-year-olds in 1999 show a severe drop in standards. This was, however, predicted and was largely due to a higher than average number of pupils within that year group who had special educational needs. Within both key stages there are a number of strengths which lead to an overall increase in standards of attainment.

99. The previous inspection found that although generally attainment was in line with the national average, there were variations both between year groups and between the different aspects of English. This is no longer the case, and standards are continuing to rise.
100. Standards of attainment in speaking and listening are average at the end of both key stages. Pupils listen attentively, both to their teacher and to others in the class. They ask questions and make positive contributions which show their level of understanding. Most are confident, eager to explain their ideas and even those with less well-developed speaking skills attempt to express themselves coherently. Some pupils are particularly articulate and use language well.
101. Overall standards in reading are average at the end of both key stages. There are a number of strengths within this area. The subject manager has recently introduced home-school reading records and a series of rewards and incentives which have increased pupils' enthusiasm for reading. Most of the pupils expressed their liking for books and many read at home every evening. There is a good range of reading books at Key Stage 1 and the older ones at Key Stage 2 are being gradually replaced. Pupils talked confidently about what they were reading, and books in general. Many were able to compare different stories and talk about favourite authors. The school has a very good library, which most pupils use. Those skills necessary to use a reference library, such as knowledge of the book-classification system, were less well developed. The inclusion of parents in reading is a very positive move. They are encouraged to comment and sign their child's reading records and a number work in the library, helping pupils to change their books. Many pupils have a good knowledge of phonics, as a result of well-planned and appropriately focused teaching.
102. The quality of writing is average by the time pupils are seven and 11 years old. Although spelling, handwriting and grammar work is generally good, there are limited opportunities provided for these skills to be utilised in longer accounts, stories or poems. There are some examples of extended writing, particularly in Year 2, where pupils write about a 'Magic Christmas Present'; in Year 5, where they write about their trip to Stafford Castle and in Year 6, where there is writing based on 'Treasure Island' and links with the topic on the Victorians. However, there are fewer examples of extended writing in other parts of the school.
103. Pupils with special educational needs receive generally good support and make good progress. Their tasks are sometimes specially targeted and sometimes a support helper ensures that they are able to achieve within the same work set for others. Pupils with the potential for high attainment are equally challenged.
104. A number of other subjects make a positive contribution to the development of skills in literacy. This was particularly the case with science, where pupils were reminded of their study of materials in Year 2; and in Years 5 and 6 where pupils wrote about their history topics. The use of information technology, whether for word processing or retrieving information, is underused at both key stages.

105. The standard of teaching is generally good and no lessons were less than satisfactory. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has helped teachers to focus on those specific steps of learning necessary for pupils to develop their understanding.
106. The best lessons seen were at the upper end of each key stage which have a direct influence in helping to raise standards. Learning objectives are shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson so that all know what is to be covered. They are then reinforced at the end. In many lessons the teachers' enthusiasm is infectious and there is obvious enjoyment. This happened in poetry lessons with Year 6 where the pupils enthusiastically wrote cinquains of their own. During a Year 2 lesson the pupils eagerly predicted what would happen in a class story. Many teachers set challenging tasks to which the pupils respond well. Planning is generally thorough, although planning sheets contain no identified opportunities for assessment. The quality of marking by some teachers, particularly towards the top of Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. In some cases comments are supportive and help pupils understand what they need to do to improve. However, some comments are harsh. Untidy ticks spoil neat and careful work. The grading of work is unnecessarily complicated.
107. The subject manager's positive enthusiasm has a direct influence on the rising standards. However, there is insufficient time to regularly monitor teaching in all classrooms. Targets are set for all pupils in Year 6 and those in one of the Year 2 classes. These are successful in involving the pupils in their own learning and are to be extended throughout the school. The quality of resources is good and in many lessons they are used well.

MATHEMATICS

108. In the 1999 national tests for pupils aged 11, standards were below average. During the last four years 1996 to 1999 there has been a significant improvement in test results in mathematics, except for last year when there was a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. Currently attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is average. In the 1999 national tests for seven-year-olds pupils' performance was close to the national average. Currently attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 is average. Inspection findings and test results show no significant gender differences in attainment. Since 1996 rates of improvement in pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been steep. Over the same period improvement, at the end of Key Stage 2, has been erratic. Overall it matches the national trend.
109. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils can add and subtract to 20. They competently order numbers to 100 and higher attainers recognise how many tens and units in numbers to 100. Pupils can measure length with an acceptable degree of accuracy in centimetres. Most pupils can recognise and identify the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes and can understand simple Carroll and Venn diagrams. Their response to mental calculations is improving in quality and speed as a result of mental mathematics session at the beginning of lessons.
110. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have extended their knowledge of number measurements and shape and began to develop data-handling skills. Pupils have a good understanding of shape and symmetry and explore rotational symmetry to create designs of regular shapes. Many pupils can use a range of methods to add, subtract, multiply and divide accurately and have a good understanding of the

relationships between these operations. Higher attainers have good mental arithmetic skills and can use a variety of methods to multiply one and two digit numbers and check their answers by inverse operations. They have a good understanding of fractions and decimals. Many pupils have appropriate knowledge of the terms 'mode' and 'median', when analysing graphs and tables. They use four figure co-ordinates confidently and can accurately rotate shapes using negative numbers.

111. Pupils throughout the school have positive attitudes and are keen to succeed. They listen well, are eager to answer questions and concentrate for considerable periods of time. They enjoy lessons, are keen to solve problems and complete tasks with satisfactory standards of presentation. However, standards of marking are variable and some untidy marking with inappropriate comments devalues the work of pupils. Most pupils behaviour in the classroom is good, which has a positive impact on the standards achieved. Pupils work well individually but have few opportunities for collaborate work due to the over reliance on work sheets and workbooks in many classes. Pupils have good relationships and respect for their teachers and others.
112. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection where it was unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Within Key Stage 1 pupils receive at least satisfactory and often good teaching. Within Key Stage 2 pupils receive predominantly good teaching. This ensures that all pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress in their learning in mathematics lessons.
113. Where teaching is good teachers have a sound subject knowledge and manage their pupils well. Planning has significantly improved since the last inspection. Lessons are now planned well and basic skills are well taught based on the numeracy strategy. This ensures that work is generally well matched to the needs of individual pupils and has a positive impact on their learning, which was not the case in the previous report. In the best lessons learning is very effective because pupils are well motivated and challenged by the tasks teachers prepare and the pace of lessons is brisk. Where teaching and learning is less satisfactory at both key stages expectations are too low. Time is not used effectively. The pace of lessons is too slow and there is an over dependence on using work sheets and work books. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to use and apply mathematics. Homework is regularly set for pupils in Key Stage 2 and is beginning to have a positive effect in their learning of multiplication tables. Assessment procedures have recently been introduced including target setting for pupils in Year 6. Insufficient attention is given to using and applying mathematics which restricts the learning made by pupils who have little opportunity to apply skills and knowledge to problem-solving activities.
114. The co-ordinator has given good support to staff to implement appropriate practice in the teaching of the numeracy strategy. There are some opportunity to monitor the teaching and learning of pupils in lessons and regularly sees teachers' plans. Numeracy skills are promoted appropriately in curriculum subjects such as science, geography and design and technology. However, insufficient use is made of information and communications technology to support pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

115. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are average and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. In the most recent assessments for 11 year olds standards were

above the national average and very high when compared to similar schools. Over the last four years standards in science have remained consistently above the national picture and have improved at about the same rate as other schools nationally. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are the same as at the time of the last inspection. Standards are higher at the end of Key Stage 2.

116. Within Key Stage 1 pupils know that forces such as push and pull come into effect when a wheelbarrow is moved or a light is switched on or off. They know the names of the main organs of the body and can distinguish between animate and inanimate objects. They are beginning to understand the need for fair testing and can record data they collect for example, in testing their fitness and determining which forces are in play when pushing and pulling in a variety of ways. They are beginning to learn how to classify objects scientifically by their different characteristics.
117. Within Key Stage 2 pupils know how the skeleton is made up and how the body moves. They know the functions of muscles and tendons. They can test their reaction times fairly and express their information graphically. They can conduct experiments to test the evaporation rates of different substances. They can predict why some objects float and others sink. They know how to construct a simple circuit and can observe the effects of different electrical currents in it. They can follow an agreed way of carrying out an experiment and can apply an hypothesis to their work. In this key stage particularly pupils learn well and pupils with some degree of special educational need and those with specific difficulties are well supported. All benefit from a process of regular testing to find out what they have learnt from a series of lessons. Their reports contain specific performance targets for science so that parents and children know what needs to be achieved for the performance to improve. This is closely linked to homework. Information from assessments is used well and is reflected in the good progress many pupils make.
118. The quality of teaching is good. Where teaching is very good lesson plans are well thought out so that activities planned build systematically on what pupils have just undertaken. The teacher clearly sets out the objectives of the lesson so that no one is in doubt about what they should do. The teacher repeatedly emphasises the standards expected in both the scientific and written aspects of the work set, so pupils work neatly and with a sense of pride. Resources are well prepared and readily to hand, so that pupils can take over some of the responsibilities for organising their own work. The teacher questions cleverly, challenging pupils to work out an hypothesis for themselves. Boys and girls are encouraged effectively to work together in their experiments and share the tasks equitably. The pace of learning is maintained throughout the lesson well. As a result pupils work purposefully and eagerly and complete a good amount of work in the time available. Where teaching is less secure insufficient attention is given to emphasising the importance of making a test fair and the work lacks sufficient challenge for the higher attaining pupils, who complete their work easily.
119. Pupils' learning, particularly within Key Stage 2, is considerably helped by the very good range of resources to support the teaching of all aspects of science. These are very well catalogued, stored and maintained in the science laboratory. This room is regularly used by older pupils and provides very good facilities for science.

ART

120. Standards in art are at the levels expected and generally found nationally.

121. Weaknesses highlighted in the previous report were concerned with standards being below national expectation and progress unsatisfactory. There was insufficient development of skills and techniques to draw, print, make collages and work regularly in three dimensions. These areas have been successfully addressed. No art lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 during the time of the inspection but scrutiny of their work and displays indicates that they show a developing ability to represent what they see and touch and work practically with materials and techniques. At both key stages, pupils have the opportunity to use a range of techniques and a variety of media to express their feelings and ideas through observational drawing, painting, printing, models and collage work. They successfully explore the work of other artists for example Van Gogh and Henry Moore and try to adopt his style to their work. Overall pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress.
122. Pupils have good attitudes to art and often display enthusiasm for their lessons. They are attentive and involved, working co-operatively upon a range of themes. Relationships between pupils are good. They appreciate the efforts of other pupils and make positive comments about each other's work. Behaviour is good. Pupils concentrate well and pay good attention when observing works of art, particularly work of past pupils. They persevere industriously with their projects and take care, working with a sense of pride and purpose.
123. The teaching of art is satisfactory. Where teaching is good, teachers have high expectations of the pupils. Teachers organise the lessons well teaching and demonstrating skills and techniques needed for the project. Careful planning ensures that pupils have opportunities to work in two and three dimensions. Pupils respond well to the relaxed atmosphere that is created, working well and using resources with care and respect. Good use is made of art to support other areas of the curriculum for example in history when pupils in Year 3 make Greek pots. However, insufficient use is made of information technology to support work in art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

124. Standards have improved and are now above national expectations. Year 1 pupils successfully observe and record rotation of a simple gear system in relation to their topic on moving toys. Year 2 pupils make clear designs for a purse with measurements. They successfully evaluate and modify their designs for purpose and suitability before making a paper pattern to guide cutting them out of chosen material. They are accurate when measuring and persevere to transfer their designs on to paper patterns. Pupils use confidence and accuracy. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils recognise and name different saws and know their uses. They measure pieces of wood with appropriate accuracy and are developing good saw actions to cut wood successfully. Older Key Stage 2 pupils make appropriate designs annotated with measurements for a motorised car that will travel fast and in a straight line. They list materials and tools needed. Effective evaluations and modifications are made before measuring and cutting materials. Pupils measure accurately and join pieces of wood for a chassis using triangles of card to strengthen corners.
125. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school. Throughout the school pupils enjoy this subject. Behaviour is good and pupils have good regard for safety. Expectations are high and pupils rise to the challenge and become deeply involved in the activity. They work well together, discussing their work sensibly and are sensitive in their evaluation of each other's attempts. In making things they show an increasing accuracy in measuring,

cutting and shaping with good attention to the finished product. Pupils work independently of the teacher for appropriate lengths of time, solving challenges that arise by themselves or through discussion with each other. They co-operate with each other in the making process and in the sharing of tools.

126. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are suitably planned with clear learning objectives. A strength of teaching is the identification and teaching of skills and techniques. This was evident with Year 3 pupils in the use of saws. Teachers use questions skilfully to help pupils recall previous learning and to consolidate and build on what they already know. Good use is made of links to other curricular areas for context and application of skills and knowledge, such as in mathematics and science. Pupils sometimes write realistic evaluations of their experiences in designing and making. This was evident in work from last year's Year 6 in clear evaluations when making letter racks. Difficulties were identified and explanations of how they were overcome. Pupils indicated what they would improve in future work. Insufficient use is made of information and communications technology to support this subject, for example, in graphic design.
127. The subject is effectively managed by the co-ordinator that has a clear action plan for further improvement in assessment procedures. Good use is made of the science technology room that has been specifically resourced for these subjects.

GEOGRAPHY

128. Standards in geography by the end of both key stages are higher than those usually found. In the last inspection report, attainment was judged to be in line with national expectations. The improvement in standards is directly related to the good teaching and thoughtful planning of work for pupils to undertake.
129. Assessment procedures were judged to be underdeveloped; the co-ordinator has addressed this issue and assessment tasks are now conducted at the end of each unit of work, each targeted to measure attainment in a specific geographical skill.
130. In Key Stage 1, pupils are able to gather and interpret simple survey data on routes and methods of transport to school and they can translate this into appropriate graphs. The work of average and above average attaining pupils contains accurate measurements and they develop well in interpreting ground plans of everyday surroundings. There is growing use of appropriate geographical vocabulary across the key stage.
131. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their understanding of map reading and the purpose and use of a key. They use atlases accurately to locate the major cities of the United Kingdom and they are familiar with all the symbols used to record and report weather conditions. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a secure range of map reading skills and can plot co-ordinates effectively. They employ their local knowledge well and are increasingly able to make comparisons with areas further afield, justifying their observations and views perceptively. Their work on the changing nature of settlements is reinforced by good background knowledge and cross-curricular links with history enable them to make acute observations on the physical features determining the outcome of the Battle of Hastings. Year 6 work on the tropical rain forests shows that pupils are developing good recall skills and the ability to apply their knowledge to different areas and environmental problems. Speaking and listening skills are well displayed in the extended answers which pupils give in lessons and during exploratory conversations. Opportunities for

extended writing in geography are appropriate and average and above average attaining pupils can record their findings in a variety of suitable ways.

132. Progress in geography is good. Pupils build on previously acquired skills and grow in confidence in reading maps. However, below average attaining pupils are not always provided with suitably adapted work in all classes and year groups. There are good opportunities to extend knowledge and understanding for average and above average attaining pupils at the end of the key stage. Pupils use a variety of sources to locate information, including the Internet.
133. Teaching in geography is good, overall. Thoughtful planning and good subject knowledge result in clearly identified and stated lesson objectives. Pupils are encouraged to look critically at their work and to take an increasingly investigative approach to geographical problems as they mature. Teachers are careful to share their time equally with all groups and individuals and their planning ensures that learning is consolidated in the wide ranging summaries and questioning at the end of lessons. Good relationships between teachers and pupils and positive approaches to classroom management ensure that lessons are purposeful and productive.
134. Pupils' learn well and respond positively to their teachers. They work purposefully and with interest, are keen to contribute to class and group discussions and work amicably together to produce work that is often neatly presented. Growing concentration and perseverance lead to an increasing ability to work independently in order to extend their understanding.
135. Resources in geography are adequate and of good quality and range. They are accessible to pupils and teachers. The local environment and field work trips are well used as a further resource.

HISTORY

136. Standards in history by the end of both key stages is higher than national expectations. This is higher than the time of the last inspection when they were in line with national expectations.
137. Then it was felt that there was a need for pupils to have greater understanding of how interpretations of history can differ. Now in discussions with pupils in Year 5 it is clear that these pupils have an awareness that serfs would have had a different perception of their society from lords of the manor; they understand that history is interpreted in a variety of ways from different standpoints. Assessment and recording were judged to be unsatisfactory in the last report. This has been addressed well so that assessment tasks are conducted at the end of each unit of work and the results recorded appropriately.
138. In Key Stage 1, pupils know that there is an order in which major events happened. The concept of the "past" is reinforced through work on timelines in Years 1 and 2, where pupils are encouraged to investigate the history of their immediate families and to record this by drawing up simple family trees. There is a good understanding of the concept of change taking place over time; pupils can put teddy bears in chronological order and they can accurately explain what they mean by 'oldest', 'older' and 'youngest'. Speaking skills are well developed; they can give perceptive reasons for their choice of the oldest teddy bear and they are confident in expressing their views. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to sequence

stories accurately and are beginning to recognise the validity of different points of view in a story, taking into account cause and effect as they do so. Pupils handle artefacts with care and respect and are able to record their findings appropriately.

139. In Key Stage 2 pupils build successfully on the knowledge, understanding and historical skills acquired in Key Stage 1. By the end of the key stage, some pupils have a wide-ranging knowledge of historical topics which have gripped their imagination. The school's careful planning of links between subjects promotes good research skills by individuals who use a variety of sources, including the Internet, to locate information. By Year 5, pupils are acquiring the confidence to develop their interpretative and investigative skills; for example, by studying the Bayeux Tapestry critically. Above average and average attaining pupils develop good writing skills, writing in the style appropriate to the purpose of the task. Speaking and listening skills are also well developed and pupils show a growing sense of empathy with the lives and experiences of people in the past.
140. Progress in history is good in both key stages. Pupils develop a good range of historical skills and competencies as they progress through the school. Pupils are interested and enthusiastic about their work in history. They are attentive, keen to ask and answer questions and to make sensible contributions to discussions. Pupils concentrate and persevere with tasks, especially when the content stirs their imagination. Visits to local sites and institutions of historical interest help pupils apply their experiences to their school work in a positive manner.
141. The quality of teaching in history is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and in most classes they use a variety of teaching strategies to sustain pupils' interest and concentration. Clearly stated lesson aims, brisk pace and appropriate challenge stimulate and encourage pupils to make their best effort. Marking is generally positive, though it is not uniformly informative in all classes.
142. Resources are satisfactory; pupils have access to a variety of books, artefacts and other historical source material. Wall displays are attractive and colourful, suitably linked to the history curriculum and stress the value which the school places upon pupils' work.
143. The curriculum co-ordinator has good policies and planning documents in place. However, there is little opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching in the subject or to ensure that there is consistency of approach and delivery across the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

144. Standards at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are currently below those expected nationally because until recently, pupils have had too few opportunities to develop their information and communications technology skills in every area of the curriculum. The use of computers in classrooms has not been given a sufficiently important role in lesson planning. However, in the three weeks before the inspection, the acquisition of a new networked suite has already led to some exciting developments and pupils in both key stages are rapidly building up their confidence and learning to use an appropriate range of computer programs. The school's provision for information and communications technology meets statutory requirements.

145. The last inspection report found that pupils' attainment was in line with national expectations but that Key Stage 2 pupils were not familiar with the redrafting features of word-processing programs. Computers in classrooms were not all used to good effect, nor were the facilities offered by the computer room then in existence. Assessment and recording procedures were judged to be unsatisfactory. These shortcomings are now beginning to be addressed.
146. Now in Key Stage 1, pupils are able to use a word-processing program to write simple sentences and construct lists. They log on and off efficiently and are able to save their work and print it. Keyboard and mouse skills are sound; they can choose appropriate fonts and letter size for their documents and they remember and use appropriate technical vocabulary for the procedures they undertake. However, there is no evidence that pupils are able to create, test and modify instructions for control robots, nor that they are familiar with the possibilities of programs for drawing and painting.
147. Now in Key Stage 2, pupils have sound mastery in processing text at a basic level and Year 6 pupils are beginning to work effectively with spreadsheets. Most of them can reproduce mathematical formulae on the spreadsheet format and are able to explain the steps necessary to enter information into file. Most recognise the need to frame appropriate questions to achieve satisfying results from their enquiries. Pupils save and retrieve their work efficiently and show growing competence in searching the Internet for information, for instance, on their geography project on Brazil. By Year 3, pupils are able to visit the school's web site and are aware of the use of search engines. Keyboard and mouse control skills are developing well and the majority of pupils are able to edit text appropriately. Some pupils have well-developed information technology skills, working on their home computers with growing interest; one pupil has succeeded in setting up his own web page.
148. Pupils are making good progress from the reception class onwards and are learning to transfer their skills and techniques to new situations. The good cross-curricular links, which are a strength of the school, encourage pupils to hone and refine their skills of information seeking and research; pupils are recognising the range of possibilities now open to them and they become more confident and discriminating in locating sites and in experimenting with different ways of controlling and presenting information.
149. Pupils in both key stages work well together, supporting each other's learning and persevering and concentrating well on the tasks set. They show high levels of motivation and interest. Pupils are equally happy to work individually, in pairs or in groups and they show growing independence in dealing with problem-solving situations. They are well behaved, thoughtful and keen to improve their skills.
150. Teaching is good. Currently it is taught as a separate subject to a whole class. Here the teacher has good subject knowledge which is backed up by an enthusiastic approach and a brisk, clear delivery; levels of challenge are well planned to match pupils' abilities. Lesson objectives are well defined and are shared with pupils, so that they know what they need to do to raise their standards of achievement. Pupils' learning is constantly reinforced and they are strongly encouraged to develop their confidence and to experiment with their techniques. Teaching in information and communications technology is less secure in other subject areas where specialist teaching is not involved, and there is too little routine use of computers in classrooms during the school day. However, most teachers have now attended relevant courses and are developing their confidence and expertise in this area. The information and communications technology subject manager ably supports them in

this. Plans to develop and improve the assessment and recording of pupils' information technology skills are in place and well focused on encouraging an improvement in standards of attainment.

151. The recently installed networked computer room is a sizeable investment and a very good resource to help the school meet its stated targets in developing the information and communications technology curriculum across the key stages. Efficient use is made of the equipment and plans to extend the range of subject specific software available to pupils are appropriate in ensuring that key skills across the curriculum will be given due emphasis in order to strengthen this area of the school's provision. Staff training in computer skills is well advanced and classroom teachers are gaining in confidence.

MUSIC

152. During the inspection music was not a focus of the curriculum and few lessons were seen. However, from a discussion with teachers looking at teachers' plans and pupils' work and from talking to pupils it is clear that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are at the expected levels for seven year olds. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 for 11-year-olds are below expected levels. The standards are the same as at the time of the last inspection for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and below those found for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. This is because the subject is not taught systematically across this key stage.
153. Within Key Stage 1 pupils can listen carefully to rhythms and repeat them accurately using parts of their body. They can invent a series of sounds to illustrate a "spooky-creepy castle" and perform them to follow the lines of the story. They can use untuned percussion appropriately to add colour and tone to their initial compositions and they record their compositions in simple notation. Pupils respect each other's ideas sympathetically and take turns fairly. They respond enthusiastically and show a good sense of humour when performing and listening to others when they have their turn to perform. They can express their own ideas about the music they have heard, sensibly.
154. Within Key Stage 2 pupils currently receive very limited opportunities to learn music. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 can sing tunefully even when unaccompanied. They quickly learn new rounds and songs. They perform confidently when singing in small groups and show enthusiasm and a capacity to concentrate well for longer periods. They are eager to please their teacher and try hard.
155. In the small number of lessons seen the quality of teaching is good. Where teaching is good the teacher begins the lesson well by telling a story which the pupils illustrate with sounds very dramatically. The pupils' attention is fixed as they listen breathlessly to the story. At the story's end they are eager to start their own work and are given a clear idea of what they should do. Pupils are encouraged sympathetically to perform and to overcome their shyness by the very good personal support they receive. The teacher shows a good sense of humour and involves all pupils in the activities which are closely related to improving the pupils' speech. Pupils are given a clear impression that music is to be enjoyed; for example, the teacher passes on enthusiasm and a sense of fun by the outgoing and cheerful way the subject is handled. Resources for music within Key Stage 1 are adequate and readily available so that they are used effectively to support activities in composition and performance. However, within Key Stage 2 resources are not readily to hand and many are in a state of neglect, for example, many of the chime

bars are incomplete. Resources for pupils to listen to and perform music from other cultures are inadequate and the subject is not managed with a clear sense of direction. As a result it does not make a significant contribution particularly within Key Stage 2 to pupils' sense of spirituality or an awareness of their own and others' cultural traditions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

156. Standards have improved overall since the last inspection, where attainment was reported to be in line with national expectations. High priority is given to the teaching of physical education. More time is set aside for physical education than that recommended nationally.
157. Pupils have the opportunity to regularly attend swimming lessons at the local Riverside Recreation Centre from Year 2, where they receive expert instruction. Standards of attainment in swimming are above national expectations at the end of both key stages. By Year 6 almost all pupils swim at least 25 metres and the majority of pupils are confident swimmers. Higher attainers have received up to bronze, silver and gold awards and receive good instruction for water safety. Pupils in the speech and language unit are invited to participate in swimming with Year 2 and effectively develop their swimming skills and confidence. The school provides an extensive range of games at Key Stage 2 including football, basketball, hockey and netball where pupils' skills are well developed in both school time and through extra-curricular activities.
158. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know the importance of warm up at the beginning of lessons and the necessity to respond to commands for personal safety. In games, pupils successfully develop and practise skills of catching, passing and throwing a large ball, where pupils from the speech and language unit are effectively involved. In gymnastics pupils confidently travel along large apparatus balancing and transferring weight to different parts of the body.
159. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils increase their skills in developing ball control and using space effectively. They develop their skills of travelling with a ball on the move and play invasion games such as netball and football effectively. However, there are limited opportunities for boys to play netball and girls football as these lessons are organised into separate boys and girls activities. In basketball boys and girls mix well together and increase their skills in shooting and dribbling when on the move. In gymnastics, pupils successfully develop a sequence of travelling actions and balances both on the floor and using appropriate apparatus.
160. Most pupils participate enthusiastically, work hard and enjoy their physical educational lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils from the speech and language unit integrate well into lessons and are given appropriate help and encouragement by support assistants. Pupils respond quickly to their teachers' instructions and many persevere to refine and develop movements and skills. Pupils work effectively together, behave well and encourage each other.
161. The quality of teaching overall is good and has improved since the previous report. Teachers plan lessons well with clear objectives based on the comprehensive policy and scheme of work, which has a positive impact on pupils' learning. In swimming, pupils make very good progress as a result of regular swimming opportunities from Year 2 and good coaching from swimming instructors. Pupils' learning is enhanced by teachers' confidence; good subject knowledge and appropriate teaching of basic

skills. In many lessons teachers intervene appropriately and use demonstration to draw attention to particularly good work as a form of ongoing evaluation and assessment. Good use is made of the large hall, extensive grounds, changing rooms and good resources to support pupils' learning. The subject manager is enthusiastic and provides good support to the staff. However, she has no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school and has identified the playground markings need to be improved and developed to support pupils' learning. Many staff, including the headteacher, willingly give their time to support the extensive range of extra-curricular activities for pupils in Key Stage 2 and as a result effectively develop pupils' skills. A good range of outdoor pursuits are available as part of Year 6 residential visit to Stanley Head, where pupils' social development is effectively enhanced.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

162. Standards in religious education are lower than those expected within the locally agreed syllabus, and are the same as at the last inspection. The school does not follow the locally agreed syllabus. For example, two classes had no religious education lessons timetabled during inspection week and in one Year 6 class pupils had received no religious education teaching since Christmas. The school is not meeting its statutory responsibilities regarding the teaching of religious education. A limited number of religious education lessons took place during the inspection, but evidence is drawn from teachers' planning, a limited amount of pupils' work and displays together with discussions with staff and pupils.
163. In Key Stage 1 pupils develop an awareness of Christianity and the Old Testament through the stories they hear such as Jesus and the fishermen and Moses taking the Israelites out of Egypt. They know about Christian festivals and are familiar with the major events of the Christmas story. Pupils begin to understand customs and celebrations in world religions such as Judaism by learning about Hanukah the festival of light. However, the majority of pupils have little knowledge of world religions and Christianity. In Key Stage 2 pupils learn of symbols associated with Christianity by visiting the local parish church and appreciate that other religions worship in mosques and synagogues. Older pupils compare the similarities of moral values between Islam and Christianity. They are able to compare the Eid festival with Christian festivals and can design and make Eid cards. Year 6 pupils develop their understanding and knowledge of the Old Testament by participating in the Bible Explorer Programme led by a local minister.
164. Overall pupils have positive attitudes towards religious education. They are interested in the stories they hear and are eager to contribute their ideas. However, pupils have limited opportunities for discussions in lessons or circle times. Many pupils lack enthusiasm and some fail to maintain their concentration fully.
165. The quality of teaching in the limited number of lessons observed is satisfactory. In the most successful lessons teachers' subject knowledge, good relationships, well-structured planning and the valuing of pupils' ideas have a positive impact on their learning. In the unsatisfactory lessons pupils' concentration falls due to inappropriate unstimulating activities with little religious content, lack of subject knowledge and a lack of appropriate resources to support pupils' learning. Although in the majority of lessons observed all pupils including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning; the quality of pupils' learning overall is unsatisfactory. Pupils' learning is hindered by insufficient time allocated to the teaching of religious education throughout the school, particularly at

Key Stage 2. There has been no recent inservice training for religious education and many teachers lack confidence and often their subject knowledge is limited, particularly regarding world religions. Pupils' learning is also hindered by not having exercise books to write down their thoughts and record their work. There are very limited planned opportunities across the curriculum to promote spiritual awareness from an early age and insufficient attention is given to making pupils aware of the diversity of cultures including religions within the wider community.

166. A new co-ordinator has been appointed this term. She is a newly qualified teacher and has had no opportunity to consider her co-ordinating role. Inspection evidence indicates that the subject has been neglected. The school recognises that the policy and scheme of work needs to be reviewed and updated. As in the previous report there is very little written work. Teaching is insufficiently detailed to support the teaching of the locally agreed syllabus. The school has made no progress in adopting a system for assessing and monitoring the standards that pupils attain. Resources for learning remain unsatisfactory and there are insufficient religious artefacts to support what is taught.