

INSPECTION REPORT

**GEORGE FENTHAM ENDOWED PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Hampton-in-Arden

Solihull

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104094

Headteacher: Mr David Wilkins

Reporting inspector: Mr Keith Edwards
RgI's OIN: 21190

Dates of inspection: 24-27 January 2000

Inspection number: 189495

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 category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Fentham Road Hampton in Arden Solihull West Midlands
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Alan Warren
Date of previous inspection:	30 September 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Keith Edwards, Registered Inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
	Art	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		How well are pupils taught?
		How well is the school led and managed?
Susan Dixon, Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
		How well does the school care for its pupils?
		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
		Equal Opportunities
Lea Short, Team Inspector	Under fives	
	Information technology	
	Science	
	Design and technology	
	Geography	
	History	
John Williams, Team Inspector	English	Special educational needs
	Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
	Music	
	Physical education	

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The Registrar
 Inspection Quality Division
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	5
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	9
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	11
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	12
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	15
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	15
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	17
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	18
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	22

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

George Fentham Endowed School has a tradition that dates from 1782. Although it does not come under the jurisdiction of the church or diocesan authorities, it is voluntary aided and classed as “Church of England by usage”. The current site is in the heart of the village of Hampton-in-Arden, where most of the housing is owner-occupied. There is also a privately managed site for travelling families. The school draws most of its children from the immediate village, with a proportion coming from the neighbouring settlements of Barston and Bickenhill. The socio-economic circumstances of most families are favourable. Numbers have risen steadily over the last 20 years and the school is unable to provide places for all those families who wish to enrol their children.

There are currently 232 pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 and a further 35 children who attend the Nursery Unit on a part-time (0.5) basis. At the present time, 18 pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is a much lower than average. Currently, almost all of the pupils are white and all come from homes where English is the first language.

The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is above average, but there is a wide spread of ability in each class. There are currently 33 pupils on the school’s register for special educational needs. Three of these pupils have a formal statement of special educational need and receive support from the school and the local authority.

In addition to the nursery, the pupils are taught in seven classes in discrete year groups. Pupils are admitted into the reception class in September of the academic year of their fifth birthday. There are nine teachers employed in the school on a full-time basis, as well as four other teachers who are employed on a part-time basis.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school that provides very good value for money. The quality of teaching is good. Results in national tests in English and mathematics are consistently above those achieved by pupils in similar schools. The school benefits from very good leadership that has secured the position of the school in the heart of the community.

What the school does well

- Standards in English and mathematics are well above the national average at the end of both key stages. The pupils achieve well in these subjects in comparison to pupils from similar schools.
- The quality of teaching is good and enables the pupils to make good progress overall.
- The school is very well led and managed. There is effective teamwork and the governors are keenly interested and very supportive.
- The provision for those pupils with special educational needs is excellent.
- The education provided in the nursery is very good and enables the children to make a very good start.
- The school has a high standing in the community and its work is greatly appreciated by the parents.
- The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are very good.
- Relationships within the school are very good and the traveller children are very well integrated.
- The range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards of achievement in science could be better in Key Stage 2: assessment information could be used to provide greater challenge for pupils of differing abilities.
- Although standards of attainment in art and design and technology match national guidelines, the pupils are capable of greater achievement.
- Information technology and the library are under-used. There is a need for more independent research and further opportunities for open-ended tasks.
- The quality of marking lacks consistency.
- The outdoor provision for the under fives in the reception class is inadequate.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1996. Since then the school has made good progress. The school has made sound progress in revising its assessment policy and procedures. The school makes detailed analyses of the pupils' performance, particularly in literacy and numeracy and uses the information to set targets and to raise standards. There is scope for the greater use of assessment criteria in science to provide greater challenge for pupils of different attainment. The school is awaiting the introduction of Curriculum 2000 before further developing its assessment criteria in the non-core subjects.

The school has made good progress in developing and implementing clear strategies and criteria for monitoring teaching and learning. Senior members of staff have undertaken training and guidelines have been produced to guide classroom observation. This is having a beneficial impact in the quality of teaching and learning particularly in literacy and numeracy. The school has made good progress in broadening the scope of multi-cultural dimension of school life. The curriculum has been enhanced both by the enhanced range of visitors to the school, and by the enriched project work. For example, pupils in Year 2 study Arizona with an emphasis on its native peoples and older pupils study the Amazonian rainforest and the Indian population.

The school continues to improve its accommodation; the staffroom has been relocated and the new information technology suite is nearing completion. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced and the provision for those pupils with special educational needs is now excellent. The school has been particularly successful in establishing the new nursery as a first class facility.

STANDARDS

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

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

At the age of eleven, the pupils' results are well above the national average in English and mathematics. Pupils' achievements are above those of pupils attending similar schools in these subjects. In science, the pupils' attainments are similar to the national results, but are below those

achieved by pupils in similar schools. Standards, however, are consistently higher than the national average and the school consistently meets the targets it sets. The pupils achieve high standards in their work in most subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils have very good attitudes to school. They approach lessons and activities with great enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The behaviour of the pupils is very good throughout the school.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils are provided with many opportunities to take responsibility and they act with increasing maturity as they progress through the school.
Attendance	Attendance rates are well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The overall quality of teaching is good. It enables the pupils to make good progress throughout the school. In 98 per cent of lessons, the teaching was satisfactory or better. In 48 per cent of lessons, the teaching was good and in 19 per cent of lessons it was very good. The overall quality of teaching in the Nursery Unit is very good. The overall quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good and enables the pupils to develop a secure foundation in the skills of literacy and numeracy. The school is effective in meeting the needs of most pupils in most subjects. In particular, the needs of the pupils from traveller families are well addressed as are those of the pupils with special educational needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the under-fives is very good. The curriculum for the pupils in both key stages is broad and fulfils legal requirements in respect of the National Curriculum. It is enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for those pupils with special educational needs is excellent and enables them to make very good progress, particularly in the development of literacy skills.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision overall. Provision for the moral and social development of the pupils is very good. The provision for the cultural development of the pupils has been enhanced by a marked improvement in the way the curriculum reflects our multi-cultural society. The spiritual development of the pupils is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good arrangements for the care and protection of its pupils. Pupils are well supported by the very good relationships that exist throughout the school. Health and safety procedures are good.

The school has an excellent relationship with parents. Together they form a very effective partnership which enables the pupils to make good progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the school is very good. The headteacher and his deputy form a very effective team and responsibilities for aspects of school life have been efficiently devolved.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are strongly committed to George Fentham Endowed School and have made a significant contribution to its development, particularly in improving the buildings.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is growing more confident in the evaluation of its performance and uses a range of indicators to measure its success.
The strategic use of resources	The school has a very successful history of securing additional funding and putting the money to very good effect for the benefit of the pupils.

The school is very well resourced and the accommodation, with the introduction of the new information technology suite, is very good. The school has an excellent record of applying best value principles when implementing the school improvement plan.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school is well led and managed.• The school expects the children to work hard and to achieve their best.• The teaching is good.• The school is approachable.• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.• Behaviour in the school is good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework which is set.

The parents strongly support the work of the school. Parents regard the school as a caring institution that produces good standards of achievement, good behaviour and good progress. They very much appreciate the welcoming atmosphere and approachability of the staff. They are particularly impressed with the leadership of the headteacher. The inspection team endorses the parents' view that the strengths of the school far outweigh the weaknesses. The inspectors agree that the school enables the pupils to make good progress and that standards of attainment are above average.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The children's attainment covers a wide range on entry but it is above average overall. The children respond well to the teaching to make good progress in the nursery and the reception classes. By the age of five, children are beginning to read, turning the pages of books correctly and recognising words. Many children can write their name and are forming letters well. They have a good understanding of number and use mathematical language such as "more than" and "less than". They make good progress in their personal and social development. Children work well together in pairs and groups, share resources and have established good relationships with their friends and the adults who work with them. They make good progress in their physical development and show agility in their movement.
2. Pupils make good progress in relation to their prior levels of attainment and achieve standards which are well above average in most subjects at the end of Key Stage 1. The National Curriculum assessments for 1999 indicate that pupils' attainments were well above the national average in English, mathematics and science, and inspection evidence supports this judgement. An analysis of the school's 1999 performance data compared to pupils from similar schools, indicates that the pupils achievements were above average. Pupils with special educational needs are sensitively supported and helped to make good progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy..
3. Pupils maintain this good progress in most subjects in Key Stage 2. By the age of eleven they attain standards in English and mathematics which are well above the national average and above the results achieved by pupils in similar schools. An analysis of test results for the school over the last three years shows that standards in English and mathematics are consistently better than the national average. The school's careful monitoring of the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy to assess its impact demonstrates the school has the capacity to continue to improve. Pupils achieve standards that are very high in speaking and listening. Pupils of all ages have a very good command of language and express themselves clearly and confidently. When reading, pupils are able to adopt appropriate strategies according to their purpose; this includes skimming to gain an overall impression and scanning to locate information. When reading aloud, they use expression and are sensitive to the finer nuances of the text. They use their reference skills confidently and accurately when seeking information from books. Their skills in writing are well above average. Pupils write confidently and fluently for a range of purposes. Their literacy standards enable them to work readily in subjects where they need to use their reading skills.
4. The pupils' levels of attainment in mathematics by the age of eleven are well above average. Results in the 1999 Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests were well above those achieved by pupils attending similar schools. In those tests, 41 per cent of pupils attained Level 3. Inspection evidence supports the view that the national tests provide a fair reflection of the pupils' achievements. The good standards reported in the last inspection have been maintained and improved, and the school is very well placed to sustain this progress. Pupils respond well to the high quality teaching and make good progress, particularly in acquiring and using a mathematical vocabulary. Pupils are responding well to the Numeracy Strategy and its emphasis on mental mathematics and are making good progress in calculations involving tables, fractions and measurement. They apply their skills in numeracy very effectively in other subjects such as science and geography.
5. There is some under achievement in science where pupils attain standards which are in line with the national average and below the results achieved by pupils in similar schools. The younger pupils engage in practical investigations and can classify materials according to their properties. They check the validity of their predictions and know how to apply the concept of a fair test. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils engage in investigations and apply sound

scientific methods to ensure secure conclusions. However, assessment is not used as effectively as it is in English and mathematics to match the work to the different abilities of the pupils. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress in science and although standards of attainment are above average by the time they leave school, they could be better.

6. By the time most pupils leave the school, they have a knowledge and understanding of information technology which is in line with national expectations. The pupils are currently working with a range of computers most of which are out of date. However, the school has almost completed the building of its new computer suite, and money has been allocated to ensure that it is equipped with the latest technology.
7. The pupils have high achievements in history and geography. These subjects are well supported by clear schemes of work and field visits that stimulate the pupils' interest. The quality of learning is very good. Pupils use their reference skills well to further their understanding through independent research. Art and design and technology are not supported by clear schemes of work. In particular, these subjects in Key Stage 2 are often used to support learning in other subjects such as history and geography rather than to ensure a clear development of skills. Consequently, the work that the pupils produce could be better.
8. Pupils achieve well in physical education, religious education and music. Their achievements in music at the end of Key Stage 1 are well above average; pupils respond well to music making and have an impressive technical knowledge.
9. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Care is taken to ensure that pupils who are experiencing learning difficulties are identified at an early stage and provided with individual programmes of work. The higher attaining pupils make good progress in the school in most subjects, but they would benefit from more open-ended tasks in mathematics and science to provide further challenge. The pupils who attend school from traveller families receive very good support. They are well integrated and make good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The pupils have very good attitudes. They clearly enjoy their time at school and approach lessons and activities with great enthusiasm. In lessons, the teachers' high expectations are well met; their good use of questions offers challenge and stimulation. The responses from pupils of all ages, including children in the nursery, are well considered and presented with confidence. Pupils listen very well to their teachers and each other. This makes a significant contribution to the purposeful atmosphere that exists throughout school. There are many opportunities for pupils to share their ideas and opinions and to take part in discussions. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, the pupils explain different methods of calculation to their classmates. The pupils work very well together either in pairs or groups in lessons such as dance and drama. Independent learning skills are well developed in all classes, although at present there are too few opportunities to make independent use of the school library or for more able pupils to carry out investigative work in science. The high value placed upon the pupils' achievements is evident in attractive displays of their work.
11. The behaviour of the pupils is very good, and this has a beneficial effect upon their learning and upon the school community as a whole. Pupils of all ages display high levels of self-discipline and follow the school rules closely, reflecting their involvement in forming them. In lessons, praise is used effectively to recognise good work and behaviour. Rewards both as house points or certificates are received with pride and pupils readily celebrate the success of others. Children in the nursery behave very well; they learn to appreciate praise and the need to take turns and follow instructions. This provides them with a good foundation for the time ahead of them at school. Pupils treat the school building and the resources they use with care and respect. There have been no exclusions in the past year.

12. The relationships amongst members of the school community are very good. Adults in school present very good role models and pupils are treated with great care and respect. The pupils are very polite and helpful towards each other and to adults. They work and play very well together and older pupils adopt a responsible and friendly approach to younger ones. There is very little conflict in school and pupils have learnt how to resolve their differences in an exceptionally open and mature manner.
13. The pupils' personal development is very good. They are encouraged to act responsibly and are provided with many opportunities to carry out class duties or to serve the whole school community, for example by maintaining the world news display or serving in the school shop at playtimes. Pupils express their opinions and make decisions in class council meetings in preparation for a school council which is due to be formed later in the year. Pupils learn about the values and beliefs of others in lessons and assemblies and show respect for different life styles. They show their concern for others less fortunate than themselves by organising events and raising funds for charity.
14. Attendance rates are well above the national average; there have been no unauthorised absences in the past year. Pupils arrive at school eager to start the day. Registration is conducted efficiently and this time is well used to reinforce the work of the previous day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The overall quality of teaching is good. It enables the pupils to make good progress throughout the school. In 98 per cent of lessons, the teaching was satisfactory or better. In 48 per cent of lessons, the teaching was good and in 19 per cent of lessons it was very good. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. The overall quality of teaching in the Nursery Unit is very good. The overall quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good and enables the pupils to develop a secure foundation in the skills of literacy and numeracy. The school is effective in meeting the needs of most pupils in most subjects. In particular, the needs of the pupils from traveller families are well addressed as are those of the pupils with special educational needs.
16. The quality of teaching in the nursery is very good. The nursery carries out its own entry assessment and the nursery staff effectively use this information to plan suitable work for the children. The very good monitoring of children's progress in the nursery ensures that any child with special educational needs is identified early and action is taken. The teacher has high expectations of the children in terms of behaviour and attainment. For example, in a very good physical education lesson, she promoted the physical and personal development of the children through parachute games. The children learned the importance of teamwork as well as developing stamina and co-ordination. Adult support is used very effectively to ensure that pupils remain on task and follow instructions carefully. This good practice continues in the reception class. The quality of learning is very good.
17. The quality of teaching for children under five in the reception class is good in all the areas of learning. Baseline assessment is carried out on entry into the reception class with ongoing literacy and numeracy assessment over the reception year. The planning for continuity and progression in the reception class is very good, with the curriculum planned well to link to the National Curriculum. All of the staff are involved in planning activities which show understanding of how young children learn. Good use is made of the non-teaching staff to support group activities in the reception class. The scrutiny of planning and inspection observations show appropriate coverage of all aspects of the Desirable Learning Outcomes for this age group.
18. In Key Stage 1, the staffing ratio is good. Teachers and classroom assistants work very effectively in teams. Their planning is thorough and assessment is used effectively to ensure that pupils of all abilities are being challenged. For example, in literacy and numeracy lessons, teachers support each other well. They ensure that all pupils are involved in the oral

introductory sessions by targeting their questions to each ability group, allowing all pupils to be challenged and to achieve success with correct answers. The tight use of assessment, linked to very good feedback to pupils, enables the pupils to make good progress. In art and design and technology lessons, the teachers ensure that the adult support is used to help the pupils to develop a variety of skills. For example, pupils have the opportunity to prepare a pizza, to make clay models and to sew. The quality of learning in music is very good as the teacher has good subject knowledge, high expectations and conducts her lessons with pace and challenge.

19. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good. At the beginning of the key stage, the teacher uses a range of methods to maintain the pupils' interest and to promote learning. In mathematics, she uses the hall and physical education apparatus to good effect to teach the children about direction and points of the compass. It is clear that her teaching builds effectively on earlier learning. Throughout the remainder of Key Stage 2, teachers introduce appropriate challenge for pupils of differing abilities in the numeracy and literacy sessions. They are well prepared and their planning is closely matched to the strategies. In geography and history sessions, the quality of teaching is enriched by the visits which are planned to support learning. The pupils in Year 4 conduct a sophisticated study of the River Blythe and are encouraged to plot a profile of the river bed. This challenges their mathematical skills of measuring and data handling. At the end of Key Stage 2, the teacher is skilled in her encouragement of the pupils to develop their skills of debate and to extend their vocabulary. She allows pupils time to consider their responses carefully before answering.
20. As yet the school lacks effective procedures to ensure that all pupils have worthwhile access to information technology to support learning across the curriculum. The school recognises this shortcoming and is optimistic that this will be satisfactorily addressed with the opening of the computer suite. The library which is located in an isolated position on the first floor is underused for independent research. There are some very good examples of marking and feedback to pupils which leads to improved performance, but this high quality is not evident in all classes. Although assessment is used effectively in most lessons to organise groups of pupils of different abilities and to set appropriate work, this is not always the case, particularly in science in Key Stage 2.
21. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent with many outstanding features. The special needs co-ordinator provides very good support for colleagues and very effective management. The school has developed detailed individual education plans. These contain clear and precise targets for improvement. Teachers follow them in classes and they contribute well to the good academic progress made by these pupils. The special educational needs provision is particularly successful in enabling these pupils to make significant advances in the development of their skills of literacy and numeracy. Traveller children are well integrated into classes and receive good quality support and teaching. Teachers maintain very good records and ensure that learning builds effectively on what these children already know, understand and can do, regardless of their time lapse between attending the school.

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

22. The school plans its curriculum for the pupils under five very well and this provides a good introduction to the National Curriculum. The lack of facilities for outdoor play, however, limits the range of the work in the area of physical development and the pupils do not have opportunities to climb, to ride wheeled vehicles or to explore large spaces and equipment through outdoor play.
23. At both key stages, the school provides a broad and stimulating curriculum that covers all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The school has a policy for the teaching of personal and social education, and health and sex education are taught as part of the science curriculum. The school is developing a policy to guide teaching about the perils

of drug misuse. The school has successfully modified the amount of time spent on teaching the foundation subjects in order to increase its provision for teaching literacy and numeracy. The National Literacy Strategy is securely implemented and an equally positive start has been made with the introduction of the Numeracy Strategy. Planning for religious education is based on the locally agreed syllabus. Teachers plan much of their work in themes, which involve work in more than one subject. This is generally successful, with the exception of art and design and technology where there is insufficient emphasis on the development of skills.

24. At the time of the last inspection, a key issue indicated that the school should take steps to ensure that the curriculum included aspects to reflect a wider range of cultures and traditions. The school has worked hard to ensure that the curriculum has been broadened in this way and this issue has been successfully addressed. The present school management plan outlines a rolling programme for the development of curriculum subjects, making good use of the schemes of work and guidance issued by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). The implementation of these developments ensures that the school's curriculum provision is broad and balanced. The co-ordinators are working to develop their role as subject leaders to influence the teaching and learning. They are involved in the monitoring of the teachers' planning, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and in evaluating and reviewing the teaching and learning that is taking place.
25. The school ensures equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils and it has effective procedure for assessing and identifying those pupils who have special educational needs. The special needs co-ordinator, with the class teachers, plans individual work programmes, which contain targets for improvement and these contribute to the very good progress made by the pupils. The teachers provide homework tasks such as reading and the school has a formal homework policy. The school's expectations about homework are shared with parents.
26. Several visits to places of interest, for example to Coventry Cathedral or to the local river for a field study are arranged throughout the year. Pupils also have the opportunity to participate in two residential visits during Key Stage 2, and visits to the school by musicians, artists, writers and members of the local community broaden the pupils' experience.
27. The school has established very good links with the playgroup and also the local secondary school. This ensures an effective transfer of information. The close contact with the local playgroup for instance, means that the school is made aware of any pupils who might have learning difficulties well in advance of admission to school. Links with the secondary school are very good and are praised by parents. Upper Key Stage 2 pupils begin their contact with their new school during Year 5. This helps to alleviate their anxiety and leads to a smooth transition between the key stages.
28. The school provides well for the personal development of its pupils. Provision for the spiritual moral social and cultural development of the pupils including those not yet five years old is good overall. This broadly matches the findings of the last inspection.
29. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The school's act of worship meets statutory requirements and makes a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Teachers use assemblies to offer pupils insight into values and beliefs and periods of reflection. During the inspection the theme of assemblies was "Special People," and pupils learned effectively about such people as Martin Luther King, Mahatma Ghandi and a heavily disguised George Fentham. However, the passage of adults moving to and from the kitchen and the staffroom during assemblies detracts from the impact of these occasions. Lessons provide pupils with opportunities for spontaneous expressions of awe and delight, such as when pupils handle religious artefacts for example, a cappel, or when they anticipate what will happen next in the story of "The Iron Man." Pupils visit the local church on a regular basis.

30. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school has developed rules to guide behaviour in class and around the school, which are well understood by pupils. In Year 6, they have devised their own distinct code of conduct. Good behaviour and achievement are encouraged by positive rewards in the form of certificates. Staff provide very positive role models which give pupils an effective example of good behaviour and insight into what is right and wrong. Aggressive behaviour is not tolerated and the school deals immediately with any problems of this nature. Assembly themes often contain guidance on behaviour and the importance of rules for the common good.
31. The provision the school makes for the pupils' social development is very good. During many lessons pupils are offered the opportunity to work together, sometimes in groups and sometimes in pairs. In a science lesson, pupils display high levels of co-operation when involved in an experiment. In physical education lessons, they work very well together setting out and then putting away gymnastics apparatus. Pupils readily share ideas and equipment in design and technology and art lessons. Older pupils form good relationships with younger ones by visiting them to read them stories, or by helping them in the dining hall. Pupils are generally caring and supportive of each other. The pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the life of the school. The teachers value them and their work and this has a beneficial effect on their self-esteem. Pupils take part in fund-raising events for local and world charities and their participation in team games helps to generate a sense of pride and common purpose. They develop an awareness of their local community through a range of events as well as their studies of local geography and history.
32. The provision the school makes for its pupils' cultural development is good. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of western culture via art, music and literature are good. Pupils study a wide variety of literature during lessons and learn much about their own cultural heritage through history lessons and on visits to museums, art galleries and other places of interest. The residential experience in York, for instance, involves visits to museums which support pupils' cultural development. The school also offers its pupils opportunities to appreciate the richness and diversity of other cultures through lessons in history, geography and physical education. They study other world religions and visit sites of educational interest in the locality such as the river and church. Visitors come into school to show the pupils artefacts from other religions and to play South American music. Aspects of gypsy culture are discussed with pupils as part of the successful integration of the school's traveller population. The curriculum offers its pupils the opportunity to study music and stories which derive from other cultures and these activities help to prepare its pupils well for life in a multi-cultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school has good arrangements for the care and protection of its pupils. Pupils are well supported by the very good relationships that exist throughout the school. Health and safety procedures are good. There is a comprehensive policy and the governing body are fully involved in ensuring that daily practice is effective. The arrangements for child protection are satisfactory; teaching staff and classroom assistants have an appropriate level of awareness and suitable training.
34. There are very good procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievement and progress. A wide variety of tests and assessments allow detailed records to be maintained. The use of this information to monitor the pupils' individual progress is satisfactory and in part is used to provide information for the written reports to parents and to set individual targets. The use of assessment information to provide further guidance and to ensure that work is closely matched to the pupils' individual abilities is effective in mathematics and English but is not used well in science in Key Stage 2. The marking of the pupils' work generally provides them with guidance on how their work might be improved. This is done very well in some classes but the quality of marking is inconsistent across the school. Assessment information is used very well to identify pupils with special educational needs and to provide appropriate

work and support. These pupils are very well provided for both academically and personally and their parents are closely involved in regular reviews of this provision. Pupils from the traveller communities are very well supported.

35. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. There is a very effective and well understood system of rewards and sanctions that have a very positive emphasis. The teachers have high expectations and are consistent in their use of praise and reward. They are skilful at dealing with any undesirable behaviour in a positive manner and any conflict or disrespect is dealt with swiftly. In personal and social education lessons, the pupils learn how to listen to each other and to resolve issues in a mature and successful way.
36. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are very good. The school meets with statutory requirements and the administrative arrangements are very efficient. Parents are provided with clear information about attendance issues and in turn they provide the school with prompt information about any absences.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. The parents' views of the school are very positive. Parents are highly appreciative of the commitment made by the staff and of the high quality education provided for their children. They welcome the recent improvements in the provision and the variety of homework and the provision for reading. They praise the quality of the information they receive and the provision for children in the nursery.
38. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is excellent. There is a close and mutually supportive relationship. This extends to all parents and families and is notable in the value the school places upon its close relationship with the traveller communities. Parents have many opportunities to take part in the life of the school. They attend assemblies and services and are able to watch their children at work. A number of parents are able to provide help in lessons or are able to share specialist skills and interests. The parent teacher association is well supported and provides social and fundraising activities that provide the school with additional resources. A recent and well-attended workshop about the introduction of the Numeracy Strategy left them feeling well informed about the changes.
39. The quality of the information provided for parents is excellent. There is a wealth of information about all aspects of school life, all is clearly written and attractively presented. Detailed information is provided about the curriculum and the topics to be covered in the coming term. There is guidance on how to help at home and how to support the work their children do at school. Parents who are new to the school or nursery benefit from home visits and much useful information; this is a particular strength of the school. Consultation events are held each term and give parents the opportunity to discuss their children's progress in detail. There are two written reports each year that give much useful and detailed information about pupils' achievements and areas where they might improve. Nursery parents receive excellent information about their children's progress in all the areas of learning and in their personal progress.
40. The contribution that parents make to their children's learning at home and at school is very good. Parents have recently received information and guidance about the provision and expectations of homework. Homework is well supported by the majority of parents and they benefit from home school record books that give information about homework requirements, these are especially beneficial to older pupils who are well prepared for the demands of secondary school. Topic work is well supported and requests for resources and artefacts are met with interest and enthusiasm. The levels of attendance at the school are very good indicating the importance that parents place upon their children's education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The school benefits from very good leadership. The governors and staff work well together and are committed to the aims of the school and to high standards of personal and academic achievement. This provides a clear educational direction for the work of the school. The headteacher has vision, drive and determination and maintains a good overview of the work of the school. The development plan, drawn up in consultation with staff and governors, and taking heed of the views of the older pupils, clearly defines a programme for further improvement. The school is both reflective and evaluative and has a clear sense of purpose.
42. The ethos of the school is very good. The school is committed to equality of opportunity and is very successful in meeting its aims. There is a positive, caring ethos that promotes high standards of academic attainment and personal development. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are happy in school and share its values. This is reflected in the very successful integration of the traveller population into the school community.
43. The headteacher and his deputy who have been working as a team for almost twenty years complement each other well. They have established effective management structures and have empowered and motivated their colleagues to continue to strive for higher standards. There is a strong team spirit that is based on a commitment to achieve further school improvement. The headteacher is particularly effective in attracting additional funding into the school and in ensuring that the budget is wisely spent. For example, funding has been strategically allocated to Key Stage 1 for additional staffing to ensure that the pupil\adult ratio is maintained at a favourable level. This has resulted in pupils receiving quality support from additional adults which has contributed to their progress. The school is held in high esteem within the locality and is oversubscribed.
44. Since the last inspection, the school has been particularly successful in raising standards of attainment in English and mathematics by the age of eleven. There has been a significant improvement in the numbers of pupils who are achieving the higher grades. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain standards in these subjects that are above those from pupils from similar schools. The school consistently meets its targets.
45. The school has successfully introduced the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. It has refined its assessment procedures to ensure that the work set is more closely matched to the different ability groups within each class and builds successfully on the pupils' prior attainment. Assessment and recording procedures are more detailed and have been standardised. They influence the planning of future work.
46. The school has made good progress in developing and implementing clear strategies and criteria for monitoring teaching and learning. Senior members of staff have undertaken training and guidelines have been produced to guide classroom observation. This is having a good impact on the quality of teaching and learning particularly in literacy and numeracy. Appraisal procedures are used to improve practice and there are effective arrangements to mentor newly appointed members of staff. The school has made good progress in broadening the scope of multi-cultural dimension of school life. The curriculum has been enhanced both by the enhanced range of visitors to the school, additional spending on resources and by the enriched project work.
47. Although the school has very good accommodation and is well resourced, the school has allocated funding to an ambitious building programme to enhance the accommodation which is almost completed. The governors have played a key role in these initiatives. The governing body meets all of its statutory requirements. It has an efficient committee structure and these meet regularly. The governors' annual report for parents provides clear and useful information about the life of the school. Governors are extremely supportive and some take an active part in supporting the pupils' learning by working in the school. There is a named governor who plays an active role in supporting pupils with special educational needs and the roles of literacy and numeracy governors have been allocated. Governors are involved in training and

regularly monitor the work of the school through direct observation of classroom practice.
The school provides very good value for money and is well placed to continue to improve.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school should now:

- Raise standards of achievement, particularly in science in Key Stage 2 , by:
 - a. using assessment information to provide greater challenge for pupils of differing abilities (paragraph 86)
 - b. more consistent use of the school's marking policy (paragraph 20,34 & 86)
 - c. providing more open-ended investigations (paragraphs 84,85).
- Raise standards of attainment in art and design and technology through greater emphasis on the progression of skills in the scheme of work (paragraphs 23,90 & 96).
- Develop the use of the library and information technology for more independent research (paragraphs 20, 81,87 & 91).

Other issues which should be considered by the school

- Further develop the external accommodation to improve the outdoor provision for the under fives (paragraph 50).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	19	48	31	1		

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	R-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	18	232
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	18

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	R-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	40

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
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	15	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	13
	Girls	11	12	11
	Total	25	27	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (92)	100 (97)	89 (97)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	14
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	24	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (95)	89 (97)	93 (97)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	16	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	11
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	23	25	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (84)	86 (81)	79 (84)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	13
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	25	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (81)	83 (88)	86 (81)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	231
Any other minority ethnic group	14

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)	10.25
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	33

Education support staff: YR-Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	118.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998\99
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	£
Total income	442663
Total expenditure	446920
Expenditure per pupil	1719
Balance brought forward from previous year	23955
Balance carried forward to next year	19698

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	268
Number of questionnaires returned	126

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	39	3	1	
My child is making good progress in school.	54	45	1	1	
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	44			2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	47	18	1	
The teaching is good.	61	37			2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	40	6	1	
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	38	2		
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	33	1		1
The school works closely with parents.	57	38	3		2
The school is well led and managed.	72	25			3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	42	1	1	
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	60	7		7

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

48. Children are admitted to the nursery when they are three and to the reception class in the September of the year in which they are five. Although there is a wide spread of attainment, many children are of above average attainment on entry to nursery. The children make good progress in the nursery and baseline assessment shows that the children overall are of above average attainment on their entry into the reception class.
49. The nursery staffing consists of a teacher and a nursery nurse. The reception class is staffed by a full time teacher, a part time teacher and a nursery nurse, which enhances the amount of adult interaction with children in work and play. At the time of the inspection, all of the children in the nursery and 22 of the 32 children in the reception class were under five. The nursery and the classroom for reception children are well organised and both provide the full range of practical activities expected. The reception class has no outdoor area with resources for physical development although the hall is used for physical education lessons.

Personal and social development

50. The children make very good progress and are likely to achieve what is expected of them by the age of five. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good. The planned teaching and constant reinforcement of classroom routines ensures all children become confident and develop independence. They know what to do on entering the classroom and in the nursery the children are able to select from the activities on offer and settle quickly to work. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and ability to take care of themselves and have organised resources to support this. The trays, in which the equipment is stored, are labelled in a way which helps children to see what is available so they can select and put equipment away themselves. In all activities the children are given responsibility for leaving equipment tidy. There are good relationships between adults and children. The children work and play together well. There is a very good balance of teacher-directed tasks and self-selected activities in the nursery. The children show self-reliance as they move confidently from their own chosen activities to directed tasks. In the reception class the children have settled quickly and happily and have a positive attitude to learning. The children's good response to learning is shown by their very good behaviour and their ability to complete set work and make choices from the range of activities on offer. The children speak confidently to adults and respond openly to questions from their teachers.

Language and literacy

51. Children enter the nursery with above average language skills. Staff place emphasis on developing children's speaking, listening and literacy skills in all the work done which results in children making good progress. By the time they leave the nursery the children generally listen well and talk to their teacher in individual and group discussions. In the reception class they are able to listen to each other in smaller groups as they work on tasks such as number work, and when talking to the full class at the end of lessons about the work they have been doing. The quality of teaching is consistently good with examples of very good teaching observed in the nursery, where the teachers' good planning, calm relationship with the children, the good support by support staff, motivates the children and helps them to concentrate.
52. Most children know the words to rhymes such as 'here is the reindeer whose antlers are long' etc and recognise letters and their own names. The children enjoy story-time and 'tell' stories using the pictures. For example, the children are able to make up their own stories about the lost penguins and draw pictures to illustrate their story. In reception they learn to recognise letters and the sounds within words in books and in their names. They identify letters and match objects to the initial sound. Children make good progress in their reading skills and

most children learn the first words in the very early texts of the reading scheme. The highest attaining children are confident early readers. The children write their names and copy simple words, for example when writing about how they will rescue a cat from a tree. They learn how to hold a pencil correctly and gain confidence in the very early stages of writing. Handwriting is beginning to be formed correctly. Children take books home to share with an adult. The children make good progress and most attain the national expectations in language and literacy for their age, and a significant number attain beyond this.

Mathematics

53. Children's learning in mathematics is very good in the nursery and the reception class. The balance of teacher-directed tasks and the range of activities which the children are encouraged to take part in results in good progress. The quality of teaching is good overall and very good in the nursery. Teachers try to ensure that the lessons are enjoyable so that the children are motivated, for example when singing a number rhyme about 'five little penguins standing in a row'. Children learn the language of mathematics such as 'big and little', 'short and long' as they make scarves for snowmen. The children learn to name simple shapes in the nursery and in reception they learn the names of three-dimensional shapes and some of their properties. They count and match the symbols of numbers to the correct number of objects. Nursery children can count to ten and can match the number to the correct number of penguins. The children in reception can count to ten and beyond and higher attaining children understand that the order of numbers is important and can place numbers in the correct order on a number-line. Children are given a very good range of mathematical activities to choose from and these reinforce the work done with the teacher. Examples of these include playing number games, singing number songs and rhymes, and completing number jigsaws. There are many opportunities for the children to learn and staff intervene in these activities to ensure that learning is taking place. For example, when playing in the water and sand the children learn about concepts of capacity and volume, and begin to understand what full and empty mean. The children learn the names of colours and sort objects by shape and colour. Most children achieve beyond the nationally expected level by the age of five.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

54. By the time they are five most children are likely to achieve the level expected in knowledge and understanding of the world. They have some understanding of how things work and in their role play they talk about the work of firefighters. The children recreate situations such as visiting the vets and making telephone calls. Children mould playdough into shapes and select colours to paint pictures of their experiences. Children learn about how ingredients change in texture and consistency when mixed together when baking 'Poor Peter Pizzas'. In reception the children show understanding of families and past and present through looking at photographs and talking about them. The children plant bulbs and observe them at different times to see how they grow, for example comparing the heights of 'Naughty Lady' and 'Hercules' the amaryllis bulbs, noting that 'Naughty Lady' is taller. There are many opportunities for children to build models with a good range of construction sets, cut and stick using scissors and glue. Children are given the opportunity in the nursery and reception classes to use the computer and they know how to use the mouse to click and drag to move objects on the screen. The quality of teaching is very good. The children are involved in a balance of teacher led and child initiated activities. There is always appropriate adult intervention in the children's own chosen activities in the nursery and reception class to ensure that they are making progress.

Physical development

55. Children develop their physical skills in the nursery through indoor and outdoor play where there is a range of resources for climbing, balancing, throwing and catching. The reception has physical education lessons in the hall but the children only have outdoor play at playtimes with the rest of the school and do not have regular opportunities to develop their

skills on climbing or wheeled outdoor equipment. Teaching is good and the children make good progress in physical development in the nursery and satisfactory progress in the reception class. By the age of five most children are likely to achieve the national expectation in this area of learning. The reception teachers plan physical education lessons in the hall; to develop awareness of space and different types of movement and show a developing sense of safety. Children show a good awareness of space by not bumping into each other as they move around the hall. All children, including those with special educational needs, are well supported so that they make progress. The children in reception are able to dress and undress themselves. There are many opportunities to develop fine motor skills through the use of paintbrushes, pencils and scissors, as well as through joining together pieces when making jigsaws and models. The children are taught to hold a pencil correctly when writing.

Creative development

56. Most children make good progress in their creative development and are likely to attain the national expectation by the age of five. The quality of teaching is very good. There is a good range of creative activities planned to promote this area of learning. Children in the nursery have many opportunities to paint, draw, and make collages using different textures and colours. In the nursery the children learn the names of colours and learn they can make other colours by mixing. By the time they enter reception most know a range of colours and can sort and match by colour. They mould using dough and make three-dimensional models with recycled materials and construction sets. The reception classroom is arranged to incorporate a role play area including a puppet theatre and this is well used by the children. Children learn a variety of songs and sing enthusiastically, as they learn the words and tunes. They have opportunities to listen to music and to play percussion instruments.
57. Booklets with very good information of what happens in nursery and reception are given to parents and in the nursery some parents stay to help and support the children in their learning. Parents are well informed of their child's progress and given good information on how to help them at home, particularly with reading.
58. There was positive report on under fives provision in the previous inspection. The under fives provision continues to be good overall and very good in the nursery.

ENGLISH

59. Pupils achieve standards well above the national average. In the 1999 tests for seven-year-olds, the percentage of pupils attaining or exceeding the national standard in reading (93 per cent) was well above the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 or above was also well above the national average. Attainment in writing was very high with 100 per cent of pupils attaining or exceeding the national expectation. However, only 7 per cent of pupils attained the higher Level 3 or above. The school has responded promptly to this and has made an improvement in writing in Key Stage 1 a priority.
60. In the 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level (79 per cent) was above the national average. The number of pupils reaching Level 5 or above (41 per cent) was well above the national average. These figures represent a significant success for the school as the cohort included a larger than usual number of pupils with special educational needs. These levels of attainment are above average when compared with the performance of pupils in similar schools.
61. Inspection findings confirm these levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and note an improvement at the end of Key Stage 2. Attainment at the end of both key stages is well above national expectations. These levels of attainment indicate that the school has improved its standards since the last inspection report in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

62. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy. In writing, pupils demonstrate an improving command of skills such as punctuation and sentence structure. In reading, pupils benefit from experiencing a widening range of reading material. They read more accurately and with greater confidence. Improvements are also evident in speaking and listening skills, where the emphasis on the development of pupils' oral skills is having a good effect. As teachers become more experienced in applying the scheme, they begin to see the need for flexibility and they are beginning to adapt it to suit the particular needs of their pupils
63. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. They are set suitable tasks in reading and writing designed to help meet their specific needs and their progress towards specific targets is monitored carefully. Higher attaining pupils make good progress, particularly when they have sufficiently challenging work. Usually therefore, these pupils achieve levels that are well above average in all elements of the subject. There are no pupils with English as a second language.
64. Standards of speaking and listening are above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Whether discussing a story, analysing a text or giving opinions about a topic the majority of pupils demonstrate very good vocabulary skills. They speak very well and state their opinions clearly. Pupils come into school with above average speaking and listening skills. Throughout the key stage, teachers work hard to provide their pupils with a wide range of imaginative tasks to help broaden their experience and increase their confidence even further. The youngest pupils role-play such activities as 'shops'. Older pupils act out plays, perform in assemblies and, at the end of lessons, report back to their classmates on what they have learned. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, standards in speaking and listening overall are well above national expectations. Most pupils speak confidently. They ask and answer questions readily, respond enthusiastically to literature and express themselves clearly. They learn to present information they have gathered from a variety of sources. Most literacy sessions end with a discussion about what pupils have learned during the lesson. Some pupils read out completed work and this reinforces learning and increases confidence. Speaking and listening skills are also used profitably to aid learning in other lessons such as a discussion about solving problems, in a religious education lesson in Year 6.
65. Standards in reading are also impressively high. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is well above national expectations. The majority of pupils read fluently and accurately books at a suitable level for their age group. They become adept at reading and following written instructions for their work. They recall well stories they have read and recall the main points of texts. In literacy sessions when sharing texts, pupils learn to combine a full range of reading cues, which they use effectively when reading independently. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have reading standards well above national expectations. Pupils read for pleasure and with considerable understanding. They have favourite books and authors and give informed reasons for their choices. They comment confidently on the differences in style between books and can answer questions which challenge their depth of understanding. Pupils use dictionaries and a thesaurus to aid their spelling and writing. The school works hard to build up a home-school reading partnership. The majority of parents support the school in this and this considerably aids their children's progress.
66. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in writing is well above national expectations. The school has responded to the low number of higher achievers in last year's tests by closely targeting the teaching of writing in Key Stage 1 and this has had a good effect. Pupils write stories, poems, diaries, factual accounts and instructions. Standards of spelling and punctuation are good. There are some very good examples of writing in which pupils use punctuation, including inverted commas. In literacy sessions the pupils demonstrate their knowledge of the sound and spelling system which they use to read and write in other subjects. Standards of handwriting are very good. However, pupils do not always use their best handwriting skills, acquired consistently in handwriting lessons, when working in other

subjects. By the age of eleven, writing standards are well above what is expected nationally. Pupils write in a range of styles for a variety of purposes, including stories, poems, scripts and reports. There are some good examples of extended writing in English. Pupils develop, organise and communicate ideas, for example, in their book reviews. A significant number of pupils write in linking paragraphs. Pupils' spelling of regular and irregular words is usually correct and they use punctuation to good effect. Standards of handwriting and presentation at Key Stage 2 are very good overall. While most pupils use joined, neat writing, this is not consistent in all classes in all subjects.

67. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and is good or better in three-quarters of lessons. In one third of lessons, the teaching is very good. Where teaching is very good lessons are characterised by brisk pace, challenging tasks, and high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. This ensures that learning of high quality takes place. In these lessons, pupils make good and sometimes very good progress in their learning. For example, in a very good lesson in the reception class, pupils use shopping and role-play to learn about the need to write lists. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They present their pupils with an interesting range of texts for analysis and expect them to respond in a mature and sensible way. In these lessons teachers have very high standards. They have high expectations of their pupils and pupils respond accordingly, ensuring that very effective learning takes place. They teach the appropriate programmes of study effectively and help to extend pupils' skills in subjects across the curriculum. Where teaching is less effective there is too little use made of information gained from assessments to target the work accurately for pupils' of differing abilities. Activities are too general and do not have a sharply focused learning target.
68. Teachers work hard to ensure that the majority of pupils make good progress in speaking and listening. They take care to use appropriate vocabulary and terminology in lessons in other subjects, such as science and art. They have high standards and insist on pupils speaking well and listening carefully. This ensures that good learning takes place. Pupils in Year 3 discuss rules for behaviour in small groups and nominate a member of the group to report back their ideas. This has to be done clearly and well whilst the remainder of the class listens carefully.
69. The Literacy Hour is well taught in both key stages. The strong focus on reading ensures good progress. The school allocates additional time to reading activities and teachers monitor the progress of pupils very carefully. Group reading sessions ensure that pupils develop their comprehension skills effectively. Where parents support the school by hearing them read at home, the pupils make better progress. The good teaching ensures good progress in developing the pupils' writing skills. Pupils learn to adapt their writing for different audiences whether responding imaginatively to a poem about a dragon, composing a newspaper article or writing about their visit to York. Pupils make good use of planning, drafting, revising and proof reading before producing a final clear copy of their work.
70. Where the pupils' learning is less effective, the teachers do not mark the pupils' work so as to suggest how they might improve their work. The use of support assistants is not consistent. In some lessons they are deployed efficiently and they make a major contribution to pupils' progress. In a minority of lessons, they are under-used and their talents wasted.
71. The co-ordinator analyses the results of the school's testing procedures and sets targets for improvements. She also monitors her colleagues' planning and checks on pupils' completed work.

MATHEMATICS

72. Pupils achieve standards well above the national average at the age of seven and by the time they leave the school. In the 1999 tests for seven-year-olds, the percentage of pupils (89 per cent) attaining or exceeding the national standard in mathematics was well above the national

average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 or above (33 per cent) was also well above the national average. These results are above average in comparison with pupils from similar backgrounds.

73. In the 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level (86 per cent) was well above the national average. The number of pupils reaching Level 5 or above (41 per cent) was also well above the national average. These results are above average when compared with the performance of pupils in similar schools.
74. These levels of achievement are confirmed by the inspection findings. Standards over the last three years have been consistently higher than the national figures. The boys have been performing well above boys nationally and the girls have been performing better than girls nationally. Standards of attainment have improved since the last inspection. The introduction of the Numeracy Strategy is having a marked impact on the pupils' ability to calculate mentally and the school is well placed to see standards rise even higher.
75. Mathematics is consistently well taught throughout the school. In the reception class, pupils can count up to 20 and the higher-attainers can count up to 100. Pupils recognise numbers and place them in the correct sequence on a number line. They count forwards as well as backwards and the more able pupils are beginning to distinguish between odd and even numbers. Pupils respond well to the teaching that has pace and high expectations. The teacher uses a range of strategies to motivate the pupils and to keep them thinking such as rhymes and number lines.
76. This good practice is evident throughout Key Stage 1. The teachers have a good understanding of the framework of the Numeracy Strategy and are well organised. Their planning is thorough and lessons are conducted at a brisk pace which holds the pupils' attention and enables them to make good progress. Teachers make good use of questions which are open-ended; for example, "How can we find out if there are more blue cubes than yellow ones?" Teachers constantly reinforce the language of shape. When pupils are engaged in group work, the tasks set are well matched to the different ability levels within each class. This enables all pupils to be challenged and to make progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by extra adult support and by the carefully considered use of resources. Towards the end of the key stage, most pupils have a good awareness of place value and work confidently with simple mathematical equations such as $8 + ? + 9 = 20$. Very effective planning ensures that the team teaching makes the best use of adult support and detailed on-going assessments are made to record the progress of the pupils.
77. In Key Stage 2, pupils learn the language of position and direction. They respond well to the imaginative teaching which makes good use of the hall to enable the pupils to explore direction in a series of practical exercises. Pupils clearly explain why "north-east" is so called and show a developing understanding of angles and terms such as "clockwise" and "anti-clockwise". The teacher makes good interventions to enable the pupils to add precision to their mathematical language. As pupils progress through the key stage, the teaching makes more demands on the pupils to improve their mental agility. Teachers effectively convey to their pupils that methods of calculation vary and pupils are taught that certain strategies are more appropriate for different situations, but there is no one single definitive method. As a result, the pupils are becoming very inventive in devising alternative methods of solving number problems. In upper Key Stage 2, pupils are presented with challenging work that enables them to understand decimal fractions and equivalent fractions. They can carry out long multiplication and division calculations and check their answers with pocket calculators.
78. Teachers give clear explanations and use the introductory and plenary sessions to good effect to reinforce learning. Teachers provide good feedback to pupils and insist on the correct terminology in the pupils' responses. Where the learning is less effective the teachers do not mark pupils' work in such a way as to give the pupils an indication of how they might improve. Adult support is well used in Key Stage 1 to enable groups of pupils of different

abilities to make good progress. Teachers in Key Stage 2 have equally large teaching groups, with a wide spread of ability but do not have the same support.

79. Mathematics is used well across the curriculum to support learning, particularly in science, history and geography. When conducting a study of the River Blythe, pupils were successful in measuring the speed of flow as well as drawing graphs to show the depth of the river at different points. Younger pupils use their knowledge of weight and time when preparing pizzas.
80. The co-ordinator has ensured that the Numeracy Strategy has been successfully implemented and that mathematics is well resourced. Assessment information is used effectively to provide clear targets for the achievement of different groups of pupils. The co-ordinator recognises that there is scope for the greater use of information technology and open-ended investigative work to support learning.

SCIENCE

81. In the teacher assessments in 1999, the proportion of pupils attaining the national expectation, was in line with the national average. Attainment at the higher Level 3 was well above average. The attainment of eleven year old pupils in the 1999 national tests was in line with the national average, but below average when compared with pupils from similar schools.
82. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a basic understanding of electricity and can construct a simple circuit. They investigate and classify objects made from the different materials and sort them into groups. Pupils identify and name the major parts of plants. They are learning that they need exercise and a good diet to keep healthy. Most pupils are developing an understanding about fair testing and are able to say when a test might be unfair. By the end of the key stage most pupils understand that soil is made up from different materials. They use magnifiers to observe closely and separate out stones, fragments of plants and animal remains. They record their observations and are able to communicate their understanding in drawings, through talking about what they have done and in simple sentences. Pupils are also able to collect data and display information in charts and in class webs.
83. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to carry out investigations planned by the teacher. They can make predictions and can carry out a fair test and know how to change one variable. For example in Year 3 they know they must only change the material and keep other variables constant when investigating insulation. Pupils can identify and name the key parts of plants. By Year 6 the pupils name and locate organs of the body and describe their functions. They know about the life processes and that all animals and plants eat, breathe, grow and reproduce. They name bones in the skeleton and the muscles surrounding them. Pupils describe the differences between solids, liquids and gases. They can separate mixtures through filtering, dissolving and evaporation. The pupils use equipment well but are frequently over-directed by the teachers. The pupils are able to observe carefully and make accurate measurements as they carry out investigations and record their findings. Higher attaining pupils suggest reasons for their findings and draw conclusions. Older pupils have a good understanding of the investigation process and can record their results in a variety of ways. However, they are frequently directed by the teacher in how to record. This restricts the opportunities for pupils to select how they record or choose the method which they themselves consider to be the most effective in conveying their results.
84. Pupils in both key stages have experienced a good range of experimental work, but much of it over-directed by the teachers. Literacy and numeracy skills are used well to record the results of investigations in writing and charts. Lower attaining pupils are well supported in science lessons and they can record their work and make progress. In Key Stage 2 pupils use their mathematics to record results and present data. By the end of the key stage pupils use

reference books to seek information and are beginning to use information technology for research and to present information.

85. The quality of science teaching is satisfactory overall with some good teaching observed. One lesson in early Key Stage 2 was very good and only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. In the most effective lessons, the teaching is lively and there is good pupil participation and motivation. The teacher is aware of all the pupils and assesses their understanding through effective questioning. Pupils are actively drawn into discussions and investigations. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Lesson planning is generally good; it is detailed and identifies what the pupils will learn in the lesson. Materials are well prepared, the pace of the lessons is brisk and all pupils are involved. Pupils are supported where appropriate and given positive feedback. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to feed back to the class what they have learned and this increases their understanding and confidence. Homework in science is used well to extend classroom teaching and learning.
86. In the less effective lessons the work is over-directed and lacks challenge. Questioning is used less effectively and pupils are given few opportunities to offer suggestions as to how they could investigate or record results. The pace is slow and time is not well used. This results in pupils being off task. There is scope for greater use to be made of information technology to support teaching and learning. Where the learning is less effective the teachers do not mark pupils' work in such a way as to show the pupils how they might improve. Assessment information is satisfactory although it is not used sufficiently to plan activities for pupils of differing attainment. In many lessons pupils are given the same tasks, with the lower ability pupils given extra support.

ART

87. In Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress; this is apparent in the work produced in lessons and in displays around the school. Their achievement is similar to that of other seven year olds.
88. Pupils build up their knowledge and understanding of a variety of media and techniques. They learn to control their brush strokes and show an understanding of the use of colour in their portraits of animals. Pupils learn the techniques of collage when working together, for example, on the faces of lions and tigers. They fold, cut and tear paper to create different effects. Older pupils in the key stage have experience in working in three-dimensional forms when working with clay. They fashion clay into a series of snakes to make coil pots or shape the clay to form features such as eyebrows, noses and lips when making a mask.
89. In Key Stage 2, the pupils make satisfactory progress. They have the experience of working with a range of materials in two- and three-dimensional forms. In Year 6, in a project involving the expertise of a specialist art teacher from a local secondary school, the pupils made ceramic gargoyles and complex designs in their batik work. However, work of this high standard is not always a feature of the pupils' artwork in Key Stage 2. Art is used effectively to support work in other subjects such as history. For example, pupils in year 4 paint mosaic pictures in the style of the Romans, but the skills of observational drawing and art appraisal are not consistently taught.
90. The attitude of the pupils towards their work is good overall. In Key Stage 1, where the teachers have good subject knowledge and present the pupils with a range of stimulating activities, it is very good. Here they work with obvious enjoyment, talk about their work with enthusiasm and show satisfaction with the outcome of their efforts. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1. The teachers establish a purposeful atmosphere and are very successful in motivating their pupils. They have established good relationships with their pupils and use introductory sessions effectively to explain the techniques to be used. They are well aware of the learning needs of the different groups in their class and lessons are conducted at a good pace. Throughout the school, the teachers maintain good standards of discipline, and effectively link art to other subjects, particularly science and history. Very few of the

teachers use information technology to support learning. However, in one very good example, pupils used a digital camera on a field trip to York and then carefully expanded the photographic images with closely observed drawings.

91. The display of pupils' artwork is used effectively to create a stimulating learning atmosphere in the classrooms and corridors.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

92. Standards in design and technology are average at the end of both key stages. Pupils gain experience of working with a range of materials and tools and design and make models, which are usually linked to topic work in history or geography.
93. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have worked with a range of construction sets, card, paper, textiles and recycled materials as well as food. The youngest pupils complete simple design drawings and make a mechanism to rescue the cat from the tree. In all classes the pupils learn about hygiene and how to use tools when making biscuits and other simple food dishes. In Year 2, pupils make Victorian cross stitch samplers linked to their history topic and mobiles linked to their work about overseas locations. Pupils learn different ways of joining materials by sewing, gluing, and combining.
94. In Key Stage 2, the pupils work is more directly linked to topic work in history and geography, such as Ancient Greek vehicles using wheels and axles and a frame. In Year 4, pupils learn to draw designs using accurate measuring skills when making Celtic roundhouses. They use reference books to find out about the roundhouse construction, for example the doorways and how the centre posts need to be strong enough to hold the thatched roof. In Year 5, the pupils use a shoebox to make a model rainforest linked to work on the Amazon rainforest. They also make fruit salads and design a recipe using rainforest foods. Work about structures is based on the history topic work about the Tudors. In Year 6, the pupils design and make board games with three-dimensional aspects. They also make powered vehicles as part of a car project.
95. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. Planning for design and technology covers all aspects of mechanisms, systems and materials. The weakness is that although linking design and technology to topic work gives a context for the work, this does not ensure that pupils are progressing in understanding of designing or in the skills they use. The planning does not identify a clear progression in skills, knowledge and understanding or in using more appropriate materials as pupils get older.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

96. During the inspection it was only possible to observe one history and two geography lessons. These lessons and the evidence from the samples of pupils' work, planning, displays and discussions indicate that standards in both history and geography are well above average. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
97. History and geography topics identify the skills and concepts to be taught. This results in pupils having a good knowledge and understanding of historical events and the environment.
98. In geography, pupils in Key Stage 1 are interested in learning about their locality. They use the computer to design a village and add features such as houses, shops, railway lines and trees in a simple layout. By the end of the key stage older pupils are familiar with other countries and study the geography and culture of Arizona in detail.
99. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils are able to report on travel from Birmingham Airport. They can locate various destinations around the world on an atlas and a globe. Pupils study their own locality of Hampton and the river. They increase their understanding of other places and cultures when studying the Amazon rainforest in Brazil. They can discuss the

traditional methods of hunting and gathering food and are developing an understanding of ecology and environmental impact. They compare the traditional methods and know that the Amerindian lifestyle leaves no lasting damage on their environment and compare this with hunting and farming methods which have the opposite effect.

100. In history the Key Stage 1 pupils gain understanding of chronology and can use a timeline to identify significant events. The youngest pupils can sequence stories and older ones sequence their own lives and recall their own memories after listening to the story of the 'Patchwork Quilt'. By the age of seven the pupils have a good understanding of 'then' and 'now' and are able to contrast objects from the past and talk about very old and new toys.
101. These concepts are further developed and by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have studied different times through topics such as Ancient Greece, the Romans, Tudors and Britain since 1930. The pupils are able to make more detailed time lines and have a good understanding of the sequence of events. They gain understanding of the significance of historical evidence and use primary and secondary sources to aid research including talking to older generations, reference books, artefacts, CD-ROM and the internet. They gain insight into the importance of different points of view, for example when studying social changes which have taken place since the 1930s, in particular post war Britain, and reasons for those changes. The pupils are able to debate such issues as the impact of the oil crisis in the 1970s and the work of equal rights campaigners.
102. Teaching in the lessons observed was satisfactory or good. Less effective learning was the result of teaching where the presentation lacked enthusiasm although the teacher's subject knowledge was good. All teachers provide a very good range of resources to support the work in progress. Planning is good and identifies the objectives of the lessons. Teachers inform the pupils of the lesson objectives, and in the best lessons the style of presentation gains the pupils' interest and motivates them.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

103. The standards achieved in information technology are broadly average. In the last inspection, pupils' attainment was considered to be above average.
104. The school has recently undergone a building programme and is developing a computer suite to ensure that all classes have access to skills teaching in information and communication technology.
105. At the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' attainment in information technology is broadly average. Pupils have good mouse and keyboard skills. They know basic word processing functions and are able to print out and save their work. Pupils are learning to change the font and size of the text. They use a range of programs to support their work in literacy and numeracy.
106. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is average in word processing and data handling and average overall in controlling and modelling. The majority of pupils have experience of using computers at home and this has helped them to achieve their present standards. Pupils can discuss different ways of presenting information and the advantages and disadvantages of using computers compared with other methods of working. The school is connected to the Internet and higher attaining pupils can access this when researching for their topics and some pupils use electronic mail at home. The pupils' word-processed work is enhanced by the use of digital photographs and clip art. Higher attaining pupils can move easily between programs. All pupils are learning and developing skills in using the computer, particularly to support their work in literacy and for history and geography research work. There are opportunities to collect and display data in charts and graphs and to produce spreadsheets in mathematics.

107. Very good use is made of information technology to enhance the attainment of pupils with special educational needs, particularly to support teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy. The progress these pupils make in a short time is very good and they gain in motivation and self-esteem as well as in attainment. Higher-attainers are given challenging work using computer programs. Pupils are often to be found working on the computers in their own time without the need for close supervision.
108. Information and communication technology is taught as a discrete subject and it is used well to support the work in other subjects particularly literacy. Planning identifies the learning targets for each year group and the software to be used. The school is making good progress in the development and use of information technology to enhance teaching and learning in computer skills and to support and extend work in other subjects. The capacity for further improvement is very good.

MUSIC

109. Overall standards in music are well above average in Key Stage 1 and above average in Key Stage 2. The quality of pupils' singing is above average at the end of both key stages. Many of the pupils who are able to take advantage of the individual instrumental tuition provided in the school become highly skilled musicians for their age. There has been an improvement in standards since the last inspection.
110. The youngest pupils learn to keep a steady beat and to sing a variety of songs related to the topics they study. As they progress through Key Stage 1 they learn to identify long and short sounds, to keep a steady beat and to make long and short sounds using voice and percussion. By the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils' experiences of music become wider. They learn Indian songs and can identify crotchets and quavers. They learn to create chords using three notes and to denote loud and soft notes. They learn to create symbols to depict sounds.
111. Pupils in Year 3 learn effectively about pitch and structure. They explore sounds and learn to improvise. Their listening and appreciation skills are enhanced by listening to pieces such as Holst's "The Planet Suite." In Year 4 pupils further their knowledge about pitch and create a rondo with pitched sounds. In Year 5 pupils learn about dynamics and tempo and become familiar with terms such as timbre, duration and texture. End-of-key stage pupils use their accumulated musical expertise in creating sound pieces and in responding to recorded music. Through a close adherence to a published scheme of work the pupils are introduced to a wide variety of music from many cultures and ages. This broadens their musical experience and aids their cultural development.
112. Teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1 the specialist music teacher displays very good subject knowledge. This gives the pupils confidence and aids their learning. For example, in a lesson with the youngest pupils on high and low pitch, the teacher was able to use her own voice expertly to guide the pupils' performances. The best lessons were conducted at a very good pace and this kept the pupils interested and involved. They enjoy their music lessons and there is a progressive and systematic development of musical skills. Where the teacher's subject knowledge was not so secure, as in some lessons in Key Stage 2, there was a lack of confidence and the pace of lessons was slow. Overall, teachers are well organised, plan their lessons carefully and use the school's good supply of musical instruments well. Where teachers have very high expectations of their pupils' performance, they are rewarded with very successful learning.
113. Music is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as choirs and recorder groups. There is also a wide range of instrumental tuition available that is frequently demonstrated to parents and friends of the school in musical events. The pupils sing to various groups in the local area and this contributes to their social development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

114. Standards in physical education are above expectations in both key stages. The school has maintained the good standards in physical education in Key Stage 1 reported in the last inspection. There has been an improvement in standards in Key Stage 2. Most pupils achieve standards appropriate to their age and a significant number exceed these standards. There are lessons in dance and gymnastics.
115. Pupils in Year 1 explore mood and character in dance. When listening to a poem about a robin they begin to explore a variety of movements and retell the story in dance. They cooperate very well and learn to share the space well when performing a wide variety of movements. End of Key Stage 1 pupils learn to perform a sequence of actions using basic body movements. They transfer these skills to a wide range of apparatus, which they assemble and put away themselves. End of Key Stage 2 pupils use dance to express character in movement; interpreting a piece of music called "Oxygene" they work with others to develop a narrative. They remember well a piece they have entitled "Alien" from a previous lesson and practise and refine it.
116. The majority of pupils reach good and sometimes very good standards overall as they develop and improve their skills. There is equal access to all activities and the majority of pupils make good progress in developing the basic skills. Lessons in dance lead to a refinement of movements, improvement in physical control and appreciation of space. Pupils benefit from a range of well thought out activities each designed to offer them further challenge. In swimming lessons pupils develop confidence in the water and improve their strokes. Swimming lessons take place at a local pool and the school has a good record in ensuring most pupils swim 25 metres unaided by the time they leave the school.
117. Involvement in the `Tops` scheme has assisted the school in teaching a wide range of games. The school also provides a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities, including competition with other schools. Both boys and girls have opportunities to make progress in developing appropriate skills in out-of-school clubs in athletics, cross-country, rugby, netball, soccer and short tennis. Pupils gain experience of orienteering by using the school's own orienteering trail and the opportunity to participate in outdoor activities is provided at the residential visit centre in Wales.
118. Pupils' learning is assisted by a wide variety of factors. Teaching is never less than satisfactory; two thirds of lessons are good. In the most effective lessons the teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, plan their lessons effectively and have high expectations of their pupils. They give the pupils every opportunity to practise and to improve. Activities are well planned and ensure the progressive development of skills. They have a high level of challenge and inspire pupils to work hard. Teachers are determined to achieve high standards and will settle for nothing less. They use pupil demonstrations very effectively to assess performance and to help pupils to improve. For instance, pupils in a Year 1 class demonstrate how a robin would hop and how a cat would crawl. Their teacher effectively picks out the strong points of the demonstrations to show pupils how to improve. Older pupils are shown how to assemble a wide range of apparatus for the lesson with due attention to health and safety. They are then able to arrange the equipment in a very mature and sensible way. Teachers make the most of the school's good facilities for physical education to plan exciting and challenging lessons.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

119. The pupils' attainment in religious education is above average at the end of both key stages. By studying a carefully chosen series of themes the pupils learn about Christianity and acquire a knowledge and understanding of its origin, content and development. They are aided in this by the school's close ties with the local church. They also learn about the other principal religions found in the United Kingdom, Sikhism, Judaism, Islam and Buddhism. In seeking out similarities and contrasts between the various religious practices they deepen their understanding of the nature of religious belief and the spiritual dimension of life.

120. This represents an improvement since the 1996 inspection when attainment was judged to reach “national standards.”
121. Pupils in Year 1 examine a cappel. They learn that religion affects what some people wear. They come to understand that different people show respect to God in many different ways. Pupils in Year 2 effectively draw comparisons between Islam and Christianity. They examine well-chosen artefacts to help their understanding and compare going to church to entering into a mosque. They have already built up a considerable background knowledge and can explain what is meant by minarets. They are familiar with festivals such as Ramadan.
122. Lower Key Stage 2 pupils learn effectively that religion determines how people live. They study the Ten Commandments and realise that they are “a set of rules” by which people can live happy lives. After an exercise in devising a set of rules to guide behaviour in their own classroom they are surprised to note that some of the commandments are still valid! Older Key Stage 2 pupils study Hinduism. They find out about the sacred writings of the Hindus and learn to appreciate their importance to believers. They become very involved in a discussion about fighting and whether violence is ever a good way to solve a conflict. Opinions are divided but well argued. They learn about how important religious belief is to the way that people live their lives.
123. Teachers realise that their pupils learn best by being involved. The scheme of work for teaching religious education includes the use of stories artefacts, music, drama, visits and visitors in order to stimulate interest. This approach is used in all lessons seen. Teaching is good in every lesson. This represents an improvement over the last inspection when teaching was judged to be “at least sound”... “with some examples of real expertise.” Pupils are involved and their opinions are sought and developed by good teaching. This leads to good and sometimes very good learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are therefore able to answer pupils` questions. They have very high standards and expect high levels of commitment from their pupils. Pupils respond well to this, work hard and make good progress. The teachers use a range of methods notably discussion. Whether devising rules to guide behaviour in their class or discussing whether wars are ever justified, pupils of George Fentham School develop strong opinions and are articulate in expressing them.
124. The school has acquired a good selection of artefacts to support the teaching of religious education. The co-ordinator has devised a comprehensive draft scheme of work to aid her colleagues` teaching. The school makes very good use of the local church to support the study of Christianity but does not organise visits to other places of worship.