

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BAR HILL COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bar Hill

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 189567

Headteacher: Mrs L Whyte

Reporting inspector: Miss M A Warner  
17288

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> February – 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2000

Inspection number: 189567

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Gladeside Bar Hill Cambridgeshire
Postcode:	CB3 8DY
Telephone number:	(01954) 273305
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Lewney
Date of previous inspection:	1 <sup>st</sup> July 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
M A Warner	Registered inspector	Music	Standards achieved
		English as an additional language	Teaching and learning
J Lovell	Lay inspector		Partnership with parents
D Franklin	Team inspector	English	Curriculum and other opportunities
		Geography	
		History	
		Equal opportunities	
M Mackay	Team inspector	Information and communications technology	Leadership and management
		Under fives	
		Special educational needs	
M Phillips	Team inspector	Mathematics	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		Design and technology	
		Religious education	
M Wallace	Team inspector	Science	How the school cares for its pupils
		Art	
		Physical education	

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Inspection Quality Division  
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Alexandra House  
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Bar Hill Community Primary School is a larger than average primary school with 398 pupils on roll. It was built in 1968 to serve the first new village to be built in modern times in Cambridgeshire and was one of the first designated community schools, opening with 29 pupils. The building has been added to over the years. The school acts as a centre for community activities.

The number of pupils who have free school meals, 2.3 per cent, is well below the national average. This, however, does not necessarily reflect the socio-economic status of the catchment area, which is nearer average. Many families do not claim the free school meals they are entitled to. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is 23 per cent, and of those with statements of need is 2.3 per cent, both of which are slightly above the national average. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language, 1.3 per cent, is a little higher than most schools. Pupils' attainment on entry to the reception class is in line with the national average.

There has been a change in leadership since the last inspection, with a new headteacher, deputy headteacher and chair of governors.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Bar Hill is a good school. The leadership of the headteacher and governors is very good. Standards have improved in all core subjects since the last inspection and are now above average in English across the school and in science by the end of Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching is good. The school gives good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The leadership and management of the headteacher, deputy head and key staff are very good.
- Good standards are reached in English and science.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good and data are used constructively to raise standards.
- Strategies for teaching literacy across the school are very effective.
- The curriculum provided for pupils is stimulating and well planned.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, including instrumental teaching, drama, 'Booster classes' for literacy and extension classes in English and mathematics.
- Procedures for and the monitoring of pupils' personal development is very good.
- There is very good provision for pupils' social development, with many opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and specific social skills groups are provided.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils' attendance is very good.
- The impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school is very good.
- The governing body is very effective in fulfilling its responsibilities. The school's performance is monitored and evaluated and effective action is taken.

### **What could be improved**

- Standards in mathematics, which are already in line with the national average, and which reflect good teaching, learning, assessment and monitoring, should continue to be raised in both key stages.
- The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 should be raised from satisfactory to the good quality in the rest of the school.
- Outdoor play facilities are needed for the children under-five.\*
- The learning environment of classrooms needs to be improved, by reducing the intrusive noise from printers and lessons in other classes, caused by the design of the building.
- Pupils' annual reports should include more information on progress.\*

\* These have already been identified by the school

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The two key issues of the 1996 inspection have both been addressed.

- The information and communications curriculum has improved, with better access to resources and better management. The quality of teaching has improved, as teachers now have greater confidence in teaching the subject.
- The monitoring and assessment of pupils' progress and academic and personal development have improved.
- Standards have improved in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2.
- There is stronger and more effective leadership and management from the headteacher, senior management team and governors.
- The analysis of results and an increased focus on assessment, particularly in mathematics, is a considerable improvement.
- There has been an improvement in resources for literacy.
- The planning structure for mathematics has improved, using improved resources. There is now better provision and challenge for the higher attainers in mathematics.
- There are challenging and interesting investigative and experimental tasks, throughout the school, in science.
- The management and teaching of religious education, resources and links with the local church have improved.
- Information and communication technology and physical education have improved from unsatisfactory to satisfactory.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	A	B	D
Mathematics	B	D	B	D
Science	B	C	B	C

<i>Key</i>	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

[The low proportion of free school meals at this school does not necessarily reflect the socio-economic character of its intake, against which the gradings for similar schools is compared].

In the work seen, standards, overall, are in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Standards in English, science, design and technology in both key stages and history and music at the end of Key Stage 2, are above expectation. In no subject is attainment below average. Particular strengths are in design and technology, history and the composition element of music. Attainment is in line with expectations at the end of both key stages in mathematics, art, information and communication technology and physical education. At the end of Key Stage 2 it is in line with expectations in geography.

Whilst the rate of progress of pupils under-five is good and they reach above average standards in literacy and mathematics by the time they are five, this momentum is not continued in mathematics to the end of Key Stage 1, where standards are average.

In the 1999 National Curriculum tests, attainment in English, by the end of Key Stage 1, was in line with the national average in speaking and listening and above in reading and writing. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment was above the national average in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Both Key Stage 1 and 2 results were just below average, when compared with similar schools.

In mathematics, by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, attainment was slightly above the national average. Both Key Stage 1 and 2 results were just below average, when compared with similar schools.

When compared with similar schools, results were close to the average.

In English, standards rose sharply from 1996 to 1998 and have remained above average in 1999. In mathematics, standards varied from year to year, but there has been an overall improvement in recent years. In science, standards have fluctuated, but have risen faster than the national average.

The school has set targets for 2002 that are slightly below the Local Authority's targets in literacy and slightly above its targets for mathematics. These are realistic and achievable.

Standards are improving and, as such, are high enough.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The attitudes of almost all pupils are good. They are keen to attend school, eager to learn and are interested and involved in what they do. They usually listen attentively, try hard and contribute well to lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Most pupils behave well in lessons and at other times. However, a few pupils display a lack of self-control when not formally supervised around the school, or when, in occasional lessons, there is insufficiently challenging work in class, or teachers' expectations of behaviour are not clear.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school, between pupils and adults and between pupils are usually good. Most pupils are independent from an early age and become increasingly so. Older pupils readily accept responsibility for a range of duties and frequently lead and report back for group activities with maturity.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance levels in 1999 were well above the national average and the level of unauthorised absences was well below. Pupils are punctual for school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	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 quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science and, in Key Stage 2, is good in English and mathematics and very good in science.

Strengths in teaching are: high expectations and appropriate challenge; excellent pace; good support for problem solving in mathematics with an emphasis on prediction before calculation; providing pupils with props and strategies for tests; targeted open-ended questions for mixed-age groups; bringing average attainers up to the level of higher attainers at the end of a lesson; pupils setting their own appropriately challenging targets; good feedback to pupils; good use of praise.

*Occasional* minor weaknesses are: talking for too long or too quickly; lack of musical vocabulary; lack of challenge for higher attainers in group-work; not enough notice taken of those who have not answered questions; not insisting on a given amount of work from pupils.

There are very effective strategies for teaching literacy and good strategies for teaching numeracy. The school meets the needs of pupils with special needs and the needs of pupils of different attainment well. During the week of the inspection, there were two supply teachers in Key Stage 1.

The quality of teaching is very good or better in a quarter of lessons, good or better in almost three-quarters and satisfactory or better in all lessons. No unsatisfactory lesson was observed.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities is good in all key stages. The curriculum is stimulating, specialist skills are used well and good use is made of the local environment and visits. There is very good provision for extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good across the school. Teachers and support staff work closely together when identifying pupils' needs and drawing up individual education plans and implementing them. The multi-disciplinary approach is very successful in identifying needs and implementing individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory provision. No pupil is at an early stage of learning English and appropriate support is given in class.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development and very good provision for their social development. In art and music, in particular, there are good opportunities to develop cultural awareness, but there are fewer opportunities to discuss world religions.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils very well. There are effective systems in place to ensure statutory health and safety aspects. The school monitors academic achievement and has established many systems to support pupils' personal and educational achievements.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher and key members of staff are very good. Resources are good, but the adequacy of the accommodation is only satisfactory, because of the design of the building and the disturbance that can be caused to nearby classes because of this.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very effective in fulfilling their responsibilities. Governors are well informed, have very good expertise and there is a good committee structure. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is very good at monitoring and evaluating its performance and taking effective action.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is very good, with good expertise on the governing body and good strategic planning and use of resources and funding.

The governing body understands the principles of best value. Together with the headteacher and senior management team, it closely monitors the performance of the school and uses detailed analyses of assessment results, including comparisons with other schools, to target its spending in ways that will support improvements in standards.

Partnership with parents is good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' progress and standards attained. An effective partnership between the school and parents is promoted through very good communications, the provision of good overall information regarding pupils' progress and the very good involvement of parents in the life and work of the school.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.</li> <li>• That their children make good progress in school.</li> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard and do their best.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistency of homework – generally homework is not marked and pupils receive no feedback.</li> <li>• Lack of information to parents about the methodology of teaching, for example, mathematics, to enable them to support work at home.</li> <li>• Lack of consistency in application of rewards.</li> <li>• Concern over mixed aged classes.</li> <li>• Some bullying and an inability to resolve problems promptly.</li> <li>• Concern about the lack of a coherent reading scheme.</li> <li>• Insufficient help and extended activities for the more able pupils.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the parents' positive comments. Inspectors comment as follows on the parents' concerns:

- The school is carefully monitoring the impact of homework, which is being set regularly and used effectively to support learning.
- When curriculum evenings are arranged, few parents attend.
- Teachers monitor to ensure that all pupils receive a certificate each year for effort in behaviour, academic or personal and social development.
- The management of mixed aged classes is mainly good.
- No incidents of bullying were observed during the period of the inspection and, of the pupils interviewed, all expressed the view that bullying was not a significant problem at the school.
- Pupils' reading is above average at both the end of Key Stage 1 and 2. This is facilitated by the school's resourcing and approach to the teaching of reading.
- In general, provision and support for the higher attainers is satisfactory. In a small minority of lessons these pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- Pupils' annual reports are carefully written and provide details of the areas of work covered and of pupils' knowledge and understanding. There are, however, limited targets and insufficient detail about progress. The school has recognised this and is intending to address it this year.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. Standards, overall, are in line with expectations at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
2. Pupils' attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 1, in the National Curriculum tests in 1999, was in line with the national average in speaking and listening and above in reading and writing. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level 3 was close to the national average. Pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, was above the national average. The percentage reaching the higher levels was close to the national average. Results at the end of Key Stage 2 were below those of similar schools. In the lessons observed and in the work seen standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are above the national average.
3. Pupils' attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 was close to the national average and those reaching the higher level 3 were above average. When compared with similar schools, they were well below, overall, but well above for the higher grade. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was close to the national average for both levels 4 and 5. Compared with similar schools, they were below average. In the work seen, whilst the rate of progress of pupils under-five is good and they reach above average standards in literacy and mathematics by the time they are five, this momentum is not continued in mathematics to the end of Key Stage 1, where standards are average. In the lessons observed and the work seen, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly in line with the national average and, at the end of Key Stage 2, is in line with the national average.
4. Pupils' attainment in science at the end of Key Stage 1 in the teacher assessments was above the national average. The percentage reaching the higher level 3 was below the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards were below average at level 2 and well below at level 3. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards were above the national average in the National Curriculum tests in science. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level 5 was close to the national average. When compared with similar schools, results were close to the average. In the lessons observed and the work seen, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was average and at the end of Key Stage 2 was above average.
5. Standards in English rose sharply from 1996 to 1998 and remained above average in 1999. In mathematics, standards have varied from year to year, but there has been an overall improvement in recent years. In science, standards have fluctuated, but have risen faster than the national average.
6. The school has set targets, for literacy, that are below those for the Local Educational Authority for the year 2002, but higher in mathematics. The Additional Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact, however, particularly in reading in Years 3 and 4. Teachers also make good use of literacy across the curriculum, especially in history, geography and science. This promotes well the progress that pupils make. The school's provision for numeracy is good and is developed in many subjects including science, design and technology, geography, history and information technology. Again, this assists pupils' progress well.
7. Particular strengths, in the standards of work seen, are in design and technology, history, and the composition element of music. Standards in art, geography, information and communication technology, physical education and religious education are average.

8. Standards are improving and, as such, are high enough.
9. There is satisfactory provision for pupils who have English as a second language and their progress is satisfactory. No pupil is at an early stage of learning English and appropriate support is given in class by teachers and support staff.
10. In general, the achievement of higher attainers is satisfactory and there are suitable provisions. This has improved since the last inspection in mathematics. In one lesson, the higher attaining younger pupils in a mixed aged class could have been better supported, but this was an exception. Pupils with special educational needs who have learning difficulties generally make good progress and achieve good standards in reading, writing and mathematics, in relation to their previous learning. They do so because the teachers construct useful individual education plans that include clear targets and useful strategies and because the school makes effective use of its classroom based learning support assistants. The pupils with behavioural difficulties also make good progress because the school supports them well, particularly through its programme in social skills training and through the work of the learning support assistants who closely supervise and monitor the pupils' learning activities. As a result many of the pupils with special educational needs successfully complete the work they are set, preventing them from lagging further behind other pupils of their age.

#### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

11. The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of nearly all pupils are good. They are keen to attend school, eager to learn and are interested and involved in what they do.
12. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are very good. Registers are completed efficiently and comply with requirements, although there were some cases of the school authorising absence for 'holidays' in circumstances which did not appear to be for 'annual family holidays.' This was because families tend to take a number of long weekends instead of a two week holiday. In 1998/9, the attendance level of 96.7 per cent was well above the national average of 94.1 per cent and the level of unauthorised absence (0.2 per cent) was well below the national average of 0.5 per cent. In the current school year, 70 pupils have an excellent 100 per cent attendance record to-date and only three pupils have attendance levels of less than 85 per cent. Attendance rates are consistently high and have a very positive effect upon standards of attainment and progress. Pupils are punctual for school.
13. In lessons, pupils respond well to the challenges put before them. They usually listen attentively, try hard and contribute well to class discussions. Throughout the school, the pupils respond very well to the opportunities provided for them to show initiative in their work, as when reporting back from group discussions in English and religious education, or organising the necessary resources in lessons such as science, design and technology and mathematics. The pupils take pride in their work and the quality of presentation is very good in all classes.
14. Children who are under five enjoy their learning and show enthusiasm, applying themselves well to their activities. Children in the reception classes are well integrated into school life and are given a caring and secure start. They relate very well to the adults they meet and collaborate well in their work and play.
15. Relationships throughout the school, between pupils and adults and between the pupils, are usually good. In class, the playground and extra-curricular activities, pupils of both genders generally mix well. Most pupils behave well in lessons and at other times. For example, pupils

can be trusted to work in groups with a minimum of teacher supervision. No incidents of bullying were observed during the period of the inspection and, of the pupils interviewed, all expressed the view that bullying was not a significant problem at the school. Parents' concerns in this respect were judged to be unfounded. The recently-introduced anti-bullying council is seen to be effective in dealing with any possible instances of oppressive behaviour and all pupils feel able to approach an adult if they are worried. However, a few pupils display a lack of self-control when not being formally supervised around the school, or when, in occasional lessons, there is a lack of challenge or the teacher's expectations about behaviour are unclear. No pupils have been excluded from the school in the past year.

16. Overall, the personal development of the pupils is good. Pupils of all ages make a significant contribution to the life and work of the school. As they grow through the school, for example, they participate in the anti-bullying council, organise resources and collaborate well, supporting one another in learning activities. Most are independent and confident from an early age and they become increasingly so. They are usually mindful of the feelings and values of others. Older pupils readily accept responsibility for a range of duties about the school as monitors and frequently lead and report back from group activities with maturity.
17. The pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to learning and generally behave well. This is mainly because the school's arrangements for supporting them are effective in helping them to maintain good levels of confidence and high self-esteem. Their personal development is good, largely because the pupils enjoy access to the full range of curricular and extra-curricular activities provided by the school.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

18. The quality of teaching is very good or better in a quarter of lessons, good or better in almost three-quarters and satisfactory or better in all lessons. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. During the inspection, there were two supply teachers in Key Stage 1.
19. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science and, in Key Stage 2, is good in English and mathematics and very good in science. There are very effective strategies for teaching literacy and good strategies for teaching numeracy. In other areas, particular strengths are in the teaching of the under-fives, in information technology, design and technology and music in both key stages and in art and history in Key Stage 2. Four of the six excellent lessons were in mathematics. In excellent lessons, teachers' questioning was particularly effective in developing pupils' understanding, lesson plans had targeted questions for the two different year groups and there was good emphasis on predication. The fact that by the end of the lesson the average attainers were introduced to work the higher attainers were covering was also particularly effective and showed very good learning. Teachers had excellent subject knowledge, used specialist vocabulary well and kept up a superb pace. Lower attainers were well supported by classroom assistants, in both class and group sessions. In English, pupils were treated as mature young people and were guided in their learning rather than directed. Open questioning was used very effectively. An excellent religious education lesson was inspirational, because the teacher was very knowledgeable, started from the children's own experience and there was very skilled handling of pupils' questions. Assessment was effectively included in the planning. As a result pupils' learning was also excellent. They learned more about themselves and developed empathy with others.
20. Teachers are particularly effective in their planning of lessons in all key stages. Tasks are well matched to pupils' different attainment and, as a result, the higher attainers are usually sufficiently challenged. Marking is good. Pupils are given effective feedback on their work and

are encouraged to take a pride in presenting final work. This has a positive impact and contributes to the good standard of presentation in all subject areas, throughout the school. Homework is very well used to consolidate and revise work and the revision programme is having a good impact on pupil's learning at Key Stage 2. Work is regularly marked. The detailed planning of music lessons by a specialist in Key Stage 1 is very effective, both in terms of inservice training for teachers and in the pupils' learning it promotes. The quality of teaching of the children under-five is good, overall, and sometimes very good. Teachers have high expectations, good subject knowledge and learning activities are interesting, challenging and skilfully introduced and taught.

21. There were no unsatisfactory lessons, but there were a few minor weaknesses in different lessons. Occasionally, teachers spend too long talking, talk too quickly, have subject knowledge which is not secure, such as musical vocabulary. In one lesson, there was a lack of challenge in group-work for the higher attainers and not enough notice taken of pupils who did not answer questions. In a class of older pupils, they were not expected to complete enough work in a given time and no action was taken when they had not completed the amount of work of which they were capable. In Key Stage 1, the pace of lessons is sometimes slower than necessary and this impedes progress. The management of classes and of time is sometimes unsatisfactory, for example, when changing for physical education lessons. Noise levels, caused by the design of the building, from adjoining classrooms, including the sound of noisy printers, are intrusive and pupils at the back of a class have difficulty hearing the teacher in class-taught sessions.
22. The school meets the needs of pupils with special needs and the needs of pupils of different attainment well. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are also appropriately supported.
23. The school receives visits from overseas visitors who want to learn more about good primary school practice and the setting up and running a multi-agency approach to special educational needs provision.
24. The school is very successful in meeting the needs of the pupils with special educational needs. It has a very effective team of learning support assistants who work closely with the teachers in planning and teaching lessons. The school also makes good use of the local authority's special support teachers and its own Reading Recovery teachers to enhance the teaching. Consequently, the work planned for pupils with special educational needs and the level of support available in lessons are well matched to their needs. For example, in some of the lessons for the mixed Years 1 and 2 pupils, the teaching was enhanced by the work of the learning support assistants. They helped their pupils by reinforcing important teaching points, by providing further opportunities for them to consolidate previous learning and by offering them encouragement and close supervision, so that the pupils remained focused on their learning tasks.

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

25. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The school provides a stimulating, well-balanced curriculum, which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Overall, a satisfactory amount of time is allocated to all subjects and provision for teaching information technology has improved since the previous inspection. Good use is made of specialist teachers' skills in information technology, science, mathematics and music, particularly in the upper school and this is having a positive impact on teaching and learning.

26. The school successfully promotes pupils' physical, social and personal development and has an appropriate, planned programme for sex education and drugs awareness. The schemes of work for each subject have recently been revised and the overall planning of the curriculum is good. The school has successfully moved to a subject-based approach to the curriculum and this ensures well that there is continuity and progression of skills within classes and across year groups. The teachers plan effectively in teams and medium-term and short-term plans are effectively monitored by coordinators and the headteacher. Daily plans have been introduced to ensure that the learning objective for each lesson is appropriately addressed and that assessment opportunities are highlighted. Pupils all have equal access to the curriculum and there is an effective equal opportunities policy.
27. Strategies for teaching literacy are very effective and those for numeracy are good. The well-established national literacy and numeracy schemes together with the Reading Recovery and Additional Literacy strategy are having a positive effect on standards in reading, writing and number. Literacy is used very effectively across the curriculum particularly in history, religious education, geography and science. Booster classes for pupils in Year 6 also have a positive impact on learning.
28. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. The range, including various sporting activities, drama, music such as choir, orchestra, guitar club, and chess club effectively enhance the curriculum.
29. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good. There is an effective system of home/school reading records and parents are invited to support pupils with their homework, which is in its early stages of development. Although some parents were concerned about the quality and consistency of homework, no evidence was found to substantiate this concern. The school has good links with the local church and clergy visit the school regularly to assist with assemblies. Pupils are able to visit the local library regularly and there are good links with the local supermarket. Pupils also benefit from local visits and visitors to school; for example, a local storyteller regularly comes to share stories with pupils. Relationships with local schools are good and there are close links with the local secondary school where most pupils will attend.
30. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good and they have a clear understanding of the values and beliefs that the school promotes. Daily acts of collective worship are well planned and the school has good links with the local church. The school has worked hard to raise awareness of opportunities for spirituality across the curriculum and these are appropriately identified in medium-term planning. These opportunities all make a positive contribution to spiritual awareness.
31. Provision for moral development is good and is very good for social development. There is a carefully planned programme for personal, social and health education and pupils learn to co-operate in drama and working in the shared areas. All classrooms clearly display the classroom rules and the pupils' charter of rights is reviewed with pupils annually. Good opportunities are provided to discuss moral issues during circle time and the school council has been trained to help staff to address any issues of bullying in the school. The school also provides opportunities for some pupils to take part in special group activities to develop their social skills. Pupils in Year 6 take their extra responsibilities very seriously and are responsible for organising their own duty rotas. Duties include answering the telephone, looking after visitors, preparing the hall for assembly, library duty and taking play equipment outside for use during the lunchtime. There are also general duties for pupils in their own classrooms and good opportunities for pupils to take part in fundraising, for example for Save the Children.



32. Good opportunities for cultural development are provided through music, art and geography. The school also celebrates some of the festivals for world religions, but these opportunities are limited. The school also encourages visitors to the school from other countries, for example from Japan, Florida, Thailand and China, and provides good opportunities for visits to museums and art galleries to enhance the learning opportunities for its pupils.
33. The school provides a broad range of learning opportunities that successfully meets the interests and aptitudes of the pupils who have special educational needs. It places a strong emphasis upon the pupils' acquisition of basic skills in literacy and numeracy and has good strategies for teaching them. The needs of pupils with English as an additional language are also met well as a result of this. The way the school organises its special educational needs provision ensures that its pupils with special educational needs experience the full range of learning opportunities. The class teachers, learning support assistants and the co-ordinators for special educational needs work closely together, when identifying individual needs, in drawing up individual education programmes and in implementing them.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

34. Child protection arrangements are good and the school uses the local area protection committee's child protection procedures, which comply with requirements. All staff understand the child protection policy and the school is vigilant and sensitive in exercising its responsibilities. The designated person for child protection and all staff have received appropriate training. There are good liaison arrangements with outside agencies. There is a very good policy and appropriate records on the use of force to control or restrain pupils.
35. The school has very effective procedures to monitor attendance and punctuality and strongly encourages parents to take holidays outside term time. In a few cases, however, long weekends are not uncommon. Registers are marked accurately using an optical mark system and analysed carefully. If parents have not advised the school of the reason for their child's absence, they are contacted by mid-morning.
36. The headteacher is responsible for health and safety and has received training in risk assessments. The school has appropriate policies. Day-to-day attention to health and safety matters is satisfactory and there is good awareness of safety issues. The governing body receives regular reports and is involved in identifying safety issues. The school carries out some informal risk assessments which are not documented and it has undertaken some formal risk assessments which are recorded, although detail is limited. This is an area which is insufficiently developed.
37. The school and governors have correctly identified the potential danger created by parents who persist in driving their cars up to the school gates to collect children. These drivers have to manoeuvre in an area congested with children and sometimes do so at excessive speeds. Despite communications and a vigorous campaign by governors, to stop this unnecessary practice, a minority of parents still bring their children to the school gates by car.
38. The arrangements for providing first aid are very good and eight staff hold current first aid certificates. Pupils are looked after well, both within the school and the playground and accidents are properly recorded.
39. The school has very effective arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development. Baseline assessment, using the local authority's scheme, is in place for pupils entering the school under five. All pupils are assessed in September and at the end of every term. Results are rigorously recorded throughout

the school and these supplement national test results. The introduction of daily planning ensures that teachers use their assessment to guide day-to-day planning. There are regular tests in English, mathematics and science and co-ordinators keep portfolios, containing samples of moderated work, for each year group. The assessment of pupils who have special education needs is good, individual education plans record pupils' progress rigorously and focus on the particular needs of the pupils. Statutory requirements for assessment are fully met.

40. Since the last inspection, the school has made very good progress in improving the quality of assessment. The school has made good progress in monitoring teaching and learning throughout the school. An effective system of monitoring has been introduced to check continuity and progression throughout the school. The staff use the information well to pinpoint areas for development in the school's approach to teaching. The school analyses the test results and is developing good systems to analyse data, including evidence from a wide range of sources, including local expertise. The school uses the analysis of test results to identify targets and areas for improvement. All pupils have individual targets for literacy and mathematics. Pupils' assessment of their own work and progress is well developed in science. Pupils comment on their learning and identify areas for improvement. The marking policy provides a strong guide to all staff, ensures consistency throughout the school and raises the pupils' standards of work, in particular of that of presentation. Their personal development is recorded well throughout the school. School improvement receives high focus and a comprehensive policy identifies the school's belief that self-evaluation is an integral part of school self-improvement.
41. Procedures for monitoring personal development are well developed. All class teachers keep records that are on-going from pupil's base line assessments. The school has established a system of rewards for valuing individual effort. Teachers monitor to ensure that all pupils receive a certificate each year for effort in behaviour, academic or personal and social development. The school is committed to promoting pupils' personal, social, and health education and developments to promote citizenship are well developed. There is a co-ordinator for this aspect and good links are maintained with local support groups. Positive behaviour receives a high profile and pupils are encouraged to develop an awareness of this aspect by adding leaves to the 'Together tree.' These describe examples of positive behaviour observed by pupils throughout the school. The recent formation of the anti-bullying council, in response to instances of bullying within the school has been well considered. Pupils and staff involved have received training. Pupils demonstrate a sense of responsibility and recognise the need to differentiate between instances of bullying and other aspects of inappropriate behaviour. Members of the council acknowledge that some pupils might be unclear about defining bullying.
42. The school places a very high priority on special educational needs provision. It meets all the statutory requirements outlined in the statements of special educational needs and it closely follows the guidelines of the Code of Practice to ensure that its standard of care is very good. The school has established a very good multi-agency approach to providing care for its special educational needs pupils. Through its multi-agency group, it effectively co-ordinates the work of the following: the class teachers, the learning support assistants, the teaching support staff, the special support staff, the Reading Recovery teacher, the social training assistant, and the educational psychologist. The school has earned well-deserved praise for the way it provides for pupils with special educational needs. The provision for special educational needs is very good and is a significant strength of the school.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

43. Partnership with parents is very good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' progress and standards attained. An effective partnership between the school and parents is promoted through

very good communications, the provision of good overall information regarding pupils' progress and the very good involvement of parents in the life and work of the school.

44. Parents express positive views of the school, although they express some concerns about the amount of homework pupils are given, the information which they receive on their children's progress and the range of extra-curricular activities. The issue of homework was the subject of extensive consultation with parents before its introduction in the autumn term and parents are divided as to whether the amount of homework is too much, too little or appropriate. The school is carefully monitoring the impact of homework and is contacting parents in the event of any concerns regarding the completion of homework which is being set regularly and used effectively to support learning and to provide opportunities to reinforce understanding. Arrangements for homework are to be evaluated at the end of this year. Most parents are supportive of the work which pupils are expected to do at home, although a number do not complete the homework record sheets, which can provide useful parental feedback on homework.
45. The information provided for parents is good, overall. Staff are very accessible to parents, to discuss any concerns and arrangements for individual consultation meetings each term are very good, allowing flexibility through an appointment system which operates throughout the term. These consultation meetings, at which verbal targets for numeracy and literacy are provided, are well supported by parents and the school follows up those parents who do not readily arrange to meet with teachers. Parents receive annual reports, which are carefully written and provide details of the areas of work covered and of pupils' knowledge and understanding. There are, however, limited targets and insufficient detail about progress, but the school has recognised this and is intending to address it this year. Parents receive a good overview of the topics which pupils are to study, which helps them in providing opportunities to support learning at home or when making family visits. Frequent, informative newsletters and letters about specific events are provided and parents are regularly invited to events and performances. Meetings are organised to inform parents about supporting children in areas of work, such as that organised for parents of children in Years 1 and 2 to help them support the school's literacy strategy.
46. The impact of parents' involvement on the life and work of the school is significant and their contribution is valued by staff and pupils. The school's home/school agreement, which was introduced after consultation with parents, seeks to constructively build upon the very good partnership which exists with parents and this is further reinforced by the school's parental involvement policy which was introduced in autumn 1999. About 18 parents provide regular, effective assistance in classrooms with activities such as reading, science and craft work, such as affixing 'conservatories' to model houses. Other parents provide assistance in supervising pupils participating in visits. Parents provide valuable practical assistance in a number of ways, such as redecorating areas of the school to enhance the learning environment and by regularly supporting the extra-curricular information technology activities and supporting the production of the school's own web site, which is of interest to both pupils and parents, containing useful information about the school. The Parent Teacher Association raises money through events such as car wash days and discos and the funds are used to improve the learning environment and opportunities for pupils. For example, it has recently spent a substantial amount on information and communications technology hardware.
47. The school has good arrangements to include the parents of pupils with special educational needs in the review of their children's progress and in drawing up and agreeing individual education plans and learning targets.
48. Parents' concerns were addressed during the inspection and homework was found to be satisfactory; parents' curriculum evenings have been arranged, but few attended; there is

consistency in the giving of rewards; the teaching of mixed aged classes takes into account pupils' differing ages and attainment and teaching are mainly good; the recently introduced anti-bullying policy is addressing the concern about bullying and none was observed or reported during the inspection; the standards of reading are good and the lack of a coherent scheme for the majority is not affecting standards adversely, in fact pupils enjoy the range they are offered; there is well matched work for the higher attainers.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

49. The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher and deputy head (who work closely together), senior teachers and the governors of the school share a very clear vision of the kind of school they want. It is grounded in their commitment to promote high standards of teaching and learning. This helps the leadership to give good direction to the work and development of the school. One of the strengths of the leadership is its success in building a team that is committed to the pupils' well being and able to manage change effectively in order to improve standards. An example of this is the school's development of a multi-agency approach to its provision for pupils with special educational needs. The work of the multi-agency group successfully draws upon the experience and expertise of a wide range of providers. This has a significant impact upon standards, because the pupils with special needs benefit from earlier, better focused and more sustained support. Another example of the school's success in managing change, in order to secure higher standards of attainment among its pupils, is its action to improve the teaching of information and communications technology. As a result of it, the standards reached by the pupils across the year groups are significantly better than they were at the time of the last inspection.
50. The leadership is particularly successful in ensuring that the school's agreed aims and values are clearly reflected in its work. For example, the school is as committed to promoting good relationships and equality of opportunity for all of its pupils as it is to raising their standards of attainment. It has taken vigorous action to reduce the incidence of bullying and is flexible in the way it organises the curriculum and the teaching to ensure that all pupils have full access to the available learning activities. A significant strength of the leadership lies in the effective way the headteacher delegates responsibilities. For example, the subject co-ordinators have detailed job descriptions and a clear sense of how they are to discharge their duties in order to secure further improvements in standards.
51. The members of the governing body know the school very well. They are strongly committed to supporting it and to providing a clear strategic steer to its further development. The governors are very well organised. They have an effective committee structure and good procedures for monitoring all aspects of the school's work. For example, the governors' school effectiveness committee works closely with the headteacher, senior management team and teachers to ensure that the main focus of the school's development plan is the raising of standards among its pupils. The committee reports to the full governing body and helps it to form a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governors fulfil their duties very well in helping to shape the direction of the school. They visit the school regularly and those with special responsibilities, such as the named governor for special educational needs, regularly meet the co-ordinators for special educational needs and visit classes when they monitor the work of the school. The chair of the full governing body and the chairpersons of the different committees take their responsibilities seriously. They keep themselves well informed about the school and make a significant contribution to the overall effectiveness of the governing body.
52. The school has rigorous systems for monitoring, evaluating and developing the quality of its teaching. The headteacher, deputy head and senior teachers regularly monitor teaching and know

what is happening in classrooms. They keep good records of what they see and these are well used to inform the school's provision of professional development opportunities. As a result, the school is able to prepare its teachers well for the introduction of national initiatives such as the literacy and numeracy strategies. The school knows and uses the strengths of its best teachers to influence the rest. It makes good use too, of teachers with subject-specific expertise. For example, the talents of its co-ordinator for information technology are effectively deployed not only in the classroom to raise the pupils' standard of performance, but, also, to support the teachers in developing further their knowledge and skills in teaching the subject. The governing body has good arrangements for appraising the work and effectiveness of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. It sets the senior managers appropriate and challenging performance targets and keeps them under review. The school has also implemented a form of teacher appraisal/performance management in anticipation of the national requirements.

53. The headteacher, deputy head, senior managers and governors work closely together to identify appropriate priorities and targets for the school. These are based upon good levels of data from assessments of the youngest pupils when they enter the school, from detailed analyses of the performance of older pupils in a wide range of standardised tests and from the monitoring of the work pupils do in class. The school makes effective use of the outcomes of its data analyses to question itself about the performance of different groups of pupils as well as its own performance when set against that of similar schools and against its own earlier achievements. It has, for example, identified the need to adjust the teaching to take account of the relatively lower achievement of boys in the written tasks in the English national tests. The priorities and targets it sets itself are identified in the school development plan and are linked to clear programmes for action. For example, the school devised a very good action plan to improve the quality of teaching and learning in information technology. It included a more challenging curriculum, better access for pupils to computer technology, more specialist teaching and better opportunities for teachers to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills.
54. The headteacher and the governing body provide very good management of the school's delegated budget. They budget systematically for all expenditure and have a clear idea about the cost of school development. Their spending decisions relate directly to the school's priorities for improvement. The school has very good arrangements to ensure that there is effective financial control and administration. It has well-trained finance and administrative officers who are very efficient. They keep the way clear for the teachers to concentrate on their work and provide the headteacher and governors with good quality information that ensures that finances are kept in good order and that costs are easily determined.
55. The school makes effective use of new technologies for administrative and teaching purposes. For example, the administrative computers are networked so that information can be shared among administrators, managers and teachers. The school has computerised the attendance records, the school meals records and the pupils' personal and academic records. It uses the powerful data-analysis facilities of information and communications technology to ensure that it maintains a clear picture of what data are telling the school. The school also has a web site on the Internet. Its web site functions as a useful link to the wider community. It contains good information to parents, including the school prospectus, information about the management and organisation of the school and samples of the pupils' work. A significant improvement since the last report is the school's use of information technology to support learning. It has heavily invested in educational computer hardware and software, in teacher training and in curriculum development. All pupils now benefit from regular lessons in the computer suite where they are introduced to a wide range of applications and resources. For example, the older pupils have access to the World Wide Web and to E-mail services. The pupils in Year 6 have their own web site and some of them have constructed personal web pages. The school makes effective use of

other forms of information technology when, for example, the pupils use cassette recorders to store information arising from their science investigations into the uses of materials around the school.

56. The school makes very effective use of its standards funds to effect improvements in its teaching and the performance of its pupils and it fully satisfies statutory regulations in the way it uses the funds it receives for special educational needs. The governing body understands the principles of best value. It closely monitors the performance of the school and uses detailed analyses of assessment results, including comparisons with other schools, to target its spending in ways that will support improvements in standards. The school also uses information collated from the questionnaires it sends to parents to inform its planning and decision making. It makes effective use of the skills and knowledge of its finance and administrative officers in seeking competitive quotations for educational services and equipment.
57. The school has a sufficient number of qualified teachers, a nursery nurse and learning support assistants to match the demands of the curriculum. They make an effective team, because they work well together in the best interests of the pupils. A significant strength of the school is the staff's willingness to work closely with outside agencies to promote the pupils' learning. This is one of the reasons why the school's multi-agency approach to the provision of special educational needs is so effective. For example, the special support teachers who regularly visit the school report that they are able to make valuable contribution to its work, because of the high level of co-operation between them and the staff at the school. The school has two co-ordinators to manage the provision for special educational needs. They are well-qualified and very effective managers who have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to serve the best interests of those pupils who have special educational needs. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is a significant strength of the school.
58. The accommodation, although attractive and very well maintained, is barely adequate to allow the curriculum to be taught effectively. Some of the classrooms have insufficient space for the size of the classes they accommodate and this sometimes limits the range of teaching styles that can be used. The open plan design of some of the teaching areas allows an excessive amount of background noise to travel between classrooms. This often makes it difficult for the teachers to teach and the pupils to learn. The children in the reception classes who are under the age of five have no access to a suitable outdoor area where they could enjoy opportunities to use large play and climbing equipment. The library is located within an area that is used by the local community. It is not well adapted to meet the needs of the pupils, particularly those engaged on independent research and learning. The school has good resources to support learning in English, mathematics, information and communications technology, design and technology, geography and history. It has an adequate range of resources to teach art, music, physical education and religious education.
59. The school has improved significantly in recent years. It is well run and effective in delivering the National Curriculum. It spends its money wisely and always with an eye to improving the quality of its education and the standards its pupils attain. The school receives and spends less than the national average for schools of its size and type. It provides good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. In order to enhance the good quality of education that the pupils already receive and raise standards further, the governors and staff should:

- raise standards in mathematics in both key stages, by continuing to develop the good teaching, learning, assessment and monitoring now found in the subject (paras 5, 10, 19, 25, 39, 40, 80, 87);
- bring the satisfactory quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 up to the good quality in the rest of the school, by improving where necessary:
  - classroom management (para 21);
  - the behaviour of a small minority of pupils (paras 15, 78, 84) ;
  - the pace and challenge of lessons (paras 15, 21, 83, 125, 128);
- provide outdoor play for the children under-five (paras 58, 67);\*
- reduce the intrusive noise levels, caused by the design of the building, in order to improve the quality of the learning environment (21, 58);
- include more information on progress in pupils' annual reports (para 45).\*

*\* These have already been identified by the school.*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

92

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

96

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	16	42	25	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	398
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	10
<i>FTE means full-time equivalent.</i>	
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	93
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.1
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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	26	22	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	23	21
	Girls	22	22	21
	Total	44	45	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (76)	94 (80)	88 (86)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	22	22
	Girls	21	21	22
	Total	43	43	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (80)	90 (81)	92 (90)
	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	22	25	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	15	20
	Girls	23	20	22
	Total	37	35	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (82)	74 (45)	89 (74)
	National	70 (64)	69 (58)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	18	21
	Girls	24	22	25
	Total	39	40	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (80)	87 (63)	100 (80)
	National	68 (64)	69 (64)	75 (70)

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	2
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	335
Any other minority ethnic group	6

*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)	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.7
Average class size	26.9

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	275

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	574227
Total expenditure	569665
Expenditure per pupil	1443
Balance brought forward from previous year	7003
Balance carried forward to next year	11565

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	415
Number of questionnaires returned	180

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	41	3	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	48	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	22	66	8	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	53	19	4	2
The teaching is good.	39	53	3	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	48	16	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	45	4	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	41	53	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	33	52	11	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	41	51	3	3	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	54	6	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	49	18	3	6

26 parents added written comments to the questionnaires. 39 parents attended the parents' meeting

### Parents expressed significantly more strengths than weaknesses at the meeting and in the questionnaires, but the principal areas of concern were:

- inconsistency of homework – generally homework is not marked and pupils receive no feedback;
- lack of information to parents about the methodology of teaching, for example mathematics, to enable them to support work at home;
- lack of consistency in application of rewards;
- concern over mixed aged classes;
- some bullying and an inability to resolve problems promptly;
- concern about the lack of a coherent reading scheme;
- insufficient help and extended activities for the more able pupils.

## **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**

61. The school's baseline assessments indicate that most of the children enter the school with average levels of attainment. The children make good progress. Nearly all of them are on target to achieve the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five and most of them are likely to be working successfully at Level 1 of the National Curriculum, particularly in English and mathematics.
62. Most of the children exceed the national expectations for language and literacy before they reach the age of five. They talk confidently about their work and their experiences at home, ask sensible questions and enjoy investigating spoken language. For example, they quickly learn nursery rhymes, songs and poems which they enjoy sharing. They acquire a good vocabulary related to the work they do. The children develop very good listening skills. They quickly become absorbed in the stories they hear and eagerly participate in discussions about the characters and events in them. The children are good at listening to instructions. They concentrate hard and ask questions to get a clearer understanding of what they must do. They can be trusted to relay messages accurately and to listen to each other when participating in group discussions and when working collaboratively.
63. The children become confident and habitual readers. They read regularly at home and at school and many of them visit the local library. They know that print conveys meaning and many of them have developed sufficient knowledge of letter sounds to enable them to tackle unfamiliar words by sounding out their initial letters. They use other aids to reading, including illustrations and contextual cues. In one literacy lesson, for example, the children used the story's illustrations and the textual patterns set up by the author to help them to identify important words in an unfamiliar text. Once these had been established, the whole class read the story with confidence and enjoyment. All of the children recognise their own names in print and many of the most common words. The children quickly use their knowledge of reading to practice writing skills. Most of them form the letters of the alphabet accurately when they write their news and stories. They write their names with appropriate use of capital letters. Many of them can accurately spell regular single syllable words when they are writing, without the aid of the teacher. They have a good understanding of the different purposes of writing when for example, they make lists, annotate pictures, write stories and personal news. They make good use of the writing aids provided by the teachers to help them with unfamiliar or difficult words. Their writing is strongly featured in the classroom displays.
64. Most of the children exceed the desirable learning outcomes for mathematics. They have a good vocabulary of mathematical terms to describe shape, size and quantity. For example, the children know the names of the two dimensional shapes they use to construct pictures. Some confidently talk about three-dimensional shapes used to construct classroom models. The children recognise and create complex patterns. They confidently compare, sort, match, sequence and count, using everyday objects. They recognise and use numbers beyond ten and know how to record simple addition and subtraction problems. They have a good understanding of how time is measured. In one lesson, the children quickly learned to tell all the o'clocks and relate them to routine events at home and at school. For example, the average and higher attaining children could use the clocks they had constructed to show nine o'clock and twelve o'clock and explain that those were the times when they started lessons and ate lunch respectively. Nearly all of the children accurately record numbers to ten, and some write larger numbers.
65. The children attain good standards of knowledge and understanding of the world. They talk and

write about where they live, their environment, their families and past and present events in their own lives. They show a good awareness of the purposes of some of the features in the area in which they live, when, for example, they talk about the photographs of a visit they made to a local super-market. They know where the local library is and what it contains and they know about the local church and what it is used for. They show some awareness of life in other European countries when they discuss pictures 'sent' by Teddy on his tour through France, Switzerland and Italy. The children can talk about, for example, where the Eiffel Tower is and which of the traditional dolls on display comes from Holland. They successfully explore and recognise living things, objects and events in the natural and man-made world and they investigate similarities, differences, patterns and change. For example, they observe and record changes in the weather and investigate which objects are attracted by magnets and which are not. They use construction kits to build robots. They talk knowledgeably about nuts and bolts, spanners and keys, wheels and cogs. They explore and select materials for their different textures when they make 'feely' mice and they use scissors with a good degree of accuracy to cut circles and paper strips when they make clock faces. The children confidently use computers to draw and write. They know how to use the mouse to 'drag and drop' images and to control what happens on the screen. They write simple sentences and know how to correct mistakes by deleting text and re-typing. They confidently use a range of programs designed to develop their language and mathematical skills and understanding. For example, in one lesson, the children used a mathematical program to learn about comparisons of sets.

66. The children acquire a good range of creative skills. For example, they quickly acquire good skills in handling paintbrushes and in mixing colours when they paint portraits of themselves and when they explore a range of printing techniques. They draw human figures accurately and colour-in carefully. They use their imagination well when engaged in role-play. For example, they act out visiting and working in a fast-food outlet where they take turns in placing and taking orders and preparing the food. In music lessons, the children explore percussion instruments and experiment with rhythmic clapping. They sing enthusiastically and tunefully, often inventing actions to express the mood of the songs or the events they describe. In a dance lesson, the children successfully used their imaginations to convey the idea of a party to celebrate Teddy's homecoming after his trip around Europe. They used movements to convey the floppiness of the jelly and the bubbles in the pop.
67. The children's physical development is at least satisfactory and some aspects of it are good. The children make less progress in this area of learning than in the other areas, because they do not have opportunities to use large outdoor equipment such as climbing frames and large outdoor toys such as bicycles, scooters and peddle cars. However, they make good progress during indoor gymnastics and games lessons. For example, in one lesson, the children talked knowledgeably about how to move in different ways. They used an appropriate vocabulary to express their intentions. They showed an awareness of how the movement could be varied to include high and low actions, fast and slow ones, smooth and jerky movements. The children confidently climbed on to low apparatus and jumped and landed with a good degree of skill. They knew, for example, that it was important to land on their toes and to bend their knees at the moment of impact.
68. The children's personal and social development is very good. The children play well together and establish good relationships with their peers and with the adults who teach them. They work successfully as part of a group and independently when required. They are confident learners. They persevere with tasks, concentrate hard and seek help when they need it. They work on simple or routine tasks without the need for close supervision and they show a good degree of independence in selecting resources and in dressing themselves. The children are sensitive to the needs of others, offering support and encouragement to those who find a task difficult. They take turns when working at the computer and when sharing scissors or other resources. They express

their feelings appropriately and behave very well. The children have a strong sense of right and wrong and show a good degree of care for living things when, for example, they care for the class's pet hamster. During acts of worship, they show a range of appropriate responses such as concern for those in danger or who are suffering from the effects of natural disasters. In one assembly, the children contributed much to the exploration of what it means to be helpful towards each other.

69. The quality of teaching is good, overall, and sometimes very good. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of how children learn are good and inform the detailed and useful planning of lessons. The teachers have high expectations of what the children should know, understand and be able to do from term to term. The learning activities are interesting and challenging and are skilfully introduced and taught. The quality of the teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons, for example, is particularly good. It ensures that the children quickly acquire the basic skills so that they become confident and motivated learners. The teaching employs a wide range of effective methods to make the children's learning interesting as well as challenging. The children and their activities are well organised and managed. For example, in a lesson on learning how to read, the work was carefully matched to the needs of all the children. The teacher first introduced the main activity to the whole class then, at the point at which the work was more difficult, the lower attaining pupils left the main group and worked with the nursery nurse on reinforcement activities to consolidate their learning. The rest of the class continued with the main activity until the next stage in the learning. At this point, the average attaining pupils, under the supervision of another adult, left the main group to work on their tasks. The class teacher, left with the higher attaining children, then moved the work a stage further. This organisational strategy ensured that every child was suitably challenged and appropriately involved in the learning activities. It also demonstrated the effective deployment of teaching support staff.
70. A strong feature of the teaching, is the high level of collaboration among the teachers, the nursery nurse and the teaching support staff. This ensures that the children are well cared for and that the learning is well paced. Another strength of the teaching is the effective way the children's knowledge and understanding is assessed and monitored. Careful analysis of baseline tests and good records of each child's progress inform the teaching. The teaching makes good use of the outcomes of monitoring and assessment when they plan further work. The teaching is particularly successful in establishing very good standards of behaviour and independence among the children. This has a positive impact upon the quality of the learning because the teachers are not having to spend time dealing with disruptions to the lessons. There are no significant weaknesses in the teaching.
71. The management of provision for the under-fives is good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and carefully constructed to establish a high degree of continuity and progression from term to term. Because those who work in the reception classes are thoroughly professional in the way they collaborate in the planning and teaching of the curriculum, the children enjoy a good education and become happy and effective learners.

## **ENGLISH**

72. Standards in English, overall, by the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. Most pupils by the age of seven attain standards in speaking and listening in line with that expected nationally. For a small minority, listening skills are less well developed and, sometimes, pupils are impatient and do not instinctively listen well to each other's comments in discussion, which has a negative impact on their learning. Most pupils are keen to answer questions and contribute to discussions. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 can satisfactorily discuss the pictures in a non-fiction alphabet book and make sensible suggestions for an alphabet book of England. The range of vocabulary and use of

language is satisfactory, overall.

73. By the age of eleven, pupils attain above average standards in speaking and listening and can express their opinions clearly in a range of situations. For example, pupils in Year 6 can describe the special features of folk tales and in discussion give their opinions, backed by reasons, about some of the tales. In Year 5, pupils discuss the morals of some famous fables such as “The Lion and the Mouse” and, in Years 3 and 4, talk about the different styles of presentation of text. Most pupils across the key stage listen carefully to adults and each other and talk confidently about their work and everyday experiences.
74. By the age of seven, attainment in reading is above the national average. From the earliest stages, pupils learn a range of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words. Most pupils enjoy reading and have the opportunity to read a wide range of fiction books. They talk confidently about the books they read both at home and in school. Many join in the shared text sessions, reading with expression and can talk about the contents of the book. However, few pupils understand how to use the school library. The Reading Recovery Strategy, used for some pupils who are experiencing difficulties with reading is having a very positive impact on their attainment and progress.
75. The attainment of eleven-year-olds in reading is above the national average. Their reading skills are well developed and most read confidently for a range of purposes. Many can identify a favourite author and can offer opinions on a range of books. All pupils have reading targets which include for some reading more challenging fiction. Pupils know how to use contents and index pages and many know how to use advanced reading skills of skimming and scanning text for information. Although older pupils know how to use the school library, they do not regularly use it to develop their research skills. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 can confidently compare and contrast a television version of a story with the original text and explain the impact that viewing may have on reading. The Additional Literacy Strategy used with some pupils in Years 3 and 4 is having a positive impact on attainment in reading.
76. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above the national average. Pupils’ writing is well organised and they are beginning to adapt their writing for different readers. Stories and events are sequenced logically and many are beginning to use a range of interesting vocabulary in their writing. Lower attaining pupils are beginning to write, sequencing events, but this is not consistent and correct punctuation varies. Pupils can write simple definitions of animals so that other pupils can guess their names. By the end of the key stage, most pupils are using a joined style of writing.
77. Attainment in writing by the age of eleven is above the national average and by the end of the key stage their writing is fluent, interesting and carefully presented. Pupils have good experiences of writing for a range of purposes, for example, newspaper reports, instructional text and creative writing. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 describe a character in a story from another character’s point of view well and the core group can satisfactorily describe the features and behaviour of a character in a fable. Pupils in Year 5 use a story planner appropriately to prepare their homework task of writing their own fable. In Years 3 and 4, pupils successfully complete work, putting apostrophes in the correct place to reinforce the learning objective of the lesson. By the end of the key stage, many pupils’ writing includes the use of interesting vocabulary and correct punctuation and spellings. Higher attaining pupils are using paragraphs correctly in their work.
78. The quality of teaching is sound in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Lessons are well planned by the teachers, using their good knowledge of the format of the literacy hour. Introductions are good and, in some lessons, the objectives are clearly shared with the pupils. Because of this, pupils respond well, with positive attitudes to their work, good relationships and

mainly good behaviour. Where a small minority of pupils in Key Stage 1, however, behave inappropriately by calling out, the teachers have to constantly stop the flow of the lesson, which impacts on the progress the pupils make during that lesson. Teachers are skilled at questioning to promote discussions and to make assessments and praise is used well to raise self-esteem. This has a positive impact on standards. Explanations are clear and the high expectations of presentation of work and attainment support learning well. A good pace is usually achieved, because resources are well prepared. Where teaching is very good and excellent there is excellent subject knowledge, very good pace to the lessons, very clear instructions and very good relationships, resulting in learning also being very good or excellent. The teacher knows individual pupils' targets and makes good reference to them during the lesson, adapting the lesson to meet their needs. The teaching of Reading Recovery and Additional Literacy has a very positive impact on those pupils who are receiving support and planning clearly meets their needs. Teachers make good use of literacy across the curriculum especially in history, geography and science, with good results.

79. Assessment procedures are good and include targeted assessments each term in areas of English, optional tests in Key Stage 2 and teacher assessments recorded at the end of each year. Each pupil has a reading record sheet and there are reading recovery records for those pupils who need them. All assessments are used well to guide teachers in planning suitable activities to meet the needs of the pupils. The results of standardised tests are carefully analysed to support planning in order to raise attainment. For example, teachers are focusing on non-narrative writing to support the attainment of boys in the school. Management of English is good and the co-ordinator uses her excellent subject knowledge very effectively to support her colleagues. There is a satisfactory selection of books in the school library. However, its location in one of the teaching areas does not enable pupils to use it effectively for research and to develop their library skills. Resources for literacy are good and have improved since the previous inspection and good use is made of the local storytellers and the arts cinema.

## **MATHEMATICS**

80. The school has undertaken a careful analysis of pupils' results and has identified some areas of under-performance. These are being addressed by the provision of a more structured programme for mathematics, which includes following the guidance of the numeracy project and increasing the pupils' facility with mental mathematics. Classes have also been created to provide extra challenge for higher attaining older pupils and all pupils are being given valuable extra experience in how to structure their work in readiness for test situations.
81. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly in line with the national average, with an appropriate number of pupils attaining at a higher level. Most pupils can count forwards and backwards in twos and fives and some see the patterns these make, although they are not always confident in their knowledge of simple tables. Many of these pupils are becoming confident in identifying odd and even numbers and are almost secure in their knowledge of number facts to ten. The higher attaining pupils can recall addition facts mentally and have a good recall of many tables. They can identify patterns and solve number problems and explain the strategies used. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with the national average, with a significant number of pupils likely to attain at a higher level. In this particular group of pupils there were a larger than usual number of lower attaining pupils. Many pupils are developing their own strategies for solving problems, as when calculating the area of a perimeter and use an appropriate vocabulary for measure. They work with increasing confidence, orally. The higher attaining pupils use their own problem-solving methods and explain the area of compound shapes clearly to the class. The quality of presentation found in the sample of work for both key stages is very good, with pupils of all ages setting out their workings well and showing pride in their



work. At both key stages, the using and applying element of mathematics is well developed and all other elements are satisfactorily developed

82. The school's provision for numeracy is good and is developed in many subjects. In science, there is regular use of tables and graphical representation in the recording of findings. For instance, Year 1 pupils made a block graph of their pets and Year 2 pupils investigated materials and completed tables to show their findings. Key Stage 2 pupils made graphs following investigations of how much oxygen a candle burned. In the design and technology work in the school, rulers are used to make increasingly careful measurements, such as when joining the points on their star graphs in Year 3 and Year 4. The oldest pupils made precise measurements for their 'countries and capitals' quiz board. Work in history uses time lines and pupils develop a good awareness of chronological order throughout the school. All classes regularly use information technology to practice and consolidate their mathematical calculations and understanding of number, using calculators and computers. For instance, Year 6 pupils learned to use several function keys on their calculators to calculate area.
83. Teaching and learning and the pupils' present progress are satisfactory, overall, in Key Stage 1. The progress for higher attaining pupils is usually good, because of well-planned work. Progress of pupils with special educational needs and of those pupils with English as an additional language is generally good, because of the well-targeted support provided. There is variation, however, between year groups and classes in both the quality of work produced and the progress made, because of work in previous years and differing expectations from teachers. The high quality team planning provides guidance to teachers in the careful provision of work for pupils of different attainment. In all of the lessons observed, teachers showed good subject knowledge, used effective teaching methods, including questioning and were generally clear in their delivery. This motivated the pupils, enabling them, for instance, to become more fluent and accurate in counting and to begin to note patterns more readily. Sometimes, understanding was not developed sufficiently and the pupils lacked confidence. Review sessions at the end of lessons celebrated what pupils could do well and clarified what might not be understood. Where teaching was good or better the pace of the lesson was swift, time was used effectively, with pupils practising and improving their mental skills, often in interesting ways. For instance, pupils each had a hand of bananas made in card that they used well to show the teacher their answers. The creative use of pegs on a coat-hanger enabled the pupils in another class to see clearly the numbers that together made ten. Sometimes, however, the introductory sessions of lessons are a little long and the pupils lose concentration, or sounds from other classes nearby cause distractions and pupils cannot always hear properly. Tasks provided for the pupils did not always contain sufficient challenge to ensure that maximum progress was made. The pupils in Year 1 often show greater confidence and facility with numbers and mathematical calculations than some of those in Year 2, because of work done previously by these pupils. The acquisition of skills and understanding at Key Stage 1 has sometimes been slow, because of insufficient emphasis on these elements, although recent progress is better, because of the stronger focus on acquiring speed to calculate mentally in numeracy lessons.
84. The attitudes of pupils in Key Stage 1 are usually satisfactory and often better, although they vary. The pupils are enthusiastic and eager to answer questions and they often, but not always, listen carefully. In most classes, they organise themselves rapidly into their groups and start working promptly, although there were examples of pupils not settling to their work and of occasional challenging behaviour. The pupils usually co-operate well and share resources, treating them carefully. Some pupils were less used to being independent and working unsupported in their groups.
85. The teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 are generally at least good and often better, with some

excellent lessons seen. Planning across the year groups is good, learning checked and assessments made well throughout and at the end of lessons. This leads to the constant provision of well-matched and challenging work, with pupils being given useful feedback and often involved in the assessment of their work. The teachers show good knowledge in the subject and ensure that the processes needed are explained and practised in gradual steps, so that pupils develop their understanding well and build on what they have previously learned. In this way, they identify and understand the methods they need to use in their problem-solving, of, for instance, the area of a rectangle in a Year 6 class. A group of higher attaining pupils in Year 6 was taught very well by a specialist teacher how to use a written frame for calculating perimeter of area and this provided them with a useful strategy that broke down complex work into simple steps, as in another lesson at Year 5. Mathematical skills are taught in a logical sequence and lessons are often exciting and challenging, with resources and time used well, as when using a hundred square and arrows to represent calculations made, with Year 3 and Year 4 pupils. There is a strong emphasis on pupils' explanations of their thinking and the processes used and on the use of correct vocabulary. The teachers have consistently high expectations of the pupils and usually use time very efficiently. In the excellent lessons, the teachers, with pace, challenge and successful methods, provide the pupils with strategies to use in their work. They teach impressively, with inspiration, to encourage confidence, enjoyment and the full involvement of the pupils in their learning.

86. The attitudes of pupils at Key Stage 2 are at least good and often better. In most lessons, the pupils show enthusiasm and high levels of concentration, application and motivation. They show enjoyment and increasing confidence in their work and are proud of their achievements. They work well together, often show wonder and are beginning to show reflective qualities in their work.
87. There has been substantial improvement in the provision for mathematics since the last inspection and there is a higher profile for the subject within the school. Measures have been put in place which are beginning to influence standards and an ethos of high achievement is now being developed. There is an improved planning structure for teaching mathematics using improved resources of commercial schemes and numeracy resources. The assessment of learning is thorough and systems are efficient. The numeracy strategy has been introduced well providing a greater emphasis on mental mathematics. Targets for the individual progress of pupils are being used well. Provision and challenge for higher attaining pupils are improved. This includes challenge for Year 6 pupils when taught by a specialist teacher in a booster class. A very well informed numeracy governor is working with the school and with parents. Teaching and learning in the subject are being monitored regularly by teachers and governors. Analysis of results is now well developed and targets for individual pupils and in year groups are being monitored. Although low at present, because of past progress, the school, governors and the inspection team are confident that by 2002 the expected national targets will have been reached. Parents are now very involved in learning. They receive information about proposed learning at the beginning of the year, share in their children's targets at consultation sessions and are involved in a valuable family numeracy programme. They have also helped to make numeracy resources. Quite recently, an impressive structure for homework has been put into place. This develops the work done at school with the under-fives, with that supported at home by many parents. The two co-ordinators provide effective management of the subject which is beginning to have a positive effect on standards.

## **SCIENCE**

88. Inspection evidence confirms the view that attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is above average and pupils make good progress. Progress throughout the school is good for pupils with special educational needs. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

89. By the end of Key Stage 1, inspection evidence indicates that pupils achieve average standards, overall. Standards of investigative and experimental work however, are good. With guidance from the teacher, pupils in Year 2 predict which material will make a suitable coat for teddy. They test a range of materials for strength, flexibility and whether the material is waterproof and record their results. Higher attaining pupils work independently; average and lower attaining pupils need support from adult helpers to complete the task. Pupils use their findings and evaluate which material would be suitable for teddy's coat. Higher attaining pupils identify different materials in the classroom, and give reasons why the materials were used. Pupils have a sound understanding of what living things need to remain healthy and an understanding of main body parts. They identify foods that will help keep teeth healthy. Pupils write independently about how sound waves travel through the air. High attaining pupils describe how a shadow is formed and describe it as a mini eclipse that happens when the sun's rays are blocked out.
90. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain standards that are above average. Pupils in Year 6 study a daffodil plant. They know the names of the flower parts and understand and can describe the function of those parts. Higher attaining pupils know about and understand photosynthesis. Average pupils identify the stigma, stamens and sepal parts of the daffodil and can discuss the function of those parts. Standards in Year 5 are well above average. All pupils understand and can explain the importance of a fair test and how to make the test fair. They correctly identify which variables could be changed in the experiment and identify which variables to keep the same. Pupils identify accurately what and how they will measure in their test and state their findings clearly. In their work on gravity, they test to see whether changing the mass and height of an object they are dropping affects the depth of the hole when the object lands in the sand. Pupils use conversion graphs to record their results in Newtons and they record mass and height and depth of the drop correctly. They draw conclusions from their results based on scientific knowledge and understanding. In their work on materials, pupils investigate and test different wood samples by scratching, hitting, wetting and treading. They conclude that chipboard will be the best material for a floor. Pupils have a good understanding of the solar system and the relative position of the sun, earth and planets. They describe accurately how day and night are caused, how the earth moves in space and how an eclipse occurs. Pupils write about food micro-organisms and the effect of freezing, pickling, drying, tinning and refrigeration in the preservation of food.
91. Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Standards in investigative and experimental science have improved in both key stages. Inspection evidence indicates that very good progress has been made in developing pupils' ability to generate their own ideas and suggest ways to test materials and investigate their properties. Science is now taught as a subject in its own right and this has helped to develop pupils' independence in investigative work and enables pupils and teachers to share the results of their conclusions resulting in greater impact on learning. The new policy and scheme of work identify the development of scientific skills and the implementation of the scheme is having a beneficial impact on attitudes to science and standards achieved.
92. The quality of teaching in science is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. The teachers' very good subject knowledge at Key Stage 2 ensures that pupils develop good understanding and knowledge of scientific terms such as photosynthesis. All lessons observed at Key Stage 2 include good levels of scientific knowledge. This contributes to pupils' clear understanding of scientific terminology and process of investigation. The very good explanation and probing questions stimulate pupils to consider the effect of increased mass and the effect of gravity. Pupils are guided to consider and identify results and explain conclusions through their understanding of science. They apply their knowledge to every day situations. The use of

specialist teaching for pupils in Years 5 and 6 ensures that continuity, quality and good progress in learning are maintained. A strength of teaching at Key Stage 2 is the high level of challenge, the very good pace and rigorous re-enforcement of learning. This has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and standards they achieve. Homework is very well used to consolidate and revise work and the revision programme is having a good impact on pupils' learning at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, a strength in teaching is the appropriate use of challenging investigative work to extend learning. Pupils are encouraged to think scientifically and give reasons for their answers. For example, if the material is rigid and stiff, will it make a suitable coat for teddy? Pupils respond to the challenge of independent work very well. However, some pupils become restless and fidgety between activities, when the teachers' instructions and guidelines are not firm enough for all pupils. There is insufficient work for all abilities and for two-year groups within one class. In both key stages, science makes a good contribution to pupils' learning in English and mathematics, information technology art and dance. Teachers identify key words and tables and graphs are well used. Pupils use the computer to record information and the solar system is used as a stimulus for work in art and dance. Assessment in science is very good throughout the school, teachers record pupils' attainment regularly and this is well used to inform teachers' planning. A significant strength is the pupils' own evaluation of their work and the practice of identifying targets for improvement.

93. Pupils enjoy science and are particularly motivated by the challenging practical activities planned for them. They co-operate well and share resources sensibly. Pupils work enthusiastically in pairs or small groups and help each other complete tasks set; they co-operate well with staff and parent helpers. Behaviour is good and the pupils take turns and listen well to each other. Key Stage 2 pupils conscientiously complete homework and are challenged by the work. Pupils are attentive and keen to answer questions in class introductions and recap sessions. Older pupils show interest and joy when they explore and identify parts of the daffodil flower.
94. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and conscientious and has made a significant impact on raising standards at Key Stage 2. Plans are monitored regularly and formal monitoring of teaching has recently started.

## **ART**

95. By the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils attain standards appropriate for their age and progress in learning is average when compared to national and similar schools. Due to timetabling, lessons were observed only in Key Stage 2 during the inspection. Discussion with pupils and a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning enabled judgements to take place. The quality of display work around the school is good. Care is taken to ensure that all pupils' work is displayed attractively. Pupils' work is appreciated and valued.
96. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can control a pencil with increasing confidence and they use simple line drawings to illustrate work in other subjects. In science, for example, they draw parts of a tree and different sources of light. They print, using different colours and repeating patterns. Chalk drawings of a hyacinth plant show evidence of work from observation. Standards of painting are average. Pupils paint different marks such as wavy lines and straight lines and they use several different paint colours. Work from imagination at Key Stage 1 is less well developed.
97. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils create a design of an alien suitable for batik. Pupils have good knowledge of the design process. They consider the characteristic features of a chosen planet, the sun, or earth and capture aspects of it in their design. Standards of work are good in Year 5 when pupils add surface to give texture to their design. Pupils have a good understanding of the batik process. They demonstrate care, using hot wax and they apply colour and create tone, using

'brusho' sensitively. They explain the reasons for the style of their design. For example, a Mercury alien character is represented with red and blue to signify the cold and hot side of the planet and craters are used as decoration. Pupils' evaluation of their own and others' work is well developed. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 create Beowulf masks, showing good use of colour and range of techniques, such as paper curling and collage work to decorate and give a characteristic style to their work. Pupils have a sound understanding of the Impressionist artists and can identify the technique used. They produce paintings of the solar system using the impressionist style.

98. Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained in art. Good progress has been made in developing planning throughout the school. Progression is now identified in developing artistic skills, knowledge and understanding. The school is currently extending resources to include a wider range of professional artists' work and styles.
99. No teaching was observed at Key Stage 1. However, a close scrutiny of work on display and teachers' planning indicate that teaching is satisfactory. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. A strength in teaching at Key Stage 2 is the clear instructions and open ended questions that check pupils' understanding of the lesson objectives and previous work. This good teaching contributes to pupils' clear understanding of what they are doing and enables all pupils to discuss aspects of their work. Organisation and methods are effective. Parent helpers and support staff are well used in small group work. When pupils are applying hot wax and 'brusho', adult helpers make a significant contribution to giving pupils feedback on their work. Pupils are challenged well. For example, pupils in Year 5 are challenged to design an alien to reflect the mood and natural colours of a planet and are encouraged to use research to guide their final choice. The good links with other subjects, especially mathematics, English and science make a significant contribution to re-enforcing learning in other subject areas. When teaching is less effective, teachers spend too long with introductory explanations leaving less time for pupils' practical work. Progress in the two year cycle and in the range and quality of work produced is less evident from Year 5 to 6 and across year groups in the same class.
100. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are enthusiastic about their work. The teachers' positive feedback and challenge to improve their work ensures that pupils concentrate well and behave sensibly in art lessons. The care that pupils take is a reflection of the teacher's careful explanation of what is required. Pupils handle resources sensibly. Art done to support work in religious education on creation is of good quality and pupils collaborate well with each other to produce attractive paintings. Pupils handle materials sensibly and are responsible for clearing up at the end of lessons. Pupils enjoy designing effective posters to advertise the anti-bullying council.
101. There is a scheme of work and policy for art. This has recently been introduced and has not had time to make an impact on standards within the school. Visiting artists and visits to local and national art galleries make a good contribution to art within the school.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

102. Although it was not possible to see any lessons in design and technology at Key Stage 1, it is clear from listening to pupils, looking at work completed previously and teachers' planning, that the attainment and progress of pupils in both key stages are above that expected for their ages. The pupils use the whole design, make and improvement process and concentrate on evaluating the success of their work. Year 2 pupils study African designed products and plan and design an animal, using limited materials. The Year 6 pupils work confidently from plans and check, measure and change their work, using tools accurately to produce a quality finish when constructing a quiz board to light up when answers are correct. They are challenged to design their own improved construction kits, based on the study of commercial ones. The high standards

have been maintained since the previous inspection.

103. The teaching of design and technology is good in both key stages, with some very good teaching, because expectations are high and good learning opportunities are assessed well. The teachers have good subject knowledge and organise lessons well in order to develop the pupils' skills and understanding and enable them to acquire the vocabulary they need. High quality planning is done jointly within year teams and with support from the co-ordinator. This helps provide progression. The teachers teach with confidence, enjoyment and imagination and this is conveyed to the pupils, who learn with similar enthusiasm and enjoyment. The lessons sustain good pace, because the teachers plan their work well and know what learning they expect of the pupils. Resources are organised well beforehand, with others readily accessible to the pupils. The teachers explain very clearly the design process and use board work well to teach pupils how to record their work in, for instance, a star graph pathway. This enables pupils of all attainment levels, including those with special educational needs, to see clearly what is required and reinforces learning. The youngest pupils learn to look carefully at their designs and Year 2 pupils reflected the teaching of good evaluative skills in their taped evaluations of the houses they had designed and made. An effective review session in one lesson with pupils of Years 3 and 4 helped them to understand that personal preferences might influence their own design of muesli. In another, pupils were taught the skills to evaluate the muesli they were testing. The learning in both key stages is good. The pupils with higher attainment are generally challenged by the evaluative nature of the subject and the activities provided. For instance, a pupil in Year 4, when constructing a graph accurately, chose to add a key independently to explain the findings. However, very occasionally, insufficient ways are found for these pupils to explain their thinking.
104. The attitudes of the pupils in all classes are consistently good. They work carefully and with concentration and increasing accuracy on their models, which they design with enjoyment and enthusiasm. For instance, pupils in Years 1 and 2 showed pride and pleasure in the houses they had made. The pupils show increasing initiative and responsibility when working together and choosing their resources and they organise themselves well. In both key stages, they reflect on their learning, because they are encouraged to be thoughtful about how they might improve their completed work.
105. Since the last inspection, the monitoring of planning and work in design and technology has been introduced to ensure progress in the use of the full design, make and improve process. A useful portfolio of work is being developed. The school has a clear overview of the needs of the subject and has identified the development of a new scheme of work in preparation for the new curriculum requirements. The subject makes a positive contribution to numeracy skills such as the creation of graphs and tables to show findings and the use of measurement in construction. Literacy skills are also well developed when pupils evaluate their work. National Curriculum requirements are met.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

106. Pupils' attainment in geography is as expected when they leave the school. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection, but there is evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work and displays that pupils' learning is sound. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Whereas the subject was previously taught as part of an integrated curriculum, geography is now taught as a separate subject to ensure satisfactory progression of knowledge and skills.
107. In Key Stage 1, pupils know some of the important physical and human features of Africa through their topic on Kenya. They know about the area in which they live and find where their house is situated from a local map. They can identify important places on a map of the British

Isles. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a sound understanding of the main features of a river. Most pupils can draw a river from its source to the sea. They can draw and label features such as valley, gorge, waterfall and delta. Lower attaining pupils can label most of the features correctly on a given picture of a river.

108. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. The pupils are generally enthusiastic and respond well to the teachers. Lessons are appropriately planned and objectives are clear. Satisfactory use is made of the new scheme of work recently introduced, which includes appropriate assessment tasks. Teachers question appropriately and make very good use of resources to promote discussions. The school makes good use of visits in the locality to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding. Homework is well planned and develops the pupils' learning, in particular in Key Stage 1, when pupils were using well their information from home to gain an understanding of Kenya. The school is benefiting well from its involvement in an international project, which is having a positive impact on pupils' geographical knowledge and skills.

## **HISTORY**

109. Standards of attainment in history are above those expected when pupils leave the school. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
110. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are developing an awareness of the past and chronology through a study of their families. They know about the schools in the past and toys used by their parents and grandparents. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Years 3 and 4 can compare well life in Saxon times to that of today. They have a good understanding of the arrival of the Saxons in England and can describe their daily life in detail. Most have a clear understanding of the role of an archaeologist and can use a range of artefacts well to develop understanding. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 have good knowledge of changes in technology since 1930. Through discussion, most can sequence a series of events relating to space travel in the correct order.
111. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good. No lesson was observed in Key Stage 1, as, this term, there is a geography focus. In many lessons, the learning objectives are clearly shared with the pupils at the start of the lesson and subject knowledge by teachers is good. Pupils' listen well to each other's ideas and respond well to questions from adults. Good learning opportunities are created through good pace and well-organised resources. Instructions for tasks are clear and this enables pupils to settle promptly and focus well on their work. Well-planned practical activities enable pupils to learn effectively. Pupils work co-operatively, particularly when working on the activity about space. There is a good range of tasks to suit the different ages and abilities of pupils. Good use is made of the new scheme of work and assessment opportunities to guide teachers in their planning and assessments of individual attainment. The management of history is good and good use is made of the local area to enrich the curriculum.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

112. By the end of both key stages, pupils attain the standards expected of pupils aged seven and eleven. The standards are significantly better now than they were at the time of the most recent inspection, mainly because the teaching is better and because the school has improved the curriculum, the pupils' access to resources and the way the subject is managed.
113. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils work with a good range of appropriate programs. They use computers to create simple texts, graphs and pictures. They are beginning to understand how they can change the appearance of texts by altering the style and size of the fonts they use. Pupils

successfully use word processing to draft letters when, for example, they write to a school in Kenya. The letters are well presented and observe the conventions of layout, including those for addresses and salutations. The pupils use the key tools of simple graphics programs to produce pictures and patterns that they annotate with text. They use a simple database to store and sort information and to communicate their findings in simple block graphs. Most of the pupils develop an appropriate range of skills to allow them to make effective use of programs that support their learning in other subjects. For example, they use the mouse and keyboard effectively to execute commands and to 'drag and drop' images. They know how to open and close programs, how to save work and how to print copies of what they do. These skills enable them to access and use programs that promote learning in literacy and numeracy, but also in other subjects. For example, in geography, the pupils use a modelling program to design small towns that feature road networks, residential areas and local services such as shops, offices and churches.

114. By the age of eleven, most of the pupils know how to use a good range of basic tools in word-processing programs. For example, they create texts that include poems, stories, labels and posters. They successfully use formatting tools and 'cut and paste' techniques to change the appearance of their work when they consider who their readers are and how best to communicate with them. Nearly all of the pupils know how to access information on CD ROMs in a range of subjects. They use graphics programs with an adequate degree of confidence and know how to import graphics into texts. They investigate some basic features of spreadsheet and databases programs and have sufficient knowledge, understanding and skill to make adequate use of them to support learning in other subjects. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the pupils used a database to sort and access information about the solar system. Most of the pupils make effective use of the Internet to send e-mails and search web sites for information to support their learning in history, geography and science. The school has a well-constructed web site that features a Year 6 web page. Some of the older pupils, with the help of a knowledgeable parent, have begun to construct their own pages on the site. The pupils are familiar with control technology and with the technology for modelling. However, they do not have sufficient experience of the technology used for monitoring in science investigations where, for example, they would be expected to collect data on changes in temperature or the levels of different sounds.

115. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and is most often good. It has improved significantly since the last inspection, partly as the outcome of the school's appointment of a knowledgeable co-ordinator to manage the subject and partly because the school has successfully raised the level of the other teachers' confidence and competence. Both developments have encouraged the teachers to make better use of the available resources. The teaching is good, overall, because the specialist teacher, who has good knowledge and understanding of the subject, does much of it and is able to advise and support other teachers effectively. Much of the teaching, therefore, is well matched to the needs of the different groups of pupils. It is characterised by high expectations of what the pupils should know, understand and be able to do by the end of each lesson. Another strength of the teaching is the effective use teachers make of the laptop computer and overhead projector to introduce and demonstrate new skills to the pupils. This makes the teaching efficient, because it allows all of the pupils in a lesson to benefit from direct, whole class teaching. The teaching successfully employs a wide range of other methods, including paired work, discussions, reviews and the skilful use of questioning, to support and promote learning. The pupils and the learning tasks are well organised and managed for effective learning. Teachers quickly establish a rapport with their pupils that permits them to maintain a good pace to the lessons. These strengths of the teaching have a positive impact upon the quality of the pupils' learning. They provide the pupils with many opportunities to review and consolidate skills and to acquire new skills quickly. They encourage the pupils to invest good levels of intellectual and creative effort in their work and to work at a good pace. In the lessons seen, the pupils showed a strong interest in what they were doing. They persevered with challenging tasks and maintained



good levels of concentration. However, a small number of pupils take too long to settle down to work at the beginning of lessons.

116. The teaching has no significant weaknesses, but there are a number of areas in which it could be improved. For example, it does not consistently take sufficient account of the needs of the higher attaining pupils in order to raise further their level of attainment. Whilst all teachers make effective use of the resources in the computer suite, they sometimes make less effective use of those based in the classrooms. For example, the teachers use the available resources well to support learning in literacy and numeracy in the morning sessions. However, they make insufficient use of them in the afternoon sessions to support learning in other subjects by, for example, providing sufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in independent research or in communicating and presenting what they are learning.
117. The school has successfully addressed the issues raised by the last inspection. The subject is well managed. The school is developing effective systems for monitoring, evaluating and improving performance. It is achieving the ambitious targets it has set itself, in relation to raising the level of attainment among its pupils across all aspects of the subject. An appropriate policy, a useful scheme of work and the teachers' improved level of confidence now underpin the teaching. The management of the subject has achieved the latter by implementing an effective programme of support and professional development opportunities for teachers and classroom support staff.

## MUSIC

118. Standards are in line with expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and above expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn about timbre, when they consider objects that make metallic sounds, using different kitchen utensils. They begin to appreciate that instruments are made of different materials and, therefore, make different sounds and, when listening to a piece of music, they begin to recognise the brass instruments. Pupils learn songs from Africa and enjoy the sound of a different language and the rhythms they make, changing the time and volume very successfully. In Key Stage 2, they also sing songs from different countries and sing Frère Jacques in French. There are good opportunities for pupils to compose, perform, listen and appraise music in class. They write pieces of music to accompany topics such as 'the planets' using a combination of music on compact disc and their own instruments. They also combine dance and their own composition when they compose music in small groups, similar to Holst's Mars from The Planet Suite. They discuss how the composer creates 'mood' and the different moods, when they compare Mars and Venus compositions. They write down words that are conjured up in their minds when they listen to different pieces of music. Pupils write music for drum, tambourine, castanets, triangles, wood blocks and cymbals, using a graphic score. They use a graphic score to portray Anglo Saxons arriving in their boats. Tape recordings are made of pupils' compositions which show that a high degree of discussion takes place when composing. Assemblies are used well to introduce pupils to music from a range of cultures and they are encouraged to listen to and appraise what they hear, putting forward their own opinions. Opportunities are also given in assemblies to perform both what has been learned in class lessons and in instrumental lessons.
119. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Pupils' learning is good in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, good opportunities are taken to link music with personal development and, during a song, younger pupils are taught how to shake hands with one another. Pupils enjoy listening to music and some have a good understanding of how instruments such as a harp are played and enjoy miming as the music is played. Pupils enjoy singing on their own and with a partner. In Key Stage 2, pupils take appraising and improving their own compositions seriously and standards in this aspect of the curriculum are much higher

than is usually seen. They enjoy music and learn quickly.

120. The quality of teaching is very good in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Pupils' views are valued in lessons and their contributions and ideas welcomed. As a result, there are good discussions, as well as opportunities to sing, play and appreciate music in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, music in one lesson was cleverly linked to literacy, when the story of the Iron Man was read and a new song was introduced along side the story. By the time the story was finished, the new song is well known. Flash cards are also used well to introduce subject-specific vocabulary to the pupils. Lessons are enjoyable and productive because of the careful planning and the very good range of linked and progressive activities in them. At the end of lessons, teachers successfully assess what the pupils have learned through careful questioning. Although teachers are not specialist they are well led and lessons are successful. Occasionally, however, there is a lack of knowledge of musical vocabulary, which would not necessarily be noticed unless lessons were carefully monitored. In-service training in this aspect has not yet been given.
121. There is a very broad curriculum, with not only imaginative class lessons but also many other opportunities for musical development. Instrumental lessons are given and pupils have the opportunities to learn the recorder, guitar, string, woodwind and brass instruments. They perform at end-of-term concerts as well as in assemblies. Good standards in playing the flute are attained and satisfactory standards in trumpet playing, sometimes in parts. In violin, pupils are entered for graded examinations with success. The school has recently set up a small orchestra which it hopes will increase in size over time. This gives pupils a good opportunity to play in a moral formal setting. Older pupils have also taken part in a music workshop in Ely cathedral.
122. There has been a complete change in the way music is taught in the school since the last inspection, when a specialist took all lessons. A direct comparison is not, therefore, possible. However, all class teachers now take their own class music lessons successfully and often very successfully under the strong leadership of the co-ordinator who writes very detailed lesson plans for non-specialist teachers. This is a positive move forward. The specialist who previously taught the music in the school is now retired but gives willingly and ably of her time to take clubs at lunch time and after school. These include a choir and a club for pupils in the reception class. High standards are expected and both are valuable times for the pupils. The younger pupils, including those with special educational needs, are given individual attention in a small group. Pupils in the choir are taught the importance of facial expression when singing and how to produce their voices correctly. They sing in parts.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

123. By the end of both Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils attain standards that are appropriate for their age and progress in learning is average, when compared to national and similar schools. Due to time-tabling, no lessons were observed in games at Key Stage 1 or gymnastics at Key Stage 2. Discussion with pupils and a scrutiny of planning enabled judgements to take place.
124. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' ability to link movements together in gymnastics and remember a short dance phrase is well developed. In gymnastics, pupils know, understand and perform curled, stretched and wide shapes. High attaining pupils travel and remember to hold curled, stretched and wide shapes. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs travel confidently, but do not always hold shapes with clarity. All pupils demonstrate well-developed resilience and high attaining pupils perform curled sideways and extended rolls with appropriate body tension. In dance, pupils explore creeping actions for their space dance. They select, remember and refine three creeping actions well. Awareness of direction, dynamics and expression is well developed. Pupils' ability to observe and comment on each other's work is a

strength. The improvement in the quality of the dance was evident after effective evaluation and feedback by pupils to their partner. Pupils lift, carry and place apparatus sensibly. They have satisfactory awareness and can talk about the effects of exercise on the body.

125. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can explain the effect of exercise on the body and have some understanding of attack and defence strategies in games. Pupils talk about basic principles of attack and defence in a game of netball. Throwing and catching is well developed; pupils practise throwing to a moving target and receive the ball with reasonable accuracy. In small groups, pupils improve their ability to dodge and mark, and they demonstrate good awareness of the space. Pupils play in a full game of netball. However, skills to play in a full game are insufficiently developed. Catching and throwing in the large game situation is not always consistent and footwork is insufficiently developed. In Years 3 and 4, pupils achieve good standards in their games. They send and receive a football with increasing accuracy and control. Pupils explain and demonstrate how to intercept and gain possession of the ball. In dance, Year 6 pupils explore appropriate movements to communicate their space dance, 'Big Bang'. Pupils hold starting and finishing positions, but expression and confidence in movement is not fully developed. Pupils are not challenged to remember the sequence and order of their movements and, therefore, movement memory is not well developed. Evaluation and feedback to others is a strength and is well developed. Pupils develop an awareness of team building through outdoor adventure activities and problem solving such as 'bench order.' They describe qualities of a good team. However, opportunities for pupils to practice and improve the physical aspects of the lesson are insufficient to ensure that good progress is made. Learning opportunities are limited by the lack of challenge in the problem solving activities. Pupils swim for 6 weeks in the course of a year. No swimming lessons took place during the inspection.
126. Standards in physical education have remained stable since the last inspection. The school has introduced swimming since the last inspection, but none took place during the inspection week. A significant improvement since the last inspection has been in the quality of pupils' evaluation of their own and others' work and the quality of the feedback given. The evaluation makes a significant contribution to pupils' speaking and listening. The school has made good progress in developing planning and identifying progression throughout the school. There is a detailed scheme of work in gymnastics. The co-ordinator is monitoring lessons through the planning and some lesson observations. Although there were no opportunities to observe cricket during the inspection, this aspect has been well developed within the school. Qualified coaches teach school teams who achieve notable success in county competitive events.
127. Pupils enjoy their lessons and have a good attitude to the subject. Pupils are courteous, keen and interested in their work. In all lessons observed, pupils worked well and remained on task throughout. Behaviour is good. Pupils listen to instructions well and respond well to their teacher. Relationships are good. They work sensibly alongside others when travelling around the room and also in small groups, for example, in Year 6, when practising their space dance. Pupils are sensible and responsible, for example, when Year 1 and 2 pupils lift, carry and position apparatus for gymnastics. Behaviour is good and pupils are sensible and responsible when using equipment and resources.
128. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, throughout the school. Lessons are well planned and organised, teachers have good relationships with pupils and instructions are clear. In the good lessons, the explanation and teaching point ensure that pupils clearly understand what they have to do to improve their performance. The teacher reinforces learning and challenges pupils to consider acquisition of further skills. In gymnastics, in Years 1 and 2, the teacher challenges pupils to consider the range and quality of movements performed. In dance at Key Stage 1, the teacher was effective in constantly giving pupils feedback on their performance and challenging them to

consider levels, directions, speed and expression. These aspects were evident in the pupils' work. In the games lesson in Year 3 and 4 the teacher demonstrated effectively how to intercept a moving ball and despite cold blustery weather conditions, this demonstration was effective in raising pupils' performance and accuracy. Pupils were given the opportunity to consolidate their acquisition of basic skills and the teacher was flexible in adapting the content of the lesson to suit the cold conditions. This ensured that pupils enjoyed the lesson and remained highly motivated throughout. Where teaching is less effective there is insufficient emphasis on the quality of the work produced and insufficient guidelines to extend pupils' performance. This results in performance that lacks confidence and where pupils are not fully extended in their movement. Lack of pace and insufficient emphasis on good levels of physical activity contribute to lessons that lack challenge for all pupils.

129. The co-ordinator was appointed at the beginning of this term. She is enthusiastic and has already taken positive action to improve the provision for physical education within the school. There are schemes of work and planning is good. Learning objectives are identified and progression is evident in the planning. Assessment opportunities are identified in the planning.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

130. Attainment at the end of both key stages is broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and is showing clear signs of improvement because of recent developments. By the time they leave school, many pupils are just beginning to understand what it means to take a religion seriously. As they progress through the school, they are acquiring an appreciation of the practices and beliefs of Christianity and increasingly of some of the other major traditions such as Sikhism. In all their work, the pupils are encouraged to relate what they are learning to their own feelings and experiences and most develop a good awareness of themselves and the world around them and show sensitivity to the needs of others. They also acquire useful knowledge about some aspects of several religious traditions, but particularly the stories, festivals, symbolism and meaning of Christianity. They are introduced to a range of stories and practices from this tradition, the knowledge of which they build on as they go throughout the school. The pupils show a satisfactory knowledge, for instance, of some of the stories of Jesus and other people in the Bible and an awareness of the significance of festivals such as Christmas and Easter, as when pupils in Years 3 and 4 learned about the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. Whilst the attitudes of the oldest pupils to the study of religion are generally satisfactory, however, there is currently a lack of depth of knowledge about some of the other religious traditions and their meaning, because of their limited experience in earlier years.

131. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with good lessons seen in both key stages and an excellent lesson in Key Stage 2. The high quality joint planning, used by all the teachers, supports the teaching and learning in all classes and staff are gaining confidence in the subject. They are helped by the useful guidelines in the new syllabus and are well supported in developing their skills by the coordinator and other skilled teachers. There is some knowledgeable teaching, in both key stages, where the confidence and enthusiasm of teachers is passed on to the pupils, who enjoy the lessons. They often find them challenging and their knowledge and understanding are developed well. The teachers' questioning is usually perceptive, encouraging the pupils to consider and reflect. At the end of some lessons, the teachers shared responses effectively and were able to use this as a means of assessing progress. In lessons seen in Key Stage 1, learning objectives were clear and teachers used perceptive questions, which were relevant to the pupils' knowledge and experience. These clarified the pupils' thoughts and enabled the teacher to identify what they understood. The pupils responded thoughtfully and consolidated their learning about, for instance, the Church, prayer and the use of Sunday, following a talk by a local vicar. In an excellent lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, the teaching

was inspirational and imaginative, the pupils' responses were handled with skill and the learning was exceptional. The pupils watched, with wonder, an excerpt from a video about the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and, guided by the teacher, used their imagination to take them there. Using their own created sound effects for the sounds heard that day, they recorded an audio tape, which consolidated the learning for all. Objectives are sometimes too broad in Key Stage 2, which led in one lesson seen to a lack of clarity about the skills, concepts and attitudes the pupils were to develop. This leads occasionally to a lack of attention or to some pupils not taking the subject seriously enough. In the sample of work seen, there was little recorded work in Key Stage 2. This is now being developed and portfolios of work throughout the school are beginning to provide evidence that will ensure that progression is clear in the subject.

132. Assessment opportunities have been built into the planning and are to be used to identify what pupils have learned, in order to inform parents at the end of the year. Progress, overall, in the subject is now satisfactory, although the older pupils have been hampered by a lack of previous knowledge and understanding on which to build as they begin to form their own ideas. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs and the higher attainers, are beginning to develop an appropriate awareness of the key ideas, people and practices of some religious traditions. Recent progress is better and, for instance, pupils in Years 1 and 2 had completed thoughtful work on celebrations, including baptism and marriage. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 showed good knowledge of Christian prayer and symbolism. They also displayed considerable empathy and a sensitive awareness of the issues of Palm Sunday, in their work about Easter.
133. The pupils' attitudes are good, overall. Many show thoughtful responses and reflect sensitively on what they feel. Their lack of earlier experience in the subject means that some older pupils have not yet developed a full awareness of the richness and diversity of beliefs and values. Some pupils near the end of Key Stage 2 are not always able to share sensitive or important feelings without some silliness, as when considering their responses to the natural world. In Key Stage 1, the pupils enjoy stories and listen well to them. They are thoughtful and interested, often showing wonder and curiosity, as when listening to the local vicar and understanding the activities involved in going to church, or in Key Stage 2 when reflecting on wonders of the natural world. The pupils in each class take pride in recording their work and present it well.
134. The role of the subject co-ordinator is having a positive impact on the development of the subject. She has a clear view of the subject's needs and is providing good support to colleagues. Since the last inspection, aspects of the curriculum and its management and teaching have improved, and religious education has been given a more considered place in the curriculum. It is now developing well. There is a more structured approach to the subject, which meets the requirements of the new agreed syllabus and some teachers are more skilled and confident in their teaching, although further staff training is required. Links with the local Christian churches have improved and local ministers visit the school regularly. At present, the use of planned visits to other places of worship is not built into the curriculum and this restricts discussion about pupils' understanding of other religions. Resources are adequate, but there are still some gaps in the provision of items such as posters and artefacts.