

# INSPECTION REPORT

St James CE Primary, Southam  
Southam

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique Reference Number: 125727

Inspection Number: 189601

Headteacher: Mrs Mary Thompson

Reporting inspector: 2414

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> September

Under OFSTED contract number: 707859

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
Type of control:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Tollgate Road Southam Warwickshire CV33 0EE
Telephone number:	01926 812127
Fax number:	01926 815438
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Andy Mears
Date of previous inspection:	February 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
David Westall, RgI	Art Design and technology Science Music	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management Staffing, accommodation and learning resources The efficiency of the school
Lizzie Forster, Lay Inspector	Equal opportunities	Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Brian McCutcheon	Mathematics Geography Information technology Areas of learning for children under five	Curriculum and assessment
Sandy Wellsted	English History Physical education Special educational needs	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The inspection contractor was:

Oxford Associates Support and Inspection Service (OASIS)  
Waterstone Cottages  
Naunton  
Near Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire  
GL54 3AS

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefit from good or very good teaching.
- The quality of teaching is good, and occasionally very good, in over half of all lessons; and is ever less than satisfactory.
- The school is well led by the headteacher and has a conscientious, able staff.
- Pupils make good progress in English, information technology and physical education throughout Key Stage 2, and in music across the school.
- The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school is very good at promoting pupils' moral, social and cultural development, and is good at promoting their spiritual development.
- There is a strong partnership with parents, and this benefits pupils' learning.
- The school is a caring community, and relationships between pupils and staff are good.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- The headteacher and subject managers do not allocate sufficient time for checking the quality of teaching and learning by watching lessons and studying pupils' work.
- The governors need to spend more time in the school to observe it in operation.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils make mainly unsatisfactory progress in design and technology, and standards in the subject are a little lower than in most schools.
- The planning for art, design and technology, and geography does not ensure that pupils develop important knowledge and skills in a systematic way.
- The school development plan does not provide sufficient detail about the timing of some tasks, and does not include some important work the subject managers have recently decided to do.

**The weaknesses are far outweighed by what the school does well. The first two weaknesses listed above will form the basis of the governor's action plan which will be sent to all parents or guardians at the school. The remaining weaknesses are less important, but should be considered by the school for inclusion the action plan.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made sound progress, overall, in addressing the weaknesses identified in the last inspection. The needs of the more able pupils are now met, and their tasks are sufficiently challenging. The school's behaviour policy is put into practice, and pupils' behaviour is generally well managed by all teachers. The governors are taking a more prominent role in school management and evaluate school policies and plans carefully. However, most need to visit the school more often to observe it in action and develop their understanding of the curriculum. The school is in a sound position to make further improvements.

### Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

In 1998, there were no Year 6 pupils in the school to undertake the tests, so the Key Stage 1 results are presented above. The school's 1999 test results were better in reading and a little less favourable in writing, at the end of Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, the 1999 results show that few pupils did not achieve the national standard, and that a high proportion exceeded that standard in English and science. At the time of the inspection, there were no national averages to compare with the school's 1999 results.

Inspection findings show that pupils make sound progress in Key Stage 1 in English, mathematics and science and that the current attainment of Year 2 pupils is mainly in line with the national average. In Key Stage 2, inspection findings show that pupils make good progress in English and reach standards which are generally a little above average in Year 6. In mathematics and science, pupils make mainly sound progress in Years 3 and 4 but good progress in Years 5 and 6. In both subjects, most pupils achieve at the higher end of the average range and a good proportion do better. Pupils achieve good standards in music in both key stages, and in history and physical education in Key Stage 2. Standards in other subjects are sound, overall, except in design and technology in Key Stage 2, where standards in the subject are a little lower than in most schools.

## Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Satisfactory	Mainly good	Mainly very good
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory in Years 3 and 4, and good or very good in Years 5 and 6.
Science	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory in Years 3 and 4 and good in Years 5 and 6.
Information technology	Insufficient evidence to make a judgement		
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Good in music and satisfactory in art. Not enough evidence to judge teaching in other subjects.	Good in music and very good in physical education. Not enough evidence to judge teaching in other subjects.

The quality of teaching is sound, or better, in all lessons. In Key Stage 1, the teaching is satisfactory, overall, and good teaching is demonstrated in about one third of all lessons. In Key Stage 2, about three quarters of all lessons show good, and sometimes very good, teaching. The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is consistently good or very good, and is a major strength in the school.

The literacy hour is taught well and the school has made a sound start in introducing the National Numeracy Strategy. While little teaching of design and technology was seen, evidence suggests that some Key Stage 2 teachers would benefit from in-service training to increase their knowledge in the subject. Teachers plan lessons conscientiously and the quality of their planning is mainly sound and often good. However, the planning for art, design and technology and geography requires a more secure framework to ensure that pupils make systematic progress in developing important skills and knowledge.

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

## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Mainly good, across the school
Attendance	Very good
Ethos*	Good. Most pupils are keen to learn, concentrate well and persevere with their work. Relationships are good, across the school.
Leadership and management	The leadership of the headteacher is a significant strength in the school. She is highly conscientious, develops good relationships with parents and a positive team spirit with the staff. Subject managers make a mainly sound, but sometimes good, contribution to the standards achieved in their subjects. The work of the governing body is satisfactory overall, but governors need to visit the school more often to see it working. The headteacher and subject managers do not spend enough time checking the quality of teaching and learning and studying pupils' work. The school development plan is mainly sound, but requires more detailed timings and does not include some important work to be carried out by subject managers.
Curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Children who are under five receive a sound range of learning experiences. Sufficient time is allocated to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, across the school.
Pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs receive good support, and the work set for them is well matched to their needs.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development and good provision for their spiritual development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The teachers are conscientious and are generally well informed about the subjects they teach. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, and work well with the class teachers. There is sufficient space in the school and playground space is just adequate. Teachers take care to create an interesting learning environment for the pupils. Resources are sound, overall.
Value for money	Good

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

### The parents' views of the school

<b>What most parents like about the school</b>	<b>What some parents are not happy about</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The headteacher and staff are easy to talk to and are dedicated and caring.</li><li>• Parents are welcomed into school and encouraged to take an active part</li><li>• The good behaviour achieved by the school</li><li>• The very good support and guidance provided by the school</li><li>• The good provision for pupils with special educational needs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school is sometimes defensive about complaints</li><li>• There is a lack of consistency about the amounts and quality of homework set</li><li>• Parents are not always well informed about their children's progress</li></ul>

**Inspection judgements fully support parents' positive views about the school. There is no evidence to suggest that complaints or suggestions are not carefully considered by the school; and the school implements effective procedures to keep parents well informed about their children's progress. The school's new homework policy is successfully addressing the concerns expressed by a few parents about homework.**

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In order to improve aspects of the management of the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- implement systematic and effective procedures to improve the monitoring of teaching and learning by:
  - (a) the governors visiting the school more frequently to observe it in operation and to learn about the curriculum;
  - (b) the headteacher allocating more time for observing teaching, across the curriculum;
  - (c) the subject managers making more use of work sampling and lesson observation to assess the needs in their subjects.

**(See paragraphs 53, 54 and 55)**

**In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.**

- Raise standards in design and technology in Key Stage 2, by:
  - (a) improving teachers' knowledge through focused staff development; and
  - (b) providing clear guidance to enable teachers to plan the progressive development of pupils' skills effectively.

**(See paragraphs 29, 59 and 121)**

- Improve the school development plan by ensuring there is sufficient detail about the timing of initiatives, and by incorporating the key priorities, recently identified by subject managers, to improve provision in individual subjects.

**(See paragraph 56)**

- Ensure that pupils make systematic progress in developing key skills in art and geography by developing schemes of work with clear guidelines for teachers.

**(See paragraphs 23, 29, 116 and 126)**

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **Characteristics of the school**

1. The school has 209 pupils on roll. The school opened in 1978 as a First School, was redesignated as a Primary School in 1998, and had its first cohort of Year 6 pupils in the last educational year. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. Three pupils come from homes where English is spoken as an additional language. Six pupils have statements of special educational needs.
2. Current priorities identified by the school include developing the roles of subject managers and the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy.

### 3. Key indicators

#### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	15	18	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	11	12	15
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	29	30	30
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88 (93)	91 (90)	100 (92)
	National	80 (80)	81(80)	84 (84)

Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	12	15	15
	Girls	18	17	18
	Total	30	32	33
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	91 (90)	97 (90)	100 (93)
	National	81 (80)	85 (84)	86 (85)

In 1998, there were no Year 6 pupils in the school, so there are no results for Key Stage 2.

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<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

**Attendance**

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	0.0
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.0
	National comparative data	0.5

**Exclusions**

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

**Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	18
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **Attainment and progress**

4. Children who are under five make mainly sound progress in all aspects of their learning and, on entry to Key Stage 1, the overall attainment of most pupils is broadly average. In Key Stage 1, the results of the 1998 statutory tests were above the national average in reading but were below the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The 1998 results for writing were well above the national average and above those achieved by similar schools. In mathematics, the results of the 1998 tests, in Key Stage 1, were well above the national average and above average when compared to the results of similar schools. In science, the teacher assessments in 1998 show that all pupils reached the expected standard in Key Stage 1, and the percentage reaching a higher level was in line with the national average.
5. At the time of the inspection, no national averages were available for comparison with the school's 1999 test results, in any subject. However, the school's results in reading suggest a marked improvement in Key Stage 1, while the writing results appear to be a little less favourable. In mathematics, the 1999 results, in Key Stage 1, show that the vast majority of pupils achieved the expected standard and a good proportion exceeded the level. In science, the 1999 results were a little lower than those achieved in the previous year, in Key Stage 1.
6. In 1998, there were no Year 6 pupils in the school to undertake the statutory tests. In the 1999 tests, the national standard was exceeded by 41% of Year 6 pupils in English, by 18% in mathematics and 54% in science. Only a small percentage did not achieve the expected standard in these subjects. There are currently no national averages to compare with these results, but they will clearly be high in English and science.
7. Inspection findings show that Key Stage 1 pupils make sound overall progress in English and most achieve average standards at the end of the key stage. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in the subject and attainment is a little above average at the end of the key stage. Year 6 pupils read well and apply their skills well across the curriculum, for example, when searching for information during independent research work in history. Most can select appropriate vocabulary and an appropriate style to match the purpose of their writing, and their standard of handwriting is good.
8. In mathematics and in science, pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and their attainment is mainly average at the end of the key stage. In both subjects, pupils make mainly sound, but sometimes good, progress in the younger half of Key Stage 2, while pupils in Years 5 and 6 make good progress. In mathematics and science, most pupils achieve at the higher end of the average range at the end of Key Stage 2, and a good proportion do better.
9. In information technology, pupils make broadly satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and achieve mainly average standards at the end of the key stage. Pupils make mainly good, and otherwise sound, progress in the subject in Key Stage 2. The vast majority of Year 6 pupils achieve at the higher end of the average range and a good proportion demonstrate attainment which is above the expected standard.
10. In both key stages, pupils make sound progress in geography and art, and attain standards which are satisfactory for their ages. Pupils' progress is also sound in design and technology,

history and physical education in Key Stage 1, and their standards are satisfactory. In music, across the school, and in history and physical education in Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress and achieve high standards for their ages. In Key Stage 2, pupils make spasmodic and mainly unsatisfactory progress in design and technology, and overall attainment in the subject is a little lower than in most schools.

11. There are no significant differences between the progress made by boys and girls, across the school. Pupils with special educational needs make mainly sound, and sometimes good, progress in Key Stage 1, and consistently good progress in Key Stage 2. Pupils with statements of special educational needs, and those with individual education plans, make sound or better progress towards their targets. Those pupils who have learning difficulties related to behavioural factors work hard to meet their targets. The last OFSTED inspection found that more able pupils sometimes marked time due to a lack of challenge in the work set for them. This has been successfully addressed by the school, and more able pupils make sound progress in Key Stage 1 and mainly sound, and sometimes good, progress in Key Stage 2.

#### **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

12. Children who are under five years old make good progress in their personal and social development and behave well. The vast majority of pupils in Key Stage 1, and all pupils in Key Stage 2, demonstrate consistently positive attitudes towards their work. At the time of the inspection, very early in the autumn term, a small number of pupils in Key Stage 1, mainly boys, were finding it difficult to re-adjust to the disciplines of learning and to their teachers' expectations. In particular, they were finding it difficult to listen attentively, and this detracted from the progress they were able to make in some lessons. Nevertheless, most pupils, throughout the school, are keen and enthusiastic. They work hard, investing considerable effort in the content and presentation of their written work. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 produce high quality project books related to educational visits or to English and history topics. These books testify to pupils' interest in their work, to their mastery of research skills, and to their perseverance. It is clear that the pupils have adopted, as their own, the high standards of performance expected of them by their teachers. Pupils of all ages complete homework tasks conscientiously and the partnership between home and school has a strong influence on the pupils' success as learners.
13. Most pupils listen with interest to their teachers and to each other, and are very willing to contribute to discussions. They observe the conventions of turn-taking during discussions, and this is a courtesy which they also take with them into more practical contexts, for example when queuing in the dining-room. They are self-disciplined and patient, and they enjoy working together when opportunities arise. They share resources fairly, and they support one another in their efforts, building on others' ideas in a friendly, open and non-competitive manner. Group activities run smoothly, whether in the classroom or in PE lessons, and whether directly supervised by the teacher or managed independently by the pupils. Of particular note are the very good relationships that exist amongst the pupils, and the very positive though unobtrusive support offered by their peers to those pupils who have special educational needs.
14. In all company, pupils are friendly, courteous, helpful and polite. Behaviour is good in the vast majority of lessons, in assemblies and in the playground, and is always very good in lessons in Key Stage 2. Pupils respond positively to the school rules and to class codes of conduct, and very few need to be prompted. They know the difference between right and wrong and, as they mature, are very aware of the need to set a good example. Pupils of all ages carry out classroom duties willingly and reliably. Prefects and members of the School Council value their roles and talk with pride about their contributions to the orderly running of the school, pleased with the responsibility entrusted to them rather than with any sense of the power of authority. A calm, orderly atmosphere prevails in the school, and pupils show the

same degree of care and concern for the work and property of others as for their own. They care for the environment, and many pupils have been keen to join the gardening club.

15. Incidents involving bullying are very rare indeed, and there have been no recent exclusions. Pupils clearly respect and trust the staff, and they also trust one another. Their caring attitudes are apparent in their written work, in the empathy they express for historical characters and for characters in the books they read, and in their concern for those less fortunate than themselves. They show good understanding of differing viewpoints, for example in history, and they respect those with religious beliefs that differ from their own.

#### **Attendance**

16. Attendance is very good, with very low levels of unauthorised absence. Registers are completed correctly, pupils are punctual and sessions start on time.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

### Teaching

17. Across the school, the quality of teaching is sound or better in all lessons. In Key Stage 1, the teaching is sound, overall, and good teaching is demonstrated in about one third of all lessons. In Key Stage 2, the teaching is generally more effective, with about three quarters of all lessons demonstrating good, and sometimes very good, teaching. The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is the main strength in Key Stage 2, where half the lessons are good and the remainder are very good. This teaching profile is clearly reflected in the general progress made by the pupils, since Key Stage 1 pupils make mainly sound but sometimes good progress and older pupils make the most rapid gains.
18. The school has maintained the quality of its teaching since its last OFSTED inspection, in 1996, when over half the lessons were judged to be good or very good. Overall, sixty one per cent of all lessons demonstrated good, and sometimes very good, teaching in the current inspection.
19. The teaching of children under five is mainly sound and sometimes good. Sound lesson planning is closely linked to the nationally agreed areas of learning for children of this age and elements of the early stages of the National Curriculum are included where appropriate. Classroom assistants are well briefed and appropriately deployed by the reception teacher and all staff make a contribution to the helpful on-going assessments of individual children. The reception classroom is well organised and good use is made of the available space. Resources are well prepared and suitable to support learning. There are clear classroom routines and satisfactory management of children results in the effective use of time. Staff have appropriate expectations of children and the tasks which are set usually provide sufficient challenge. However, some activities are too teacher directed and, as a consequence, do not fully promote independence in children's learning.
20. In English, the quality of teaching in the literacy hour is mainly good and otherwise sound in Key Stage 1, and is mainly very good and otherwise good in Key Stage 2. Common strengths of the teaching, in both key stages, include effective planning and good use of plenary sessions to summarise and reinforce learning. In the best lessons, teachers model the reading and writing processes well, and provide ample opportunities for pupils to learn through discussion and by developing their own ideas. In those which are satisfactory rather than better, pupils have few opportunities to contribute their ideas or to make decisions.
21. In mathematics, the teaching is mainly sound but sometimes good in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, teaching is sound but has good features in years 3 and 4 and is good or very good in years 5 and 6. Throughout the school, teachers plan conscientiously, using common formats based on the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. The most effective lessons include well paced introductions, with a variety of short mental activities, and good opportunities for pupils to explain the process of their calculations.
22. In science, the teaching is sound, overall, in Key Stage 1. On occasions, however, the pace of learning slows when pupils are required to sit and listen to their teacher for too long, and their involvement in practical activities is delayed. Science teaching is sound with good features in the younger half of Key Stage 2. Effective planning, well managed lessons and clear teacher explanations are characteristic of teachers' work. In Years 5 and 6, the teaching is good in science, and teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations.

23. In information technology, design and technology, geography and history, in both key stages, and in art in Key Stage 1, insufficient lessons were observed to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. Art teaching in Key Stage 2 is sound, overall, but is sometimes good. While teachers plan conscientiously in all subjects, evidence suggests that long term planning requires improvement to ensure that key skills are systematically developed in design and technology, geography and art. This is recognised by the school, and they have appropriate plans to develop their schemes of work in these subjects. In design and technology, evidence suggests that some Key Stage 2 teachers, in particular, would benefit from in-service training to increase their knowledge about the subject. In physical education, the quality of teaching is generally sound in Key Stage 1 and is mainly very good in Key Stage 2. In music, the teaching is good in both key stages.
24. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from their teachers, from the support assistants who work with them on a regular basis, and, where appropriate, from the special needs support teacher who teaches in the school on a part-time basis. The tasks set for these pupils are matched well to their needs, and teachers make every effort to ensure that the books and other materials they are required to read are well matched to their capabilities. Support assistants are well briefed about the work the pupils are going to do, and they are also well informed about what the pupils might be expected to achieve. Class teachers, as a matter of course, draw the pupils into discussions and encourage them to talk about what they have learned. The statements and individual education plans drawn up for the pupils have very specific, achievable targets, and are effective.
25. Across the school, the teaching is characterised by positive relationships between teachers and pupils. Teachers explain tasks clearly, create an orderly and purposeful atmosphere in lessons and generally motivate pupils well. Sound use is made of homework to reinforce and extend what is learned in school. In the most effective lessons, skilful use is made of questioning to assess their future needs. Particularly good use is often made of time in lessons in Years 5 and 6, where teachers' high expectations and good subject knowledge contribute significantly to the good progress generally made by the pupils.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

26. In the reception class, the curriculum for children who are under five has satisfactory breadth and balance. Overall, the children receive a sound range of learning experiences. However, opportunities for children to play outside with large toys and equipment are limited by the small amount of space available to them, and this constrains their physical development. The quality of planning is sound and takes appropriate account of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's 'Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning'. The curriculum for children who are under five provides a secure foundation for the statutory curriculum.
27. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the curriculum has satisfactory breadth and meets statutory requirements. The school allocates an appropriate amount of time for the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and the balance of the curriculum is sound. Pupils benefit from very good provision for their moral, social and cultural development and their spiritual development is well promoted. Health and drugs education are given appropriate attention and the school successfully implements its sound policy for sex education. Pupils have access to a good range of extra-curricular activities and older pupils take part in a variety of competitive sports.
28. Arrangements for the identification and support of pupils with special educational needs are very sound and are consistent with the Code of Practice recommendations. Achievable targets are set for pupils, and are regularly reviewed. Pupils are moved appropriately to different

stages on the register in the light of the progress they make. Parents and specialist agencies are appropriately involved in assessments and reviews, and statutory requirements for reporting are met. There are very sound policies for special educational needs and for the needs of the more able pupils.

29. Sound policies are in place for most subjects. The school is aware of the need to update those for design and technology and geography, and to create a policy for the education of children under five. Helpful schemes of work have also been formulated for the majority of subjects and these provide valuable guidance to teachers. The school recognises that the schemes of work for design and technology, geography and art need to be focused more strongly on progression in the key skills of these subjects. Most subject policies make appropriate reference to the need for equal opportunities, and the school ensures that fairness and equal access are the foundation of all aspects of school life.
30. Teachers plan conscientiously and their medium and short term planning is carefully linked to the programmes established in the schemes of work and to the school's long term plans for each year group. Overall, the quality of planning is sound and the planning for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is mainly good. Planning is often undertaken in key stage teams and this promotes a consistent approach.
31. The school has formulated a sound policy for assessment, recording and reporting which has recently been reviewed to reflect current practice. The learning objectives for lessons are clearly identified in teachers' planning; and in the best practice, notably in Year 6, objectives are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons. These lessons also include the use of skilful questions to probe pupils' understanding and to assess their needs. Teachers evaluate the success of their plans to ensure that assessment influences future planning; and pupils are encouraged to judge their own attainment and complete self-assessments to identify targets for their learning. These are appropriately reviewed collaboratively by pupils, teachers and parents, twice a year. Pupils also help to evaluate their own progress through making a contribution to their end of year school report.
32. Baseline assessments, and the careful monitoring of progress in the reception class, provide helpful information and enable the school to identify pupils with special needs at an early stage. Teachers keep pertinent notes about the significant achievements or needs of individual pupils and these usefully inform future planning, in all classes. Sound use is made of a range of nationally standardised tests to monitor and improve the day-to-day assessments made by teachers. The school also uses some assessment tasks to measure pupils' progress in modules of work; and appropriate records are kept of pupils' achievements in these, using a common format. A careful evaluation of the annual SATs results is undertaken and the analysis of this information usefully informs whole school planning and target setting. Record keeping procedures are satisfactory, overall, across the school.
33. There is a school portfolio of work which contains examples of pupils' recent work in science. These are annotated and have been assessed by teachers against National Curriculum levels. They provide useful benchmarks in relation to pupils' attainment, and the school is appropriately planning to update the portfolios for English and mathematics. Subject managers are also beginning to assemble useful folders of pupils' work in other subjects, across the school.
34. There is a satisfactory marking policy and practice has recently been reviewed as part of a scrutiny of pupils' work. Overall, the quality of marking is mainly sound. However, there is some variation throughout the school. The best marking includes pertinent advice and instruction as well as encouragement.

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

35. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development, and very good provision for their moral, social and cultural development. The personal development of children who are under five is fostered successfully. Strong values and genuine warm relationships underpin all aspects of the school's work, creating an ethos which establishes a climate conducive to learning and which promotes pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence.
36. Spiritual development is promoted well through assemblies with predominantly Christian themes, and through strong links with the parish church and with other local churches. Assemblies address a range of religious, moral, social and cultural themes, and fully meet the requirements for a daily act of collective worship. During the inspection, stories from the Old Testament were used well, by the rector and by staff, to demonstrate the continuing presence of God in our lives and give pupils opportunities to reflect upon the inner strength people derive from their religious faith and beliefs. Prayer is preceded by a time for reflection; and hymns with Christian themes, sung with enthusiasm and conviction, contribute to the spirituality of these experiences. Within the curriculum, pupils are taught to value human achievements, to recognise qualities of leadership, and to appreciate displays of courage in difficult circumstances. For example, pupils discussed the story of Grace Darling and tried to understand the feelings of concern and compassion for others which had motivated her rescue missions. Work around the school and in pupils' books also testifies to the school's strong promotion of a sense of wonder at the marvels of the natural world.
37. The school is fortunate in being able to build on the strong moral foundation already established in pupils' home lives. Through its aims, policies, rules and practices, the school provides pupils with very effective moral guidance. Staff provide exemplary models for relationships and behaviour in their daily interaction with their classes and with each other and, with very rare exceptions, these qualities are reflected in the behaviour of the pupils and in their support for one another. Of particular note is the genuinely caring and friendly support of pupils for those of their peers who have special educational needs. The teaching of right from wrong is a constant, and often subtle, feature of all the school's work. In its most explicit form, the behaviour policy framed in a booklet 'School Rules, OK' has involved staff, children and parents in its creation and states the school's expectations very clearly. The rules listed emphasise the need to ensure the safety of all those in the school, and to make it possible for everyone to be able to enjoy their experiences of school. These rules are displayed in every classroom, and some classes have also developed their own codes of conduct. Members of the School Council are involved in ongoing reviews of the school behaviour policy. They play an active role by consulting their peers and by generating ideas for the operation of the systems of sanctions and rewards. Through involvement in raising funds for various charities, through discussions in assemblies and in class, and through their links with the local community, pupils are taught to reflect on mankind's moral responsibility for the care of others less fortunate than themselves.
38. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop social awareness and social responsibility. They are required to work together in class, both with partners and in small groups. The school's policy for personal and social education emphasises the integration of social development in the context of the whole curriculum and this is a strong feature of the teaching across the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to participate in competitive and non-competitive team games outside lesson times, and to attend a variety of clubs which promote social interaction between pupils of different ages. Through membership of such clubs and through collaborative efforts in class, for example in group authorship of written work and class anthologies, they learn about the importance of individual effort and of collective responsibility. The school song is often sung during assemblies, and the pupils' enthusiastic rendering of it demonstrates, very forcibly, their pride in their school and their sense of corporate identity. Pupils of all ages are expected to assume responsibility for classroom

duties, and two pupils from each class in Key Stages 1 and 2 are democratically elected to join the School Council and to represent their peers. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are encouraged to care for younger pupils and to develop leadership qualities as school prefects. Paired reading between older and younger pupils positively reinforces social interaction between the year groups, and has a beneficial impact on the self-esteem of all the pupils involved. The social development of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is enhanced further by residential visits, while all pupils benefit from the strong community links which foster their understanding of citizenship.

39. Pupils' cultural development is promoted very well through the curriculum and through a wide range of extra-curricular activities. History and geography lessons give pupils valuable insights into different societies, both past and present. English lessons introduce pupils to a number of significant authors and poets, and music is a strong feature in the school's provision. Visits and visitors extend pupils' cultural experiences and interests, and their understanding of their own cultural heritage. School drama productions are highlights of the school year and make a significant contribution to both the social and the cultural development of the pupils. Letters from members of the public who attended the recent production of 'The Pirates of Penzance' testify to the resounding success of the performance! In response to criticisms raised in the report of the last OFSTED inspection, the school has taken steps to enhance pupils' multicultural awareness. Reading resources purchased to support the introduction of the literacy hour include a representative sample of writing by authors from a range of cultures, and each class now learns about another major world religion in addition to Christianity, in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.

#### **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

40. The school is a caring community which provides very good support for all its pupils. Adults know the pupils well and relationships are based on respect, care and encouragement coupled with high expectations of good behaviour.
41. The school has well thought out procedures to ensure that pupils' needs are met. Academic targets are set and regularly monitored. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are encouraged to assess their own strengths and weaknesses each year. Support staff are well trained to pick up any difficulties that pupils might be having so that extra help can be provided. The headteacher and staff strongly promote good communication with parents so that pupils' pastoral needs are shared. This integrated approach ensures that any significant change in pupils' academic performance is quickly identified and appropriate support is given to maintain their progress. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, are given appropriate support within their classes. Plans identify targets to improve the pupils' performance, attitudes, or responses across the full range of their specific needs. All pupils on the special educational needs register receive good support from teaching and non-teaching staff. Good use is made of outside specialists to support educational, medical or pastoral needs.
42. The school is very successful in promoting pupils' high standards of behaviour, manners and good relationships. The establishment of a School Council and the increasing levels of responsibility entrusted to the pupils help them to take a pride in their school and feel valued. As a consequence, pupils approach school life with positive attitudes and confidence, and know that their concerns will be listened to. The revised behaviour policy, which has been carefully explained to both parents and pupils, is fairly and consistently applied both in lessons and at playtimes. The school has formulated an appropriate policy for guidance on physical intervention and maintains detailed records of the few significant breaches of the discipline code. Incidents of bullying are very rare and are dealt with promptly.

43. The school strongly promotes the importance of good attendance and the effects that unnecessary absences can have on pupils' progress. All staff are aware of child protection issues and the procedures are sound. Children new to the school are visited at home and have several opportunities to visit the school before starting, initially on a part-time basis. This gentle introduction helps them settle in quickly to school routines and prepares them to tackle tasks with positive attitudes.
44. The school has planned how best to integrate the many aspects of personal and social education into all aspects of the curriculum. Health, sex and drugs education are mainly taught as part of the programme of study for science. Pupils are encouraged to make healthy eating choices from the selection available in school dinners. Particular attention is given to raising pupils' awareness of safety issues through a variety of visiting speakers from the police, fire service and road safety unit.
45. The school, which has achieved the county gold safety award, has comprehensive and well documented procedures for all aspects of health and safety including first aid, medicines and safety on visits. Appropriate risk assessments have been undertaken. All staff are well briefed on the needs of pupils with medical conditions that might require specific monitoring or treatment. Staff routinely remind pupils of the need for safe practice in lessons such as physical education. The premises and grounds, which are regularly inspected, are very clean and well maintained, and provide a safe and secure environment for the pupils.

#### **Partnership with parents and the community**

46. The headteacher and staff have successfully built up a strong partnership with parents by keeping them well informed, listening to their views and encouraging them to participate in all aspects of school life. This has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to school and learning. The prospectus provides clear, friendly and comprehensive information about the school and regular newsletters keep parents well informed about the curriculum and school activities. However, the annual report to parents from the governors lacks some information. Most importantly, the national data on attainment for comparison with the school's test results is not included, and this does not meet statutory requirements. The governors are aware of this oversight and plan to rectify it.
47. The school involves parents in initiatives, such as the policy for homework, and they have appropriately been consulted about the home/school contract. The staff have run workshops to explain new developments in the teaching of literacy and to inform parents about how sex education will be covered. These are well attended.
48. Parents are well informed about their children's progress. They value the opportunity to discuss progress and review targets set for improvement twice a year. In response to comments made in a survey of parents' views, the school has also introduced an additional open evening for parents to look at children's work and meet informally with the class teacher. Annual reports give clear indications of strengths and weaknesses.
49. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed about their own child's progress, although the references to special educational provision, given in the governors' annual report to parents, present only the briefest summary of the school's success in managing provision for their pupils. Parents of pupils with statements are invited to attend regular reviews of their child's progress. These meetings are also attended, where relevant, by all the staff closely associated with the child's education, and by representatives from those outside agencies which have been involved. Good links with the partner secondary school ensure a smooth transfer for pupils with special educational needs.

50. Parents find the staff easy to approach and value the openness of the school and the welcome they receive. Many parents give generously of their time to help in classes, run the library or accompany trips. The flourishing School Association is well supported in its activities and raises substantial funds for additional equipment and resources for the school.
51. St James' is an outward looking school that makes very good use of community links to enrich the curriculum. Pupils benefit from an extensive range of visits, both locally and residential, and use the nearby parks, library and museum as a source for topics in geography and history. Good use is also made of a wide range of visitors, including theatre groups and musicians, who broaden pupils' knowledge and appreciation of culture. The school fully exploits the opportunities offered by the Business Enterprise Partnership to enable pupils to visit companies, such as Severn Trent Water, when studying topics in science and design.
52. There are strong links with the churches in Southam; the parish church rector takes regular assemblies at the school and pupils celebrate occasions, such as harvest, in the church. The school choir sing from time-to-time at Sunday services. The school is an active participant in the Southam Area Schools Association which creates opportunities for subject managers to discuss curriculum issues, to have common training sessions and to bid for funds to develop a local computer network. Pupils have the chance to play sporting fixtures against other schools and to come together for musical events. Secondary school pupils are welcomed on work experience and have involved pupils in a project to assemble bird boxes. Pupils are encouraged to think about the wider community through charity fundraising activities and entertaining elderly residents through school productions. Harvest gifts are used to provide food for the less advantaged. The school successfully promotes its achievements through regular articles in the local press, and this encourages pupils and parents to value the school.

## THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

### Leadership and management

53. The last OFSTED report (1996) judged that the governors were insufficiently involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's policies and plans. Overall, the governors have made broadly satisfactory progress in rectifying this weakness, and the school's policies and the development plan are debated with adequate rigour. However, there is a need for the governors to increase their monitoring visits to observe the school in operation so that they are better informed about the implementation of agreed policies and plans. The governors recognise this and have recently agreed to increase their knowledge about specific subjects through discussions with subject managers and twice yearly visits to watch work in progress. The governors with specific responsibility for monitoring literacy and numeracy have undertaken appropriate training and are taking a keen interest in the school's work in these areas. The governor with responsibility for monitoring the provision for pupils with special educational needs has recently become better informed through focused visits to the school. Overall, the governing body makes a sound contribution to the leadership and management of the school. Statutory requirements are met, except for the appraisal of teachers and for the inclusion of all necessary data in the annual report to parents. Sound plans have been devised and implemented to address the weaknesses identified in the last OFSTED report.
54. The school is led well by the headteacher. She promotes good relationships with parents and the local community very successfully, and fosters a positive school ethos which is reflected in the good team spirit of the staff. She has a very strong commitment to the school, and knows individual pupils well. The headteacher has undertaken a useful review of a range of pupils' work, across the school, and provided pertinent feedback to staff. She has observed lessons in English, but appropriately recognises the need to increase her monitoring of teaching in other subjects through a more systematic programme of focused visits. Overall, her leadership is a significant strength of the school; and she is supported well by the conscientious deputy headteacher.
55. The subject managers are hard-working and the vast majority monitor teachers' planning rigorously. They audit and organise resources effectively and willingly provide advice to their colleagues. Overall, they make a mainly sound, and sometimes good, contribution to the standards achieved in their subjects. However, few have experience of monitoring provision through observing teaching in their subjects, or make sufficient use of work sampling to judge pupils' attainment and progress.
56. Overall, the school development plan is sound and makes an important contribution to school improvement. The last OFSTED report found that appropriate costings were not linked to the plan, but this is no longer the case. Tasks are listed in priority order, together with targets, success criteria and review dates, and this is sound practice. Dates are set for the completion of individual initiatives, but there is often insufficient detail about when they will begin. Recently, subject managers have formulated plans to improve their subjects, but these were produced after the main development plan and are, in the main, not incorporated. This is a weakness in planning which requires attention so that the school can judge how many tasks can viably be included in a years work.
57. The governing body meets its statutory requirements regarding special educational needs. The annual governors' report to parents comments only very briefly on the success of the school's special needs policy and could be more informative. The headteacher, as SENCO, is very effective in her management of special needs provision. She has a very good overview of the teaching of pupils with SEN. She is also very effective in achieving good co-operation and communication between the staff and outside agencies involved in the support of these pupils.

58. The school's aims are appropriately included in the prospectus. They emphasise the importance of pupils' personal development as well as academic achievement, and are clearly reflected in the work of the school. The day-to-day management of the school is good. Routines are well organised and help to create an orderly atmosphere in the school.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

#### **Staffing**

59. The school has sufficient teachers and they are appropriately qualified. The staff have the experience and expertise to cover the age and ability range of pupils. Their subject knowledge is mainly good, and is otherwise sound, except in design and technology where some Key Stage 2 teachers would benefit from in-service training. There are managers for all subjects, and those for English, information technology and music have particularly good expertise.
60. The provision of support staff in classrooms is good and their quality is high. They are well briefed by teachers, develop positive relationships with pupils and make a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning. The school benefits from an efficient secretary and school bursar.
61. Procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff are sound, and the governors are appropriately involved in making appointments, using job and person specifications. The induction of new staff, including for newly qualified teachers, is well planned and a mentoring system is established. The staff willingly attend a good range of in-service training courses and benefit from an annual staff development interview with the headteacher. However, procedures for the appraisal of staff have not been implemented for a number of years and the school is not meeting statutory requirements, as a consequence.

#### **Accommodation**

62. The school was built in 1978 and is in good condition externally and internally. Classrooms are of adequate size and there is a well proportioned hall. Teachers take care to create interesting displays of pupils' work, and the school environment is stimulating and enhances pupils' learning. The school is kept in clean condition by the conscientious caretaking staff.
63. The playground space is just adequate for whole school use. Children who are under five have easy access to a secure outside play area but its small size restricts the use of some apparatus and activities to develop their physical skills. The school is able to use the adjacent recreation ground for timetabled sport activities.

#### **Learning resources**

64. Resources are good in English, information technology, and physical education. In all other subjects resources are satisfactory, although they are only just adequate in design and technology and geography. Resources are well organised and easily accessible, across the school. Good use is made of educational visits to enhance pupils' learning.

### **The efficiency of the school**

65. The day-to-day administration of the budget is carried out efficiently by the headteacher and the school bursar. Spending is also monitored by the finance committee of the governors. The most recent auditor's report (1998) found that the school's financial administration systems and controls were satisfactory. A small number of recommendations for improvements were made, and these have been efficiently implemented.
66. The finance committee provides sound support for the management of the school and finance is discussed with satisfactory rigour in the main governor meetings. Financial planning is appropriately linked to the initiatives identified in the school development plan. The school carried forward a substantial sum into the current financial year, but appropriately intends to allocate additional funds to provide more opportunities for subject managers to monitor their subject, across the school, in 1999/2000.
67. Overall, the school makes good use of finance, including for the support of pupils with special educational needs. Good use is made of staffing, and the deployment of learning support assistants is effective. The school's accommodation is used well and teachers create a stimulating learning environment. Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual development and very good provision is made for their social, moral and cultural development. The quality of teaching is never less than sound and is often good. Pupils make sound or better progress in all subjects except in design and technology in Key Stage 2. Their general progress in Years 5 and 6 is good. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

68. Children are admitted to the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they are five. Attendance is initially on a part-time basis and, at the time of the inspection, they were attending for either a morning or afternoon session as part of a carefully planned induction process.
69. The classroom for children under five is of average size. The children also have access to a very small, but secure, outside area and some use is made of the school hall. However, as a consequence of the restricted outside space, children have limited opportunities to play with large toys and equipment in order to develop their physical skills. The teacher and support staff work together closely and effectively, basing the work for the children on the nationally agreed areas of learning and desirable learning outcomes. The curriculum for the children who are under five provides a secure foundation for the statutory curriculum.

#### **Personal and social development**

70. Most children enter school having had pre-school experience at local nurseries and playgroups. Provision for their personal and social development is good and they make good progress in this area of learning. By the age of five, they are on course to achieve the standards expected for their age. They settle very well into classroom routines, which they follow confidently. The adults in the reception class give good support to children at all times of the day, which promotes their confidence. Children are eager to explore new learning, are enthusiastic, and listen attentively to adults when required to do so. Opportunities are sometimes missed to provide tasks which promote children's independence and discussion making skills. They respond particularly well when these are provided; and persevere with those that are not immediately easy to complete. Children relate very well to each other and adults, work co-operatively to good effect, share resources sensibly and willingly take turns. They know what is expected of them and understand what is right and what is wrong, in the school setting. Their behaviour is good whether they are working in a group or as a whole class; and they take good care of their environment and equipment.

#### **Language and literacy**

71. Children in the reception class make mainly sound, and sometimes good progress in their language development and in initial literacy. When they enter Key Stage 1, their attainment is broadly average for their ages, and they have received a sound foundation for the early stages of the National Curriculum. They know a number of useful subject specific terms which allow them to talk accurately about books and about other areas of their learning. They listen with interest to their teacher and to other children, and they respond appropriately to questions and instructions. Most children speak clearly and confidently, and many are already aware when more formal language is appropriate. They develop their vocabulary well by assimilating words and phrases from the stories they hear and from the conversations they hold with adults, and they convincingly adopt other roles as they play. For example, children re-enacting the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', in the bears' home-corner 'cottage', readily adopt an adult tone and adult language when speaking as the 'mummy bear'.
72. When their teacher reads aloud with them, they follow the text closely, joining in when they know the words and when invited to do so, and learning to use the pictures and the context to predict the next word. They understand how books are organised, know that both pictures and print carry meaning and know that print is read from left to right and from top to bottom of

the page. They can imagine how characters might feel when certain events happen, and can explain such feelings in very simple terms.

73. Most of the children can recognise their own names in writing. Higher attaining children are beginning to copy their teacher's writing, and some make their own attempts at independent writing. A few children can already compose simple sentences to communicate their own ideas. Most of the other children can tell their teachers, in meaningful statements, what they would like to write about, and can copy the teacher's writing when she acts as a scribe to record their sentences. Children who are just beginning to write produce 'emergent' writing with some recognisable letters, and, occasionally, plausibly spelled words.

## **Mathematics**

74. The majority of children in the reception class make sound progress in developing their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding. By the time they are five, their attainment is satisfactory and is commensurate with their ages. They are beginning to understand capacity and measures through exploring materials, such as sand and water; and make sound progress in using mathematical language, for example, to compare two numbers or quantities, or to describe shape, pattern and position. They make satisfactory progress in understanding numbers through sorting, matching, ordering, sequencing and counting using either everyday objects or mathematical resources such as 'compare bears'. Most children recognise the numerals 1 to 9 and can use the number names, in order, in familiar contexts. They consolidate this knowledge effectively through learning number rhymes and songs and when playing counting games. The quality of teaching in mathematics is mainly sound, and sometimes good; and an appropriate range of practical activities is provided to promote children's mathematical development.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

75. In this area of learning, children make sound progress and, at the age of five, most attain the expected standard. They make satisfactory progress in developing an understanding of the wider world in which they live through visits made around the school and its grounds, and learn to use simple geographical terms. Observations they are encouraged to make also enable them to develop an understanding of change, for example, in the weather and the seasons. They make sound progress in developing their scientific understanding when examining a range of common materials, and describing their appearance.
76. Children under five make sound progress and acquire a suitable foundation for the study of history in Key Stage 1. They talk daily about the immediate past and about changing dates, using language associated with the passage of time. They explore the 'old' cottage of The Three Bears in their role-play, and they note differences between things 'then' and 'now' when sharing the story of Goldilocks with their teacher. They recognise how they and their families have changed over time, and they develop an early understanding of chronology as they reflect on the key events in their own lives, note the changing seasons of the year, and become familiar with the sequence of days in the week. They begin to develop the skills of historical enquiry when they study family photographs and make deductions about 'past' and 'present' in relation to their own place, or that of their siblings, within the family group.
77. Children use computers with increasing confidence and make very sound progress in developing information technology skills. They learn to control a computer mouse by using a range of appropriate programs often linked to their other work. For example, they confidently use the mouse to organise screen pictures of the characters and furniture associated with the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. They make satisfactory progress when learning to cut and stick paper, and when using construction kits to make simple models.

## **Creative Development**

78. Children make sound progress when painting and good progress when learning new songs. They make satisfactory progress when developing their creative skills by role playing.

## **Physical development**

79. Children under five make sound progress in their physical development. They can find a space of their own without fuss, and they show an appropriate awareness of others' need for space, whether working in the hall or playing on the climbing frame or on tricycles outdoors in the very small enclosed area outside their classroom. They enjoy being physically active, and their attainment is broadly in line with that normally expected of children of the same age. They demonstrate increasing co-ordination in their movement when they practise particular activities such as balancing, jumping and climbing on apparatus in the hall. However, because space in the enclosed area outdoors is so restricted, they do not have access to the range of large play equipment and toys that would normally be expected, and this, to some extent, inhibits certain aspects of their physical development. When working with tools and construction materials in the classroom, they handle the equipment safely and with increasing control.

## ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

### English

80. Pupils entering Key Stage 1 at the age of five demonstrate broadly average standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing. They have received a sound foundation in initial literacy skills in the reception class.
81. In the 1998 SATs at the end of Key Stage 1, the school's results for reading were above the national average though below the average for schools with pupils from a similar background. Results for writing were well above the national average, and above the average for similar schools. Early indications for 1999 suggest a marked improvement in the results for reading, with almost a third of the Year 2 cohort achieving above the standard expected nationally for pupils aged seven. Results for writing appear to have fallen slightly in 1999.
82. At the time of the inspection, very early in the autumn term, inspection findings strongly indicate broadly average attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in speaking, listening, reading and writing, including spelling and handwriting. However, the listening habits of a minority of the pupils are not yet as well developed as they might be, and this has a bearing on their overall attainment in English at this stage in the academic year.
83. In lessons, and over time, Key Stage 1 pupils are making sound progress in reading and are steadily acquiring an appropriate range of strategies for decoding print, for discussing books and other texts, and for understanding both literal and 'hidden' meanings. They can recall the events in the stories they hear or read, talk about the characters with reasonable insights into what motivates them, and predict what will happen next. They know, and can use, a number of specific terms useful for discussing books, understanding, for example, the meanings of 'author', 'illustrator', 'title-page' and 'blurb.' Progress in writing, though generally satisfactory, is slower than in reading for many pupils in Key Stage 1. The highest attaining pupils in Year 2 attain good standards in all aspects of writing. They can organise and present their work neatly, and they match the language, style and form of their writing to its intended purpose, for example when producing information leaflets about ants or worms. However, although many pupils in Year 2 communicate their ideas well to their teachers, form their letters accurately and can produce neat, copied handwriting, their independent writing has weaknesses. There are few pieces of extended writing, particularly by the lower attaining pupils, and rarely are these pupils required to express their own ideas in their own words. Too much of the written work in English in Years 1 and 2 takes the form of routine exercises designed to develop, and to practise, specific basic skills. As a consequence, pupils frequently draw on 'given' text, and the range of purposes for their writing is too narrow.
84. Because there were no Year 6 pupils in 1998, there are no results for national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in that year. At present, there are no national averages to compare with the school's 1999 results. However, a scrutiny of the work of last year's Year 6 pupils indicates high attainment overall, with a significant proportion exceeding the expected standard for their age in writing, and very few falling below that level.
85. All available evidence from the inspection indicates that the current cohorts of pupils make good progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing throughout Key Stage 2, and that attainment, overall, is slightly above average in Year 6. Pupils listen well and speak fluently and clearly for a wide range of purposes, adapting their vocabulary, tone and style of address to match their different audiences. They read well, demonstrate good understanding of literature, and can extract relevant information from a broad range of text types, including persuasive writing and reference books. They can apply their higher order reading skills to

good effect throughout the curriculum, and most pupils are able to conduct independent research competently when required to do so. However, few pupils read widely and at a sufficiently challenging level in their independent reading. For example, the younger pupils in this key stage, as in Key Stage 1, know relatively few famous children's authors or poets by name, and can talk knowledgeably about only a limited range of titles. Nevertheless, their writing is usefully informed by what they have read at home or in school, and also by what they have been taught about language. The highest attaining pupils in Year 6 already display a mature grasp of structure and style in their written work. Most Year 6 pupils can select appropriate vocabulary and an appropriate style to match the purpose of their writing, and they know how to engage their audience. Standards of handwriting were criticised in the last OFSTED inspection in 1996, but are not a cause for current concern. Indeed, the standard of handwriting and presentation in the finished work seen during the 1999 inspection was high, and work was frequently enhanced by the use of word-processing, or, occasionally, by computer graphics. Pupils of average and lower attainment generally spell with reasonable accuracy, and their handwriting is of a satisfactory standard. Weaknesses in their written work more often relate to grammatical inaccuracies, a lack of detail and precision, or to weaknesses in the structure of sentences or the general organisation of their work. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, make sound progress in Key Stage 1, and good progress in Key Stage 2.

86. Pupils in both key stages show interest in language, enjoy reading, and respond well during lessons in the 'literacy hour.' Most pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other, especially in Key Stage 2, and many are very keen to answer questions. They work purposefully in groups, whether with an adult or on their own. A minority of pupils, mainly in Key Stage 1, find it difficult to listen attentively and to sustain concentration for the required length of time during the literacy hour. As pupils mature, however, they are increasingly willing and able to persevere and to sustain their effort. They work conscientiously, and they gain confidence in their own capabilities both as readers and writers. As a consequence of their growing confidence, they become much more adventurous in the vocabulary choices they make, draw increasingly on their previous learning, begin to use dictionaries and other reference books without being prompted, and support one another thoughtfully on shared tasks. The very good relationships which exist between pupils and their teachers, and between pupils and the support assistants who regularly work with them, are very evident in the literacy hour and contribute significantly to the progress made. Older Key Stage 2 pupils take particular pride in their own achievements, and this is evident in the great care they take in independent projects produced for homework.
87. The literacy hour is being introduced successfully; and the quality of teaching is mainly good, and otherwise sound, in Key Stage 1, and mainly very good, and otherwise good, in Key Stage 2. In both key stages, both medium- and short-term planning are good. The plans make clear what pupils are intended to learn, and learning objectives are pursued rigorously. In most lessons, introductory sessions are used to good effect to check what has already been learned and to make sure that pupils know what they are to do, and to learn, during the session. Plenary sessions are also used well. Pupils are invited to talk about their work, and teachers use the opportunity to check that learning is secure. Expectations of good behaviour and of pupils' commitment to high attainment are communicated clearly. Tasks for groups, and the texts selected, are well matched to the range of attainment represented by pupils within each class. In the best lessons seen, in both key stages, teachers model the reading and writing processes well. They also ensure that pupils have substantial opportunities to use their own ideas and to learn by shaping those ideas and by drawing on their own language resources. They make very effective use of spontaneous comments and assessments to make pertinent teaching points when opportunities arise. In those lessons which were judged to be satisfactory rather than better, pupils were expected to follow given instructions rather than being involved as partners in the learning process. They had few opportunities to contribute their own ideas, or to make choices.

88. The subject manager is a skilled and experienced teacher who has worked successfully with the headteacher and with the staff to prepare for the implementation of the literacy hour. Their combined efforts and hard work, together with ongoing support from LEA personnel, have resulted in the successful implementation of the literacy strategy. There has been some monitoring of teaching during literacy hours, and the subject manager and the headteacher have also examined samples of pupils' written work. Resources have been chosen with care, are in good supply, and offer both staff and pupils a suitable range of core materials and literary texts. Assessment procedures are well developed. The results of national tests, both statutory and optional, are analysed in order to identify significant strengths and weaknesses in performance, to monitor the progress of individual pupils, and to set targets for particular cohorts and individuals. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and helped to do their best. Curriculum links between English and other subjects are used to advantage to foster pupils' literacy skills. Pupils are given many opportunities to participate in role-play, drama and other presentations which build their confidence in speaking to an audience. Their learning experiences are enhanced further by visiting authors, by theatre visits, and by special events such as Book Week.

### **Mathematics**

89. On entry to Key Stage 1, the attainment of most pupils in mathematics is broadly average. The results of the 1998 Key Stage 1 SATs indicate that the percentage of pupils reaching the standard expected was very high in comparison to the national average; and the proportion exceeding this level was above average. Overall, these results were above average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In the 1999 Key Stage 1 SATs, the vast majority of pupils reached the standard expected and a good proportion achieved a higher level. There are currently no national figures available for comparison with the school's 1999 results.
90. Inspection findings indicate that all Key Stage 1 pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the key learning objectives for this age group. They have a sound understanding of numbers and calculations and can apply this knowledge to solve problems. Pupils also make satisfactory progress, across the key stage, in developing their understanding of measures, shape and space. At the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils reach the nationally expected standard in mathematics and a small minority achieve higher standards.
91. There were no 11 year old pupils in the school in 1998. In 1999, the vast majority of pupils achieved the national standard and a small minority exceeded this level. There is currently no national data available for comparison with the school's results. Inspection findings show that most Year 6 pupils achieve at the higher end of the average range and a good proportion demonstrate attainment which is above the nationally expected standard. Progress is mainly sound and sometimes good in Years 3 and 4, and older pupils make good progress in the key learning objectives for Key Stage 2. At the end of the key stage, most pupils have a secure understanding of the number system and of measures, shape and space; and can handle data and solve problems competently.
92. Throughout the school, most pupils show an interest in mathematics and they respond particularly well to practical activities. The vast majority take a pride in their work and it is usually well presented. Behaviour in mathematics lessons is mainly good. However, in some lessons in Key Stage 1, a small minority find it difficult to listen attentively and to sustain their concentration. Most older pupils, and in particular those in Year 6, demonstrate a mature approach to their learning.

93. In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is mainly satisfactory and sometimes good. In Key Stage 2, teaching is sound with some good features in Years 3 and 4 while pupils in the oldest classes benefit from good or very good teaching. Throughout the school, teachers plan conscientiously using common formats based on the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. All teachers are appropriately beginning to implement the recommended three part lesson and the most effective numeracy hours include well paced introductions, with a variety of short oral and mental activities; and the provision of opportunities for pupils to explain their mental calculations. In these lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils' attitudes and work rate and use skilful questioning to probe their understanding and to extend their thinking.
94. In both key stages, resources are well prepared and appropriate. Instructions and teaching points are clearly explained, and satisfactory use is made of homework to support pupils' learning in school. Teachers make effective use of assessment to inform their planning and tasks are usually well matched to pupils' capabilities. Classroom assistants are well briefed and appropriately deployed, and provide good support for individuals or groups of pupils. Some teachers make good use of mathematical display to promote pupils' interest in the subject, for example, using 3D shapes in Year 5, but there is scope to extend this good practice across the school. In less effective lessons, in Key Stage 1, the pace is rather slow and, during group work, some pupils receive insufficient direct teaching.
95. The subject manager has attended appropriate training including for the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Following this, she has conscientiously reviewed and updated the school's policy for the subject to reflect the new requirements. Test results are analysed and some scrutiny of pupils' work has been undertaken. However, the school is aware that monitoring of the subject currently lacks rigour and should be improved, for example, through regular work sampling and audits of provision to inform practice across the school. Some staff training for the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has already taken place and more is planned later this term. The school development plan appropriately includes a number of priorities related to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy including the need to develop a scheme of work. A timetable for teachers to observe good practice in the subject has yet to be formulated.
96. Resources for mathematics are satisfactory and are well organised in a central area.

## Science

97. On entry to Key Stage 1, the scientific knowledge and understanding of most pupils is broadly average. In the 1998 teacher assessments, at the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils reached the nationally expected standard and the percentage achieving a higher level was in line with the national average. In 1998, there were no Year 6 pupils in the school to undertake the statutory tests and, at the time of the inspection, there were no national averages to compare with the school's 1999 results for either key stage.
98. Inspection findings show that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress, overall, in Key Stage 1. Current attainment is a little lower than is reflected in the 1998 teacher assessments. The majority of pupils achieve average standards at the end of the key stage but relatively few pupils achieve a higher standard. In the younger half of Key Stage 2, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make mainly sound but sometimes good progress, while pupils in Years 5 and 6 generally make good progress in the subject. As a consequence, most pupils achieve at the higher end of the average range, at the end of Key Stage 2, and a good proportion demonstrate attainment which is above the nationally expected standard.

99. In Year 1, pupils make satisfactory progress when developing their observational skills and describing the appearance of common materials. They make sound gains when making simple records of the growth of plants, and understand that plants need water to survive. In Year 2, pupils make satisfactory progress when learning to identify and compare a range of sounds, and learn how some materials change when they are heated.
100. In Year 3, pupils develop a sound understanding of the need for healthy eating and for dental hygiene. They learn that humans have skeletons and muscles to help them to move; and make good progress when conducting simple experiments to discover the absorbency of different kinds of paper. In Year 4, pupils make sound gains when discussing the characteristics of different kinds of soil. They progress well when planning, undertaking and recording experiments to discover the thermal insulating properties of different materials, and make sound gains when learning about forces. In Year 5, pupils understand that the pitch and loudness of sounds produced by some vibrating objects can be changed. They are able to plan and carry out simple investigations systematically, and record their results clearly. In Year 6, most pupils have a secure grasp of the principle of fair testing. They understand that the position of the sun affects the length of shadows and that light travels in straight lines. They learn to conduct experiments to discover the rates of evaporation of different liquids, and to draw pertinent conclusions from the results of their investigations.
101. Pupils' attitudes towards the subject are positive, across the school. Their behaviour is mainly good in Key Stage 1, although a minority of pupils are slow to settle to their work in some lessons. In Key Stage 2, behaviour is consistently good: pupils generally concentrate on their tasks, and their work habits are particularly good. Relationships between pupils are constructive and they work together well on shared tasks.
102. The quality of teaching is sound, overall, in Key Stage 1. On occasions, however, the pace of learning slows when pupils are required to sit and listen to their teachers for too long, and their involvement in practical activities is delayed. The teaching is sound in Years 3 and 4 but has good features. Effective planning, well managed lessons and clear teacher explanations are characteristic of work across the key stage. In Years 5 and 6, the teaching is good. The teachers have good subject knowledge, motivate pupils strongly and use effective questioning to probe pupils' understanding. Lessons move at a good pace, and teachers' expectations are high in the older half of Key Stage 2.
103. There is a subject manager for each key stage, and they have formulated a satisfactory policy for science. A sound scheme of work is in place, based on guidelines from the local authority, and this ensures that pupils benefit from a well balanced curriculum in science. Appropriate attention is given to the development of pupils' investigation skills as well as their knowledge and understanding of the subject. The staff have worked together effectively to create a useful portfolio of assessed work to promote consistency in their judgements about standards. The conscientious subject managers carefully monitor teachers' planning and analyse the results of the statutory assessments. However, they recognise the need to improve their monitoring procedures further, by occasional work sampling and lesson observation. They have recently produced a useful action plan for the subject, but this has yet to be incorporated into the school development plan. Resources for the subject are well organised and are sound.

## OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

### Information technology

104. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make broadly satisfactory progress in information technology. When given the opportunity to use computers, most pupils demonstrate sound mouse and keyboard skills. Overall, the majority of pupils attain average standards at the end of the key stage.
105. Key Stage 1 pupils use word processing and drawing programs to help them generate and communicate their ideas; and simple data bases to enter, store and retrieve information. Pupils in Year 1 make satisfactory progress when drawing, saving and printing pictures of the local 'Mop' Fair and when writing short accounts of their reading activities with Year 6 partners. Pupils in Year 2 design attractive cards for mothers day and can use shape tools, change colours, fill shapes and write text on their cards. They are also able to use a CD - ROM to research information, for example, on mini-beasts. Pupils in this key stage also gain some experience in programming the school's 'roamer'. However, Key Stage 1 pupils have barely enough opportunities to use their information technology skills, across a range of subjects.
106. In Key Stage 2, pupils make mainly good, and otherwise sound, progress in information technology. At the end of the key stage, the vast majority of pupils achieve at the higher end of the average range and a good proportion demonstrate attainment which is above the standard expected.
107. Year 3 pupils make sound progress when using a data base to create graphs from information gathered on favourite pets; and when analysing sentences as part of their work in English. They combine 'clip art' and text effectively when designing Christmas cards or posters, for example, to advertise a harvest festival service. Year 4 pupils, working in pairs, use a word processing program effectively to write stories; demonstrating good skills when amending the size and style of fonts and using pictures to create interesting covers. They also successfully apply these skills to using a 'word art' program to produce attractive fireworks poems. These pupils make good progress in handling information when using spreadsheets to record and analyse data, for example, about the weather or local traffic. Year 5 pupils combine text and photographs they have taken with a digital camera, to make an interesting record of a residential visit. These pupils also achieve good standards when working collaboratively to create an attractive 'Jolly Joke Book' which incorporates coloured pictures and a wide variety of text styles and sizes. Year 6 pupils make particularly good progress in information technology. They use a spreadsheet formula competently to reduce body measurements, enabling them to make accurate skeleton drawings; and use sensors well when exploring the properties of light. They also create an interesting lap-top presentation of their residential visit to York, help to produce an excellent school magazine and extend their understanding of the language of 'logo.'
108. Pupils enjoy information technology, show an enthusiasm for the subject and concentrate very well. Many are able to work independently but they are also willing to support each other and co-operate well. Older pupils demonstrate confidence and a mature approach to using information technology to support and enhance their learning. A significant number of Year 5 pupils, for example, chose to use information technology to complete a homework assignment on famous people and achieve good standards.
109. Insufficient teaching took place during the inspection to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. However, staff have benefited from well targeted training and the school has participated in the National Grid for Learning and in the 'multimedia portables for teachers' project. A well qualified classroom assistant provides good technical support and

works effectively with groups of Key Stage 2 pupils. However, in Key Stage 1, the opportunities provided for pupils to develop their information technology skills regularly, across a range of subjects, is only just adequate.

110. The enthusiasm of the subject manager makes a significant contribution to the development of the subject. She has good subject knowledge and sets a very good example in her own teaching. She monitors teachers' planning and provides good support for other members of staff. The subject manager has reviewed and updated the policy for the subject and has formulated a helpful framework for progression, based on guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. She recognises that this now needs to be developed into an effective scheme of work.
111. Resources for information technology are good. The school has benefited from donations from parents and has taken advantage of government and local initiatives. Most of the school's computers have recently been networked and there is an appropriate range of software. The subject manager is aware of the need to improve provision for modelling and control technology.

## **Art**

112. Overall, pupils make sound progress in art, across both key stages. They generally achieve standards which are satisfactory for their ages, and there are some examples of good work, particularly in Key Stage 2. As they move through the school, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding about art by studying the work of famous artists. Their progress in developing practical skills is mainly satisfactory but is uneven, particularly in relation to the development of their painting techniques.
113. In Year 1, pupils make satisfactory progress when creating mixed media pictures of cities and parks. In Year 2, pupils achieve mainly sound but sometimes good standards when using pastels to draw caterpillars and moths from direct observation. Their clay models of snails are carefully made, and they make sound progress when creating pictures of mini-beasts, in the style of Miro. In Year 3, pupils achieve sound standards in their painted self portraits and in their interpretations of canal boat art. They make good progress when looking carefully at fruits and vegetables and creating delicate interpretations in pastel. Year 4 pupils make accurate copies of the designs of Clarice Cliff, and Year 5 pupils achieve well when creating pictures in the style of Kandinsky and Picasso. In Year 6, pupils' overall progress in painting is just adequate, but their copies of flower paintings demonstrate careful observation and attention to detail.
114. Pupils have positive attitudes towards art and enjoy their lessons. Their behaviour is good and they concentrate and persevere with their tasks. Relationships between pupils are constructive and they share resources amicably.
115. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1, so it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in the key stage. In Key Stage 2, the teaching is sound overall, but is sometimes good. Teachers prepare resources carefully and their lessons are well organised. They sometimes provide good opportunities for pupils to work from direct observation of the natural and made world. For example, Year 3 pupils were able to study a range of fruits and vegetables during the inspection and effective, focused teaching led to pupils achieving well. The school's emphasis on the work of famous artists is beneficial and, in the best practice, pupils are able to make connections between their own work and the work of the artists. For example, Year 5 pupils are able to create their own abstract designs which clearly reflect the

study of Kandinsky. Less effective practice occurs when pupils are required to make direct copies of artists' work.

116. While the subject knowledge of teachers is generally sound, and is sometimes good, the lack of a scheme of work means that key skills are not always progressively developed. In particular, a more coherent strategy for developing pupils' painting skills, including colour mixing, is required. The subject manager has recently completed a draft scheme, and this will shortly be discussed by the staff.

### **Design and technology**

117. In Key Stage 1, pupils make mainly sound progress in design and technology and attain standards which are satisfactory for their ages. In Key Stage 2, their progress in developing core skills in the subject is spasmodic and is mainly unsatisfactory. Although satisfactory standards are sometimes achieved, overall attainment in Key Stage 2 is a little lower than in most schools.
118. In Year 1, pupils achieve sound standards when making paper bags which incorporate simple handles. Their cutting skills are satisfactory and they are able to use a variety of methods to join the paper, including gluing, taping and stapling. In Year 2, pupils make sound progress when creating model vehicles, using wood and card, and demonstrate careful stitching skills when making ladybirds from felt.
119. In Year 3, pupils create basic shadow puppets from card and sticks, but these present them with limited challenge. No work was available for direct examination in Year 4, but photographic evidence shows that pupils are given opportunities to create simple box frames from wood, and are taught to strengthen the corners with triangles of card. In Year 5, pupils create designs for boxes to hold tea, but these demonstrate skills which are a little below average. However, they make sound gains when creating model vehicles which incorporate electrical circuits to facilitate lighting. In Year 6, pupils make limited progress when designing kites, and their designs generally make little reference to joining methods. No evidence of the completed kites or of other design and technology work was available for examination in Year 6.
120. From discussions with pupils, it is clear that they enjoy design and technology lessons and have positive attitudes to the subject. In the single design and technology lesson observed during the inspection, in Key Stage 1, pupils were enthusiastic and concentrated well on their tasks.
121. Since only one lesson was observed, it is not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching in the subject. Evidence suggests that Key Stage 1 pupils are given a satisfactory range of opportunities to develop basic skills in designing and making. However, planning for the subject requires improvement in Key Stage 2. Insufficient attention is given to the systematic development of skills in both designing and making. There is no scheme of work to provide guidance for the teachers; and evidence suggests that some would benefit from in-service training in the subject to increase their knowledge and to raise their expectations of pupils' potential attainment in Key Stage 2.

### **Geography**

122. As a result of timetabling arrangements, it was not possible to observe any geography lessons during the inspection. Judgements are made on the evidence gathered from discussion with pupils and from a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning. Overall, pupils make sound progress in geography, across both key stages. Their attainment is mostly satisfactory and appropriate for their ages.
123. In Key Stage 1, Year 1 pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of their locality when studying the school grounds and through fieldwork undertaken in the surrounding area, for example, in local parks. They make sound progress in developing their geographical skills, extend their knowledge of land use and can express opinions about the environment. Pupils study the weather and the seasons and develop their general knowledge of different countries. In Year 2, pupils make sound progress in extending their knowledge and understanding of contrasting localities overseas, through their studies of Baricho, in Kenya.
124. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 make sound progress when undertaking fieldwork, which is focused on a local canal, as part of their studies of water. Year 4 pupils make visits in and around Southam, and demonstrate satisfactory attainment when considering local issues such as the proposed building of a supermarket in the area. They use information technology effectively to support their geographical studies, for example, to analyse data they have collected from surveys of traffic in the town and on the by-pass. Work undertaken by pupils in Years 5 and 6 extends their knowledge and understanding of other localities. In Year 5, pupils compare and contrast life in an Indian village to that in Southam and, in Year 6, pupils benefit from a residential visit to York which promotes their geographical skills further.
125. Evidence from discussions with pupils indicates that they are interested in the subject and that they enjoy geography lessons. Pupils respond particularly well to fieldwork in the local area or further afield during residential visits.
126. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching in geography. However, teachers' plan conscientiously for the subject and pupils are appropriately provided with some opportunities to develop their skills of enquiry. The scheme of work provides a useful framework for planning. However, it does not ensure the progressive development of key geographical skills, especially in Key Stage 1. The school recognises this and plans to make the necessary adjustments following the publication of new national guidelines for foundation subjects. The subject manager has recently assumed responsibility for the subject and has formulated a sound action plan. Procedures for monitoring progress and attainment are at an early stage of development.
127. Resources for geography are just satisfactory. The school should improve its provision of atlases, globes, maps and aerial photographs.

## **History**

128. At the time of the inspection, very early in the autumn term, little evidence was available in the form of current work by classes, and only two lessons could be inspected, both in Key Stage 2. A range of additional evidence was therefore taken into account. This includes some of the earlier written work of pupils still in the school's displays, discussions with the subject manager and other members of staff, conversations with pupils, teachers' planning, and the scheme of work.
129. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1. Nevertheless, it is clear from samples of work that the progress made by pupils in this key stage is sound, and that their attainment is broadly average for their ages. Through their class topics such as 'Toys' and 'Celebrations', pupils

explore the differences between 'then' and 'now'. They use words and phrases relating to the passage of time, and they develop a sound understanding of how things have changed. They begin to develop a sense of chronology by comparing simple artefacts such as old and new toys, and by considering, for example, methods of farming in the past and in the present. Pupils in Year 2 learn about the lives of famous people such as Guy Fawkes and Grace Darling, and consider the events in which these characters were involved from a variety of viewpoints.

130. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress and attain standards which are above average for their ages. In Year 4, pupils make good progress when learning about the Roman invasion of Britain in 43 AD. They make links between different sources of information, both primary and secondary, to answer questions about the past. For example, they find out why the Romans wanted to invade Britain, and they view the events of that time from the perspectives of the Romans and the Celts. In Year 6, pupils pursue independent research into various aspects of social, religious and cultural life in ancient Greece. They successfully use a range of resources including pictures, reference books and CD ROM to locate information about the Greek gods or about the Greek language. They select relevant information, organise it to suit the purposes of the tasks they have been set, and communicate their findings very clearly in their own words.
131. Pupils of all ages are familiar with time-lines and, as they move up through the school, they acquire a good understanding of how different periods of history relate to others within a chronological framework. A striking display in the school hall is entitled 'Countdown to the Millennium' and illustrates significant events in British history from the 11<sup>th</sup> century to the present day. It includes work by pupils from each class. Even the youngest pupils have made their own contributions with paintings and captions which feature their views of the major technological achievements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
132. Pupils of all ages like history and many enthuse about their lessons and about special events. They particularly enjoy the visits they make to such places as the Doll Museum in Warwick, or the various landmarks and museums in the city of York. They also relish events that take place in school, talking with great nostalgia about the 'Tudor feast' they attended, or about the 'Roman day' when they made mosaics. By engaging in role-play, and by adopting, if only for a short while, the customs and practices of people from the past, they are able to empathise with their lifestyles and to understand some of their day-to-day concerns. In the two lessons observed in Key Stage 2, pupils were fully engaged with the tasks they had been set. They were keen to ask and answer questions, and they settled to work on their own quietly and responsibly. It is clear that many pupils develop an enduring interest in history. Nowhere is this more evident than in the excellent historical biographies produced with such care and attention to detail last year by pupils currently in Year 6.
133. Insufficient lessons were observed to enable a secure judgement to be made about the overall quality of the teaching of history in the school. Nevertheless, the two lessons observed were taught well and it is clear from all available evidence that teachers in the school have good understanding and knowledge of the subject. Tasks and resources are suitably planned to match the capabilities of individual pupils and, where relevant, the additional support provided for pupils with special educational needs is very effective in enabling these pupils to produce their best efforts. The subject manager has prepared a sound scheme of work and has recently updated resources to include a suitable range of artefacts to support the various topics and units of work that are studied. An action plan rightly identifies the need to update ICT resources for the subject, to develop assessment procedures, and to review the policy document.

134. Pupils make good progress in music, across the school, and their standards are generally high for their ages. They sing with clear diction and good control of pitch and dynamics. Key Stage 2 pupils can perform songs in parts, and high standards are achieved by the choir. Pupils learn simple rhythms and repeat them by clapping or using percussion instruments in Key Stage 1, while Key Stage 2 pupils use a range of instruments confidently and well. Pupils make good progress in learning notation and Key Stage 2 pupils understand a range of technical terms in the subject. A high proportion of pupils, in Year 2 and in Key Stage 2, are able to play the recorder. Some pupils are taught brass, woodwind or strings by visiting teachers, and the subject co-ordinator has recently established a school orchestra. Pupils make good progress in composing their own music, and their listening and appraising skills are good, especially in Key Stage 2.
135. Pupils enjoy music lessons and have very positive attitudes to the subject. Their behaviour is good and they concentrate well. During the inspection, Key Stage 2 pupils worked together effectively and responsibly when given time to create their own group compositions. Throughout the school, pupils support and encourage each other, and recognise the efforts of their peers.
136. The quality of teaching is good, across the school. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, and a significant proportion have particularly good expertise. Effective use is made of specialist teaching when the deputy headteacher works with Year 2 pupils as well as her own class, and the subject manager teaches Year 5 and Year 6 classes. Lessons are characterised by good use of time and high expectations. Teachers provide clear instructions and guidance, as well as support and encouragement in their lessons. As a consequence, pupils are well motivated and try hard. The quality of teachers' planning is good, and provides a well balanced coverage of the music curriculum. The conscientious subject manager has formulated a good scheme of work, and makes a significant contribution to overall standards in the subject.

### **Physical education**

137. Only games skills were observed in Key Stage 1 during the inspection. In Key Stage 2, the lessons observed included games skills, swimming and dance.
138. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make sound progress in the development of games skills and achieve satisfactory standards for their ages. In Key Stage 2, progress is good in all the aspects of physical education that were observed. Pupils attain standards which are mainly above average, and sometimes well above average for their ages. The scheme of work and other documentation shows that pupils follow a suitably broad curriculum and that they are given appropriate opportunities to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including competitive sports and outdoor and adventurous pursuits.
139. In Key Stage 1, the youngest pupils perform simple skills such as running, stretching, jumping and curling. They perform safely, make satisfactory use of the space available and pay due regard to others' need for space. Most succeed in balancing a ball on one hand while walking, and can bounce and catch a ball with satisfactory control and co-ordination for their age. The highest attainers successfully plan and perform their own mini-games. Pupils in Year 2 can throw and catch a ball with reasonable accuracy when working with a partner or in a small team.
140. Pupils in Key Stage 2 can plan and repeat sequences of movement, and are able to sustain a high level of co-ordination and control in games skills, dance and swimming. For example,

pupils in Years 3 and 4 achieve high standards for their ages in ball control. Pupils in Year 4 attain standards which are above average for their age in swimming. All can already swim competently and are making good progress. They are working hard to achieve and to maintain the correct posture in the water for back stroke, and they demonstrated visible evidence of improvement in arm and leg movements during the lesson observed. Higher attainers have already mastered the front crawl, can swim a short distance underwater, and are making good progress in learning to use the breast stroke. Pupils in Year 6 attain good standards for their age in dance. They competently plan, perform and evaluate dance patterns and sequences of movement to reflect the mood of music, convincingly adopting, as they do so, the 'characters' and powers of the gods and giants they have read about in Greek myths and legends. They use the space in the hall well, and they show a mature sense of purpose as they change size, level and shape in their movements when interpreting particular themes, moods and feelings.

141. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. They are very well supported by teachers and support assistants, and a particularly notable feature of lessons is the unobtrusive but generous encouragement and assistance given to them by their peers. They play a full part in lessons, clearly enjoy the activities, and do their very best, achieving standards which reflect their capabilities.
142. At the time of the inspection, very early in the Autumn term, pupils in Year 1 are adjusting both to their teacher's expectations of them in terms of behaviour, and to the disciplines of PE as a subject. They enjoy the activities and most pupils practise conscientiously to improve their performance and do their best to follow the teacher's instructions. A significant minority of pupils, however, mainly boys, find it hard to listen. In both Key Stage 1 classes, a significant minority of pupils at times follow their inclinations rather than instructions, are apt to become noisy, and are slow to respond to their teachers' very clear signals. In Key Stage 2, pupils of all ages behave in a mature, responsible and disciplined way. They sustain concentration admirably throughout lessons, organise themselves well when developing work in groups and working independently of their teachers, and take pride in their own successes and in those of their peers. They relish the excitement of learning new skills, and they bring creativity and individuality to their work when given the opportunities to do so.
143. Teaching is generally sound in Key Stage 1 and mainly very good in Key Stage 2. Common strengths, in both key stages, include good planning which makes very clear what pupils are intended to learn. Lessons are well structured, with sequences of activities which progressively deepen pupils' understanding and allow them to practise and refine essential skills. Support for all pupils is good, and feedback during work in progress enables them to improve their skills. In Key Stage 1, however, the need to give frequent reminders to some pupils in order to engage their full attention leads to a lack of pace and to a loss of momentum in the learning process. In addition, pupils are given little scope to make choices, to use their own ideas, or to evaluate their own or others' work. In Key Stage 2, much of the teaching is undertaken by the key stage manager of the subject. In the best lessons seen, in dance and games skills, activities were conducted at a good pace. In dance, pupils are invited to demonstrate work which reaches a high standard and to evaluate their own and others' work. Their original ideas are welcomed by the teacher and contribute significantly to the exciting quality of the learning experience. Spontaneous assessments of pupils' progress, both in dance and in games skills, are based on thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject and make explicit the high standards that are expected. In Year 4, swimming is taught well by the class teacher and by qualified instructors at the Southam pool. Overall, the teaching of physical education in Key Stage 2 offers pupils both physical and intellectual challenges. It ensures that they improve their performance in well ordered steps, and it successfully promotes partnership, team-work and a sense of fair play.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

144. The inspection was carried out over four days by a team of four inspectors, including one lay inspector. 44 lessons, or parts of lessons, were observed during the inspection. For the majority of the time in school, inspectors visited classes, talked with individuals and groups of pupils and evaluated work. A sample of pupils from each year group, and across the attainment range, was heard to read: and pupils were questioned about their knowledge and understanding of books. A range of pupils' work, from each year group, was scrutinised by inspectors. In addition, the team studied documentation, including the school development plan and the figures for the budget. They also inspected registers, the records kept on the pupils and the teachers' planning documents. Inspectors met with a group of governors, and with the headteacher and all teachers. Discussions were also held with classroom assistants, the finance secretary and with parents who visited the school during the inspection. A meeting for parents was held on 20<sup>th</sup> July 1999 and responses from parents to the pre-inspection questionnaire were analysed.

## DATA AND INDICATORS

### Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y6	209	6	52	7

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):

7

Number of pupils per qualified teacher:

25

#### Education support staff (YR - Y6)

Total number of education support staff:

12

Total aggregate hours worked each week:

158

Average class size:

30

**Financial data**

Financial year:

1998
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Total Income	321,255
Total Expenditure	296,313
Expenditure per pupil	1,474
Balance brought forward from previous year	25,972
Balance carried forward to next year	50,915

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

209

Number of questionnaires returned:

70

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	54	40	5	1	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	50	34	9	7	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	22	45	20	12	1
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	24	59	10	7	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	21	56	9	11	3
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	35	57	5	3	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	35	54	5	6	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	20	53	15	9	3
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	37	51	11	1	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	39	54	4	3	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	56	39	4	1	0