

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ARCHBISHOP WAKE CE FIRST SCHOOL**

Blandford Forum

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113754

Headteacher: Mrs G R Williams

Reporting inspector: Mr J Plumb  
16930

Dates of inspection: 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> March 2000

Inspection number: 189627

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



## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: First School  
School category: Voluntary Controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 to 9 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Fairfield Road  
Blandford Forum  
Dorset  
Postcode: DT11 7AB  
Telephone number: 01258 453120  
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Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Mrs H Bignold

Date of previous inspection: 30<sup>th</sup> September 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr J Plumb	Registered inspector	Information and communications technology Equal opportunities	School improvement School's results and pupils' achievements Quality of teaching and learning Leadership and management
Mr B Sampson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development Welfare, health and safety Links with parent/carers
Ms K Andrews	Team inspector	Art Music Under-fives	
Ms J Newing	Team inspector	Mathematics History Physical education English as an additional language	Assessment
Ms Y Bacchetta	Team inspector	Science Religious education Design and technology	Curriculum
Ms J Coop	Team inspector	English Geography Special educational needs	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated in Blandford Forum in the local education authority of Dorset. Pupils come mainly from the neighbouring ward from which the school is situated and the socio-economic circumstance of the majority is unfavourable. The school is above average size, with 273 pupils on roll, including 48 children in reception. A fall in numbers due to the demographic factor has resulted in two mixed age reception / Year 1 classes. The average class size is 30. Attainment on entry is below the county average. About 7.69 per cent of pupils receive free school meals, a figure that is below the national average. Pupils' with special educational needs is 37.36 per cent. This figure is high. The school has 4 per cent of pupils with English as an additional language, a figure above the national average. The school aims to create a happy, caring and stable atmosphere that promotes high standards. Whole school priorities focus on raising standards in literacy and numeracy.

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

Archbishop Wake C E First School is a good school. Effective leadership and management create an ethos in which pupils are keen to learn. Demanding teaching challenges all pupils, except for in one Reception / Year 1 class, to achieve high standards. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The good teaching results in good learning throughout the school
- The provision for the under-fives is very good
- The attitudes and behaviour of pupils is good
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide good leadership

#### **What could be improved**

- The standards in numeracy in Key Stage 2 could be improved
- Standards in science in Key Stage 1 are not high enough
- Insufficient attention is paid to developing monitoring skills in information and communication technology in Key Stage 2
- Communication with parents/carers could be improved
- There could be more support for pupils with special educational needs and also for pupils with English as an additional language in some classes

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

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

There have been significant improvements since the last inspection in October 1996. There has been an improvement in standards in literacy in both key stages and in numeracy in Key Stage 1. Standards are higher in art and music than at the time of the last inspection. However, standards are not so good in science in Key Stage 1 and there has been insufficient progress in developing a scheme of work in this subject. The roles of the senior management team and subject managers have been developed and the monitoring of teaching is now a strength. Teachers' expectations in Key Stage 1 have been raised, but a weakness remains in the quality of teaching in one Reception / Year 1 class.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with				<b>Key</b>  well above average    A above average        B average                C below average        D well below average   E
	All schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
Reading	E	E	E	E	
Writing	E	D	E	E	
Mathematics	E	E	D	E	

Attainment on entry is below the county average. In the 1999 National Curriculum Assessment Tests at the end of Key Stage 1 standards in reading and writing were well below the national average and very low compared with similar schools. In mathematics they were below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. Teacher assessments in science show standards to be well below the national average and below those in similar schools. Current Year 2 and Year 4 pupils achieve standards in literacy in line with those expected of pupils of their age. In mathematics standards seen are in line with the national average in Key Stage 1, but below in Key Stage 2. Standards in science are below the national average in Key Stage 1, but in line in Year 4. Standards in religious education are high in Key Stage 1, but in line with those expected of pupils in Year 4. In information and communications technology, standards are in line with expectations in both key stages, except for in monitoring skills in Year 4. Standards in art and music are above expectations throughout the school. In all other subjects standards are in line with those expected. Pupils make good progress in their learning of literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. Pupils with SEN and EAL make good progress and achieve good standards when compared with their prior attainment.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to learning
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. They care for one another during playtimes
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and relationships are good
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good and often very good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is very good for the under-fives. In Key Stage 1 it is generally good, but there is some unsatisfactory teaching, mostly in a Reception / Year 1 class. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good. Throughout the school just over seventy per cent of teaching is at least good and just under forty per cent very good. Only four per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory overall, but when analysed by key stage, twelve per cent of teaching in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the under-fives is very good. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 it is satisfactory except for the lack of attention to investigative work in science in Key Stage 1 and insufficient attention being paid to developing monitoring skills in information and communication technology in Years 3 and 4.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. However, on some occasions their progress is hindered in Year 3 when there is not enough AWA support in the classroom.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good overall. Occasionally not paid sufficient attention in Year 3.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Satisfactory provision for their cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are very well cared for. Procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress are very good.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior managers provide good leadership. However, communication with parents is not always as good as it could be.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and governors have a good working knowledge of the school.
The strategic use of resources	Staff, resources and accommodation are used well to enhance the quality of learning for all pupils. However, the special educational needs co-ordinator could be more effectively deployed at times to address special educational needs in large classes. The school is at an early stage of development in applying the principles of best value.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The fact that their children are happy in school</li><li>• They like the staff as they consider that they are hard working, responsive, supportive, approachable and that they listen to them</li><li>• The singing and the music which they greatly enjoy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Poor accommodation. The lack of sufficient playground space and wheelchair access</li></ul>

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. Parents' concerns about the accommodation are justified. However, staff work very hard to create a stimulating environment. They have involved pupils in a plan to improve the school grounds.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Attainment on entry is below the county average as shown by examination of the baseline assessment data. For the current Year 3 attainment on entry was well below the county average in literacy. In the 1999 National Curriculum Assessment Tests (NCATs) results in reading and writing were well below the national average and very low compared with similar schools at the end of Key Stage 1. These results were worse than those in 1998, which were also well below the national average. Results in the 1999 National Curriculum Assessment Tests in mathematics show standards below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. However, these results were an improvement on 1998 and, although the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level was below the national average, the percentage achieving the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. Teacher Assessments in science at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 show standards of attainment to be below the national average and below that of similar schools in experimental and investigative skills, and very much below in knowledge and understanding.
2. This low attainment in the 1999 NCATs is seen in the context of the very low attainment on entry for pupils in the 1998 – 1999 Year 2 cohort, the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in that year group and also the high number of summer born babies represented. The school also provides compelling evidence that a very significant number of parents/carers eligible for free school meals decide not to elect to take them up. It is also true that the majority of pupils in the school live outside the ward in which the school is situated. The school's catchment area has considerably more social disadvantage in terms of housing and unemployment. Nonetheless the school is disappointed with this set of low results and has put considerable commitment and energy into raising standards: indeed this is priority number one on the school development plan.
3. The literacy hour and National Numeracy Strategy have resulted in raised standards in Key Stage 1 in English and mathematics for the current Year 2. However, insufficient attention is paid to investigative science in Key Stage 1 and this results in very low standards in this aspect of the subject in Year 2.
4. Standards of achievement for the under-fives are in line with national expectations in all six areas of learning for children of that age. Although they enter with very low attainment the very good and often inspirational teaching they receive results in very good learning and high standards of achievement. Children under five have made a very good start to reading and they also attain standards in line with expectations in their use of number. They count easily to 20 and beyond and match numbers to objects very well. Their singing is a particular strength. It is very noticeable that children who enter without good social/interactive skills are seen working collaboratively in the station role-play area with enjoyment and they are able to wait their turn to have a go with the Pixie (programmable toy used to develop number skills). This is quite a remarkable achievement measured against prior attainment and a credit to the excellent teaching of the under-fives.
5. In English, current Year 2 and Year 4 pupils attain standards in line with the national averages in reading and writing due to the impact of the literacy hour and the quality of planning and individual target setting. Most pupils can read with reasonable fluency by

Year 2 and have developed more advanced reading skills. By Year 4, pupils use dictionaries well and have developed good research reading skills. In Year 2 pupils write stories at some length using adjectives and punctuation marks accurately. In Year 4 pupils write instructions for pupils to follow in order to make a photo frame using bullet points and they create poems. The highest achievers use adjectives sensitively to create mood in their writing. Pupils throughout the school develop good speaking and listening skills and attain standards in line with other pupils of the same age.

6. Standards in mathematics are in line with those expected of seven-year-olds, but by Year 4 standards for a significant proportion of pupils are below those expected. Pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 show good counting skills and have a good knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes as well as being secure in data handling. A significant proportion of pupils in Year 4 do not use the number facts they know to help them solve problems due to there not being sufficient opportunities to do so and this is what brings the standards below those expected for pupils of their age.
7. Standards in science at the end of Key Stage 1 are below those expected nationally, but in line by the end of Key Stage 2. This represents a decline in standards since the last inspection. Year 2 pupils are below the standard expected in their investigative skills due to not having sufficient opportunities to participate in practical work. They do not do enough experiments.
8. Standards in information and communications technology (ICT) are above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and at least in line with those aspects of ICT covered in Year 4 such as modelling and word processing. However, standards are below in monitoring skills due to the lack of opportunity to develop this skill. Standards in religious education are well above those expected of pupils following a Programme of Study that is based on Dorset's agreed syllabus in Year 2 and in line in Year 4.
9. Pupils achieve standards in art and music above those expected for Year 2 and Year 4 pupils. Standards in singing are particularly good. In design and technology, geography, history and physical education standards are in line with national expectations for pupils in Years 2 and 4.
10. Standards in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum are satisfactory. Writing and reading skills are developed well in history, science and religious education. Numeracy skills are developed well in geography, for example in Year 3 where pupils produce block graphs to show the rainfall in millimetres and line graphs to show the maximum and minimum temperatures. In Year 1 numeracy is used well to support language and literacy; in the role-play area a station, ticket prices and train times were displayed helping to make the play meaningful. Computers are used well to develop number skills in most mathematics lessons.
11. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and English as an additional language (EAL) make good progress in their learning in most subjects due to the good quality support they are given. Occasionally in Year 3 in Key stage 2 their progress is hindered where there is insufficient ancillary welfare assistant (AWA) support when they are integrated with their peers in a large class. However, overall these pupils achieve good standards when measured against their prior attainment. There is no significant difference in standards achieved between boys and girls but standards do vary from year to year, as the SEN profiles of the cohorts in the school are very different from each other.

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

12. The pupils have positive attitudes towards school life and a very high percentage of parents agree that their children enjoy coming to school. Most teachers make lessons interesting and children respond well to this. Overall, attitudes to learning throughout the school are good and compare very well with the last inspection. Within the under-fives, pupils' attitudes are very good and occasionally excellent and this is a significant strength of the school. This is commendable considering that a comparatively high percentage of pupils initially enter the school with poor social and personal skills. Most children settle down quickly in classes. The majority of them soon become involved in whatever they are doing. They listen very intently, ask intelligent questions and make very constructive suggestions. The pupils' concentration and involvement were very effectively portrayed in one Year 3 religious education lesson on 'Temptation'. Pupils had a chart identifying various examples and were asked to encircle those of which they had ever been guilty. One little boy, quickly and philosophically, realised that he was only human and had been guilty of all of them at some time or other. In another similar lesson, Year 2 pupils became fascinated and most involved in the deprivation and sadness suffered by the Jews during their biblical, desert sojourn.
13. Behaviour within both key stages of the school is good and this closely agrees with the views of the majority of parents. In classes it is often very good and occasionally excellent and makes a very significant contribution to pupils' good learning. The majority of teachers have good control of their classes and pupils appreciate this. Although pupils are a little more boisterous in and around corridors and also in the playground, they are still usually polite and caring. Behaviour compares well with the last inspection. The school has had no incidents of exclusion within the last twelve months and the rate of such incidents has remained static over the last three years.
14. Bullying is not a problem in the school and, although the school and parents do not deny that isolated incidents do occur, the school has effective measures to deal with them. For example, after a mid morning break incident, in which one Year 1 boy had been observed being unkind to a classmate, the teacher convened an emergency, five minute circle time to discuss and diffuse the incident. Most pupils generally have a good sense of how their actions affect others.
15. The personal development of the pupils at both key stages and their relationship with each other, with their teachers and with other adults is good. These judgements compare well with the last inspection report. Pupils react very well to each other in class. Whilst at different stages of composing a contemporary story based on the 'Narnia' theme, groups of Year 3 pupils were observed exchanging ideas, back and forth, in a most mature way. The pupils enjoy working collaboratively in their groups. At break times they play happily with their friends. The pupils are polite around school and very friendly. They ask if you are lost and most notably, stand aside to let you or other children through doors first.
16. The pupils have good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. The school contains a comparatively high percentage of ethnic minority pupils and all pupils play and mix well together. Older pupils are used as 'friends' in the playground. These 'friends' are identified by a yellow armband. Lonely children, having no one to play with can stand at a pretend bus stop. From here the 'friends' pick them up and play with them. This is a good example of the good initiative and personal responsibility given to pupils. Children are also asked to act as monitors, return registers to the office and take injured children to receive help from the school's trained first aider. During one particular Year 1 session, a girl was observed tidying up the class by putting chairs on

tables and books away, whilst the others went out for play time. Most of the pupils are very good at putting their books, pencils and rulers away after every lesson. The school has no evidence of vandalism or graffiti due to the actions of its own pupils.

17. The pupils' attendance is satisfactory and figures compare well with the last inspection. Unauthorised absences are now well below national averages, which is good and an improvement since the last inspection. The school has no unexplained long-term absences. The majority of pupils come to school and into classes on time and lessons commence promptly. The quick start to lessons contributes well to pupils' good learning.

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

18. The quality of teaching for the under-fives is very good. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is at least good in four out of five lessons and very good in half of all lessons. However, one in ten lessons are unsatisfactory. Almost all of this unsatisfactory teaching occurred in one Reception / Year 1 class. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good in four out of five lessons and very good in just over one in five lessons.
19. The teaching of the under-fives is based on a very good knowledge and understanding of the Desirable Learning Outcomes (the six areas of learning for the under-fives). This very good knowledge impacts very positively on children's personal and social skills as well as on their standards in early reading skills and on their counting skills. Good subject knowledge of the National Curriculum and religious education is evident in the teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the literacy hour and National Numeracy Strategy is good and contributes to good learning in reading, writing, spelling and in number work. In a number of subjects such as art and design and technology, teachers' good subject knowledge contributes to good standards of achievement. Teachers' planning is good in both key stages and, where learning outcomes are shared with pupils, for example in English, pupils make good progress in their learning. Where teaching is unsatisfactory in one Reception / Year 1 class, the learning outcomes for the lesson are not clear and so pupils end up off task and begin to misbehave and be silly. In almost all subjects teachers have high expectations of pupils and challenge them with demanding activities. For example, in music in Key Stage 2, when teaching challenges pupils to listen carefully and then to compose their own pieces of music their learning is good.
20. A satisfactory range of teaching methods is used generally well in both key stages. However, on the occasions in Year 3 when pupils are in groups without sufficient AWA support difficulties in learning sometimes occur for pupils with SEN and EAL. On one occasion during the inspection, a pupil with EAL did not engage in meaningful learning during the group activity in the literacy hour as she was not supported, and this is unsatisfactory. Generally though, the organisation of the literacy hour and numeracy sessions results in good standards of achievement from pupils when seen against their prior attainment. In Key Stage 1 science lessons, where pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to develop investigative skills, standards are below those expected from pupils of that age. The behaviour management of pupils in lessons is generally good. However, unsatisfactory pupil management in a physical education lesson in a Reception / Year 1 class resulted in unsatisfactory behaviour.
21. Good use is made of time, resources and staff to support the good and very good quality teaching. Where there is a cracking pace, teaching is very good and results in high standards of achievement, such as in mathematics. The lack of the right sort of

equipment impedes the development of monitoring skills in ICT in Key Stage 2. AWAs work very effectively in partnership with teachers to support pupils with SEN and also pupils with EAL. Good use is made of assessment to inform planning to raise standards. Satisfactory use is made of homework to consolidate pupils' learning.

22. The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN and EAL is good overall and their acquisition of knowledge and skills is good as it is with their peers across both key stages. Pupils' intellectual, physical and creative effort is good, for example in Key Stage 1 religious education when very good teaching arouses a sense of awe and expectation in all pupils who respond enthusiastically. Pupils' interest, concentration and independence in learning is evident in most subjects, for example in physical education where by Year 4 most pupils swim independently and with confidence. Enjoyment in mathematics in Key Stage 1 enables pupils to participate fully in lessons, answer questions enthusiastically and work quietly with concentration when working independently or with a partner. These good attitudes, as with singing across the whole school, have a significant impact on good learning. However, in some mathematics lessons in lower Key Stage 2 a significant number of pupils find it difficult to concentrate, are easily distracted and have a short concentration span for their age. These attitudes impact negatively on their learning and consequently they do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. Pupils' own knowledge of their learning is better overall in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2. However, when given the opportunity, pupils in Key Stage 2 appraise their own work. In art, following a river walk, pupils in Key Stage 2 appraised water sounds in music and went on to use a collection of cool coloured materials to successfully express their feelings about the music to produce their own effective collage work. In design and technology pupils learn through discussing their problems with one another and coming to solutions.
23. The learning for pupils with SEN and EAL is good overall. It is best when these pupils are supported in lessons by sufficient AWAs, particularly in Year 3.

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

24. The curriculum in both key stages is sufficiently broad and balanced and all subjects are allocated sufficient time over the year. The curriculum planning of science is not consistently relevant to the pupils' stages of development to promote progression in the subject and this has a negative impact on pupils' achievement. Target setting for pupils has contributed to raising standards in writing. Overall the curriculum is satisfactory.
25. The learning opportunities for pupils under five are very good. Because provision is carefully designed to meet the known needs of children from the time they enter the school, they make very good progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Children enjoy stimulating and calming educational experiences and demonstrate confidence and success in well-structured tasks and activities.
26. There is an annual programme of work to ensure coverage of the subject content of the National Curriculum and religious education, but skills in science are not fully considered. Those who teach the same year groups discuss and plan the details for termly units of work and weekly lesson plans which allows equality of the curriculum in classes of similar age groups. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and those with SEN or EAL are given good support. In their weekly plans teachers set clear objectives for all subjects to be taught, how activities will be matched to the range of abilities of pupils, the organisation and what pupils are expected to learn. Teachers

frequently review formally and informally pupils' achievement in literacy and numeracy. Teachers in Key Stage 1 implement the requirement of the school, by recording brief class evaluations of pupils' needs in all subjects to inform the planning of work for the following week. There is inconsistency in this good practice in Key Stage 2.

27. All pupils with SEN have full access to the National Curriculum and religious education in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Practice for SEN. Pupils with EAL also have full access to a balanced and broad curriculum that meets statutory requirements.
28. The effective implementation of the literacy hour contributes to improving pupils' achievements. Pupils who receive additional literacy support make good progress and the school/parent/child literacy initiatives in weekly sessions and home reading links contributes to the raising of standards in reading. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented in all classes. Although this strategy has led to improved standards in Key Stage 1 it has not had an observable impact on raising standards in Key Stage 2 and many pupils particularly in Year 3 remain dependent on using their fingers or blocks for calculating simple number problems.
29. The range of extra-curricular activities is limited. Currently good opportunities, provided during lunchtimes, consist of a recorder club held by the music teacher and three short-tennis well-organised meetings held by an AWA for Year 3 and Year 4. All pupils are welcome to attend the tennis meeting, which improves their racquet and ball skills and evident commitment to playing the game well and entering local competitions. The forty-nine pupils in the short-tennis club attended the Samsung Tennis Tournament in Bournemouth and were awarded a thousand pounds by the company for their success in a tennis skills competition for visiting schools. The school includes activities to support those in need. During the autumn term they invite the elderly into school to share in Harvest celebrations and present them with gifts. At Christmas pupils sing carols at a home for the disabled.
30. Pupils respond well to the good provision for personal, social and health education. They frequently show enthusiasm in lessons and respect for adults and each other. All pupils benefit from the good relationships in classes and the sensitivity of teachers who guide them to explore their feelings and consider the consequences of their words and actions. The teaching of personal relationships assists pupils relate to the principles learned in religious education and the teaching about hygiene extends health education in science. Older pupils enjoy a suitable range of responsibilities for daily routines in the school, which they carry out conscientiously. All pupils assist those having difficulty with finding a friend to play with in the playground as a 'Friendship Stop'.
31. Good links have been established between playgroups in the community and the school to improve the quality of provision for children when they enter the under-fives class. Before pupils begin school good links are established with parents by home visits which have a very positive effect upon the rate of progress pupils make soon after entry to the school. There is good liaison between the school and the middle school before pupils transfer so as to assist continuity in pupils' learning.
32. The school's ethos is very good and teachers work very hard to successfully promote spiritual, moral and social development. Policy and practice is very good. Of particular note is the policy for collective worship, which is very well planned and monitored. Consequently, assemblies are meaningful and effectively underpin the Christian, caring ethos of the school. Cultural development is sound but underdeveloped.



33. The curriculum provides very good opportunities for pupils' spiritual development. These are often used very well by teachers to develop a sense of awe and wonder in lessons, particularly in the use of lively and imaginative resources. Pupils respond very well to this. For example, in religious education older pupils readily share personal experiences, such as when they have been tempted to do wrong and because this is handled sensitively by the teacher, an ethos of trust is apparent. Assemblies contribute very well to spiritual development. Careful choice of music, a quietly lit candle and tuneful singing, supports this spiritual atmosphere well. Good participation by pupils and the regular contribution of visiting speakers is positively encouraged and enjoyed by pupils. A good example of this is when pupils make pancake mix to reinforce their understanding of Lent. Very good opportunities are offered for pupils to reflect on issues raised in the assemblies.
34. Provision for moral development is very good. Evidence is available to show that teachers are good role models and are pro-active and successful in developing good values, honesty and fairness. For example, when pupils expressed concern for the plight of people in the Mozambique disaster, teachers were swift to help pupils organise a non school uniform day to raise funds. Circle time is well used by teachers to reinforce good values, to reflect on issues that may concern pupils and to raise self-esteem. Issues such as respect and tolerance are openly addressed. Most pupils fully understand and can explain why an action is right or wrong. Although a significant number of parents expressed concern as to the provision for personal development, pupils respond well to the good opportunities to take responsibility around the school and they demonstrate that they are particularly proud of this role. For example, pupils have been involved with staff in shaping ideas for improving the school environment.
35. Provision for social development is very good and parents' views that the school promotes this aspect well are justified. Pupils are consistently well managed, and this, together with their involvement in drawing up their own class rules, has a very positive impact on learning. Pupils work and play well together. They are polite and courteous. Learning is fun and this leads to the good relationships which are evident throughout the school. Pupils are happy, safe and secure in their learning, responding very well to the praise and celebration of achievement offered by all adults. Sometimes, in lessons, such as when pupils in Key Stage 2 are engaged in observational drawing in art, teaching is so well organised that pupils work in silence with excellent concentration, eager to complete their tasks.
36. Provision for cultural development, although it is addressed in assemblies and in the curriculum, is underdeveloped and provision for pupils to take their place in multi-cultural Britain is limited. For example, pupils have been involved in learning about other people's views and beliefs, such as when an Islamic visitor attended an assembly. They have visited a Jewish Synagogue. They study and enjoy music and art from other cultures. However, in religious education study of other faiths is infrequent, in geography, study of a developing country has not yet started and in art, study of the work of famous artists, although a priority, is underdeveloped. Consequently, discussion with pupils reveals that their knowledge of other cultures and faiths is sometimes insecure.

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

37. The school has good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance. All pupils are assessed within their first few weeks in school in line with the LEA's baseline assessment. Pupils then take the National Curriculum Attainment Tests at the end of Key Stage 1 and the voluntary tests at the end of Years 3 and 4.
38. There are good day-to-day assessment procedures, which measure pupils' achievement against the learning outcomes highlighted in the lesson planning. This assessment is used well to inform future teaching and learning. The assessment procedures are comprehensive and give teachers useful, relevant information about pupils' learning to enable them to set challenging, but achievable, targets for pupils as they move through the school.
39. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are good. Pupils' personal development is promoted and monitored well through the school's PSHE programme. All adults working in the school contribute to this assessment. There is a good range of awards given by teachers, ancillary welfare assistants and midday supervisors, which are recorded by class teachers. The special achievement assembly celebrates pupils' achievements in this area as well as academic success and this is a strength.
40. The school has very good procedures for child protection and this is a strength of the school. It compares favourably with the arrangements commented on at the last inspection. The headteacher is the named and local authority trained person. She has ensured that all staff have been made well aware of their relevant responsibilities and are also aware of the local authority representative and routines. The special educational needs co-ordinator has also received appropriate training. All relevant documentation is securely locked away in the headteacher's room and this is good practice.
41. Procedures within the school for ensuring pupils welfare are good and also compare well with similar judgements made at the last inspection. The headteacher is the named health and safety person. An up-to-date local authority risk assessment is currently being carried out, in co-operation with the governors' risk management committee. The school has good procedures for fire exercises, which are held and recorded termly. All escape routes are accessible and well marked and all equipment in date tested. The school has 'in date' certificates, ensuring that all portable electrical and physical educational equipment has been regularly tested.
42. Accident and medical procedures are well carried out by the school. Pupils with specific medical needs are well identified by staff. The school has one fully trained and one emergency trained first aider. First aid boxes are in date and well distributed around the school. Good use is made of outside professional help. For example, the local police come in to talk about Road Safety and Stranger Danger and the fire brigade initiate mock fire escape procedures for the children.
43. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are very good. These are a strength of the school and impact considerably on learning. Such procedures compare very well with the last inspection. Registers are kept for each class, in accordance with current statutory procedures. They are all returned to the school office, both after morning and afternoon registration. The school has very good routines for ensuring parents are aware of their relevant responsibilities. Pupils' lateness is very well monitored and recorded. Very good and appropriate use is made of the local authority education welfare officer.

44. Good behaviour is monitored and promoted well by the school and procedures are good. These procedures compare very well with those of the last inspection. They lead directly to very good behaviour in classes which, in turn, allow pupils to learn well. A very high percentage of parents have accepted home/school agreements. The school has a detailed behaviour policy with appropriate rewards and sanctions. Pupils receive three warnings before they can be dismissed from class. They then need to negotiate a return with the headteacher and class teacher.
45. Pupils can be shown a red card for inappropriate behaviour and punishment can involve being kept in or missing break time. Rewards can include taking home the class puppet, having a marble put in the jar or nomination as a playground 'friend'. These rewards and sanctions have a positive effect on the good behaviour throughout the school.
46. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are also good and are linked closely to those for behaviour. In addition the school has a clear, separate, written bullying policy. Pupils and parents are regularly given child/parent friendly booklets to read. Pupils are warned that bullying will not be tolerated and assembly and circle time is used effectively to discuss the harmful effects of bullying.

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

47. The overall view that the parents have of the school is that it is a satisfactory school. A significant amount of parents say that their children like coming to school, make good progress, are expected to work hard and achieve their best and that, as parents, they are not uncomfortable about approaching the school with a question or problem. A high percentage of parents also think that the teaching is good, the school is well led and managed and the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible. A significant minority of parents did not think that they were being kept well informed of how their child was getting on or that the school generally worked closely with parents. Almost half of those parents that returned questionnaires stated that the school did not provide an interesting range of activities outside of lessons.
48. The quality of information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress is also satisfactory, but has fallen somewhat since the judgement made at the last inspection. The school has worked hard on its prospectus and the annual Governors Report to Parents and both of these documents comply with all statutory requirements. However, although the school's annual pupils' reports to parents cover all subjects of the curriculum and say what pupils can do, they are very inconsistent on informing parents as to where pupils need to improve. The school provides a very clear and regular newsletter to parents and a good range of meetings. Recently there have been curriculum meetings on literacy and numeracy. In addition, the school holds a regular consultation evening when parents can meet the teacher and talk about their child's reports. Because some working parents are unable to attend Open Afternoons the school has now arranged these for the evening. Planning information for parents is placed on the school notice board. Generally the school has an open door policy. Parents are made very welcome to attend class assemblies and those that are able take full advantage of this.
49. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home are good and well appreciated by the school. This aspect compares well with the last inspection. Within school there are always at least two parents helping, per day, per year group and teachers find that they can reliably plan parts of lessons around this.

50. Parents help in all subjects with painting, readers, games, computers and trips out. Most parents have welcomed home/school agreements. Most parents are only too willing to support school assemblies, the Christmas concert, Harvest Festivals and annual sports days. At home parental help is of a high standard. Most parents like contributing to reading, via home/school books, reading awards, tables and spellings. Each parent receives a termly overview of the curriculum and the school suggests visits to museums or libraries to complete topics and projects. The school has a very hard working Parent Friends Association which arranges many social events and raises considerable funds for the pupils' education. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good and has a favourable affect upon children's learning.
51. The overall effectiveness of the school's links with its parents is satisfactory but has fallen somewhat from the standards commented on at the previous inspection. Although parental help in the children's learning is good and well appreciated, a significant minority of parents feel that they have given up on being listened to by the school and cannot always rely on the information provided for them by the school. However, within the under-fives a similar effectiveness is good. Via pre-school visits by staff and induction meetings for parents most parents feel well appreciated.

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

52. The quality of leadership and management is good. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection, for example staff with leadership and management roles now have a very good understanding of the responsibilities and the school development plan now reflects the long-term vision for the school.
53. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and the other members of senior management work as an effective team and provide a clear educational direction for the school. They have successfully created a school committed to high standards and care for all pupils. The headteacher and her deputy work in an effective partnership and provide good leadership. However, communication between the headteacher and parents and also between the headteacher and all staff is not always effective and sometimes parents do not consider that they are listened to with sufficient sensitivity about their concerns. The headteacher is keen to promote an open door policy for parents and recognises the importance of improving further systems for better communication for both parents and staff. Parents and staff recognise that in a relatively short space of time she has shifted a culture in respect of communication and that the school is much more relaxed and transparent than at the time of the last inspection, but that there is room still for further improvement.
54. Staff with management responsibilities are very effective and they impact positively on the good planning within and across the key stages and so provide very good continuity in pupils' learning. The early years co-ordinator liaises very effectively with local playgroups and this is beginning to lead to an improved start to school for the youngest children. The Key Stage 2 manager liaises very effectively with the partner middle school and this benefits all pupils on transfer including those with SEN. Systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are very good and contribute significantly to improved learning and to raised standards for pupils. The headteacher is involved in detailed monitoring in the classroom and the teaching of the literacy hour and National Numeracy Strategy are carefully monitored and evaluated by the co-ordinators with responsibility for these key initiatives to raise standards. This monitoring, and the feedback given to teachers, is leading to improved teaching and so to better learning

and higher standards. The sensitive manner in which a self-review / evaluation model has been introduced in this school has created a climate where this approach is seen as very important in improving the quality of education for all pupils.

55. The overall management of special educational needs is good. It is noticeable that the quality of teaching and management of behaviour in Year 3 is much better when these pupils have targeted learning support. The special educational needs co-ordinator is a very reflective practitioner and is concerned whether working with small groups withdrawn from their main class is as effective as the work she does in larger mainstream classes. She is engaged in active discussion with the designated governor for SEN and the headteacher about her most effective and efficient deployment in the interests of the maximum number of pupils. Pupils with EAL are generally managed well but in a Year 3 literacy lesson observed during the inspection insufficient attention was targeted on an EAL pupil.
56. The headteacher has a vision based on promoting excellence for all pupils. This is a vision shared by all staff. The school's aims and values are good and much appreciated by parents. There is a commitment to ensuring that pupils are happy in school and that their best efforts are appreciated. The school's development plan is good. It is an effective tool to manage change and priorities on the plan are rigorously monitored. The plan provides a clear focus on raising standards in literacy and numeracy and the whole staff know what is in it and the part they have to play in making the plan work. Through the excellent involvement of the finance committee of the governing body the plan drives the budget, but shrinking funding due to a drop in numbers (due to demographic trends) has resulted in some very difficult and unpopular decisions about mixed age Reception / Year 1 classes. Parents expressed concern about this and inspectors did find some unsatisfactory teaching in one of the Reception / Year 1 classes, but teaching in the other was consistently at least good and often very good. The effective school plan has clearly set long-term and short-term priorities. All priorities have been very carefully costed. The plan is regularly and rigorously monitored and evaluated to find out what impact the priorities are having on improving the quality of education for pupils. The inspectors judged that the priorities on raising standards in literacy and numeracy are beginning to make a difference, but standards in mathematics by Year 4 remain not yet high enough. The headteacher and governors recognise the need to improve the success criteria in the plan so that they can be used more effectively to measure the impact of the priorities on the quality of teaching and learning for pupils. Since the last inspection the premises plan has enabled the accommodation to be improved despite a shrinking budget.
57. The school's ethos is good and all staff are moving in the same direction and singing from the same hymn sheet. However, not all staff consider that their views are always listened to with sufficient sensitivity and the headteacher recognises the need for even more transparent and formal structures for effective communication. Despite this communication blip, relationships within the school are good. There is a deep and shared commitment to challenging and extending all pupils to achieve their highest academic standards and maximum independence in an environment in which it is safe to take risks. Staff work very hard in building up confidence and self-esteem of every pupil and this is particularly successful amongst the under-fives, where management is excellent.
58. The governing body is supportive and is becoming increasingly effective although there is an honest recognition amongst many new governors that they are on a sharp learning curve. The chair of governors visits the school regularly and has a satisfactory knowledge about what is happening in the school. She is very keen to learn what are the

sort of questions she should be asking of the headteacher and what challenges she should be making as a critical friend. There is a good structure of committees to enable the governing body to meet their statutory responsibilities effectively. They meet all of their responsibilities well except for ensuring that Key Stage 2 pupils receive their full entitlement to all aspects of ICT as required by the National Curriculum.

59. Due to an excellent chairperson of finance, financial planning is very good. There is a long-term plan linked to finance. The headteacher does involve all staff and governors in important decisions when setting the budget. The problem of the small negative carry forward is explained in the context of the falling numbers and there is a prudent plan to claw it back. The chair of finance approached the local education authority for a licence to set a technical/paper deficit budget, but was given the green light to go ahead because the deficit was so small and strategic planning showed where savings will be made and how the finances will be made secure. Satisfactory use is made of staff and resources, although learning support assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) are not always deployed to the maximum benefit of pupils. Grants are effectively targeted. The literacy, numeracy and National Grid for Learning grants have been appropriately targeted and led to improved standards. Financial control is very good. The school's administrator makes very good use of a computer system to support her control of finance. The minor recommendations in the most recent auditor's report have been acted upon. The principles of best value are satisfactory. Spending is very carefully thought through and prudent in the situation of a reduced budget.
60. The number of teachers and support staff is sufficient and well qualified to meet the needs of the National Curriculum and religious education. The SENCO and learning support assistants are well qualified to work with pupils with SEN. Support for pupils with EAL comes from the local education authority as the ethnic minority grant (EMAG) has not been devolved to the school. This does mean that EAL pupils have a number of days in school without specialist bi-lingual support and this is unsatisfactory and on one occasion a Year 3 pupil with EAL was not supported in a literacy lesson. The policy for staff development is good. It is closely linked to the school development plan and supports teachers well in improving the quality of education provided for pupils. The system for staff appraisal is good and it is effectively managed by the deputy headteacher who recognises the need to link the current practice with the new guidance on performance management. The staff handbook provides valuable guidance to staff and supports them well in their work. Induction procedures for newly qualified teachers and staff new to the school are very good.
61. The school's accommodation is satisfactory because the hard work of the staff ensures that the National Curriculum and religious education are delivered despite a significant number of accommodation constraints. The huts situated in the playground do little to enhance the quality of the appearance of the learning environment, although the staff do everything possible to make them attractive particularly on the inside. Very good use is made of display to value and celebrate pupils work. Very attractive book and learning areas have been created in corridors. The simulated train station used by the youngest children is excellent and motivates these children to learn. The school has recognised the urgent need to improve the school's grounds and work on this project was going on during the inspection. The school has successfully involved pupils' ideas in improving the environment. Despite a very tight budget there is a rolling programme to paint and decorate the school a bit at a time and volunteer parent / carers have been actively involved in improving the learning environment for the children. There is only one toilet for staff and this is unsatisfactory leading to queues to use the 'loo' and by the end of the day the standard of hygiene leaves much to be desired. The one 'loo' is under much pressure and there is not a cleaner to keep it up to a pleasant standard throughout the

day.

62. The range of learning resources is satisfactory to meet the needs of the National Curriculum and religious education except for the teaching of monitoring skills in ICT in Key Stage 2. There has been a very significant investment in excellent big books and also in computers since the last inspection and this is an improvement. However, there is no equipment to develop pupils' measuring/monitoring skills using computers and this deficiency has a negative impact on standards in ICT in Key Stage 2.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

63. The governors, headteacher and deputy headteacher should give attention to the following points to improve further the quality of education provided and to raise standards for all pupils:
- Improve standards in numeracy in Key stage 2 by:
    - ensuring sufficient AWA support in Year 3 where standards are low;
    - ensuring that the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy are fully implemented.  
(Paragraphs 6, 22, 28, 80, 81, 83, 88)
  - Improve provision for and standards in science by:
    - providing a good scheme of work to guide teachers in their planning;
    - training all staff so that they become confident in their teaching of investigative skills.  
(Paragraphs 1, 3, 7, 20, 24, 26, 90, 91, 95, 97, 98)
  - Improve the provision for and raise standards in information and communication technology in Key Stage 2 by:
    - purchasing software to develop pupils' measuring / monitoring skills;
    - training staff so that they become confident in their teaching of monitoring skills.  
(Paragraphs 8, 21, 58, 62, 119, 121, 122)
  - Ensure that all pupils with special educational needs and also those with English as an additional language are given the maximum support available in the school by:
    - reviewing the deployment of the special educational needs co-ordinator and ancillary welfare assistants;
    - training and so improving teachers' confidence in working with bi-lingual learners.  
(Paragraphs 11, 20, 23, 55, 60)
  - Put improved systems in place for better communication between the school and parents and also systems to further improve communication between the headteacher and all staff.  
(Paragraphs 47, 48, 51, 53)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	34	34	24	4	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	273
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	98

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	6	School data	0.2
National comparative data	5.4	National comparative data	0.5

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



### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1***

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	33	26	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	21	28
	Girls	18	21	21
	Total	40	42	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	68	71	83
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	29	28
	Girls	21	22	19
	Total	43	51	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73	86	80
	National	82	86	87

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	11
Chinese	
White	262
Any other minority ethnic group	2

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Average class size	30

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	177

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	411,560
Total expenditure	423,230
Expenditure per pupil	1,393
Balance brought forward from previous year	32,600
Balance carried forward to next year	20,930

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	279
Number of questionnaires returned	121

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	45	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	43	7	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	52	8	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	50	11	4	3
The teaching is good.	46	43	7	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	39	21	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	44	4	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	49	1	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	39	41	16	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	45	42	3	3	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	44	8	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	36	21	10	16

Not all columns necessarily add up to 100 because some parents return questionnaires with some questions that are left unanswered

### Other issues raised by parents

- Concern was expressed about the school having to pay for use of the recreation ground.
- Parents were concerned about the equality of access to the curriculum for reception aged children in the mixed age reception / Year 1 class.
- Concern was expressed about Year 3 children missing physical education because some boys in the group misbehave. Parents were upset that all children miss their entitlement to physical education as a result.
- Considerable concern was expressed about a child in Year 3 being given far too many jobs to take

her outside of the classroom when she had finished her work rather than being challenged by additional extension work. A parent was most concerned that her child had been asked to escort a boy who had been naughty to another class unsupervised particularly as she perceived that the boy in question misbehaved on the way and that her daughter did not know what to do.

- Parents were pleased about the extra-curricular swimming and short-tennis provided by staff.
- The parent of a child with a disability spoke very highly of the school's total commitment to involve her child in all physical education activities.

All of these issues were investigated thoroughly during the inspection. Inspectors considered that parents are right to be concerned about the quality of teaching in one mixed age reception / Year 1 class but not in the other. The welfare and guidance of pupils in Year 3 was judged to be good and there was no evidence of Year 3 pupils being sent out of the classroom to carry out jobs during lesson time and they received their entitlement to physical education.

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

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

64. This aspect is a major strength of the school and provision for the education of children in the foundation year is very good. This is an improvement on what was a good report last time. The quality of teaching is at least always good, often very good and sometimes excellent. The committed and competent team, under the purposeful leadership of the foundation year's co-ordinator carefully plans and delivers the curriculum and this has a major impact on learning in reception. Consequently, the majority of children, who enter on a very low baseline, are already in line to meet national expectations in all six areas of learning. Although parents raised concerns about provision for children in the mixed age classes, evidence shows that teachers are working very hard to ensure that this does not impact negatively on learning and attainment.
65. Forty-eight children were admitted into reception in September and, in line with county policy, these children were part-time until January. Attainment on entry to the reception class is below the county average in literacy and numeracy. These children are arranged into three classes of which two classes contain ten reception children each, mixed with Year 1 pupils. No nursery provision is available in the area, but most children have experience of a local playgroup. Although no child has benefited from nursery education, teachers in reception go to great lengths to maintain and improve links with all the local playgroups and in some instances, have been able to advise on curriculum matters. A programme of visits, which includes teachers visiting all children's homes to present a welcome pack and arrange visits to school, is seen as crucial in building the good relationships that prevail with parents and ensures a smooth admission to school. Teachers start to gather baseline information on these initial visits and a broad picture of the child is gradually built up, and evidence shows that learning is carefully tracked from this time and reviewed regularly.

#### *Personal and social development*

66. The teaching of personal and social skills is very good and the warm and friendly approach of all adults in reception results in children who are safe and secure in their learning. They are happy and eager to come to school. A consistent approach to class management ensures that they behave very well and even the youngest already show very good concentration and perseverance to complete their tasks. They respond very well in discussion due to the interesting and exciting teaching which takes place and an atmosphere where achievement is constantly praised, for example, when puppets or 'feely' boxes are used successfully to create curiosity and a sense of awe and wonder. Good learning is also effectively nurtured by very good use of practical activities. A very good example of this is the exciting, well-planned and resourced 'station' role-play area where children take turns very well and play purposefully and collaboratively. In their first class assembly, enjoyed by parents, children were confident and alert as they independently performed the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. In their writing and drawing they express their feelings well when describing what makes them feel happy or sad in school, giving teachers insight into areas for further development. After listening to the story of the Good Samaritan, children were responsive to the significant features and ably described their feelings about them.

### *Language and literacy*

67. Teaching of language and literacy skills is very good and imaginatively and appropriately linked to literacy hour objectives. This results in rapid learning and, although children start from a low baseline and have one term part-time, evidence now shows that the majority have achieved very well and are already in line with expectations; some are above. As a result of the high expectations of the teachers, several able children have already made a very good start to reading and some are fluent readers. All children, except those with SEN, have at least a small bank of familiar words. Children with SEN are eager to read, understand well that print carries meaning and use pictures for contextual clues. All children enjoy books and handle them with care. They understand the need for contents and index page and are beginning to learn the difference between fiction and non-fiction. The majority are familiar with most single sounds and the more able confidently use them in their reading. Writing is developing well with clear progression evident in the independent writing of most children, as when they write about the 'Ticket Office'. Most children write their names clearly. Although the minority still experience difficulty with pencil control, with support they overwrite well. Speaking and listening skills are developing very well, particularly through the provision of very purposeful role-play activities. Children respond very well and, without exception, are eager, confident speakers in discussion, listening very well and speaking clearly.

### *Mathematics*

68. Mathematical teaching which is carefully linked to the National Numeracy Strategy is very good. As a result, learning is very good with children already attaining standards in line with expectations. Children count easily to 20 and beyond, enjoying a repertoire of number rhymes. They work confidently with numbers to 5, matching numbers to objects; they shape numbers clearly on paper and in sand. Able children are secure in telling time to o'clock and in sequencing events in their own lives. Other children are beginning to show awareness of the passage of time. All children know the primary colours and can recognise simple shapes well. With the good, focussed teaching of the support assistant, children with SEN achieve well in mathematics.

### *Knowledge and understanding of the world*

69. Teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is very good, particularly through careful planning of practical, interesting activities. Consequently, attainment is in line with expectations and achievement, seen against prior attainment, is high. Children use listening stations and the computer independently. When using a programmable robot, they concentrate well, taking turns appropriately to turn it on, clear the memory successfully and confidently move it backwards and forwards. They consolidate their knowledge of living things when they follow the life cycle of the frog by constructing a 'clock' showing the four main stages. They persevere well to use their design and technology skills to fix a pin as a pivot. When studying sound, the sense of wonder created by the good teaching, helps children understand that they use their ears to listen. They can identify other senses and how to use them.

### *Creative development*

70. The enthusiasm and excellent musical ability of a specialist teacher, used during the inspection, has a very positive impact on the teaching of music, ensuring that pace is sustained in a positive atmosphere where learning flourishes. Children are eager to contribute to a wide range of action songs and rhymes, well linked to the musical elements. They have a sound developing knowledge of high/low and loud/soft sounds.

Through tapping and clapping they show ability to hold a steady beat well. Interesting practical activities, such as when singing is linked to dance, ensures that children eagerly perform with a growing awareness of rhythm and beat. In a weaving activity, children select from a colourful range of materials for their patterns. They readily explain that weaving should go under and over and identify that some materials are soft and others are more difficult to bend. They compare their work thoughtfully, describing the different materials and patterns used. Younger children have a very good understanding of colour and how they can be mixed to produce a different effect.

### *Physical development*

71. A secure outdoor play area is not available, but teachers try hard to compensate for this by providing good teaching in physical education lessons. Lessons have a good structure, for example, when children practise making shapes as a warm-up activity before moving around the room in various ways and making good wide/narrow shapes on a given signal. Good use of praise gives children confidence and ensures that they work even harder to succeed in completing their tasks. Teaching demonstrates high expectations of behaviour. Consequently, children listen well and follow instructions carefully. They work safely on the apparatus, getting into groups quickly and sensibly. They work quietly to make wide, narrow and curled shapes, jumping off carefully when the sequence is completed. The work of the support assistant is effective in moderating the inappropriate behaviour of a pupil with SEN and ensuring that all the tasks are completed properly. Overall physical development is in line with expectations both in gross and fine motor development.

## **ENGLISH**

72. The school's results in the National Curriculum Assessment Tests for reading and writing in 1999 show standards well below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. Compared to similar schools, pupils' performance in reading and writing tests was very low. There has been relatively little change in this trend of below average standards as compared with the national average since the last inspection. The results of the 1999 tests, however, show a further significant fall in standards attained by pupils in both reading and writing with a below average number of pupils attaining Level 3. It would appear from these results that, not only have standards not risen since the last inspection but there has been a significant further decline. On examining the reasons for this further fall in standards, data shows that this year group contains a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs and a high proportion of summer born pupils. The findings of the inspection are that, due to the impact of the literacy hour and the quality of planning and individual target setting, pupils' attainment is in line with the national averages in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4. Although the staff are working hard and to good effect to implement the national literacy hour, and have implemented special arrangements to ensure that extra support is well targeted to meet the specific needs of pupils, this has yet to impact on results in the National Curriculum tests in order to raise them to the national average.
73. Pupils' attainment in reading and writing on entry to school is below average, but because of effective early identification of learning difficulties, individual target setting and the quality of teaching and planning pupils have positive attitudes, learn effectively and make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those for who English is an additional language also make good progress due to the high quality support they receive. Higher attaining pupils similarly make good progress because of the well planned differentiated activities that challenges

and impacts positively on their learning. This is an improvement since the last inspection when some higher attaining pupils were not sufficiently challenged, resulting in insufficient progress being made.

74. Pupils develop good speaking and listening skills. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was reported that some pupils made insufficient progress. When teachers use a variety of approaches, structure the lessons well and have good class management skills, pupils are able to make effective contributions to class discussions, and can listen attentively to their peers and to their teacher when instructions are given at the start or end of an activity. In Year 2 for example, when pupils were being introduced to 'Setting' in story, the teachers clarity of explanations and good relationship with pupils enabled them to listen carefully and offer some very interesting ideas in relation to the use of adjectives. Where teaching lacks focus pupils have limited opportunities to evaluate their work at the end of lessons and opportunities to extend and develop pupils' speaking, listening and debating skills are lost. Pupils display interest in school assemblies and they listen carefully and thoughtfully. Across the school pupils speak clearly and confidently. The school takes part in a variety of festivals and on these occasions pupils are given the opportunity to perform for an audience. During circle times all pupils are given the opportunity to reflect and speak on personal issues while drama sessions in Year 3 and Year 4 give pupils opportunities to share ideas and develop imaginative ways to express themselves. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language are offered good opportunities to participate and develop their language skills in small groups and on a one-to-one basis because of the very effective additional support they receive.
75. Pupils make good progress in reading as they move through the school. As already indicated, attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4 is in line with standards expected for pupils of this age. In Key Stage 1 teachers' good phonic teaching skills ensure that pupils develop good early reading strategies that enable pupils to achieve success by reading a wide range of simple texts. In Year 1 pupils can read a range of simple text, can use letter sounds to aid word recognition and say what they like about the books they are reading. Teachers' clarity of explanations in relation to 'key words' in group reading and the well planned use of a variety of texts ensure that pupils are motivated and eager to learn. In this way, they are able to consolidate previous learning and make good progress. By Year 2, most pupils read with reasonable fluency, enjoy reading and have developed more advanced reading skills. Higher attaining pupils can predict the events of the story they are reading and can talk with maturity about the aspects of the book that they liked. They are beginning to use books for research in other subjects and can identify the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. For example, in Year 2 pupils have researched and read about Florence Nightingale in history. Pupils with special educational needs are developing appropriate reading skills and making good progress. By Year 4 pupils have more advanced reading skills and can use dictionaries and non-fiction books increasingly for research in other subjects. The additional literacy strategy and the very good support given to pupils with special educational needs by AWA's ensures that most pupils in Years 3 and 4 have made good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The quality of teachers' assessment in reading is very good; pupils' reading progress is monitored very carefully in order to target support appropriately. All pupils are set individual targets, which are reviewed termly by the teaching staff. However, pupils are not yet sufficiently involved in this process and, because of this, not all pupils know what they have to do to improve. All pupils have access to a wide range of reading materials and the library is well resourced with a variety of books. Pupils have the opportunity to take books home regularly and the support of parents especially in Key stage 1 has been particularly beneficial. All classrooms have colourful and inviting book corners and this has been an



improvement since the last inspection. The school holds a regular book week and all pupils have the opportunity to read quietly in class.

76. Attainment in writing is in line with the national average by the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4; throughout the school pupils make good progress. Within the literacy lessons pupils are given a range of opportunities to write in a variety of styles and for a range of different audiences, this is an improvement since the last inspection. Younger pupils, for example in the class 'rail station' role-play area, are asked to take messages in simple note form. In Year 2 pupils can accurately re-tell a story using correct punctuation and write at some length engaging the reader using a range of descriptive words. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are able to write instructions for other pupils to follow in order to make a simple photo frame using bullet points, edit reports and create poems related to a walk along the river. Higher attaining pupils can write with more sustained focus and can use adjectives effectively to create 'mood' in their writing. As pupils move throughout the school they develop a cursive writing style and increasingly develop appropriate punctuation skills. Teachers have generally developed good routines and relationships with their class, and use questioning strategies effectively not only to consolidate, but to extend and challenge pupils to think carefully about their writing. Plenary sessions in these instances are used effectively to encourage pupils to evaluate and improve their writing. When teaching is less effective the opening sessions are too long and pupils have limited time to develop their writing skills or plenary sessions are not used to evaluate pupils writing in order that they may improve and develop. Pupils with special education needs and those for whom English is an additional language are able to improve and develop their writing skills especially when they are supported and work is matched to their needs. Writing skills are used well to support other subjects especially in science, history and religious education. Year 3 pupils for example write in a variety of ways about the solar system, especially in their descriptions of the planets, while in Year 4 pupils' work on electricity has involved note taking, reporting and the development of safety posters. In religious education pupils write about life in the time of Jesus and have written poems and prayers at Christmas time.
77. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good with some very good teaching and a small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching in Years 3 and 4 is generally good with some very good teaching. When teaching is very good it is because of the very good relationships, class management skills and well-established routines that maximises the teaching time. In these lessons pupils are eager to learn, they have a positive attitude to work and want to do well; this enables the teacher to support and involve all class members which in turn allows all pupils, whatever their ability, to succeed. The key difference between very good and satisfactory teaching is the teachers' effective use of time, pace and the quality of questioning especially in the plenary sessions in order to consolidate pupils' learning. In unsatisfactory lessons, teachers' inability to control and motivate pupils, especially in the opening part of lessons, impacts negatively on the whole lesson. Pupils are unsure about what they have to do and become disruptive. Where teaching was unsatisfactory in one Reception / Year 1 class, pupils did not succeed and became frustrated. This in turn created additional class management difficulties. Usually, the effective use of AWA's within the literacy lessons also has a positive impact on learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are also taught well and their work tasks mirror those of other pupils in the class.
78. The school has a good policy and scheme of work that follows the literacy hour model. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enhanced by book weeks, plays, creative arts lessons and regular quiet reading sessions within class. The assessment of literacy skills is very good and is ongoing throughout the year. All pupils are set targets

to achieve within the year and these are reviewed termly. The co-ordinators have clearly identified the areas for improvement in the subject and have taken full advantage of all the support available within the authority in order to improve teaching and learning and raise standards. They have regularly monitored standards and teaching. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those pupils for whom English is an additional language is well supported by an additional literacy strategy, extra phonic lessons and extended writing sessions. The work and support provided by the AWA's is particularly beneficial. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are clearly identified and targets set to improve. However, not all targets set are specific and focussed on pupils' individual needs. They are not sufficiently focussed in order to impact on teachers' planning and to enable pupils' progress to be measured.

79. The subject is sufficiently resourced and there has been an extensive replacement of books and resources to support the literacy hour. These are centrally stored, catalogued and the school has developed a very good lending system, which is well used by pupils and parents. A range of Big Books, group readers, core texts and tapes are all stored in the bright and welcoming library area. A range of non-fiction books was obtained from the generous support of local groups. The family literacy group meets weekly in the school and this positive approach enables parents and pupils to 'read together'. The group has made story sacks, which will be used to support and develop pupils' enjoyment of stories. Literacy is often the focus of assemblies when pupils and teachers share their favourite books. All these initiatives have enabled the school to develop a positive literacy focus where all pupils enjoy books.

## **MATHEMATICS**

80. At the end of Key Stage 1 the results of the National Curriculum Assessment Tests in 1999 showed pupils' attainment to be below the national average and well below for similar schools. Although the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was well below the national average, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level was close to the national average. Although standards overall were low in 1999 they do show an improvement over the previous year. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with English as an additional language are spread across the school and make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against their prior learning and the targets set for them and achieve good standards. At the end of Year 4 53 per cent of pupils achieved Level 3 which was below the local education authority average, but the number of pupils achieving Level 4 was above the local education authority average.
81. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of Key Stage 1 attainment is in line with the standards expected for the average seven-year-old. By the end of Year 4 a significant proportion of pupils' attainment is still below that expected nationally, but in one Year 4 class standards are in line with the national average.
82. Since the last inspection standards in Key Stage 1 have greatly improved. Teaching was identified as a weakness at the last inspection, but the majority of teaching in Key Stage 1 is now good and sometimes very good. Good teaching, which motivates pupils, encourages them to work hard and uses time efficiently, are important factors in the raising of standards. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy in Key Stage 1, with the emphasis on direct teaching, ensures continuity and progression. Planning is now of good quality and shows clear learning outcomes which are then carefully assessed to inform future teaching. It is clear that the National Numeracy Strategy has had a significant impact on learning in Key Stage 1.

83. At the last inspection, standards were judged to be in line with national expectations by the end of Year 4. However, there is considerable variation in the ability of the cohorts' year on year and at the present time a significant proportion of pupils are working below the standards expected nationally. The higher standards in one Year 4 class are the result of consistently very good teaching and effective implementation of the National Numeracy strategy. However, where the National Numeracy Strategy is less well implemented the pace of teaching in some numeracy lessons is slow and pupils lose interest and concentration. The tasks do not give pupils sufficient opportunity to practise mental calculation and use the number facts they know to help them solve new problems and so they achieve standards below those expected of pupils of their age.
84. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 demonstrate good counting skills, confidently counting forwards and backwards in tens starting with various numbers between 0 and 9. Pupils show a good understanding of hundreds, tens and units as they work with two digit numbers finding one smaller, one larger and one that lies in between. For example, when given 32 and 75 they position the following numbers correctly 21, 32, 55, 75, 99. Higher attaining pupils work with three digit numbers, while lower attaining pupils' work with numbers to 30. Past work shows that the work highlighted in the National Numeracy Strategy for each term is being covered, for example, two- and three-dimensional shapes, measurement and data handling.
85. Most pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs in lower Key Stage 2, although working below the standards expected, make significant gains in knowledge and understanding during lessons, for example recognising that division is the inverse operation to multiplication. By the end of the lesson they understand that if they know the three times table they can work out the sum 9 divided by 3 and the sum 15 divided by 3. This represents good achievement. Pupils with special educational needs received very effective support during this lesson from ancillary welfare assistants, which allowed them to work on practical activities using dice and pegboards to understand the concept. Pupils in a Year 4 lesson used the fact that they knew how to multiply by 10 to help them multiply by 9 and 11. When given the sum  $22 \times 9$  they calculated  $22 \times 10 = 220$  and subtracted 22 to find the correct answer. When presented with  $26 \times 11$  they calculated  $26 \times 10 = 260$  and added 26. At the beginning of the lesson many pupils were uncertain whether to add or subtract after multiplying by 10, but they concentrated very well in response to the very good teaching and most pupils were working confidently at the end of the lesson. An AWA supported pupils with special educational needs very well and this contributed to the effective learning for these pupils. Pupils with English as additional language were working well within their ability group.
86. Evidence was seen of numeracy being used effectively in geography in Year 3, for example where pupils produce block graphs to show the rainfall in millimetres and line graphs to show the maximum and minimum temperatures. Information and communication technology is linked well to numeracy in most classes. In Year 1 numeracy was used to support language and literacy; in the role-play area, a station, ticket prices and train times were displayed helping to make the play meaningful.
87. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is generally good, and sometimes very good. Good lesson planning with clear learning outcomes, good management of pupils, the brisk pace of lessons and the ability to make learning exciting are the features of the good teaching seen in this key stage. Good learning results from this good teaching and pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress. The majority of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good or better. Where teaching is at least good the pupils learning is also good and these pupils attain

standards in line with those expected of pupils of their age. The satisfactory teaching, although having more strengths than weaknesses, is nonetheless characterised by slow pace. Tasks that are set for pupils do not relate directly to the teaching at the beginning of the lesson; there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise mental calculation and use known facts to solve new challenges and there is inadequate supervision of the whole class. In some lessons there are insufficient qualified adults, other than the teacher, in the classroom to enable all pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, to learn effectively and this has a negative impact on learning and standards achieved

88. In Key Stage 1, pupils enjoy mathematics, participate fully in lessons, answer questions enthusiastically and work quietly with concentration when working independently or with a partner. These good attitudes have a significant impact on their effective learning. In some classes in lower Key Stage 2, a significant number of pupils find it difficult to concentrate, are easily distracted and have a short concentration span for their age. These attitudes impact on their learning and consequently they do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. However, when they are well supported by another qualified adult they stay on task, concentrate better and learn effectively.
89. The quality of leadership and management of the National Numeracy Strategy is good and has led to improved standards overall. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully implemented and is having a significant impact on the attainment of all pupils, particularly in raising standards in basic number skills in Key Stage 1. Planning is good and clearly understood by all staff. Assessment is used well and informs future teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has moved to Key Stage 1 as part of the strategic plan to raise standards in Key Stage 1. She has led sessions of staff inset and regularly monitors teaching, giving formal feedback to teachers to further improve the quality of teaching. The school has invested wisely in resources for numeracy and these are used by teachers and pupils and have a positive impact on the learning.

## **SCIENCE**

90. Standards in science are below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with national average in Key Stage 2. This represents a decline in standards in Key Stage 1 since the previous inspection, as standards were then in line in both key stages.
91. At the end of Key Stage 1 the results of teacher assessments in 1999 indicate that attainment was below the national average and below similar schools in experimental and investigative skills and very much below in knowledge and understanding. Standards in Year 2 are currently well below average in experimental and investigative skills and knowledge and understanding of materials. However, in the other aspects of science, standards by the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with the national average. Pupils in Year 1 achieve a very good understanding of how a variety of sounds are made and can compare their loudness and pitch. They communicate ideas speaking confidently and draw pictures to group similar sources of sound or identify objects that can be pushed or pulled. Pupils draw pictures and label the features of familiar animals that move; they use a computer programme to construct a frog and label its features. The higher attaining pupils write well-punctuated sentences about sounds in the environment. Excellent class management and use of stimulating resources raise standards.
92. Pupils in Year 2 offer good explanations about electric circuits using correct vocabulary such as connect and disconnect. From their investigations, they observe that the more

bulbs they use the fainter the lights because they are all sharing the same amount of power from the battery. Higher attaining pupils recall that a battery has a positive and negative sign and that electricity travels through metal very easily. They recognise that some materials will allow light to pass through and that a magnet will attract some materials. They sort materials into groups according to whether they sink or float, and record other directly observable properties on a grid.

93. Pupils in Key Stage 2 demonstrate good investigative skills because they are well taught in a sequence of lessons matched to the stages of an investigation. At the beginning of the key stage they understand how to control factors and measure changes in temperature and forces, using the appropriate units. In their work on insulation, higher attaining pupils provide well reasoned explanations such as the threads of a fabric being closer together to prevent heat from escaping and cold air entering. Pupils have a good understanding of how to represent electrical circuits, using symbols as 'real scientists' do and using correct vocabulary. Higher attaining pupils in a discussion about periodic changes explain that 'the Earth spins on its own tilted axis ' and several pupils describe accurately the times taken by the orbits of the earth and the moon. Pupils in both year groups write detailed informative paragraphs. Both year groups recognise changes in materials and give examples of how some are permanent. Higher attaining pupils use their knowledge to say what they think might happen and write extensively to produce well presented, well punctuated and often extended explanations which reveal knowledge in line or above expectations for their age. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with SEN have an understanding in line with their abilities.
94. At both key stages, pupils' curiosity is aroused in science lessons because of the creation of an atmosphere of wonder and expectancy. All pupils develop evident understanding and make good progress when they handle objects and products themselves. Progress in learning is limited when pupils remain inactive throughout the lesson or are not challenged sufficiently to extend the science skills and knowledge they have secured from previous learning. Pupils suggest explanations confidently because of the good quality of relationships and evident respect they have for their teachers and each other. They have good learning opportunities to develop ideas when teachers constantly use effective questioning to encourage them to make observations to extend previous knowledge or skills. Pupils in Year 4 collaborate well in the practical activity of carrying out an investigation with a good level of independence because they are well prepared in the lessons leading up to the activity.
95. The quality of teaching is uneven, but satisfactory overall. There are examples of excellent teaching in Key Stage 1 where pupils develop their understanding above expectations for their age in their understanding of sound and of electrical components in a circuit. However, planning for the teaching of attainment target 1 in science in Key Stage 1 is weak. It is ineffective for developing pupils' skills in investigation and so pupils' standards in their ability to plan an investigation, record measurements and communicate using tables and bar charts is well below national expectations for their age. The planning for the investigation of materials and of forces and motion is ineffective in raising pupils' understanding previously acquired. In Key Stage 2, investigative skills are well planned for and pupils attain good standards, although they are not expected to convert readings recorded on a table into a graph to look for patterns in their results. Standards in pupils' knowledge and understanding of how shadows are formed are adversely affected when the purpose of the investigation is not made clear to the pupils.
96. In Key Stage 2, teachers fully involve pupils in planning, carrying out and using their evidence to explain unexpected or expected outcomes. This develops pupils' skills and

their understanding of how to experiment and investigate well. They have a good knowledge of the needs of pupils with SEN and EAL and match the ways expected for them to record with relevant expectations and supportive methods. Assessment of pupils with SEN in science is good, but is inconsistent for the majority of pupils. Assessment is frequently unrelated to the objectives of lessons and this is unhelpful in raising standards in science. Marking does not indicate what pupils have achieved and is a weakness.

97. The curriculum for science does not fully consider clear lines of continuity and progression to sequence the programmes of study to match what pupils are expected to learn in line with national expectations. There is insufficient guidance for teachers on how to identify opportunities to implement the teaching and learning of investigative skills. The school is trialling several schemes of work and has taken advice, but teachers find difficulty in consistently extending pupils to reach national expectations which is impacting on standards particularly in Key Stage 1. The environmental area of the school is underused for investigation of how differences affect local plants and animals.
98. Currently the headteacher is acting co-ordinator and from monitoring science in the school is aware that pupils are not making sufficient progress in Key Stage 1 in the development of investigation skills. She has used INSET to offer support to teachers and recently provided a new scheme of work. The school development plan identifies a review of the scheme of work planned for the summer term. The previous report in 1996 identified insufficient guidance in the scheme of work for science to which the lack of attention has and is having a negative impact upon pupils' standards. There is insufficient use of ICT for the development of monitoring skills in both key stages.

## **ART**

99. The previous inspection reported that standards of attainment in art were satisfactory in both key stages, although the quality of teaching was good. Evidence from this inspection shows that standards have improved and the standard of achievement in art is now good and sometimes very good in both key stages. The high standards are above those expected of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4. This is because very good teaching leads to very good learning. Good leadership by the art co-ordinator, who is very well qualified to lead in this subject, has led to a successful programme of in-service training on skill development, which included a whole-day workshop session on line, tone and colour. This, together with a new, good quality, skills based scheme of work and an exciting resource centre has contributed effectively to the improved subject knowledge of teachers and raised their expectations and confidence.
100. This has had considerable impact on pupils' learning and evidence shows that pupils are excited and interested in their artwork and are very proud of their achievements. Pupils stop visitors to the school and talk very knowledgeably about their achievements in art. Art is very well celebrated in vibrant, colourful displays in corridors and classrooms. When pupils in Key Stage 2 explain in detail how they used glue, sand and sawdust to create the texture of bark in their paintings of their winter trees and how they mixed colours successfully to create a winter mood for the background landscapes, they demonstrate a very good understanding of a relevant art vocabulary.
101. During the inspection, art teaching focussed on observational drawing, pattern making, colour mixing and weaving. Of note was the very good standard seen in observational drawing. Although no lessons were seen in Key Stage 1, successful teaching was evident in energetic and exciting outcomes in pupils' work. For example, younger pupils

develop appropriate skill in simple weaving techniques, using a wide range of interesting materials from around the classroom, such as unifix grids, bendy straws and paper. This skill is further developed when pupils effectively use colourful exotic materials, such as strings of beads and crystals, metallic paper, wool and fabric to create framed woven artefacts, which show very good standards.

102. In Key Stage 2, the good subject knowledge of teachers and their confidence in teaching art skills are immediately apparent. Pupils respond very well to this and are very well motivated. Instances were seen of pupils working in complete silence and with absolute concentration, perseverance and excellent behaviour to complete their set tasks. Teachers lead discussion very clearly and pupils know exactly what is expected of them. A good example of this was when younger pupils, after studying 'Fire in the Evening' by Paul Klee, were guided well by the teacher to observe rectangles around the classroom. Some awe was expressed when they realised that this shape surrounded them. Moved on quickly by the teacher, they successfully completed their own rectangular designs, including those pupils with SEN, who, through the very good support of both teacher and classroom assistant, were encouraged to achieve good outcomes. Pupils, carefully mixing only two primary colours and black and white, were able to create their own interesting, effective paintings in the same style, to a good standard. Older pupils agree that consistent emphasis by teachers on skill development has helped them to improve their work to a standard that pleases them. For example, when using soft pencil to create drawings of plant life from around the school, they thoughtfully observe and draw a variety of leaves, carefully considering shape and texture, practising their skills well before attempting the actual drawing. Standards in this work are often very good and sometimes excellent.
103. In addition to art being taught as a subject in its own right, teachers widely and successfully use artwork to support teaching and learning in other subjects. A very good example of this was when pupils in Key Stage 1, after their study of mini-beasts, created good quality observational drawings of insects. Pupils in Key Stage 2, after a river walk and appraisal of water sounds in music, used a collection of cool coloured materials to successfully express their feelings about the music to produce their own effective collage work. After choosing from tuned and untuned instruments and composing their own water music, they created very detailed soft pencil drawings of their chosen instruments.
104. Standards in art are carefully monitored by the co-ordinator. From evidence presented through this monitoring, a need for more emphasis on three-dimensional work was identified and support and relevant resources to develop this aspect has been given. As a result, good quality three-dimensional work is evident throughout the school, for example when pupils in Year 2 produce good quality clay cottages in the local thatched style. The study of the work of famous and local artists has also been identified as an area for development and an action plan is already underway to further develop this aspect.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

105. Pupils achieve standards above expectations in Key Stage 1 and in line with expectations in Year 4 in Key Stage 2 which indicates that high standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
106. In Key Stage 1, pupils use their understanding of movement and skills for joining a wide variety of materials to plan for and explain what their design has to do. They list the resources they need before beginning to use levers to make moving pictures. Pupils

consider whether their chosen character from a nursery rhyme moves in the way that they planned and modify the movement as they proceed to meet their original idea. Pupils observe vehicles carefully and use their understanding to construct wheels and axles for their own models. They use tools for cutting safely and show due regard to hygiene when handling food materials. Pupils in Key Stage 2 succeed in making attractive photograph frames. They explain how they could improve them and identify how to make them more stable. Although pupils drew a picture of the pattern for the frame, they provided no indication of size or how they might proceed, and this was a weakness in the design process. Pupils with SEN and EAL achieve standards in-line with their abilities

107. Pupils learn effectively because they behave well and are interested in their activities. They are well prepared with the requisite skills they require for design and technology, such as marking and cutting. In Key Stage 1, they extended their ideas and understanding by discussing their problems and considering how to solve them. In Key Stage 2, pupils developed their speaking and listening well by making a presentation to the class about why they liked their model and by answering confidently questions raised by their peers.
108. The quality of teaching is very good in Key Stage 1. Only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 2 and the quality of teaching on this occasion was satisfactory. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work in Key Stage 2 suggests that the quality of teaching is good overall in this key stage. Very good teaching was observed in Key Stage 1 where teachers have high expectations for pupils to design and make using their own ideas and skills previously taught. Effective use of questioning sustains pupils' concentration and extends their ideas. Skilful waiting for pupils to think before answering raises pupils' responses in predicting directions of movement.
109. The school policy identifies clear aims related to the National Curriculum and appropriately identifies that products should meet real needs. Teachers use well planned units for a comprehensive whole-school plan of work, which has a positive effect on raising standards. The previous co-ordinator monitored the progress of planned work until the end of the autumn term; currently the headteacher is continuing the monitoring role to maintain standards. Her leadership and management of this subject is good and has a positive impact on the quality of provision for design and technology throughout the school.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

110. No geography lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 due to the timing of the inspection. Pupils were interviewed regarding coverage and their work in books and on display was scrutinised. Photographic evidence and teachers' planning enabled inspectors to make a judgement on standards in this key stage. Teaching however was observed in Years 3 and 4. From this evidence the findings of the inspection are that standards in Geography are in line with those expected of pupils aged seven and in Year 4. This is similar to the previous inspection findings.
111. Pupils in Year 1 have learned about their immediate school locality. They can follow a simple route and can use correct simple geographical terms to describe features in the local area. They can say what they like and dislike about the school environment and have linked this work to their work on weather. They can describe how the weather affects their learning, for example when it is very sunny it is hard to see in some classrooms. By Year 2, pupils have progressed in their mapping skills and higher attaining pupils can use two figure co-ordinates, follow and plot a simple route around



the school, and can recognise places on the map. They can talk about the weather with increasing maturity and some pupils understand the rain cycle. However, pupils have not undertaken a geographical enquiry in any depth and are not sufficiently aware of environmental issues in relation to where they live. For example, pupils have not studied a contrasting area in sufficient depth in order for them to compare and contrast their local area and make judgements about how it is similar to or different from a distant place.

112. In Key Stage 2, pupils' progression of geographical skills is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 3 have developed a good understanding of weather patterns, through well planned lessons when they have been given a variety of opportunities to measure and record the weather using a variety of instruments and a variety of data handling methods. This work motivated pupils well and they produced interesting work. This work was extended to incorporate work on climate. Teachers' questioning strategies enabled some pupils to 'think' about the weather in this country and to compare this with the climate in other countries. High attaining pupils were able to compare weather data from other countries in order to make climatic comparisons. When this strategy was less effective, teachers did not sufficiently differentiate their questions or use a sufficiently wide range of resources to support pupils who found this concept more difficult. Work set was at too high a level and consequently pupils did not concentrate and this had a negative impact on their learning. Pupils in Year 4 have made satisfactory progress in mapping skills and can use local maps to discuss land use for a variety of purposes. Effective questioning by the teachers enabled pupils to develop questionnaires in order to further their investigations. When teaching was less successful, too much was planned in the limited time available consequently; pupils had limited opportunity to work co-operatively and extend their learning.
113. The school has identified the need to further develop the geography curriculum. The co-ordinator has clear plans to develop the subject and this is now a priority. The planning at the time of the inspection, however, shows that the school currently places too much focus on a narrow range of skills. Work on contrasting localities is insufficiently developed. This is especially so in relation to developing areas in another country in Key Stage 2. Although pupils develop satisfactory skills throughout the school, these are not used or applied enough. The use of fieldwork is also under developed.
114. The subject is sufficiently resourced with a range of books, photographs, atlases and maps. There is an adequate range of equipment and the school is developing an environmental area where they have hedgehog boxes and bird feeders. Good use is made of the school grounds to enrich pupils' geographical experiences. Visits to areas farther afield and field trips are not however sufficiently developed in order to stimulate pupils' awareness of wider geographical issues.

## **HISTORY**

115. History is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and by Year 4. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. This is a similar picture to the findings of the last inspection. Only two lessons in history, both in the same year group, were observed during the inspection and in these two lessons the quality of teaching was good. The scrutiny of work confirms that the learning and quality of teaching are at least satisfactory throughout the school.
116. Pupils in Key stage 1 are beginning to develop a sense of chronology though looking at old and new toys. The very attractive displays, for example the Toy Museum, contribute well to the learning. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have studied several famous people, including Florence Nightingale who was the focus during inspection week. Pupils know about her work as a nurse in Scrutari, and show a good understanding of a hospital today in this country and the one in Russia at the turn of the century. By Year 4 pupils have acquired a reasonable body of knowledge about Ancient Greece and Invaders and Settlers (Romans, Anglo Saxons and Vikings). Evidence suggests that history is very content orientated and enquiry and investigative skills are underdeveloped.
117. Pupils in Key Stage 1, where teaching was observed, have positive attitudes to history. They listen with interest and respond to questions thoughtfully. Their positive attitude to learning contributed to the gains that they made in their knowledge and understanding in these lessons. They used their literacy skills well when writing a comparison between the hospitals. Pupils' good attitudes contributed to the effective learning.
118. History is due to be a focus in the school development plan next year as the school implements Curriculum 2000. The policy and scheme of work are in need of review. The new co-ordinator has the knowledge and expertise to lead the school in this task and shows all the qualities of good leadership and management necessary to impact on raising the quality of provision in history throughout the school. There are adequate resources to enable teachers to teach the present curriculum.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

119. Pupils make very good progress in their learning throughout Key Stage 1 and attain standards at the end of the key stage which are above national expectations. In aspects of ICT such as word processing, modelling and data handling pupils make good progress in Years 3 and 4 and attain standards at least in line with expectations for pupils of their age. This is a very significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were below those expected of pupils in Year 4. However, standards are below those expected in monitoring skills for Year 4 pupils as these pupils do not have the opportunity to develop the skill of measuring using sensors. This is due to the lack of equipment and the lack of confidence on the part of some teachers. One Year 4 teacher recognises that a project on house alarms in design and technology lends itself to developing monitoring skills and is frustrated by the lack of equipment to realise this.
120. From an early age, pupils in Key Stage 1 make very good progress in learning how to control programmable toys and in learning how to operate computers. The use of computers by teachers and AWAs make a very significant contribution to the development of pupils' mathematical skills, such as counting on and counting back, and also to the development of their geographical awareness of direction. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are very confident working individually and in pairs, and are very keen to

reinforce their knowledge and understanding and learn new skills. They use the mouse control and keyboard accurately and acquire a good range of control skills. Pupils in Year 1 assemble text and use the cursor to select key words and rotate them to name identified features. Pupils in Year 2 know that information can be generated or found in several different forms on a computer. They retrieve, amend and save work, often independently, and understand instructions to achieve particular results, for example when enlarging text and selecting colours to highlight particular text. They delete mistakes and send their work to the printer. Pupils in Year 2 also support their work in literacy as demonstrated when extending their reading skills to help their research into historical characters. Pupils with SEN make good progress in their learning of identifying letters and making their sounds using computers. Those with EAL make very good gains in their learning of language and the use of number and in their understanding of shape through their use of computers. Listening stations are used very well to increase pupils' enjoyment of literature.

121. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good gains in their learning and development of data handling skills using computers. In Year 3, their learning is good when they use the computer to analyse data collected on the weather and construct graphs. Progress was better in the Year 3 class, where pupils were encouraged to use the computer independently to analyse the data, than in the parallel Year 3 class, where the teacher put the data in herself. Modelling skills are developed well in mathematics in Year 4 using LOGO and the higher achieving pupils are just beginning to use spreadsheets for data handling. Modelling skills are also suitably developed in history when pupils use detective games to carry out investigations on life in Ancient Greece. Research skills are also developed well using CD ROMs. Pupils with SEN and EAL make good progress in acquiring these skills in Years 3 and 4. However, no progress is made in using computers in Key Stage 2 to develop measuring/monitoring skills because of lack of equipment.
122. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is very good and contributes to pupils' very good learning. Teachers make deliberate mistakes using computers to check that pupils are paying careful attention. Pupils are then invited to make corrections independently in front of the whole class. Teaching is very well planned and conducted at a cracking pace to keep pupils interested. In Key Stage 2 teaching is good overall. It ranges from satisfactory to very good. Teaching is very good when pupils are encouraged to develop important ICT skills for themselves. Where the teacher demonstrates the skills without involving pupils teaching is satisfactory because pupils' knowledge and understanding is checked but not good because pupils are not presented with the practical opportunities to practise the important skills for themselves. Teachers use computers to support their teaching of literacy, numeracy, history and geography. Pupils' attitude and very good concentration in ICT lessons contributes significantly to their very good learning. The teaching is supported by a very good scheme of work and much improved computers since the last inspection. However, the lack of software and computers for the development of monitoring skills in Key Stage 2 is a weakness. The quality of leadership and management of the subject is good and has led to significant improvements in standards, the quality of teaching and teachers' confidence in using ICT since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has developed a very good procedure for assessment in ICT and this contributes to informing planning to raise standards.

## MUSIC

123. The previous inspection reported that standards of attainment in music were in line with expectations or above. Teaching was also reported to be in line or above. Music has a high profile in the school and evidence from this inspection shows that the school has improved its position and standards in music are now above those expected of seven-year-olds and pupils in Year 4 in all areas. Teaching, although it does vary in quality, is now good overall and sometimes inspirational. When teaching is inspirational, very good learning for pupils in both key stages is evident. Pupils are very enthusiastic about music and show their disappointment when lessons come to an end. The quality of pupils' singing throughout the school, which has been a particular focus of teaching, using the good expertise of the music co-ordinator, is a strength of the school. Pupils sing tunefully and enthusiastically both in assemblies and in lessons, with good control of breathing and excellent pitch.
124. The co-ordinator has a very good knowledge of music and is in a strong position to lead the development of this subject. She has monitored teacher planning in music and given advice and support on how to improve teaching, carefully recording and following up any targets that have been set for development. Consequently, teachers are enthusiastic and becoming more secure in their musical teaching, ensuring that they provide a rich source of experience for the pupils. Of note, is the development of a Creative Arts curriculum for Key Stage 2 pupils, where music, poetry, dance and drama activities are well co-ordinated and culminate in a performance for parents in December. On this occasion, pupils' singing is tuneful and enthusiastic with very good pitch. Through creative dance pupils show good sensitivity to music with competent use of rhythm and beat. Good opportunities are provided for the celebration of individual talents.
125. The quality of teaching is consistently very good. In Key Stage 1 some teaching is inspirational, with evidence of great enjoyment and a sense of wonder. A very good example of this is when, to support work in science, younger pupils use wind and percussion instruments to learn that sounds come from a variety of sources and that there are many different ways to make sounds. Provision of stimulating resources, used systematically, quickly develops pupils' understanding of how various sounds can be made. Very good organisation of the lesson ensures that all pupils have opportunity to participate in the music making, and good quality open questioning ensures that understanding of pitch and rhythm is quickly established. Pupils quickly understand that sound is made by plucking, blowing and banging. In other lessons, learning is very good due to the very good quality interaction between teacher and pupils, when they experiment with body sounds using voice, hands and other body parts. Very good teaching creates relevant links between music and dance as when, in their performance of the 'Grumpy Sheep', pupils competently create beat and rhythm in their own body movements and patterns, working within, for example, Calypso and Boogie styles.
126. The quality of teaching is good overall in Key Stage 2. It ranges from satisfactory to good. In Key Stage 2 teaching effectively focuses on listening, composing, timbre and dynamics and the impact on learning is good. For example, after a river walk, younger pupils are encouraged to listen attentively to 'Aquarium' by Saint Saens. Due to good teacher knowledge and suitable questioning, pupils are able to respond thoughtfully when describing their feelings about the music. Over half demonstrate good knowledge of sounds made by the orchestra, picking out accurately which instruments have been chosen for the piece, although many are slower to respond to questioning about how musical elements are used to convey the different effects. In group work, instruments are plentiful allowing all pupils to actively participate in the music making. Girls, boys and pupils with SEN all make a valuable contribution, but a minority of pupils gets over-

excited and become boisterous. Teaching addresses all attainment targets well, ensuring that pupils are acquiring appropriate skills and understanding. Pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them when they successfully develop their own compositions, in pairs, about rippling, flowing water, using both tuned and untuned instruments.

127. The management of music is good. The policy has a good focus on cross-curricular teaching and this, together with plentiful, relevant resources, excites pupils' interest well. The expertise of the co-ordinator is well used to raise standards in singing and to support other teachers with their music making and this has a positive impact on learning. Teacher planning is carefully monitored and discussed and suitable targets for development are agreed and records show that this aspect is followed up. Visiting musicians are used to very good effect with both teachers and pupils to raise self-confidence and develop classroom practice. A very good example of this was during the inspection, when a visiting musician was funded by the school for one day to provide teachers with ideas, stimuli, resources and to demonstrate activities that reinforce and develop skills and concepts appropriate to each year group. Violin tuition is offered to Key Stage 2 pupils and provides a worthwhile, stimulating experience. Involvement in musical activities and events in the local community, such as the Blandford Festival are also used well to enhance the curriculum.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

128. Attainment in physical education is in line with that expected for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and by Year 4. Pupils in both key stages, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, generally make good progress. However, in lessons where teaching is unsatisfactory, pupils do not learn effectively.
129. By the end of Key Stage 1 in gymnastics most pupils can make wide, narrow and curled shapes on the apparatus with an appropriate degree of control. In games they are developing satisfactory skills in controlling a ball, for example throwing and catching, balancing a ball on a racquet and hitting the ball from a bounce. Pupils will later use these skills in short tennis. The acquisition and development of these skills is the result of generally good teaching in physical education.
130. At the end of Year 4, most pupils work well in pairs to acquire skills in controlling the ball by dribbling, passing and retrieving. In gymnastics they can take the weight on their hands and feet, and can link movements and balances together to form a sequence. Teaching is satisfactory, or better, in lower Key Stage 2 and this results in pupils building on their earlier experiences and developing skills systematically as they move through the school. Pupils have the opportunity to go swimming in Years 2,3 and 4 and by Year 4 many pupils can swim 10 yards without armbands, while other pupils are confident in the water and swim with aids.
131. The quality of teaching is good overall in Key Stage 1, although there is some unsatisfactory teaching in one Reception/Year 1 class. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is at least satisfactory. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when low expectations and undemanding activities were highlighted as weaknesses. There was no evidence of this in either key stage during this inspection. The unsatisfactory teaching seen during this inspection was due to poor pupil management. The current generally good teaching is based on a clear scheme of work, which ensures continuity and progression in games, gymnastics and dance. A newly qualified teacher has been appointed with expertise in physical education and she will manage the subject next

year.

132. Pupils and teachers dress correctly for physical education lessons; pupils change fairly quickly. Pupils enjoy their lessons. High levels of activity are expected during the outdoor game lesson and the good warm-up session prepares them well. Good teaching contributes towards good response. Pupils listen well and try to sustain their concentration. Clear goals are set for lessons. Teachers explain them carefully and demonstrate them well; they ask pupils to demonstrate and use their ideas effectively.
133. The leadership and management of the subject is at least satisfactory. Resources are adequate. During the year pupils compete against other schools in short tennis and swimming, and co-operate with other schools in a country dance festival.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

134. Attainment in religious education is well above the expectations of the Dorset Agreed Syllabus by the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with expectations in Year 4. Standards have been sustained since the previous inspection. Pupils with SEN and EAL make progress equal to their abilities alongside other pupils in each year group. Provision meets the requirements of the Dorset Agreed Syllabus.
135. The school integrates the teaching of religious education into the daily life of the school. Themes selected for collective worship promote pupils' understanding of key beliefs of the main religions, mainly those of Christians, to recognise how people's beliefs affect their actions. Pupils' understanding of personal relationships developed as part of religious education and re-inforced in personal and social education periods enhances the caring ethos of the whole school. Nonetheless there is a distinct programme of religious education, which is planned and taught as part of pupils' curriculum entitlement.
136. Pupils in Year 1 have good ideas about making choices and discuss the importance of being a friend and relate to Jesus as a kind friend. They describe the Bibles they have at home and recognise that the Bible contains stories of Jesus. They learn quickly that the Christian message in the story of the Good Samaritan is about being a friend because of their ability to concentrate well in response to the very good ethos and quality of the teaching.
137. Older pupils in Year 2 recall harvest as a time to give food to people who have very little and Christmas as a 'church' festival to celebrate the birth of Jesus which took place 2000 years ago. They offer very good detailed explanations of the sequence of events leading up to Easter, such as Mary recognising the voice of the keeper of the garden. Several pupils say that they believe Jesus died for them and describe the cross as a reminder of when Jesus died and rose again. They demonstrate curiosity in asking who were the first people to recognise Jesus as being God's son. Currently, pupils in this year group are studying the Jewish Faith and have recalled and explained this information from the previous year with impressive explanations. In lessons about Judaism, higher attaining pupils write at length about Hanukah. Their work is well presented and many include speech marks where relevant and use correct terms when talking about the symbols used for celebrations. They have a good understanding of the meaning of symbols used to celebrate Pesach and readily explain them referring to the food as 'Passover' food. Good opportunities for pupils to have first hand experience in tasting and being involved around a table set with attractive symbols creates the sense of being present at a special occasion, a celebration. They ask questions to find out if anyone in the class is Jewish. The presence of EAL pupils in the class enriches their

awareness of main religions.

138. The very good teaching in Key Stage 1 makes a significant contribution to pupils very good learning and the high standards that they achieve. Pupils in Key Stage 1 reach high standards because teachers know their subject and pupils well and match the pace and challenge of the lessons and good use of religious symbols to arouse a sense of awe and expectation in all pupils, who respond enthusiastically. Pupils with SEN and EAL make a similar response to their peers in line with their abilities.
139. Overall, the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory and so pupils' learning is satisfactory and standards attained by Year 4 are in line with those expected of pupils of that age. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are helped to connect and identify similar aspects of religious practices between the main religions such as fasting during Ramadan and fasting during Lent. During Ramadan the Leader from the Islamic Centre visited the school, but pupils' recall of the key beliefs of Islam is confused since the visit was not part of an appropriate period for teaching and learning to develop pupils' understanding. They recognise the main books for the three main religions they study in school. Pupils identify the Christian characteristics of behaviour and set targets to make their own behaviour more Christian. They recognise the importance of friendships and caring for the environment. Pupils write their own prayers, understand prayer as talking to God, and Holy Communion as a remembrance of the Last Supper. They sequence correctly the main events in the life of Christ. Several pupils express clearly that Jesus resisted temptations because he wanted people to follow him not because of what he did but to listen to his words. Pupils relate well to the occasions when they were tempted.
140. Pupils respond well in their group work to writing tasks well matched to their ability, matching pictures to text or writing the story independently. The higher attaining pupils write in their books at length with good punctuation. Several pupils use good vocabulary but find difficulty in spelling.
141. The subject is generally well co-ordinated, monitored and assessed. The co-ordinator regularly assists Key Stage 1 teachers with their planning to ensure that they have a good understanding and she also leads a weekly Key Stage 2 assembly to assess whether pupils' responses are in line with expectations. There is, nonetheless, a distinct act of collective worship within this assembly time. Assessment using the Dorset formative and assessment sheets are being trialled to consider their usefulness. The marking of pupils' work is good where encouraging remarks or questions to extend thinking are made. Books are available for use during the literacy hour and, where the good quality resources provided are used well, they assist in raising standards in the subject.