

INSPECTION REPORT

West Felton CE Controlled Primary School

West Felton

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique Reference Number: 123512

Inspection Number: 189711

Headteacher: Mr David Rowe

Reporting inspector: Mr Alan Fullwood

Dates of inspection: 13 - 15 September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707739

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
Type of control:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Road West Felton Oswestry Shropshire SY11 4JR
Telephone number:	01691 610388
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mr John Hanmer
Date of previous inspection:	May 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Alan Fullwood, RgI	Mathematics Science Geography History Religious education	Attainment and progress Teaching Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Leadership and management Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
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Linda Shatford, Team Inspector	English Under-fives Information technology Design and technology Art Music Physical education Special educational needs Equal opportunities	

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- The partnership established between parents and the school.
- Arrangements for the professional development of staff.
- The efficiency of its use of financial and other resources.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Standards in religious education at both key stages.
- II. Standards in information technology at Key Stage 2.
- III. Assessment procedures to match work more closely to pupils' needs.
- IV. Relationships between the pupils and their teacher at lower Key Stage 2.
- V. The inconsistent quality of teachers' medium and short-term planning.
- VI. The low level of pupils' attendance.

West Felton C of E Primary School provides a sound quality of education for all its pupils. Although the school is doing some things well, it has a number of important weaknesses. The weaknesses identified will form the basis of the governors' action, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Some of the important weaknesses pointed out in the last inspection have been tackled well. Subject policies and schemes of work are now in place for all subjects and give support to teachers' planning. The quality of teaching has improved. Planning to ensure that learning activities matched to all pupils' prior levels of attainment in the mixed-age classes is inconsistent and work is not always adapted to meet all pupils' needs. Standards of behaviour, although having a few remaining weaknesses, have been improved. The curriculum now fully meets the requirements of most National Curriculum subjects, but weaknesses remain in information technology at Key Stage 2. Standards have improved in design and technology at both key stages, and in information technology at Key Stage 1. The school has introduced some procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, but more remains to be done to fully address this key issue from the last inspection, as these procedures are not always systematic or rigorous enough to ensure that future lessons are well matched to the learning needs of pupils. As a result the pace of learning slows for some pupils. It is evident from the current targets in the school development plan that the school knows where it is and what it needs to improve. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and is well placed to make further improvements.

· **Standards in subjects**

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

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

At the end of Key Stage 2, the 1998 national test results show pupils' attainment in mathematics and science to be above the national average in comparison with that of all schools. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is also above average when compared with schools who take their pupils from similar backgrounds, and well above average in science. Pupils' attainment in English was below the national average and well below average when compared to that in schools which take their pupils from similar backgrounds. Raw data from the 1999 national test results show a similar picture except in English, where pupils' attainment is much improved. However, there is no national comparative data available as yet. The attainment of the pupils at present in Year 6 and who have just begun their last year in school is in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science. Standards of attainment remain below national expectations in information technology and have declined in religious education. By the end of both key stages, pupils' standards in art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education are in line with those usually found in most schools for pupils of these ages. Standards in design and technology have risen since the last inspection.

At the end of Key Stage 1, the 1998 national test results show pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics to be in line with national averages for all schools. Pupils' attainment in reading was below average. Raw data from the 1999 national test results show a similar picture. Evidence from the inspection indicates that the attainment of the present Year 2 pupils is in line with national averages in reading and writing and in line with national expectations in all other subjects, except in religious education which is below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make good progress in reading and writing and satisfactory progress in all other subjects except religious education.

· Children under five in the reception/Key Stage 1 class make satisfactory progress. By the time they are five the majority have developed the skills and basic ideas expected in mathematics, physical and creative development. Their attainment in language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, and personal and social development is generally still below expectations for their age.

· **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Science	-	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information technology	-	-	-
Religious education	-	-	-
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Throughout the school, teaching varies between satisfactory and very good. It is satisfactory or better in all lessons, good in 16 per cent of lessons and very good in three per cent. This is an improvement from the last inspection.

The quality of teaching of children under the age of five, and at Key Stages 1 and 2, is satisfactory overall. Teaching is good overall in English at Key Stage 1 and in music at both key stages. Teachers' planning does not always identify clear learning objectives or provide sufficiently challenging activities to meet the needs of all pupils in the mixed-age classes. Consequently, pupils are not motivated by the work set, and the pace of these lessons is slow. The pace of some lessons is slowed by the amount of time needed by the teacher to ensure that all pupils are listening attentively and concentrating appropriately. Where the teaching is of better quality, pupils are fully involved in their work, work at a good pace and complete the activities successfully. Activities are sufficiently adapted to make demands of pupils of all abilities, including higher attainers.

The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. There is effective use of educational support staff and voluntary helpers to support pupils with special educational needs.

The teaching of numeracy and literacy is satisfactory. Time is allocated each day for the development of these skills and is satisfactorily used. Homework is well used to consolidate and extend what pupils have learned at school.

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

· **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Satisfactory overall; a significant minority of pupils frequently interrupt the teachers and do not listen well.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory and below the national average; many families take annual holidays in term time.
Ethos*	Satisfactory; a significant minority of pupils have poor listening skills and short concentration spans; some pupils do not relate well to others.
Leadership and management	Satisfactory; the headteacher gives a clear educational direction to the school and is given strong support by staff, parents and the governing body.
Curriculum	Satisfactory, except in meeting requirements for information

	technology at Key Stage 2 and religious education at both key stages. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.
Pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory; effective use made of educational support staff and voluntary helpers to support pupils with learning difficulties.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Satisfactory; provision for pupils' social and multi-cultural development has improved.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory overall; there is a good staff development programme; there is a shortage of space for gymnastics and storage of resources; there are unsatisfactory resources for information technology.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

- VII. They feel well informed by the school.
- VIII. The majority of staff are approachable.
- IX. They feel welcome in the school.
- X. The amount of homework their children receive.
- XI. The values and attitudes the school promotes.

What some parents are not happy about

- XII. Relationships between their children and the school.
- XIII. The standards of some pupils' work.

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views and recognise the support parents give to the school and their children's education. The inspection team found that pupils in the Year 3/4 class felt their views were not considered important by their usual teacher and they were not listened to by her. As a result there is a decline in levels of respect and behaviour. The teacher concerned was absent during the inspection.

The inspection team found standards of behaviour at lunchtimes to be generally satisfactory. Although some lively, boisterous behaviour was seen, no bullying was witnessed.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The governing body, headteacher and staff, with the support of outside agencies as appropriate, should:

- as identified in the school development plan, raise attainment in religious education at both key stages by:
 - i. increasing the time available for teaching the subject;
 - ii. ensuring that the subject is taught in sufficient depth so that pupils attain the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus; (paragraph 140)
- as identified in the school development plan, raise attainment in information technology at Key Stage 2 by:
 - i. making better use of the computers and software available by increasing teachers' confidence in managing the use of computers in the classroom;
 - ii. ensuring that all aspects of the National Curriculum are taught;
 - iii. better planning for the use of information technology across the curriculum;

- iii. improving resources for the teaching of the subject; (paragraphs 136/137)
- . improve relationships between the pupils and the teacher in Years 3 and 4 by urgently addressing with her the issues raised by pupils and parents; (paragraph 25)
- . improve pupils' skills in listening and taking turns to speak by:
 - i. ensuring that teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are consistent from class to class and lesson to lesson;
 - ii. providing more planned opportunities for pupils to practise skills such as explaining, arguing, summarising and presenting their views; (paragraph 106)
- . as identified in the school development plan, improve the consistency of teachers' short-term planning by:
 - i. introducing a common format for lesson planning;
 - ii. providing clear learning objectives for all ability groups within classes;
 - iii. ensuring that activities engage and motivate pupils to give of their best; (paragraph 49)
- . as identified in the school development plan, improve procedures for assessment by:
 - i. ensuring that procedures are effective in providing activities closely matched to the needs of different groups of pupils, especially higher attainers, particularly at Key Stage 2; (paragraph 112)
 - ii. making sure that assessments against the Desirable Learning Outcomes are sufficiently rigorous to ensure children's progress towards these goals before starting on the National Curriculum; (paragraph 50)
 - iii. improving planning for children under five years of age; (paragraph 44)
- . improve attendance levels at the school by:
 - i. informing parents of their responsibilities in ensuring the regular attendance of their children;
 - ii. ensuring that the school is informed of any legitimate reasons for their children being absent;
 - iii. informing parents of the significant negative impact on the attainment and progress of their children when holidays are taken in term time. (paragraph 30)

iii. **INTRODUCTION**

iii. **Characteristics of the school**

1. The school is situated in the village of West Felton in the north-west of the county of Shropshire. There are 78 pupils on roll aged from four to 11 and presently there are 40 boys and 38 girls. There were 91 pupils at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are organised into a Key Stage 1 class, a lower Key Stage 2 class with pupils in Years 3 and 4, and an upper Key Stage 2 class with pupils in Years 5 and 6. Children are admitted to the school in the term in which they will be five. Five children under five at the time of the inspection had just started

school. The majority of children have received some form of pre-school education.

2. Two pupils have a formal Statement of Special Educational Need and a further 23 pupils are on the school's register of those requiring some form of additional support. This is above the national average. Children begin school with a wide range skills, but overall standards of attainment are below those expected for children of this age, with a significant number of pupils having a limited spoken vocabulary and short concentration spans. This indicates a change in the characteristics of the school since the last inspection, when attainment was judged to be at least sound and often good. Twelve pupils are eligible for free school meals, in line with the national average. Pupils come from a mixture of owner-occupied and rented accommodation, some of which is owned by the local authority. There is a high turnover of pupils for such a small school.
3. The school has a broad set of aims which seek to develop the pupils academically, socially, physically and spiritually. Current targets in the school development plan are to introduce the National Numeracy Project throughout the school, to improve resources and assessment in literacy, and to introduce a Home School Agreement with parents. Curriculum areas to be reviewed include science, information technology and religious education, and assessment policies are to be improved.

3.

3. Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	1998	8	8	16

3. National Curriculum Test/Task		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Results				
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	6	6	8
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	13	13	15
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	81 (78)	81 (83)	94 (83)
	National	80 (80)	81 (80)	84 (84)
3. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	6	8	8
	Girls	7	7	8
	Total	13	15	16
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	81 (77)	94 (77)	100 (83)
	National	81 (80)	85 (84)	86 (85)

¹ Percentages in parenthesis refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	6	8	14

3. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	2	5	5
At NC Level 4 or Above	Girls	6	6	7
	Total	8	11	12
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	57 (67)	79 (58)	86 (92)
	National	65 (63)	59 (62)	69 (69)

3. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	2	5	5
At NC Level 4 or Above	Girls	6	7	6
	Total	8	12	11
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	57 (67)	86 (58)	79 (83)
	National	65 (63)	65 (64)	72 (69)

3. Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised absence	School	5.4
		National comparative data	5.2
	Unauthorised absence	School	1.4
		National comparative data	0.5

3. Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	4
	Permanent	0

3. Quality of teaching

² Percentages in parenthesis refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	3
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

3. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

3. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

3. **Attainment and progress**

4. Children begin school with a wide range of skills, but overall standards of attainment are below those expected for children of this age. Most pupils make satisfactory progress during their time at the school, and a minority of pupils make good progress. By the time they leave at the end of Key Stage 2, standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are in line with national averages. Standards in information technology at the end of Key Stage 2 are below national expectations, and standards in religious education are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In all other subjects standards of work are in line with those usually found in most schools for pupils of this age.
5. While the children are under five in the reception/Key Stage 1 class they make satisfactory progress. By the time they are five the majority have developed the skills and basic ideas expected in mathematics, physical and creative development. Their attainment in language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal and social development is generally still below expectations, although satisfactory progress is made. Children settle quickly into school and their behaviour is satisfactory. They concentrate appropriately in groups but find it difficult to concentrate and listen when the whole class is together. They are learning to co-operate with one another and to take turns to speak. Most children find it difficult to listen attentively, but are able to follow simple instructions. Their vocabulary is often limited and this restricts their speaking skills. Children enjoy reading and know how to handle books. A small number of children know some letter sounds and most are learning to write their names and recognise initial letters. By five years of age, most children are able to count to at least ten and can add and subtract using these numbers. They can identify and name common shapes such as a square, a circle and a triangle. Children's attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world is restricted by their limited vocabulary, but they can talk about events in their own lives, sequence pictures of a baby's growth and name some features of the face. They are developing physical control sufficiently to operate a simple computer program and operate the mouse. Children are increasingly able to use their imaginations when painting and using collage, but as yet find it difficult to join in with whole-class singing sessions. Their physical skills are developing appropriately as they develop their hand-eye co-ordination in small games and manipulate pencils and scissors.
6. In English at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' speaking and listening skills are broadly in line with expectations at the end of the key stage. However, their spoken vocabulary is limited and a significant number of pupils have poor concentration which makes it difficult for them to listen. When speaking, pupils give relevant answers to questions but often have to be brought back on task to do so. They are still learning to consider other pupils' responses when giving their own opinions. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Attainment in reading is in line with the national average at the end of the key stage. In the 1998 national tests standards in reading were below national averages for all schools and well below average when compared to those of schools who take their pupils from similar backgrounds. This group of pupils contained a

higher number of pupils on the school's register of special educational need than is the case in the present Year 2. Most pupils use picture and phonic cues appropriately and higher-attaining, older pupils use context cues effectively. By the end of the key stage, pupils display a good understanding of non-fiction texts and can locate information in the school library, using the contents and index pages. Pupils make good progress. Standards in writing are average at the end of Key Stage 1. Early on in the key stage, pupils have opportunities to write for themselves and to copy teachers' writing. By the end of the key stage, most pupils structure their writing appropriately, spelling is sound and punctuation used appropriately. Most pupils form their letters correctly as they print their letters. A few pupils join their handwriting. Pupils' skills are developed well across the curriculum and they make good progress. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. National tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that in 1998 pupils' attainment in writing was in line with the national average for all schools, but below average for schools which take pupils from similar backgrounds.

7. In mathematics, by the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and attain standards in line with national averages. Pupils are confident in adding and subtracting numbers to 100 and using number bonds to 20. They apply these skills when solving simple mathematical problems. They are experienced in using standard units of measurement and in displaying collected data in graphs, tables and charts. Most pupils correctly identify common shapes and are aware of some of their properties. Across the key stage pupils satisfactorily increase the speed of their mental calculations and use a wider mathematical vocabulary. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. National tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that, in 1998, pupils' attainment was in line with the national average for all schools and for schools which take their pupils from similar backgrounds.
8. In science, by the end of the Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress in all areas of their work, but need a great deal of adult guidance when carrying out their own investigations. Many pupils are aware of the need to make their tests fair. Most pupils are knowledgeable about plants and what they need to grow and can name the main parts of the body. They are knowledgeable about common materials and their properties, and simple electrical circuits, and name different sources of natural and artificial light. Pupils use a variety of ways to record their results, including graphs and tables. Attainment is in line with national expectations, and standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
9. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils' attainment in information technology is in line with national expectations and they make satisfactory progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Most pupils are confident in using the mouse to access simple word-processing and art programs, and are able to alter text font and size. They know how to use the shift key and move the cursor to insert or amend text. They have experience of controlling a programmable toy to follow a given route and are able to store and retrieve information using a data-handling program. Pupils use a modelling program to create a simple street scene. Standards have improved since the time of the last inspection.
10. In religious education, by the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils have little knowledge of the main Christian festivals and were confused about what they did know. They were unable to talk about simple religious practices, special people or places. Pupils demonstrate a lack of knowledge about what is celebrated at Christmas and Easter. Some pupils know that Jesus was an important person, but not that he was the son of God. Pupils' progress is unsatisfactory and there has

been a decline in standards since the last inspection.

11. Inspection evidence shows that, by the end of Key Stage 1, standards of work in the non-core subjects of art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education are in line with those usually found in most schools for pupils of this age, and that pupils make sound progress in these subjects. Standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection, except in design and technology, where they have improved.
12. In English, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are in line with expectations. Most pupils are confident in expressing their own ideas, but their use of a rich and varied vocabulary is limited. Early on in the key stage, a significant number of pupils have weaknesses in their ability to listen and this is linked to poor concentration. In the Year 5/6 class pupils' listening skills improve, but some pupils still have difficulty in listening to other pupils' points of view. Progress is satisfactory. Attainment in reading is in line with national averages at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils generally read accurately but not always fluently or with expression. They can discuss the books they have read, but lack confidence in putting forward their own views about what might happen next in a story. Pupils gain sound skills, using reference books to find relevant information. Although pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their reading skills, the slowness with which some pupils move away from reading scheme books constrains higher attainment and limits progress. Attainment in writing is in line with national averages by the end of Key Stage 2. In Years 3 and 4, presentation skills are often poor and spelling careless. By the end of the key stage, presentation skills, including handwriting, are much improved and most pupils write with a neat, legible, cursive style and take pride in their finished work. Spelling is sound and sometimes good. Higher-attaining pupils write in a style which engages the reader, but like that of most other pupils, their vocabulary is limited and stories lack description. From the scrutiny of past work, it can be seen that expectations for the standard of pupils' presentation of their written work lacks consistency and this limits progress early in the key stage. By the end of the key stage pupils make satisfactory progress overall. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in national tests in English has been steadily rising over a three year period but remaining below the national average. Preliminary figures for the 1999 end-of-key-stage tests show a considerable improvement, but there are no national comparison figures available as yet. The inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment in English for pupils currently in Year 6 who have just begun their final year in school are in line with national averages. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
13. In mathematics, by the end of the Key Stage 2, pupils are confident at carrying out calculations involving numbers to 1000 and beyond, using all four number operations. They apply their number skills to problem-solving situations when working with fractions, decimals and percentages. Many pupils show a developing use of mathematical vocabulary as they use terms such as 'mean', 'mode', and 'median' when carrying out work involving probability. They are knowledgeable about two and three-dimensional shapes and their properties, using such terms as 'vertices', 'edges' and 'surfaces'. Pupils are able to collect their own data, making suitable use of tally charts and tables, and record their findings in increasingly-complex graphs and charts. They are aware of degree as a unit of turn and that square units are needed to measure area. Many of the present pupils in Year 6 are knowledgeable about the place value of digits to 1000, and a few higher-attaining pupils can speedily calculate additions using these numbers. The 1998 national tests in mathematics show that pupils' attainment was above the national average for all schools and schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. 1999 raw data also indicate above average attainment, although no national comparisons are available as

yet. Inspection evidence indicates that the standards of attainment for pupils in the present Year 6, who have just begun their final year in school, are in line with national averages. Standards have improved since the last inspection.

14. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in science is in line with national averages. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 classify materials according to their use and are aware that materials are divided into solids, liquids and gases. They are knowledgeable about the human skeleton and the different kinds of joints which enable it to move. By the end of the key stage, pupils name the principal organs of the body and their functions, know that materials are changed by heating and cooling, and use classification keys to identify plants and animals. Most pupils can build simple circuits and draw diagrams of them using standard symbols. Pupils are aware of the need for a fair test and are able to identify the variables which need to be controlled. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, and in Years 5 and 6 their progress is sometimes good. The results of the 1998 national tests showed pupils' attainment at the end of the key stage to be above the national average for all schools and well above average when compared to that in similar schools. Raw test data for 1999 also indicate above average attainment, although no national comparisons are available as yet. Inspection evidence indicates that the standards of attainment of pupils in the present Year 6, who have just begun their final year in school, are in line with national averages. The number of pupils likely to gain Level 4 and above is lower than in the last group of Year 6 pupils. Standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection.
15. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils' attainment in information technology is below national expectations and they make unsatisfactory progress. This was also a concern at the time of the last inspection. Pupils understand that computers can be used to generate information, which can be presented in a variety of ways, and identify different fonts or print sizes. However, many pupils lack confidence using the toolbar to change print size or font, cut and paste text or to import graphics into their work. Pupils, with adult support, have used data-collecting programs to form spreadsheets, graphs and charts and many are confident in accessing information from a CD-ROM. They have had no experiences of using monitoring equipment, such as sensors to measure temperature.
16. In religious education, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and unsatisfactory progress is made. Standards at the time of the last inspection were said to be in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, but that pupils' learning was narrow. Pupils in Year 6 are knowledgeable about Christian festivals, but have little knowledge of the practices and customs of other religions, a criticism made at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are eager to discuss what they know and show good knowledge of Holy Week. However, when discussing other religions their knowledge is limited; for example, of Hinduism, which they have studied in some detail.
17. Inspection evidence shows that, by the end of Key Stage 2, standards of work in the non-core subjects of art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education are in line with those usually found in most schools for pupils of this age, and that pupils make sound progress in these subjects. Progress in music is good at lower Key Stage 2. Work in art, geography and history is broader than at the time of the last inspection and standards in design and technology have improved.
18. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make satisfactory progress. When they are given targeted support better progress is made against their individual educational plans.

Their attainment is below average.

18.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

19. Children who are under five happily settle to tasks provided for them. However, they find it difficult to concentrate and listen when the whole class is together. Behaviour is satisfactory when children are working in small groups. They follow simple instructions and do as they are asked. They mostly work alongside each other and are learning to co-operate.
20. Overall attitudes, behaviour and personal development are satisfactory. There has been general positive improvement in the quality of behaviour since the last inspection; for example, no disruptive behaviour was noted. The quality of relationships has some unsatisfactory elements. There has been too little progress in establishing productive relationships between pupils, as was noted in the last inspection report. This impinges on the quality of learning experienced by the majority of pupils in the school.
21. Although overall attitudes to learning are satisfactory, a significant minority of pupils of all abilities in each class have considerable difficulty in mastering basic learning skills. They lack confidence in speaking and extending their vocabulary. Often they do not listen to their teacher or follow instructions. Many can only concentrate for a short time before breaking into low key chatter, unrelated to their work. This makes it difficult for the majority who are trying to do their best and want to learn. The lack of consistency among staff in being vigilant about raising expectations and setting appropriate challenge in lessons also plays a part; too often pupils of different abilities do the same work as their class mates.
22. As pupils near the end of their time at the school there is notable improvement in attitudes and an increasing level of maturity is apparent. Currently pupils are provided with too few opportunities to develop their maturity and independence at an earlier age through, for example, collaborative work. Planned occasions for developing independent personal learning and organisational skills are underdeveloped, although the recent more rigorous focus on homework, particularly for the oldest pupils, is having some success and is appreciated by parents.
23. The behaviour of the majority of the pupils in the school is satisfactory. They are trustworthy and treat their environment with respect. A significant minority do show inappropriate behaviour when given the opportunity in class; for example, by interrupting others, or when moving around the school if not directly supervised by staff, and running noisily into assembly. The limited exposure to experience of other views and beliefs can, on occasion, lead to thoughtless actions or words and a disregard for the value and appreciation of other ideas. All pupils are enthusiastic about the larger playground and field. Although some lively boisterous behaviour was seen, no bullying was witnessed. A small minority of pupils show a lack of respect for the adults supervising them at lunchtimes, and are reluctant to do as they are told. One child, who has now left the school, was responsible for the four fixed-term exclusions over the last year.
24. Some pupils with special educational needs have difficulty concentrating, but their attitudes to learning are in line with those of other pupils. Relationships with support staff are good. Pupils listen and respond appropriately to all staff and parents who help in small group or individual situations, making the most of the additional support offered.

25. The quality of relationships in the school is satisfactory in the infant years and in Years 5 and 6. Relationships are unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4, causing anxiety to pupils and being of continuing concern for parents. This problem is of long standing and was made known to the registered inspector at the time of the last inspection. In particular, there are significant weaknesses in levels of mutual respect and communication and this is compounded by staff absence. This has led to a strong sense of injustice from the pupils, who feel that their usual teacher does not consider their views important, and that they are not listened to or able to learn successfully in these conditions. As a result there is a decline in levels of respect, behaviour and communication, which impinges on other relationships in the school.
26. Currently another teacher is covering the absence of the usual teacher for the next few weeks. This has already had a very positive impact on the quality of relationships, even in the short term, with pupils becoming more settled and secure. Many pupils of all ages also have some difficulty in building relationships with each other. Some have only limited experience of sharing or working together. All pupils express positive views about the new headteacher.
27. There is a sound planned programme of personal development, and topics such as bullying have been addressed. Opportunities for pupils to develop initiative and responsibility in school, beyond the usual monitoring duties, are underdeveloped. The school accepts this is an area in need of further improvement. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 do go on regular residential trips to outreach centres in Wales, enhancing their social development. They also make positive contributions to much charity fundraising. Pupils' personal development is successfully promoted through their involvement in community events and inter-school area activities.
28. Since the last inspection the key issue relating to improving standards of behaviour has seen sound improvement, but the unsatisfactory aspects of relationships and the need to focus on pupil attitudes mean that a positive learning ethos is not yet fully established.

28. **Attendance**

29. The level of attendance is unsatisfactory and is well below the national average for primary schools, and too often weekly attendance is below 90 per cent. There has been a steady decline in attendance since the last inspection.
30. The very significant number of holidays taken by parents throughout the school year, together with the above average amount of unauthorised absence, account for this decline. Holidays are of particular concern because this has a significant negative impact on the attainment and progress that all pupils make. Work has to be repeated for absent pupils and this slows learning for others. It also places an additional workload on teachers.
31. Registers do not fully meet requirements. Occasionally, sessions are not recorded and statistical data or information are not always completed until a later date. Punctuality is good. Pupil lateness is rare and lessons start and end on time.

31. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

31. **Teaching**

32. Teachers work hard and most enjoy sound relationships with their pupils. They have a sound

knowledge of the National Curriculum. Improvements made since the last inspection in overall curriculum planning and the establishment of schemes of work have helped teachers to plan a broader curriculum. This has improved the general standard of teaching by eliminating the high percentage of unsatisfactory teaching observed in 1996. However, teachers' short-term planning sometimes lacks sufficient detail to enable them to provide more focused learning objectives for different groups of pupils and to provide activities which are well matched to meet the widely differing needs of pupils in mixed-age classes. Often work is not sufficiently adapted to meet the individual needs of all pupils in the class.

33. Throughout the school, teaching varies between satisfactory and very good. There are no examples of unsatisfactory teaching. It is good in 16 per cent of lessons and very good in three per cent. The teaching of music accounts for half of the better quality teaching and varies from good to very good.
34. The teaching for children under the age of five is satisfactory. Both the teacher and educational support assistant have good relationships with the children. Activities and tasks are mostly planned appropriately to match the stage of children's learning. Sometimes expectations of children are too high; for example, the length of time children are expected to concentrate and listen in whole-class lesson introductions. A strength of the teaching is the good questioning by adults to develop children's thinking and oral responses. The organisation of the classroom, appropriate to the needs of older pupils in the class, means that children under five are unable to select activities for themselves, an important part of their social and personal development.
35. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. It was good in 38 per cent of lessons. Teaching is good overall in English and music. Teaching is satisfactory in mathematics, science, art, history and physical education. Insufficient teaching was observed for a judgement to be made in information technology, religious education, design and technology and geography.
36. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, and planning is usually thorough in identifying clear learning objectives for lessons. However, learning objectives for pupils of different abilities working in groups, are not always clear. Teachers have established a good relationship with the pupils, but in the lessons seen did not always insist on high standards from pupils by listening to instructions and putting their hands up when wanting to speak in whole-class discussions. In the better-quality teaching these expectations were realised and the pace of the lessons was good. In some lessons good use is made of the available resources, such as in mathematics and history.
37. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. It was good in 15 per cent of lessons and very good in five per cent. Teaching is good overall in music. Teaching is satisfactory in English, mathematics, science, art, design and technology, history and physical education. Insufficient teaching was observed for a judgement to be made in information technology, geography and religious education. However, planning to support information technology skills in other subjects of the curriculum is underdeveloped and teachers are not always confident in managing the use of computers within the context of a busy school day.
38. Teachers use their sound knowledge and understanding of the curriculum when planning, although learning objectives are not always clearly stated for group activities in these mixed-ability classes with a very wide range of attainment. Teachers manage the pupils very well, especially in Years 5 and 6, and the newly-appointed part-time teacher in Years 3 and 4 is

beginning to successfully affect pupils' ideas of what is expected of them. Relationships between staff and pupils during the inspection were satisfactory. Comments from parents and pupils indicate that this is not normally the case with the usual teacher in Years 3 and 4. The pace of lessons is generally slow and is affected by either the time needed to ensure that pupils are listening attentively and concentrating appropriately or because tasks are routine and undemanding and therefore fail to motivate pupils. In the better-quality teaching, pupils are fully involved in their work, work at a good pace and complete the activities successfully. Activities are sufficiently adapted to make demands of pupils of all abilities, including higher-attaining pupils.

39. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Teachers make effective use of educational support staff and voluntary helpers to support pupils with special educational needs. When support is available, work is often well planned to match the needs of pupils through matching work to targets contained within their individual educational plans. At other times teachers do not always take into account the learning needs of special educational needs pupils and tasks are insufficiently matched to their needs. Strategies to ensure that pupils are involved appropriately during the introductory and plenary sessions are mostly underdeveloped.
40. The teaching of numeracy and literacy is satisfactory. Time is allocated each day for the development of these skills and is satisfactorily used. All staff seen during the inspection provide an appropriate structure to the teaching of numeracy skills. Planning for class-based activities is good, but the pace of mental arithmetic sessions needs to be more brisk to make good use of the time available. Group activities need to have a clearer learning focus if they are to make good use of the time available and improve the progress that pupils make. In literacy lessons, good use is made of the National Literacy Framework to plan in sufficient detail work which is well matched to the needs of differing groups of pupils at Key Stage 1 and early Key Stage 2. Group work is challenging, and independent tasks are sufficiently demanding. In Years 5 and 6, lesson objectives are not always clear or planned for the separate elements of the lesson. Independent tasks consolidate rather than develop skills and are insufficiently matched to the differing needs of the mixed-aged class. Generally, across both key stages, the quality of teachers' questioning varies. Where learning objectives are clearly identified, questioning is good. End-of-session whole-class discussions are generally weaker and do not always concentrate on reinforcing learning or developing it further.
41. The assessments which teachers make are used to plan future lessons but few assessment procedures exist to support teachers in consistently matching work to the different ability groups in classes, especially the higher attainers. Homework is well used to consolidate and extend what pupils have learned at school. Pupils' work is regularly marked, and helpful comments about how to improve their work are frequently made. Annual reports set future targets for all pupils.
41. **The curriculum and assessment**
42. Overall, the school's curriculum provision is satisfactory, but there are weaknesses and the school has yet to meet one of the key issues identified at the last inspection.
43. The curriculum provided does not yet meet the requirements of the National Curriculum in information technology at Key Stage 2. There have been improvements in the provision for information technology at Key Stage 1, in physical education at Key Stage 2 and in design and

technology at both key stages. The key issue relating to the production of schemes of work has been met, but these are now under review as the school adopts nationally-recommended schemes.

44. The curriculum provided for children under five is satisfactory. Planning for children in reception, in the Key Stage 1 class, takes into account the Desirable Learning Outcomes recommended for this age, but is not always sufficiently focused or closely matched to their needs. Joint planning for under-fives and Key Stage 1 pupils means that objectives are often lost within National Curriculum planning, and progression to ensure that the Desirable Learning Outcomes are met is not assured. Provision is made difficult by the wide age range within the class; for example, class organisation appropriate to older pupils means that under-fives are unable to select activities for themselves, an important part of their curriculum.
45. The curriculum provided at Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad and relevant, but lacks balance, with deficiencies in information technology at Key Stage 2 and religious education at both key stages. Time devoted to the latter is insufficient to meet requirements. Allocated time is also a factor in the weak provision for information technology. Additionally, planning for information technology across the curriculum has yet to be put in place. Limitations in the provision of appropriate hard and software are also significant factors affecting standards. The action plan implemented as a result of the last inspection has had a positive impact on standards at Key Stage 1. As yet these initiatives have yet to affect standards at Key Stage 2.
46. Appropriate emphasis is placed on literacy and numeracy. The school has adopted both national strategies. The literacy strategy is being developed well at Key Stage 1, but as yet is not so effective at Key Stage 2. Currently this is due to the lack of differentiation and identification of clear learning objectives at the end of the key stage. The numeracy strategy is still at the implementation stage, a specific weakness being insufficiently-focused learning objectives. Personal and social education, including sex and drugs education, is appropriately planned for and delivered through subject specific lessons and through integrated topic work. The school provides satisfactorily for pupils' personal and physical development. Since the last inspection outdoor activities have been added to the physical education curriculum. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum, but planning to ensure that the needs of differing groups of pupils are met is insufficiently developed across the school.
47. The curriculum is supported well by visits and visitors. For example, 'Art in the Park' held last term gave pupils the opportunity to extend their skills by working with different media, on a large scale, as well as developing social skills through working in groups in a different social setting. The range of extra-curricular activities provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and skills.
48. Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils' needs are clearly identified in their individual educational plans. Programmes of work are provided to match their specific needs through well-targeted support by educational assistants and the part-time special educational needs teacher. At other times work is not always sufficiently well matched to pupils needs and this limits the progress they are able to make towards their individual educational plan targets.
49. Subject policies and schemes of work give adequate support to teachers' planning. Termly planning provides a satisfactory overview of the content of the curriculum. However, this planning and the weekly planning do not sufficiently provide for progression in learning from

year-to-year within mixed-aged classes. Weekly planning is variable from subject to subject and across classes. In the best examples, learning objectives are clear and provide for the needs of differing groups of pupils. Additionally, objectives are sometimes appropriately linked to assessment.

50. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment to inform curriculum planning was a key issue at the last inspection. Current assessment procedures allow staff to effectively monitor broad achievements, to inform report writing and set some targets for future learning. However, these procedures are not effective in supporting a curriculum matched to the needs of different groups of pupils, especially at Key Stage 2. Teachers make evaluations of some lessons and note significant achievements of pupils, but the use of these is not always systematic or rigorous to ensure that future lessons are well matched to the learning needs of pupils. As a result the pace of learning slows for some pupils. Children are assessed on entry to school and immediate targets for learning are set. Assessment against the Desirable Learning Outcomes recommended for children of this age, however, are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure children's progress towards these goals before embarking on National Curriculum objectives.

50. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

51. The provision that the school makes for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.
52. Opportunities given for pupils' spiritual development are satisfactory. Acts of collective worship are well planned and meet statutory requirements. Good emphasis is given to considering moral, social and spiritual issues through a well-planned programme of themes. Pupils are given opportunities for reflection and prayer and knowledgeably join in the Lord's prayer. They have some opportunities to study different faiths and festivals in religious education lessons.
53. The provision for pupils' moral development is satisfactory. The school teaches the principles which separate right from wrong through school and class rules. However, the behaviour policy is not always consistently applied by all staff during lessons and is in need of review to reflect current practice. Staff generally provide good role models, fostering positive values such as honesty, fairness and respect. There are still some weaknesses in the application of the behaviour policy.
54. The school makes satisfactory provision for the social development of its pupils. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions, but a significant minority of pupils sometimes find this difficult. Pupils generally relate well to one another, although a minority of pupils are quick to laugh at others' misfortunes and mistakes. Planned provision for developing initiative and taking responsibility is not well developed, especially in the Year 3/4 class, where some pupils cannot be trusted to behave appropriately when left unsupervised for short periods of time. Pupils are given effective opportunities to be involved in extra-curricular activities, such as taking part in school and area sports events and community activities.
55. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' cultural development. They appreciate their own cultural traditions through visits to places of interest, including theatres and museums. Pupils have opportunities through the curriculum; for example, in history and geography, to study other cultures, and in religious education, to learn about other religious beliefs.

56. The provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development has been maintained since the time of the last inspection, and provision for pupils' social and cultural development has improved.

56. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

57. Overall provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is satisfactory. Some aspects related to the monitoring and promotion of behaviour are unsatisfactory. The attention paid to the assessment of health and safety risks is good.

58. The monitoring of academic progress is satisfactory, an improvement since the last report, with a focus on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs receive sound additional support with literacy and numeracy in small groups when the part-time specialist teacher is available. Trained classroom assistants give assistance at other times, enabling these pupils to make steady progress. Other pupils, including the more able, do not always receive appropriate challenge, as work is not always matched closely to the individual pupil's needs. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are carefully monitored through regular reviews of their individual educational plans. Outside agencies are appropriately called in to give advice and support when necessary.

59. The monitoring of personal development is sound overall. There is a planned programme including circle-time discussions, and information on topics such as drugs education and bullying is provided by the local community police officer. The school nurse is involved in a programme of health education that includes sex education for the oldest pupils. Although sound social development is fostered through pupils mixing at lunch and residential visits for Years 5 and 6, some aspects of social skills and pupil self-esteem are underdeveloped. Some pupils are reluctant to approach adults for support and guidance due to difficulties in relationships. This is a view echoed by parents.

60. The monitoring of attendance is sound. A late/appointment book is maintained and absence notes properly refer to authorised absence. The school is now fully aware of the impact of extended holidays on attendance figures, and intends to tackle this and the need to reduce the level of unauthorised absence.

61. The monitoring of behaviour management is unsatisfactory. The behaviour policy is outdated and long overdue for review. It has an inappropriate focus on sanctions and it does not address the school's current needs and priorities. It does not reflect the much more positive current practice in the school; for instance, the introduction of achievement certificates. There is no guidance for staff on developing a consistent effective and positive whole-school plan for behaviour, including relationships. Individual records of pupils causing concern are detailed and well documented, showing positive parental involvement. Exclusion procedures are properly followed.

62. There is a trained designated person responsible for child protection, and local authority guidance is followed. Staff have received internal training in correct procedure, and 'stranger danger' forms part of the personal and social education programme for pupils. There are appropriate links with outside agencies such as social services.

63. The quality of arrangements for children first entering the school and for those preparing for

secondary transfer is good. Younger children and their parents visit the reception class several times before starting full time. This helps them to settle into school routines. Older pupils and their parents receive a lot of information about both the main receiving secondary school and other schools in the area. A well-established comprehensive programme with the main receiving school includes two pupil taster days and exchange visits between staff and pupils in Year 7.

64. Daily routines are well ordered. Lunch is organised efficiently in the cramped school hall, where the majority of pupils eat hot school dinners brought in from Oswestry. The school has two qualified first-aiders and any accidents are properly recorded.
65. Attention paid to health and safety is sound. The policy has been reviewed and offers clear guidance. Equipment, including fire extinguishers, is regularly checked and fire drills are held every term, but the evacuation times are not currently recorded. The fire alarm is sounded by a large handbell. Areas of concern about health and safety matters are clearly recorded in a standardised format. The school was aware of the few issues noted. Very prompt action was taken to immediately remedy one concern during the inspection.
65. **Partnership with parents and the community**
66. The good quality partnership existing between the school, the parents and the community it serves is a great strength in this small village school. Parents, extended family members and the local community are all warmly welcomed and often involved in the life and work of the school. Although many parents work during the school day, a few are able to help in school, and a greater number of community volunteers regularly help with activities such as hearing readers, art, talking to pupils about the history of the community and helping with swimming and other trips. Several governors are also involved in the school.
67. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning and to seek regular informal contact with the school. They meet with the special educational needs co-ordinator at parents' evenings to discuss progress more formally.
68. There is a thriving and effective 'Friends Association' raising around £1,000 each year through various fundraising activities; for example, regular sales, beetle drives and other events open to the community, which are all well attended. The Fun Day celebrating the acquisition of the new school field was particularly successful.
69. The quality of information provided to parents is good. All required and considerable additional information is provided in the prospectus and the governors' annual report. Parents receive very regular newsletters about all aspects of school life. There are termly meetings to discuss pupil progress. Annual pupil reports fully meet requirements, providing considerable detail and targets for pupil improvement in many subjects. Parents of children with special educational needs are also kept fully informed. Meetings are held to explain, for example, the literacy project and involve a display of resources used. The Home School Agreement is in place.
70. The homework system is well established. Homework is provided throughout the school at an appropriate level. Pupils have homework diaries. For the oldest pupils the homework is particularly relevant, preparing them well for secondary education. Parents receive a weekly

letter detailing homework to be done. This is greatly appreciated.

71. Community and business links are also good. There are strong links with the church and parish, with articles about the school regularly appearing in the parish magazine. Father John, a retired canon, takes weekly assembly and runs a local history club for pupils. There are regular musical and dramatic performances at the local old people's home, including a carol service at Christmas. The Harvest Festival involves all of the community and the annual Remembrance Day is celebrated, with pupils being made aware of those who were involved in the world wars. Many charities such as the National Children's Home and Red Nose Day are supported. Pupils are involved in the village carnival.
72. The headteacher has been instrumental in developing links and sponsorship from national companies. £1,000 was successfully secured from a commercial fund and used for furniture in the new demountable classrooms.
73. Good progress has been made in developing and enhancing partnership links since the last inspection. The school has been successful in regaining the confidence and respect of parents, mentioned as an urgent priority in the last report. Business and community links are being extended well.

73. **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

73. **Leadership and management**

74. The school is soundly led and managed. The governors are very supportive of the school and, through visits and being well informed by the headteacher, are satisfactorily involved in monitoring its work. An appropriate committee structure is in place and expertise available in order for the governing body to carry out its statutory responsibilities. It is suitably involved in establishing priorities for the school's future development and monitoring progress towards meeting the targets in the school development plan. At present it is well informed of some parents' concerns over the relationships pupils have with their class teacher and will be closely monitoring the situation when she returns to the school after illness. The governors' annual report to parents, the school prospectus, and annual reports to parents do meet statutory requirements - an improvement since the last inspection.
75. The headteacher has been in post for one year and, together with the governors and staff, has determined a clear educational direction for the work of the school. His first priority was to establish himself in his teaching role with the pupils in Years 5 and 6 and he has been instrumental in maintaining the good staff teamwork developed over the last few years. With appropriate support from the local education authority he monitors the standard of teaching and learning in each classroom and uses classroom appraisals to set agreed targets for development with individual teachers. He is aware of the need to raise standards of pupils' behaviour, especially with regard to their attitudes to their learning and their ability to interact with their peers. He also plans to enable other teaching staff to monitor the teaching of their subject responsibilities by releasing them from their class-teaching commitments. Numeracy is the main current target for development, and monitoring of the literacy hour is ongoing. Named governors are involved in this process.
76. The school development plan is a useful working document which starts with a thorough

evaluation of the previous year's targets and any improvements still to be made. Agreed targets for future development have clear success criteria, timescales, costings and named people who will oversee progress towards achieving them. The governing body is kept suitably informed by the headteacher in his full reports to them. However, given the high number of pupils with special educational needs and the lower-than-average attainment of pupils on entry to the school, it is surprising that these issues are not mentioned in the current plan. There is an effective school management plan for the introduction of the National Numeracy Project and continued monitoring of the literacy hour.

77. The school and governing body have been successful in putting in place a whole-school curriculum plan with policies and schemes of work for all subjects. These are now being changed in the light of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authorities' (QCA) curriculum guidance. This is a large improvement since the last inspection. However, the quality of teachers' short-term planning has yet to be improved to reflect these initiatives. The school meets statutory requirements in its provision for pupils with special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator is a part-time teacher who gives freely of her time in order to successfully manage all aspects of her work and to give guidance to colleagues. She has a clear view for the development of provision; for example, improving the quality of the individual educational plans in order to make them accessible in the classroom situation. It is a pity these developments are not listed in the current school development plan.
78. The school is generally effective in putting into practice its agreed aims and values. It is aware of the need to improve the ethos for learning by improving pupils' attitudes to learning and putting right the poorer relationships evident in some parts of the school. It has a commitment to high achievement through the continued use of individual target setting. The school is well paced to make further improvements.
78. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**
79. Overall, accommodation, staffing and learning resources are satisfactory, but with some strengths and weaknesses in specific areas.
80. Staff are appropriately qualified, experienced and able to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and the needs of pupils in the school, including those who are under five. Support staff are suitably deployed and used effectively to support the teachers' work. Support staff make a valuable contribution to the provision of pupils with special educational needs. However, the number of hours made available to support non-statemented pupils is limited, given the number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register. All staff work closely together as a supportive and very tolerant team, particularly when, for example, having to work around the considerable staff absence, or when colleagues receive training. Administrative and ancillary staff provide unobtrusive support, enabling the school to function smoothly.
81. The attention paid to staff development, including that of ancillary and support staff, is good and a strength of the school. A wide range of courses, both subject and aspect-based, have considerably enhanced the experience and professional development of staff. Any staff having difficulties have received carefully-targeted support. Training is closely linked to the needs of the school and the development plan. The headteacher is a trained mentor and aspects of appraisal are now underway. New guidance on appraisal is awaited. A seconded teacher covering staff absence feels well supported by staff and by the induction information received.

82. The accommodation has recently benefited from the provision of a double demountable classroom, one area used for pupils up to Year 2 and the other for work with small groups. This has considerably relieved pressure on teaching space in the main building. Even though there are fewer pupils than at the time of the last inspection, the school hall, also used as dining space, is still too small to seat a whole-school assembly comfortably and is unsuitable for whole-class physical education lessons such as gymnastics. This, together with the fact that the headteacher has to share a room with his staff, as at the time of the last inspection, is inadequate. The secretary now has a tiny office with little space for necessary files. The continued lack of storage space for resources and equipment for the National Curriculum means that much is packed into the already cramped staffroom.
83. Overall, the quality of resources is satisfactory. Resources are good in music, and the new playground and field ensure that provision for outside physical education is satisfactory. Information technology resources are underused at Key Stage 2 and the number of computers per pupil is inadequate. Along with deficiencies in other pieces of hardware and software this situation does not support a rise in standards. The lack of water in classrooms in the main building causes problems in art and design and technology lessons. Resources are generally appropriate and suited to the age and needs of the pupils, and generally sufficient in quantity but, because of storage problems, not always accessible. The school has benefited from the additional spending on numeracy and literacy. Pupils appreciate the new books available to them. Particularly good use is made of the local authority's loan schemes and library services, enhancing the range of resources available to the school; for example, multi-cultural artefacts. A clear strength is the good use of external resources. There is instrumental music tuition, all junior pupils go swimming and there is a full programme of visits to museums, exhibitions and residential and field trips, locally or further afield.
83. **The efficiency of the school**
84. Overall, the efficiency of the school is good; this is an improvement since the last inspection. Financial planning is sound. The school development plan identifies priorities for the coming year, with costs appropriately identified and matched to budget headings. The school is currently coping with a falling roll, which makes long-term financial planning more difficult. As a result there is no planning beyond the current year. The governing body is actively involved in the budget-setting and monitoring processes through the work of its financial committee. This committee looks at the cost-effectiveness of its decisions; for example, the effectiveness of specialist teaching and learning support staff, but are working within the constraints of a tight and reducing budget. The governors are looking at ways of decreasing the budget so that income matches expenditure or raising the budget by looking at the possibility of raising the number of pupils on the school roll.
85. The use of teaching and support staff is good. All staff are effectively deployed, with support for pupils with special educational needs being well targeted. Additional specialist teaching in music has a positive impact on the quality of provision. The support of parents and other volunteer helpers in class adds significantly to this quality. Effective use is made of the available accommodation and of learning resources, with the exception of information technology resources at Key Stage 2. Grants from central government for improving resources for literacy and numeracy have been well spent. An effective development plan is in place to ensure good use of new accommodation facilities.

86. The efficiency of financial control and school administration is good. Day-to-day procedures are administered well with minimal intrusion on the working day of staff and pupils. Information technology is used effectively to support some administration procedures, but currently most financial systems are operated manually. The very recent auditor's report highlights the generally good procedures, with only a few action points to implement.
87. The income and expenditure per pupil are above average when compared nationally with those in all schools. Taking into account the sound quality of education provided, the average standards of attainment and the generally satisfactory progress made by pupils, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

87. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

87. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

88. At the time of the inspection five children, all of whom were under five, had just started school.

88.

Attainment

89. On entry to school, overall standards of attainment are below those expected for children of this age. While the children are under five in the reception/Key Stage 1 class, they make satisfactory progress. By the age of five, the majority have developed the skills and basic ideas expected in mathematics, physical and creative development. Their attainment in language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, and personal and social development, is generally still below expectations, although satisfactory progress is made.

Personal and social development

90. Children's attainment varies, but overall it is below that expected. Behaviour is satisfactory. Children are helped to settle into school by following the example of older pupils in the class. They happily settle to tasks provided especially for them, but find it difficult to concentrate and listen when the whole class is together. They mostly work alongside each other, developing co-operative skills as the term progresses. They are learning to respond to questions and to take turns when in a group. They demonstrate independent skills when selecting apparatus during outside play. Progress is satisfactory.

91. Effective provision for this area of children's development is constrained to some extent by the nature of the class, which accommodates under-fives, reception, and pupils in Years 1 and 2. Children are unable to be independent through selecting activities and resources themselves, although there are times when choices can be made. Class organisation is arranged to suit the needs of the majority of the pupils. Due to the small number of children admitted at any one time, staff quickly get to know the children, building good relationships.

Language and literacy

92. Children's attainment varies, but overall it is below that expected for children of this age. Progress is satisfactory. Most find it difficult to listen attentively, but are able to follow simple instructions. Children's vocabulary is often limited and this restricts their speaking skills and progress generally. They mostly respond to questions with single words or short phrases, although higher-attaining children express themselves more fully. They are learning to respond to books by looking at and describing what is happening in pictures. Children are sometimes successful in relating this to their own experiences. A small proportion of children know some sounds of letters, but have yet to link this to words on the page. Most are learning to write their names and recognise the initial letter. Not all pupils have an appropriate pencil grip.

93. Language and literacy lessons are planned appropriately using the National Literacy Strategy and are usually supported by the educational support assistant. This management strategy is effective in developing children's skills, knowledge and understanding. Questions to develop children's thinking and oral skills are well targeted to individuals in all activities, not just in language and literacy lessons. The use of print around the room to develop children's awareness is only partially developed. A role-play area, a listening area and a writing area

where children can choose to use pens, pencils and paper are not readily accessible to children, limiting informal opportunities to develop skills.

Mathematics

94. By the age of five, children's attainment is in line with that expected, and progress is sound. Children have an appropriate awareness of numbers, being able to count to at least ten. They count the letters in their names and are beginning to recognise number symbols. They count pieces of Play-doh when cutting them to use for other purposes. Evidence from the scrutiny of past work shows children counting one more, one less, adding and subtracting numbers to ten, recognising coins, counting pennies, identifying plane shapes, experimenting with solid shapes to describe which ones roll, and identifying long and short objects.

95. Teachers have high expectations of children's attainment, but not all tasks are suitable for the lowest-attaining children. Displays to foster children's mathematical skills and opportunities for informal learning are underdeveloped. Children have opportunities to play informally and experiment in sand and water, but these activities are not readily to hand.

95. **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

96. Generally, the children's language development, in particular their limited vocabulary, restricts their ability to express their ideas and talk about the world around them. With support, children talk about events in their own lives and sequence pictures of a baby's growth. They can name facial features, knowing that they have two eyes, two ears and so on; some have difficulty naming eyebrows and eyelashes. When working on the computer, children are mostly developing their ability to control the mouse. Progress is satisfactory.

97. Children's knowledge, skills and understanding in this area of learning are developed through topic themes alongside the work of older pupils in the class. Whilst this is satisfactory, the teacher's planning to ensure appropriate first-hand experiences linked across areas of learning, and to ensure that vocabulary is systematically acquired, is insufficiently developed.

Physical development

98. Children's attainment and progress are in line with those expected for children of this age. They mostly manipulate pencils, scissors and small apparatus such as cars along a route on a floor map with care and satisfactory control. They can mould and roll Play-doh into sausage shapes. They demonstrate sound hand-eye coordination when handling small games equipment such as quoits and balls.

99. Opportunities to develop physical skills are used well across the areas of learning, with the provision of appropriate practical activities. Afternoon playtimes give informal opportunities to develop skills; for example, with small apparatus, as do more formal physical education lessons. There is no immediate access to outdoor play equipment of any kind.

Creative development

100. Children's attainment and progress are in line with expectations. They enjoy using paper plates, decorating them with collage materials to make faces. With support they studiously study their features in order to match colours. They successfully use a range of materials from

those given. When new to school, children find it difficult to join in singing with the whole class, but attempt to follow actions and clap a simple beat.

101. Adult support is effective in developing skills across the areas of learning. Work scrutiny evidence shows that children take part in activities that involve them exploring a range of media. Role-play resources are made available and dance forms part of the curriculum offered.

101. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

101. **English**

102. On entry to Key Stage 1 the attainment of the majority of pupils is generally below that expected. Pupils' limited vocabulary and their ability to concentrate are significant factors affecting their attainment. This indicates a change in the characteristics of the school since the last inspection, where attainment was judged to be at least sound and often good.

103. The small number of pupils taking key stage tests makes comparisons with national averages unreliable. However, over a three-year period attainments in reading and writing are close to national averages at Key Stage 1. The outcomes of the 1999 key stage tests are expected to give below average attainment in reading and average attainment in writing. (National comparisons are not yet available.) Tests show a decline in the number of pupils achieving the national expectation in reading, Level 2, due to the high number of special educational needs pupils, but an increase in the percentage achieving higher levels of attainment, Level 3. In writing, the percentage of pupils achieving the national expectation is likely to be higher than the national average. However, no pupils achieved above this. Inspection findings confirm an average picture overall.

104. At Key Stage 2, attainment has been steadily rising over a three-year period, but remaining below the national average. Preliminary figures for the 1999 end-of-key-stage tests show a considerable improvement, with attainment likely to be above average. The school stresses, however, the differences in the cohort of pupils. At Key Stage 2, attainment and judgements on progress are complicated further by the sometimes high numbers of pupils starting and leaving the school throughout the key stage. The inspection findings judge attainment to be in line with the national average.

105. Overall, the progress pupils make is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. At both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall, with sometimes good progress towards targets identified in their individual educational plans. Better progress is made when targets are specific and support is given to achieve these targets through well-matched tasks.

106. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are broadly in line with expectations at the end of both key stages, although weaknesses in the use of a wide vocabulary constrain higher attainment in all aspects of English. Additionally, until the end of Key Stage 2, a significant number of pupils also have weaknesses in their ability to listen. This is linked to poor concentration. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make relevant comments and answer questions appropriately, but too often have to be brought on task to do so. Pupils are mostly learning to take the response of others into consideration when answering questions or offering ideas. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are generally confident at expressing their ideas and answering questions. Their use of standard English is sound, but still their use of a rich and varied vocabulary is limited. Pupils' listening skills have improved, but they do not always take sufficient note of the

contributions of their peers. Opportunities to practise skills such as explaining, arguing, summarising, and presenting views, either in English or across the curriculum, are too few and this limits progress. Overall progress is satisfactory.

107. Attainment in reading is broadly in line with national averages at the end of both key stages, although fewer pupils attain higher than the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, pupils are mostly confident at reading texts matched to their levels of attainment. They use picture and phonic cues appropriately, and higher-attaining older pupils use context cues effectively.
108. At the end of the key stage, pupils display a good understanding of non-fiction texts, knowing how to locate information in the school library and use contents and index pages. Through Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory gains in skills. They correct themselves, indicating that they understand what they read. They recall events in detail, but are less confident at summarising, and lower-attaining pupils are less willing to predict. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read an appropriate range of texts. They read accurately but not always fluently or with expression. Their ability to discuss texts is sound, but some lack confidence at putting forward their own views. Their knowledge and skills for using non-fiction texts are sound; for example, most pupils understand the use of headings.
109. The slowness at which some pupils move away from reading-scheme books, when these are no longer needed, constrains higher attainment and limits progress. Such texts often restrict vocabulary, and characters and events are insufficiently challenging for pupils to be able to discuss in the detail required to achieve higher levels of attainment. Home-school records are used throughout the school, with regular comment by staff, helpers and parents. It is school policy to use praise only in these books and, although some comments about improvements are made, valuable opportunities are lost to focus pupils' attention on a particular skill to be developed. Overall, pupils' progress in reading is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2.
110. Standards in writing are average at the end of both key stages. Throughout both key stages pupils use a narrow vocabulary and this constrains higher attainment. At the beginning of Key Stage 1, pupils have opportunities to write for themselves and to copy teachers' writing. At the end of the key stage, most pupils structure their writing appropriately, spelling is sound and the use of full stops is generally consistent. Handwriting varies, with some pupils comfortable with a well-formed print, while others use a cursive style. Vocabulary choices are often limited, although some vary sentence beginnings well. Through the earlier years of Key Stage 2, presentation skills are often poor, with an inconsistency in handwriting style and careless spelling. At the end of the key stage, presentation skills, including handwriting, are much improved. Most pupils write with a neat, legible, cursive style, taking pride in their work. Spelling is sound and sometimes good. Higher-attaining pupils write in a style which engages the reader, but still with a restricted descriptive element and a limited vocabulary. Across the curriculum pupils' work is also well presented.
111. Pupils' skills are developed well across different subjects at Key Stage 1. A good range of writing enables pupils to practise and develop skills. As a result they make good progress. At Key Stage 2, the range of work is appropriate, with some opportunities for extended writing in history used well. However, given pupils' underdeveloped vocabulary, insufficient work is targeted at this area in English and across the curriculum. Pupils make use of word-processing packages to enhance their writing, but these are not used sufficiently frequently for redrafting

purposes; for example, editing work to add descriptive vocabulary. From the scrutiny of past work, it can be seen that expectations for the standard of pupils' presentation of their written work lacks consistency and this limits progress early in Key Stage 2. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2.

112. Overall, pupils' attitudes in lessons are satisfactory. Whilst behaviour is satisfactory, a significant number of pupils throughout the school have difficulties in concentrating and listening. These difficulties affect the pace of the lesson and pupils' ability to cope with independent tasks. Noise levels are often too high as pupils talk about incidental matters. This occurs when pupils take little pride in their work and do not rise to the challenge offered. Also, when tasks, whilst appropriate to pupils' level of skill, have been presented in an unchallenging manner and require little engagement on the part of pupils.
113. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and sound in lessons at Key Stage 2. No lessons observed were unsatisfactory. Good use is made of the National Literacy Framework to support teaching at Key Stage 1 and early Key Stage 2. Learning objectives and tasks are well matched to the needs of differing groups of pupils. Groups of pupils which are the focus of teachers' attention are appropriately extended, and work for pupils working independently are sufficiently demanding. At the end of Key Stage 2, lesson objectives are not always clear or planned for the separate elements of the lesson; for example, for group activities and the plenary. Additionally, work tends to consolidate rather than develop pupils' skills. Most teachers' questioning varies from sound to good. Where learning objectives have been clearly identified, questioning is focused with a good mix of open and closed questions to achieve these objectives. Plenary sessions are generally weaker, with insufficient focus either on reinforcing learning or on further development of objectives.
114. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy. Planning has yet to be fully secure in catering for the range of attainment found in any one class. Assessment linked to planning is also not secure and, whilst teachers are assessing pupils' attainment, this assessment is insufficiently rigorous to fully inform teaching, especially at Key Stage 2.
114. **Mathematics**
115. The results of the 1998 national tests showed that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was in line with the national average for all schools and in line with schools who take their pupils from similar backgrounds. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 2, the expected level, was above the national average. Early indications from the 1999 national tests show a similar result, although the number of pupils involved is much smaller. Evidence from the inspection confirms that by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment is in line with national averages.
116. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are confident in carrying out addition and subtraction calculations to 100 and are appropriately developing their knowledge of number bonds to 20. Pupils arrange numbers to 100 in order, counting backwards and forwards in fives and tens. They identify simple number patterns such as the two and ten times tables, and higher-attaining pupils can do so using the five times table. By the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils identify odd and even numbers and are confident in mental addition and subtraction of number facts to 20. Pupils apply their number skills when solving simple problems using money and when finding a half or quarter of numbers to 20. They measure distances using standard measures such as centimetre and metre, and weight and capacity using kilograms and litres.

Pupils in Year 2 draw simple graphs and charts as a result of collecting data about the number of letters in their names or how they travelled to school. They know the names of common two and three-dimensional shapes, such as triangles, hexagons and cuboids, and sort them according to the number of sides and corners.

117. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall. Progress is particularly good in Year 1, which is the largest year group in the reception class, and many pupils are already confident in recording and counting numbers to ten. Across the key stage pupils increase the speed of their mental calculations and increasingly broaden their use of mathematical vocabulary.
118. The results of the 1998 national tests showed that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was well above the national average in the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4, the expected level, but below average in the percentage achieving the higher Level 5. In comparison with that in all schools and schools which take their pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' attainment was above the national average. Early indications from the 1999 national tests show that the percentage of pupils achieving Levels 4 and 5 is higher than in 1998, although there are no national figures with which to compare them. There has been an upward trend in attainment over the last three years. Evidence from the inspection indicates that the attainment of the present cohort of pupils in Year 6, who have just begun their final year in school, is in line with national averages.
119. At Key Stage 2, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are developing confidence in using numbers to 1000 and can add and subtract using a variety of written methods. Pupils in Year 4 are confident in carrying out mental addition sums to 20, but are less confident in subtraction. Pupils cover a wide range of work across the National Curriculum Programme of Study, including frequent opportunities for carrying out mathematical investigations. From the work seen from the last academic year, by the end of the Key Stage 2, pupils carry out calculations involving numbers to 1000 and beyond, using all four number operations. They apply their number skills to problem-solving situations when working with fractions, decimals and percentages. Many pupils show a developing use of mathematical vocabulary as they use terms such as 'mean', 'mode', and 'median' when carrying out work involving probability. They are knowledgeable about two and three-dimensional shapes and their properties, using such terms as 'vertices', 'edges' and 'surfaces'. Pupils are able to collect their own data, making suitable use of tally charts and tables, and record their findings in increasingly-complex graphs and charts. They are aware of 'degree' as a unit of turn and that square units are needed to measure area. Many of the present pupils in Year 6 are knowledgeable about the place value of digits to 1000, and a few higher-attaining pupils can speedily calculate additions using these numbers.
120. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall and sometimes their progress is good, especially in Years 5 and 6. Good emphasis is given to the development of pupils' number skills. However, progress is slowed when pupils are not made aware of what they are expected to have completed by the end of the lesson.
121. Pupils generally respond well in lessons, especially in Years 5 and 6, but a significant minority do find difficulty in listening attentively to their teachers, in taking turns to answer questions and in not calling out their answers. Pupils generally concentrate appropriately when working independently, but the pace at which they work is slow and some pupils need constant reminders to stay on task. Many pupils clearly enjoy the mental arithmetic sessions which are evident at the start of mathematics lessons.

122. The quality of teaching was never less than satisfactory and was good in the Year 3/4 lesson taken by the newly-appointed part-time teacher. Staff have a sound knowledge of the curriculum and have made a good start to the introduction of the numeracy hour. Pupils' numeracy skills are satisfactorily promoted in other subjects, for example, science. The detail of planning varies from class to class and is sufficient for the whole-class sessions, but does not always clearly identify the lesson objectives for group work. Staff are aware that more work is needed in this area if all ability groups, especially the more-able pupils, are to be given suitably-challenging activities. The management of the pupils to achieve good discipline is satisfactory overall and good in the Year 5/6 class. It is improving in the Year 3/4 class as the new teacher makes more evident her high expectations of how pupils should behave and concentrate on their work. Expectations of what the pupils can achieve is not always sufficiently high and activities sometimes lack challenge for the more able, as work is not always adapted to provide suitable extension work. Teachers do not always make it sufficiently clear to pupils what they are expected to have done by the end of the lesson and, therefore, the pace at which pupils' work is slow. In the better-quality teaching observed in the Year 3/4 class, the teacher maintained a good pace during the whole-class teaching introduction on deciding which vocabulary could be used in a number problem; for example, 'Find the difference between two numbers' meant that you added or subtracted these numbers. Any inappropriate behaviour such as calling out or not listening attentively was quickly dealt with and pupils knew what they were expected to complete in the 20 minute independent working session. The teacher made good use of the whole-class discussion at the end of the session to consolidate what the pupils had learned. Throughout the session the pace of work was brisk and the pupils made good progress. All teachers regularly mark the pupils' work and frequently write helpful comments about how pupils could make improvements to it.
123. The subject is appropriately managed by the headteacher, who has had opportunities to monitor his colleagues teaching the subject. It is planned that this will be repeated with the advent of the numeracy hour. Annual assessments are made of pupils' progress, using compulsory and optional national and standardised tests and these are analysed to improve curriculum provision. Diaries are also kept of important gains in attainment made by individual pupils and their overall progress by National Curriculum level is recorded. Having used a commercial scheme of work over the last few years, the school has adopted the National Numeracy Strategy this year which is helping teachers in their planning. Since the time of the last inspection standards of attainment at Key Stage 1 have been maintained and standards have been improved at Key Stage 2.
123. **Science**
124. Statutory teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998 indicate that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 was above the national average, and the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was average. The attainment of the present group of pupils in Year 2 is in line with national expectations.
125. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are knowledgeable about the conditions which plants need in order to grow, from their own experiments on growing runner beans. They name the main parts of the human body and know that a balanced diet is necessary for healthy growth. They sort and name common everyday materials such as plastic, wood, metal, cotton and wool and are aware of the need for different types of clothing in different weather conditions. They can name some sources of natural and artificial light and describe how the movement of the

Earth around the Sun gives us night and day. Pupils make simple electric circuits to light a bulb, and name appliances within the home which need electricity in order to function. Most pupils are increasingly able to record their work, detailing how they carried out their experiments and what conclusions they drew from them. They use a variety of ways to record their results, including making suitable use of graphs and tables. When carrying out experiments they are aware of the need to make their tests fair.

126. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in all areas of their work. They make appropriate gains in knowledge and understanding of science, but they are heavily dependent upon adults for advice and guidance when carrying out their own investigations.
127. The results of the 1998 national tests showed pupils' attainment, at the end of Key Stage 2, to be well above the national average in the percentage of pupils gaining the expected Level 4, and above average in the percentage gaining the higher Level 5. Indications from the 1999 tests also indicate pupils' attainment to be above average. However, the attainment of the present group of pupils who have just begun their last year in the school is in line with national averages. Pupils' attainment, although varying from year to year depending on the cohort of pupils, has at least been maintained, and sometimes improved, since the time of the last inspection.
128. From a scrutiny of work from the last academic year, it can be seen that pupils in Years 3 and 4 classify materials according to their use, identifying properties such as insulation and waterproofing. They are aware that materials are divided into solids, liquids and gases, and that water can be found in all three states. They know that materials can be separated by filtration and use terms such as 'evaporation' and 'condensation' in their work. The present pupils in Year 4 are knowledgeable about the human skeleton and how it is made up of different kinds of joints, such as hinge and ball and socket. By the end of the key stage, pupils name the principle organs of the body and their functions, such as the heart pumping the blood. They know that materials are changed by heating and cooling and that some of these changes are not reversible. They use keys to identify plants and animals and the habitats they need in order to reproduce and multiply. Most pupils are aware of what an electrical circuit needs in order to function correctly and can draw simple circuits making good use of standard symbols in their diagrams. Pupils are aware of the need for a fair test and are able to identify the variables which need to be kept constant in order to bring this about.
129. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, and in Years 5 and 6 their progress is sometimes good. All pupils' knowledge and understanding of science develop appropriately as they are given a wide variety of practical investigations to carry out. Some pupils' poor listening skills and their inability not to call out their answers slow progress during class discussions. This slows the pace of the lesson, as teachers need to continually remind the pupils to put up their hands.
130. Generally, pupils at both key stages show interest in their work and many can work co-operatively with other pupils when asked to do so. However, it was evident at lower Key Stage 2 that many pupils, including the more able, could not be trusted to work independently when not directly supervised by an adult. When left to carry on with their work for even a short time, many pupils talk about other matters and do not concentrate well on their work.
131. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Lessons generally have a clear objective and the activities provided are suitable for the different abilities within the mixed-age classes.

Teachers' expectations of more-able pupils sometimes vary little from what is expected of other pupils, as was seen in the scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work. In the lessons seen during the inspection, although the pace was generally satisfactory, more able pupils rarely completed more work than their classmates. The quality of teachers' short-term planning varies from class to class and, although activities are open-ended, work for the more able is seldom different from that for other groups of pupils. Generally, teachers make sound use of informal day-to-day assessments to plan future work. Pupils' work is regularly marked and helpful comments are made about how they can improve.

132. It was not possible to interview the subject co-ordinator, who was on long-term absence, or to make a judgement about the management of the subject. It is clear that the co-ordinator has not as yet monitored the teaching of science through observing her colleagues. It is planned that this will happen during the present academic year. Good use is made of end-of-module tests to assess the attainment and progress individual pupils have made. Annual assessments using statutory and optional national tests are also used. Significant improvements made by individual pupils are also made in teachers' assessment notebooks. The school is trialling the QCA scheme of work for science, which is gradually replacing the school scheme of work, which was put in place as a result of the criticisms made in the last inspection report.

132. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

132.

132. **Information technology**

133. At the time of the last inspection attainment in information technology was judged to be below national expectations at both key stages, with pupils making insufficient progress. Provision for all the required elements of the National Curriculum was not in place.

134. Evidence from this inspection is based on one lesson observed at Key Stage 2, on pupils working independently, mostly at Key Stage 1, on a scrutiny of work at both key stages and on discussions with pupils at Key Stage 2. From this evidence attainment is judged to be in line with national expectations at Key Stage 1 and below expectations at Key Stage 2. The full range of the curriculum is offered at Key Stage 1, but not Key Stage 2. Deficiencies in both hardware and software are issues. The school does not expect to update resources until funds from the National Grid for Learning are forthcoming in about 18 month's time. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and unsatisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. This represents an improvement since the last inspection at Key Stage 1, but not Key Stage 2.

135. Early in Key Stage 1, pupils learn to control the mouse when matching colours to those of eyes. They quickly learn that by selecting pictures a printout will give them a description of 'themselves'. Work in other subjects such as science aids their understanding of technology; for example, when thinking about senses they identify cameras, videos, and audio tape recorders. At the end of the key stage pupils are confident at operating a tape recorder and independently using a simple word-processing program by copying a writing frame, adding their own information. They know how to use the shift key and move the cursor to insert or amend text. Evidence from the work scrutiny shows that pupils have had experience of using a programmable toy, and can store and retrieve information, formulate graphs, use a modelling program forming a simple street scene, and alter text font and size.

136. At Key Stage 2, pupils understand that computers can be used to generate information, which

can be presented in a variety of ways. Thus they can identify different fonts, sizes of print and their reasons for use in a variety of newspapers. However, many pupils lack confidence in using the toolbar to change print size or font, to cut and paste text, and to import graphics into their work. The use of word-processing skills; for example, in displays of poetry, is simple. Evidence from discussion with pupils suggests that pupils are confident in accessing information from a CD-ROM, printing off information to support work; for example, in history, but not downloading to cut and paste. Pupils have used data-collecting programs to form spreadsheets, graphs and charts and interrogated their findings, but often need a lot of adult support. All pupils have experience of programming a floor robot, and some pupils have used 'Logo'. They have had no experiences of using monitoring equipment, such as sensors to measure temperature, as none is available.

137. Progress at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Throughout Key Stage 1 appropriate expectations and support strategies are in place to ensure a sound progression in skills, knowledge and understanding. Examples of this include: working in a group to enter data to form a graph, and doing this independently, making labels for topic folders by copying a format, and using the skills of changing font and size for independent work. Pupils with special educational needs are supported appropriately in order for them to make appropriate progress. Progress for pupils at Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. As well as the provision of some of the required elements of the National Curriculum not being fully met, the information technology equipment available is not fully used. Planning to support information technology skills in other subjects of the curriculum is underdeveloped and teachers are not always confident in managing the use of computers within the context of a busy school day.
138. At Key Stage 1, pupils observed using information technology were generally confident, working diligently with good attitudes, whether independently or co-operatively with a partner. At Key Stage 2, too few occasions were observed when pupils were using computers or other technologies to properly assess their attitudes. Pupils sometimes use computers at home to complete homework tasks. These pupils clearly show an interest by accessing information to bring into school.
139. No judgement on the quality of teaching is made, as too few lessons were observed. However, management of the classroom and planning for the use of information technology are securely in place at Key Stage 1, but not yet at Key Stage 2. Curriculum planning for the subject has improved since the last inspection with the production of a policy and the adoption of the county's scheme of work. The local education authority support staff have provided training for teachers, and some equipment has been updated. These initiatives have not yet affected standards at Key Stage 2.

139.

Religious education

140. By the end of both key stages, pupils' knowledge and understanding of different religions, religious practices and belief systems are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, and pupils make unsatisfactory progress. Standards at the time of the last inspection were said to be in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, but that pupils' learning was narrow. At present insufficient time is given to the teaching of the subject and, although the school's planning ensures that the locally agreed syllabus is taught, it is not taught in sufficient depth for pupils to attain sufficiently high standards to meet those described in the syllabus. Little or no evidence of work was in found in the pupils' samples of work from the last academic year. When talked to, pupils from Year 2 had little knowledge of the main Christian

festivals and were confused about what they did know. They were unable to talk about simple religious practices, special people or places. Pupils demonstrate a lack of knowledge about what is celebrated at Christmas and Easter and that Jesus is the Son of God. At Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 6 were knowledgeable about Christian festivals but had little knowledge of the practices and customs of other religions, a criticism made at the time of the last inspection. Pupils in Year 6 were eager to discuss what they knew and showed good knowledge of, for example, Easter. They had obviously studied Easter Week in great detail and were able to discuss the significance of the sacraments used in communion services to Jesus's last supper with the disciples. However, when discussing other religions their knowledge was limited, although they had studied Hindu religious practices in some detail.

141. The quality of teaching in the one lesson observed during the inspection was satisfactory. The teacher efficiently revised the work covered in the previous lesson and used open-ended questioning to encourage the pupils to think about the start of the daily rituals they went through. A clear explanation was given of the way in which Muslims, Hindus and Christians observe their beliefs at the beginning of each day and the pupils were encouraged to write a prayer which they could use each morning.
142. Although teachers' planning shows coverage of the locally agreed syllabus, pupils' knowledge of Christianity is limited at Key Stage 1 and pupils' knowledge of other world religions is limited at Key Stage 2. Insufficient time is currently devoted to the teaching of the subject. The use made of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in the subject is underdeveloped. A review of the provision for religious education is a target in the current school development plan.
142. **Art**
143. Attainment in art is broadly in line with expectations at the end of both key stages; with evidence of higher attainment, especially at the end of Key Stage 2. Overall, the range of work undertaken is good. At both key stages pupils study the work of European artists, including lesser-known artists, and non-western artists and craftspeople. This study is supportive of pupils' cultural development. This is an improvement in provision and standards since the last inspection.
144. On entry to Key Stage 1 pupils display a wide span of attainment. Some draw figures with detailed features, but drawings by others are unrecognisable. With guidance on how to achieve the right proportions pupils in Years 1 and 2 successfully draw portraits. Water-colour portraits on display are of a high standard. At the end of the key stage, pupils have acquired an appropriate range of skills through exploring a good a range of media.
145. Early in Key Stage 2, a display of water colour paintings of a vase of flowers are well executed and shows that pupils have gained an insight into the style of impressionist painters. The portfolio of work for this group of pupils contains some good work, showing development in drawing skills. However, it is not as comprehensive as other classes and shows less attention to developing pupils' knowledge and understanding. Much of the work does not match the higher quality found on display. At the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment in two-dimensional work is generally above expectations. Use of colour is good or very good, pupils' understanding of light is developed well through shading techniques and detail in water colour and pencil sketches is good. The work on the Japanese artist, Hokusai, has been used effectively to develop expression in an unfamiliar style. The lesson observed with this age

group gave pupils the opportunity of developing their understanding of Egyptian art, but was insufficiently challenging to allow pupils to display their skills.

146. Overall, pupils make sound progress. Progress is sometimes good at Key Stage 1 and often good at the end of Key Stage 2. Special educational needs pupils are well supported to ensure that they make similarly sound progress.
147. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory. Younger pupils' listening skills and their ability to concentrate at the beginning of the lesson detract from their good behaviour when working independently. In the lesson observed with older pupils in Key Stage 2 they were attentive during the introduction, worked quietly on the activity, but demonstrated little interest. Insufficient responsibility was given to pupils on this occasion to ensure their interest.
148. The quality of teaching observed was sound. High expectations and good questioning to raise pupils' awareness were key features of the lesson at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, clear exposition imparted information successfully to pupils to achieve the learning objective. However, the follow-up activity was undemanding and not matched to the level of expertise found amongst many of the pupils.
149. Events such as 'Art in the Park' clearly support pupils' development not only in art but also culturally and socially. Pupils have opportunities to work with pupils from a number of other schools and to learn about artistic designs from other cultures. The art club adds another occasion when interested pupils can develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. The long-term plan and scheme of work adopted successfully since the last inspection are now being revised in the light of new guidance. Links with other subjects of the curriculum are used well, for example, creating Egyptian artefacts in history.
149. **Design and technology**
150. Design and technology formed part of the key issue at the last inspection to provide a curriculum that fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has put in place a policy and scheme of work to meet the requirements, but is now reviewing the curriculum in the light of national initiatives. Evidence from the inspection shows the standards of pupils' work to be in line with those usually found in most schools for pupils of this age, with some higher attainment at Key Stage 1. An appropriate emphasis on the different elements of the subject ensures adequate coverage. This is an improvement since the last inspection in both provision and standards.
151. At Key Stage 1, pupils engage in a variety of activities to develop skills and their understanding of technology. For example, they taste bread and evaluate foods, and they use construction apparatus such as Meccano to make toys to push or pull. Pupils design bracelets for themselves and weave wool. Chairs made from junk materials and balsa wood were first designed to ensure that they would fit 'baby bear'. Designs included dimensions and problems identified. The finished products were of a high quality.
152. At Key Stage 2 the number of tasks are fewer, although all elements, design, make and evaluation skills are covered. Early in the key stage, pupils are engaged in designing puppets. With teacher support they developed an understanding of the function of paper mock-ups and of the need to plan. Pupils experiment at trying to find the best way of making holes to fix card together, but restricted resources limit the success of these attempts. At the end of the key

stage, pupils successfully evaluate Roman slippers in order to design their own. Discussion of past technology projects, such as making buggies, using resistant materials and electrical components, demonstrates pupils' ability to describe the making and evaluation processes they were involved in.

153. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. They are encouraged to evaluate their work from the youngest age. Opportunities for pupils to select their own materials and resources are less well developed. At Key Stage 2 progress is sound, although the progression in skills is less well developed.
154. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are sound. They handle resources sensibly and share when required to do so. They communicate their ideas confidently.
155. No teaching was observed at Key Stage 1, but work scrutiny shows that pupils are well supported to achieve the aims of lessons through good quality teacher worksheets and appropriate activities. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. Teachers are mostly effective in realising the learning objectives of lessons by providing clear guidance when supporting groups and individuals.
155. **Geography**
156. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are in line with those usually found for pupils of this age in most schools. No geography lessons were observed during the course of the inspection as history is currently the focus of work in each class. Therefore, no judgements can be made of the quality of teaching or pupils' response to the subject. However, from a scrutiny of pupils' completed work from the last academic year and teachers' planning, it can be seen that satisfactory provision is made for the subject. Standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection, but the breadth of the curriculum has been improved.
157. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of their own environment and the environment of the school. They ask questions such as "Where is it?" and "What is it like?" as they explore their surroundings. The youngest pupils write their address and identify the main features of the area. By the end of the key stage, pupils can identify attractive and unattractive features of their own locality and make simple maps. They compare West Felton with the seaside resort of Llandudno, identifying similarities and differences in land use, shops and houses. Pupils can follow a route on a simple map of the village. They know the names of the countries which make up the United Kingdom.
158. At Key Stage 2, pupils in Years 3 and 4 study the local area and draw their own maps of its main roads and utilities. They describe direction using the four points of the compass and are aware of some of the main rivers in the United Kingdom. They compare and contrast their own lives with those of Indian villagers in Chembakolli and identify similarities and differences between features such as houses, agriculture and industry in the two areas. By the end of the key stage, pupils have developed a sound knowledge of different countries of Europe and the world, and can locate them using a globe. They use their developing literacy skills to find information from written sources and to write stories and accounts of other places, such as the Taj Mahal and Wind Palace in India. Their skills in reading maps develop appropriately as they use different scales to calculate distance in the areas they have studied and begin to use keys to interpret local and world maps.

159. At both key stages pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Good use is made of visits to give pupils first-hand experience of some of the areas they study. Pupils are given opportunities to use their developing skills to solve real problems. For example, Key Stage 1 pupils were involved in solving the problem of parking at the school, which has recently been improved. Pupils' mapping skills are systematically developed as they progress from drawing pictures of places to drawing increasingly complex plans using keys and standard map symbols. Pupils learn to use appropriate geographical terms when discussing their work, such as 'delta', 'tributary' and 'source' when learning about the rivers.

159. **History**

160. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are in line with those usually found in most schools for pupils of this age. Standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection.

161. At Key Stage 1, pupils study changes in their own lives and those beyond living memory. They develop their vocabulary of the passage of time using terms such as 'before', 'after' and 'long ago' as they sequence pictures of a child growing up and order artefacts that they might have used. They discuss their own lives and how they have changed since they were babies, through the toddler stage, to being school children.

162. At Key Stage 2, pupils study the Roman invasion of Britain and the reasons why the Romans came here. Through visits to Roman remains in Chester, they talk about the legacy of roads and artefacts such as mosaics that still exist today. They compare and contrast life in Roman times with that of today. Pupils can name the various gods that the Romans worshipped and how their life was affected by their beliefs. By the end of the key stage, pupils are knowledgeable about the various periods of history which they have studied and can put them into a timeline. They are aware of how archeological studies have provided much of the information which we have about the Romans, Greeks and Egyptians and their everyday lives and times.

163. At both key stages pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall. The progress of more able pupils is at times slow, as the work covered is seldom adapted to provide greater challenge through more extended activities. All pupils' knowledge and understanding of different historical periods develop satisfactorily as they use their literacy skills to find out information and write more extended accounts of historical events such as the Great Fire of London. Their concept of chronology is developing well as they learn about eras further and further back in time.

164. Pupils' response to the subject is satisfactory. They generally listen appropriately to explanations from their teachers if the lesson introduction is short, but pupils in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 quickly lose concentration when made to listen more extensively. A significant number frequently call out their answers to teachers' questions and find it difficult to take turns to speak in class discussions. When working independently, pupils are able to complete their tasks, although the pace of their written work is slow.

165. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and often make good links with other subject areas, such as designing and making a Roman sandal in design and technology. Good use is made of a range of resources such as artefacts, videos, books and pictures to engage the pupils' interest. The

activities provided are generally appropriate, but teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what the pupils can achieve. Teachers generally manage the pupils well, particularly in the Year 5/6 class.

166. There is a subject policy and a four year outline scheme of work in operation at present. The school is gradually introducing the QCA's scheme of work for the subject, and a review of provision is planned for the summer of the year 2000. At present there is little evidence of assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in the key elements of the National Curriculum Programme of Study and this is a weakness.
166. **Music**
167. No judgements were made at the time of the last inspection.
168. Attainment in music is in line with expectations at the end of both key stages, with evidence of higher attainment earlier in Key Stage 2.
169. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn to keep simple rhythms by clapping and tapping. Older pupils are adept at changing to new patterns following the teacher's example. Younger pupils join in well with some quite difficult songs. At the end of key stage pupils sing well, in tune, with good attention to tempo. When appraising music they appreciate its dynamics.
170. Earlier in Key Stage 2, pupils' skill in performing rhythmic patterns is extended by using different body parts and working in a number of groups to form a quite difficult round. Pupils keep good time during this activity, developing good listening as well as performing skills. Throughout the key stage many pupils confidently compose using a steady pulse and vocal and body percussion. Pupils sing with good pitch early in the key stage, but older pupils are less confident. Attainment earlier in the key stage is higher than at the end of the key stage, partly due to the better attitudes of pupils.
171. Progress in all lessons observed was at least good, due to the high quality teaching.
172. The attitudes of most pupils are good. They are interested and motivated to join in with all aspects of the lesson. Some boys in the Year 5/6 class join in some activities reluctantly; partly due to embarrassment.
173. A part-time specialist teacher took all the music observed during the inspection. Two of the three lessons observed were good and one was very good. Very good subject expertise and the use of a good range of teaching strategies are significant factors in pupils making good progress. The pace of lessons is very good, only affected by the poor attitudes of some pupils in the upper Key Stage 2 class. Providing additional teaching of music by class teachers is currently a focus of the school development plan. So too is the implementation of a policy and scheme of work for the subject.

173. **Physical education**

174. Only outdoor games were observed during the inspection. Pupils' attainment in this aspect of physical education is in line with that normally found in pupils of this age. Whilst not observed, standards in swimming are good, with almost all pupils achieving the required minimum standard of being able to swim 25m by the time they leave the school.
175. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 learn to use the available space in the playground through carefully controlled activities. They display satisfactory control when throwing and rolling small apparatus. At the end of the key stage pupils move around with a good awareness of space and good control over bodily movements. They demonstrate generally good hand-eye co-ordination when rolling and aiming balls at targets.
176. The younger pupils in Key Stage 2 throw and catch small balls with accuracy when reminded what is required. Their ability to do so over greater distances is limited by their poor attitudes and silly behaviour. Later in the key stage pupils sensibly devise their own warm-up routines for the beginning of the lesson. They learn to pace their running when jogging the perimeter of the school field. The majority of pupils accurately throw and catch large balls when working with a partner or in groups. However, some rely on throwing underarm and are less accurate.
177. Pupils generally make sound progress across both key stages. The poor attitudes of some pupils early in Key Stage 2 affect the rate of progress as they cannot be relied upon to follow instructions. Progress is better when pupils listen to instructions and where teachers make timely interventions to develop skills, knowledge and understanding.
178. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good at Key Stage 1 and the latter half of Key Stage 2. They are less than satisfactory early in Key Stage 2.
179. The quality of teaching observed was satisfactory in all lessons. Teachers' plan appropriate activities, although for a minority of pupils these do not always offer sufficient challenge. Teachers insist on good standards of pupils' behaviour, and the pace of lessons is sometimes adversely affected by the time taken to bring this about. The effective use of pupil and adult demonstration to develop skills is variable; some teachers intervene only at an individual level instead of teaching to the whole-class group.
180. There is a good range of sports clubs. Pupils also have opportunities to take part in competitive sports, such as football, netball, swimming, hockey, athletics and cross-country running.

180. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

180. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

181. The inspection team consisted of a registered inspector, a team inspector and a lay inspector. The team spent a total of seven inspector days in the school. During that time:

- approximately 18 hours were spent in direct classroom observation of a total of 31 lessons or part lessons, with approximately 40 minutes spent on average in each lesson;
- approximately five hours were spent in hearing a representative sample of pupils read and in talking to them about their work;
- approximately eight hours were spent scrutinising samples of the work of pupils from each class;
- approximately seven hours were spent in discussions with members of staff and with all members of the governing body;
- the operation of the school during lesson times, breaks and lunch times was observed closely;
- registration procedures were observed in each class;
- a very extensive range of documentation about the school and its work was examined in detail.

1. Twelve parents attended a pre-inspection meeting and 19 parents returned questionnaires giving their views on a wide range of topics about the work of the school. These views were taken into account in preparing for the inspection and during the course of it.

182. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

182. **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y R- Y6	80	3	26	12

182. **Teachers and classes**

182. **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent): 3.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:

25

182. Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff: 3

Total aggregate hours worked each week: 45

182. Average class size in the school

Average class size: 27

182. Financial data

Financial year: 1998 – 1999

£

Total income 136,858

Total expenditure 139,952

Expenditure per pupil 1,749

Balance brought forward from previous year 9,630

Balance carried forward to next year 6,536

182. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	50
Number of questionnaires returned:	19

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	21	68	5	0	5
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	21	63	11	0	5
The school handles complaints from parents well	16	47	32	0	5
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	16	58	21	5	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	16	68	11	5	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	16	58	21	5	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	21	37	32	11	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	21	63	11	5	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	11	63	21	5	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	0	63	11	21	5
My child(ren) like(s) school	21	74	5	0	0

182. **Other issues raised by parents**

Parents were very concerned at the poor relationships their children had with their teacher in the lower Key Stage 2 class and the effect of this situation on the progress of their children. Parents reported a positive relationship with the headteacher and Key Stage 1 teacher. Some parents thought that the provision for sport has been improved by the new playing field and also by competition with other schools and in area events.