

# INSPECTION REPORT

**MEDLAR WITH WESHAM CHURCH OF  
ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Wesham, Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119553

Headteacher: Mr W Hulme

Reporting inspector: Mrs Sonja Öyen  
7167

Dates of inspection: 21-24 May 2001

Inspection number: 189834

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Garstang Road North  
Wesham  
Preston  
Lancashire

Postcode: PR4 3DE

Telephone number: 01772 682836

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Marjorie Towers

Date of previous inspection: 14/10/1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7167	Sonja Öyen	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Geography History The Foundation Stage English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? School's results and achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
12682	Jim Griffin	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
7222	Alan Watson	Team inspector	English Music Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

23319	Vincent Leary	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology Physical Education Equal opportunities	
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Medlar with Wesham CE Primary is a voluntary aided school in the large village of Wesham, between Preston and Blackpool. Built in 1880 next to the church, it takes children from the parish as well as others from outside the area. Many parents attended the school themselves. With 193 children on roll and seven classes, the school is smaller than most primaries. One child is from an ethnic minority and has English as an additional language. Twenty-two children (11 per cent) are eligible for free school meals. This is lower than the national average and reflects the high level of employment in the area. Twenty children (10 per cent – below the national average) are on the school's register of special educational needs. Five children receive support from external agencies for speech, literacy, learning and emotional and behavioural problems. When the children start in the reception class, most have attended nursery or play group, and their attainment varies but is generally below but close to that expected for their age.

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

Wesham CE has a well-justified high reputation for good standards. The headteacher is very effective in helping the children, parents and staff to feel part of a caring community. The children get off to sound start in the reception year and standards are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 2, compared with similar schools, standards are average in English and higher in mathematics and in science because of much good teaching and a clear focus on what children should know. The school is not as effective in developing the children's writing skills. Not enough has been done to monitor the work of the school and to decide exactly what the school does well and where it needs to improve. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- It is a happy, family school; each child is valued and all care about each other.
- Standards for eleven year olds are good in mathematics and very good in science.
- The children achieve well; they are interested in learning, self-motivated and really enjoy school.
- The relationships between adults and children are very strong.
- The children behave well and show good self-discipline.
- It has a good, fruitful partnership with parents and the local community.

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

- Standards in writing throughout the school but especially at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The quality of teaching to accelerate the children's progress and raise achievement further.
- Systems to track the children's progress and the critical use of information to decide the next steps in the children's learning.
- The effectiveness of the governing body, headteacher and key staff in evaluating how well the school is doing and what needs to be done next.

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

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

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in 1996. In many respects, this report echoes that of 1996 as key strengths have been sustained. The school retains its focal place in the community and good partnership with parents. The children's attitudes are judged to be even stronger than in 1996 and are now very good. While the poor behaviour of a few children is no longer a concern, due to the school's improved systems to manage their behaviour, a small number are quick to distract others when they are bored. Standards have risen in line with the national trend at Key Stage 2, although the improvement in English, especially in writing, has not equalled that in mathematics and science. This reflects some weaknesses in the teaching of English, noted also in 1996. The school has been slow to use and refine systems to evaluate its own work. Much has been done in the last year to lay the foundations but there are few established procedures to ensure that the governors, headteacher and key staff are fully informed of how well the school is doing.



## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	C	D	C	C
Mathematics	B	C	A	A
Science	A	A	A*	A*

**Key**

well above average    A  
 above average        B  
 average                C  
 below average        D  
 well below average   E

In the national tests in 2000, the school's science results placed it in the top five per cent of schools. Seventy per cent of Year 6 children did better than expected for their age. The results were also well above average in mathematics. Standards in English were in line with most schools. Inspection evidence indicates a similar picture. Although standards remain good in mathematics and very good in science, they are not so high as last year. The school is likely to exceed its target for Level 4 attainment in mathematics in this year's national tests, but less likely in English. The school recognises there is underachievement in writing throughout the school.

Inspection evidence shows standards are average at the end of Year 2. Nearly all the children reach Level 2 as expected for their age and a small number do better. Last year, the school's results were well above the average in reading, above in writing and in line in mathematics. However, no child attained the high level in writing and, compared with similar schools, few attained the high level in mathematics.

The children make good progress in the reception class in personal and social development, reading and number. By the end of the foundation stage, most have met the standard expected for their age in all six areas of learning. A few are working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum in reading and number. Progress is slower in writing. Pupils do not all see themselves as writers and this contributes to the lack of high writing achievement throughout the school.

In art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, music and physical education, overall standards are satisfactory throughout the school. In ICT, the children do not have enough time to practise and apply the skills learnt in group sessions. By contrast, the children's ball and team game skills are strengthened by the opportunities at play and lunchtimes to practise cricket and use ropes, balls and bats.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; the children are keen to learn and enjoy school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; pupils generally behave well in and out of school. There are examples of very good behaviour when the teaching holds the children's interest.
Personal development and relationships	Good; children of all ages get on well with and care about each other. They carry out jobs in school responsibly and sensibly.
Attendance	Good.

The children are very enthusiastic about school and proud of what they do.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in 41 per cent of lessons, and very good in an additional four per cent. It is at least satisfactory in 98 per cent of lessons. The one unsatisfactory lesson seen was not typical of the teaching for pupils in Year 4. The reception year children are learning well because of much good teaching. The temporary teacher has high expectations of the children. The infant children (Key Stage 1) make sound progress because of the satisfactory teaching but lessons often lack the vitality and pace seen in the reception class and at Key Stage 2. In the junior classes, good teaching accounts for 55 per cent of lessons; there is good teaching in all classes with occasional very good teaching for Year 4 pupils. The good teaching reflects individual areas of expertise, such as music, mathematics and science, rather than overall strength apart from Year 3 where the children are learning well across the curriculum.

All the teachers plan and prepare their lessons conscientiously. They often use resources that interest the children. In science, the children are taught relevant terms and how to carry out investigations. In mathematics, the teachers are specific and confident. The children are consequently learning a range of strategies to use when solving number problems. In English, the teaching is not consistently strong enough to raise standards especially in writing. The children are not learning sufficiently well how to improve what they do. Children with special educational needs often receive adult support in lessons.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory; the good range of extra curricular activities extends the curriculum. Not enough attention is given to using the outdoors as part of the curriculum for the reception year children.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory; pupils receive support in class and this helps to develop their self-confidence.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory; no child requires additional support in learning to speak English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall with particular strengths in the provision for moral and social development. The staff expect the children to show good manners, to do the right thing and to consider others. Not enough is done to develop the children's awareness of life in a multi-racial and multi-cultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good; the staff know the children well and take an interest in their achievements. The teachers do not use what they know about each child's progress to decide what they need to learn next.

The parents think very highly of the school and what it provides. The headteacher takes the lead in working with parents and the community to extend what the school offers. Most parents support their children in doing their homework. Others help in school or support fund raising events.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory; the headteacher is highly regarded for his sensitivity and team leadership. While sustaining what the school did well previously, not enough has been done to give a clear sense of purpose and direction to the current work of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory; governors are very supportive and committees deal efficiently with school matters but do not take a critical enough stance in holding all to account.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory; available information has not been used to best advantage to identify where there are areas for improvement; there are few agreed procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of action taken to meet targets in the school development and co-ordinators' action plans.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory; reserves have been allocated to improve the layout of the building; the bank of computers has yet to be used by all classes.

The school is adequately staffed and makes good use of specialist teaching to support the children's learning in ICT and physical education. The main building is awkward in layout; the hall is too small. Subject resources are satisfactory but the library in the hall offers a poor selection of books. The school consults parents on key matters and is beginning to compare itself critically with others.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They feel comfortable going to school to talk to the headteacher and staff.</li> <li>• Their children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress.</li> </ul>	<p>Very few parents raised concern, but the following points were made :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not all parents know what the school offers outside lessons.</li> <li>• there is no meeting in the summer term for all parents to discuss their child' progress .</li> </ul>

The inspection team agree in large part with the parents' views. The school is strong in pastoral care and in working with parents. Teaching is good in many classes and satisfactory in all other classes. The headteacher is considering ways to keep parents more informed.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The children's level of attainment varies on entry to the reception class and the average is just below that expected at their age. This is confirmed by the evidence from assessments that were made in the first few weeks after the children started school. Since then, the children have made at least satisfactory progress. Progress in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development is good overall due to a strong focus on these aspects in the teaching and provision.
2. By the end of the reception year, most of the children are reading independently. Progress for many is boosted by them reading regularly with their parents. A small number of children are already working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum in reading. Progress has not been as good in writing. Only a few children write independently. Although a few children quickly learn to use joined handwriting, others struggle. They are not sure how to form the letters correctly.
3. In mathematical development, the children have made the most progress in dealing with numbers. Most children will have attained the level expected at the end of the reception year in counting and calculating but have a little way to go in other aspects. In knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development, the children are on course to reach the standard expected for their age by the end of the reception year.
4. As noted in the 1996 inspection, the provision in the reception class prepares the children well for the National Curriculum. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils build on this foundation and inspection evidence shows that the school is successful in ensuring that the vast majority of pupils reach the standard expected for seven year olds in English, mathematics and science. Given pupils' attainment on entry to the reception class, this represents good achievement. The higher attaining pupils reach the higher Level 3. This year, these pupils are doing best in mathematics. Work done in daily mathematics lessons is sharpening the pupils' facility with, and understanding of, the relationships between numbers.
5. Since the previous inspection in 1996, the school has generally kept pace with the upward national trend in standards at Key Stage 1 in English, mathematics and science. In the 2000 national end of Key Stage 1 tests, the school's overall results were well above the average of all and similar schools in reading. They were above the average in mathematics and in line in science. However, this masks a complex picture. A higher percentage of pupils than seen nationally did well within Level 2 in reading and mathematics and this raised the overall standard. Also for the first time, the percentage of

pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in reading and science matched that seen nationally.

6. This year, a significant number are still in the early stages of reading, writing and mathematics. The school has raised the achievement of the higher attaining Year 2 pupils in writing which is an improvement compared with last year when no pupil attained Level 3.
7. In 2000, in science, the teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment showed nearly all pupils to have attained the level expected for their age. The high number of pupils judged to be attaining Level 3 in the area of physical processes, placed the school in the top five per cent of all schools. This contrasted sharply with the lower than average percentage doing well in experimental and investigative science. Inspection evidence confirms that some pupils in Year 2 are not achieving as well as they could. They have good scientific knowledge but have too few opportunities to develop their skills in applying their own ideas to investigations.
8. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are independent readers and writers. They read accurately, often with expression, and know how to use books to find information. The majority express their views clearly, have good listening skills and converse easily with others. They are less fluent in their writing, especially in writing at length. Most pupils use basic punctuation correctly and spell common words accurately. Although some have developed a fluent joined handwriting style, others find it hard to present their work neatly. Parents rightly commented on the difficulties that some of their children were having in joining letters. Too many pupils have not had sufficient regular teaching and practice to ensure that correct letter patterns have been learnt.
9. Pupils cope confidently with number to 20 and often to 100, and apply this knowledge when dealing with addition and subtraction problems in their workbooks. They know the procedures but are less skilled in dealing mentally with numbers. Too many pupils rely on using their fingers to count rather than knowing and appreciating number relationships. In science, pupils' interest helps them to grasp new ideas and knowledge quickly.
10. At Key Stage 2, the pupils get off to a good start in Year 3 due to the good quality of teaching. All pupils develop their learning and make good progress in all subjects because of the challenging teaching which motivates the pupils to improve their work and achieve more. This is most evident in English where many pupils have made good progress in writing, especially in writing for a range of purposes. Similarly, in Year 4, pupils have made at least satisfactory progress in English and science because of the teacher's good focus on practical work and clear teaching of what pupils need to know.
11. The learning of Year 5 pupils has been disrupted by the absence of their teacher but pupils' achievement was good in many lessons seen because of the often good teaching of a temporary teacher. When the pupils' interest is caught and they are actively involved, they are quick learners. This was seen

at its best in music and swimming when pupils worked hard to improve and achieved good standards.

12. By the end of Year 6, standards are average in English. In the last inspection, they were judged to be above average. As in 1996, standards are good in mathematics. They are now very good in science. The school has echoed the national trend in raising standards in English, mathematics and science. Improvement has been best in science and reflects the structured work done in developing pupils' scientific knowledge and use of scientific terms. Mathematics is showing an increasing upward trend as a result of the work done in numeracy sessions to help pupils acquire and realise the procedures and strategies they can use to deal with mathematical problems. The positive impact of this structured approach is less evident in English and the school has rightly identified the development of pupils' progress in writing as a key priority. As seen nationally, the boys do not do as well as the girls in writing although some achieve high standards for their age.
13. In English and mathematics, the majority of the Year 6 pupils are working at Level 4, as expected for their age. In science, the teacher is confident that all pupils will achieve Level 4 in the national tests and inspection evidence supports this. The higher attainers are doing better in all three subjects and attaining Level 5, most especially in science. This sustains the high standards of 2000 but not as many pupils are working at Level 5. In 2000, all pupils attained at least Level 4 with seven out of ten attaining Level 5. These results placed the school in the top five per cent of all and similar schools.
14. Most Year 6 pupils read confidently, accurately and expressively. They appreciate the story line and key information in non-fiction texts but find it harder to infer and deduce from their reading or to identify and discuss different stylistic features. In mathematics, boys and girls do equally well in using the four rules of number. They have a good feel for computation and confidently solve problems both mentally and on paper. Their understanding of different procedures and strategies stands them in good stead in other subjects, such as geography and science, when they need to handle data and make quick calculations.
15. In writing, as seen nationally, standards are not as high as in reading. Pupils are less sure what to do to attain a high standard and few are doing better than expected for their age. Some, more often the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, have done well to reach Level 3 from Level 1 at the end of Key Stage 1. They are often given good support in lessons and reminded of what they need to do. All pupils make good use of their knowledge about language to express their ideas. They generally know to structure their work using features such as paragraphs and sub headings, but the overall quality is marred by errors made in spelling and slips in punctuation. This affects the quality of their work across the curriculum.
16. The school's overall results in the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000 were in line with all school nationally and with similar schools in English. The

school fell just short of its target for Level 4 attainment in English but far exceeded it in mathematics where results were well above average. The school is on course to meet its target in mathematics this year but inspection evidence indicates that the target in English is slightly too high.

17. The school is using test data to track pupils' achievement and to set progress targets for each year group. The pupils' targets are not being used rigorously enough to help pupils realise what they need to do to get better in specific aspects of reading, writing, mathematics and science. Over the year, not enough ongoing reference is made to the criteria for each level to identify what pupils need to do to improve, especially to ensure that more pupils' work in English is consistently of Level 5 standard.
18. Standards in ICT are satisfactory at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. The school has lost the edge that it had in 1996 when standards were judged to be good at the end of Key Stage 2. The school has not kept pace with national developments and a key problem is the limited time that pupils have for "hands-on" experience. Pupils make good progress in sessions working with the ICT specialist. They remember what they are told and are very confident in trying things out. As a result, Year 6 pupils know how to enter and access information; they create their own text pages and import pictures and sound. As in other year groups, standards vary considerably in pupils' competence in using word processing functions.
19. Standards are fairly consistent in all year groups in other subjects. In art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education, standards are satisfactory at the end of both Key Stage 1 and 2. Year 6 pupils do not show the depth of understanding in geography and history to indicate the above average standards seen in the last inspection. Similarly in physical education, pupils show good skills in ball control and playing games, but there is not enough evidence to show that standards are good in all aspects as reported in 1996.
20. Standards in religious education were the subject of a separate diocesan inspection.

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

21. Since the last inspection, the school has strengthened the quality of its work in fostering pupils' personal development. Pupils show very positive attitudes towards school and their work. They behave well and they form very good relationships with others.
22. Nearly all parents who returned a questionnaire agreed that their children like school and that the school was helping them to become mature and responsible. This is reflected in pupils' own opinions. A group of Year 6 pupils ranked school ahead of friends and hobbies and only one behind their family in a list of the important things in their lives. Most look forward to coming back to school at the end of holidays as they like the positive

atmosphere. Pupils' favourite subjects and lessons are those where they are doing something practical, such as physical education, ICT, art and design and mental mathematics. By contrast, few express positive attitudes towards English as few got a sense of enjoyment or achievement. The best attitudes and behaviour occur in lessons where the teacher's expectations of them are high, where the work is demanding and where pupils are kept busy and engaged in a variety of activities.

23. The children in the reception year are confident and happy. They know the routines of the school day and show a good level of independence in organising what they need. They enjoy school and are curious about new things. This often leads to a natural enthusiasm and keenness to see, touch and be involved but most are also well able to wait their turn and to consider others.
24. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms, during lunchtime and playtimes is good overall. It has improved since the previous inspection, due primarily to a greater consistency in the way all the staff handle and manage the pupils' behaviour. The pupils respond well to the visible presence of the headteacher in the playground and follow his lead in showing courtesy and consideration to others. The predominantly good, reliable behaviour of nearly all pupils is a key element in the positive atmosphere for learning. In all but one lesson seen, the pupils were well behaved. In one lesson, a small number of Year 4 pupils deliberately misbehaved and distracted others. As a result, none of the pupils learnt well even though the lesson interested them. Pupils form orderly lines, stand patiently and move about in a calm and responsible way. There is no sign of any bullying, racist or sexist behaviour. Indeed the way in which boys and girls play together and enjoy games, such as soft tennis, is a strikingly positive feature. No pupil has been excluded permanently for many years and fixed term exclusions are also rare. Parents' questionnaire responses fully endorse this positive picture with nearly all parents agreeing that behaviour is good.
25. The relationships between adults and pupils and among pupils are very good overall. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 spoke very positively about the support they get from teachers and the fair way in which they are treated. As a result, their self-esteem is good and they are comfortable expressing views and asking questions of adults and classmates alike. This assists their learning. The older pupils relish the joshing and repartee of their teachers and show a good level of maturity and social awareness in how they interact with visitors. All the pupils get on very well with others from differing classes and age groups.
26. Pupils' personal development is good overall. The older pupils show a responsible attitude towards the younger ones. Year 6 pupils regularly help in the small playground and join in the play of the younger pupils. A common feature is the way pupils show concern for others, if they are ill or upset, and try to help them. Pupils regularly, and usually without prompting, hold doors open for others. They become increasingly comfortable in taking responsibility as they move through school. Year 6 pupils are very proud to



be a member of the hand chimes group and reel off the list of places where they have played. Similarly, they speak of their pride when representing school at sporting events.

27. Pupils learn to work very well in pairs and small groups. The older pupils listen well to each other's opinions and often agree a compromise when there are different views. Parents commented on the way that many of their children needed little prompting to do their homework. Many show a conscientious approach and also a willingness to take the initiative. Many pupils talked of using the Internet at home to find out and use information for topic work.
28. Attendance is good. It is consistently above the national average with the unauthorised absence level below the national average. Punctuality is good. Nearly all pupils come to school on time and settle to their work promptly and calmly.

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

29. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and much is good. In 98 per cent of lessons seen, the teaching was at least satisfactory. It was good in 41 per cent of lessons and very good in 4 per cent. The one unsatisfactory lesson for Year 4 pupils was not typical of the teaching for that class. As in 1996, the overall quality of teaching is good for children in the foundation stage and at Key Stage 2, and satisfactory for pupils at Key Stage 1. During the inspection, much good teaching by temporary teachers ensured children in the reception class and Year 5 pupils learnt well.
30. Key shared strengths are the teachers' good relationships with the pupils. All the teachers expect the pupils to learn and they work hard to that ensure they do. They place high value on homework and remind the pupils of what they have to do. The emphasis on thorough planning and preparation of materials, the use of practical experiences and working as a team, gives a good degree of consistency to most lessons.
31. Other strengths lie in the consistently good teaching for pupils in Year 3, and in the good teaching of ICT and music by visiting teachers. In the case of pupils learning to play stringed instruments, it is very good. There is some good teaching in English, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology and physical education.
32. There is a close correlation between the teaching and rate of learning. In all the lessons where the teaching was good or better, the pupils showed a real interest in learning and made good progress. This was well exemplified in an art and design lesson for Year 6 pupils. The lesson got off to an exciting start as the pupils enjoyed seeing their teacher parade wearing a top hat. They responded very positively to looking at and finding out about different headwear. The teacher's prompting and guidance helped them to design their own hat and to improve the quality of their evaluations.

33. The use of interesting resources to catch the children's attention also typifies the frequent good teaching in the reception class. The use of a cloth cap, hobby horses and real money added much authenticity to "The Fairground" where the children were excitedly using and developing their number skills in play. The children were learning well because the teacher and nursery nurse have a sound understanding of how young children learn through talk, play and first hand experience.
34. Good teamwork between the teacher, support staff and parent helpers ensures the children know what they had to do and are supported without being helped too much. The cards prepared by the teacher to tell helpers about the activities and for them to record their comments about the children, are a very valuable initiative. The adults' questions and comments often raise the quality of learning. A good example was when the children decided on the content of speech bubbles to reflect what characters said in the story "I'm not sleepy". Questions such as "Who do you think is saying that?" and "What do you think Daddy Bear might have said?" prompted the children to offer ideas and to have a go at writing. By the end of the session, the children were more certain about the purpose of speech bubbles and many had had a chance to speak as different characters.
35. At Key Stage 1, the teaching is effective in ensuring that the pupils learn the basic skills in reading, writing, number and science. It is not as effective in helping the higher attaining pupils to achieve well. The level of challenge is sometimes too low and lessons lack much of the vitality and sense of shared fun which characterises much of pupils' learning in the reception class and in many lessons at Key Stage 2.
36. The overall teaching of literacy is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2, especially for pupils in Years 3 and 4. In numeracy, the teaching is satisfactory overall with particular strengths in the teaching for pupils in Years 3 and 6.
37. All the teachers have sound knowledge of how to teach the basic skills in reading, writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation and number. They plan conscientiously and their planning draws on the guidance for teaching the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The teachers use commercial literacy and mathematics materials to structure their teaching but this leads to the frequent use of workbooks and worksheets that too often constrain the pupils' response. The teaching does not always take sufficient account of what different pupils know and can do and there is often little difference in what the higher and average attaining pupils are asked to do. As a consequence, the higher attaining pupils underachieve and their learning is slower than it ought to be. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, when the whole class worked to compile 25p using different coin combinations, the higher attaining pupils found little challenge in the task and learnt little that was new.

38. In both literacy and numeracy, not all the teachers follow the recommended structure for lessons. In many mathematics lessons seen, the initial period of mental mathematics was not brisk or challenging enough to sharpen the pupils' number skills. Where this was done well, as in Years 3 and 6, pupils rehearsed and applied their knowledge because the teachers questioned them well and set new problems. Year 6 pupils drew on different strategies to total weights and Year 3 pupils learnt the vocabulary needed later in the lesson to talk about volume. The quality of plenary sessions also varies considerably. The sessions were often too short, if held at all, and not always used to remind the pupils of what they had learnt. This is a concern given the school's priority in raising standards in writing. In a very effective and well organised plenary in a literacy hour, the teacher helped Year 4 pupils to review their work on rhymes, to identify difficulties and also key characteristics. Such sessions help the pupils to remember what they need to know for next time.
39. During the inspection, the teachers made little use of practical aids, such as flip charts, games, letter and number cards or small whiteboards for pupils to draft and show their responses. Similarly, the computers were often unused in literacy and mathematics sessions. In several lessons, a weakness was the tendency of the teachers to tell the pupils rather than to use questions to draw out what the pupils know. Many of the teachers' questions only require one word or short responses and pupils do not have the opportunity to develop their explanations and show how much they actually know.
40. In some classrooms, the pupils benefit from well presented and displayed information that guides their work in spelling, writing and number. The reception class has key words and numbers on prominent view and the adults draw the children's attention to them. A similar display of musical terms supported Year 5 pupils' learning. As few classes are organised to encourage the pupils to be as independent as possible, learning time is often lost as the pupils wait for their teacher to hand out books or to tell their group what to do.
41. The work of the support staff is good. They play a vital role in managing the pupils and guiding them in activities. All have good relationships with the pupils and they offer unobtrusive support for pupils with special educational needs who often do well as the adult helps them with the task. In working with the pupils, the teachers and support staff often give very positive and helpful comments about progress and achievement. This is less evident in the marking of pupils' work in their books. There are examples of clear, evaluative comments but opportunities are missed to link pupils' achievement to their targets and to the descriptors of the National Curriculum levels of attainment.

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

42. The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory for all children and is broad, balanced and relevant. All statutory requirements are met and the pupils benefit from a good range of extra curricular activities. A weakness is the lack of challenge in the curriculum for the higher attaining pupils.
43. The curriculum for the children in the foundation stage is based on national guidance and covers the six areas of learning. Good emphasis is placed on the children learning through experience and language. The topics link ideas together well but a scrutiny of planning in the three terms shows lists of the activities to be done rather than what the children will learn or how they are expected to make progress towards the early learning goals. A recurring weakness is the omission of planning for physical development other than in lessons in the hall.
44. At Key Stages 1 and 2, all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught plus religious education. ICT is a strand across the curriculum. The practice of taking groups out of other lessons for ICT tuition often results in good learning in ICT but pupils do not always have the chance to catch up on what they have missed. This is a concern when the withdrawal occurs during literacy and numeracy.
45. The school has successfully introduced the programmes and guidance of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy and, like most schools, gives more than half of the teaching time to these two subjects. In both subjects, there are areas for improvement. In literacy, the reading curriculum is narrow. Very few classrooms have attractive reading areas or display books to attract the pupils and prompt the use of their skills. The use of commercially produced schemes and worksheets for literacy work, and more especially for mathematics, often constrains the curriculum which is more vibrant when teachers draw on their own ideas. Not enough attention is given to the programme of study in English for speaking and listening and the link that this has with pupils' writing skills.
46. In planning the curriculum, the teachers draw on subject schemes which take account of recent statutory changes and draw on national guidance as to what each year group should be learning. National Curriculum requirements are met. In science, geography and history, good attention is given to developing the skills of investigation and the use of different resources. In some cases, good links are made between subjects. Year 4 pupils have benefited from meaningful links between history and art. As part of the topic "The Ancient Egyptians" the pupils have created their own versions of Egyptian pyramid friezes and jewellery. Teachers' planning does not always acknowledge how reading and writing can be developed through the other subjects.

47. A developing aspect of the curriculum is in personal, social and health education. Through circle time – when all pupils have a chance to say what they wish – younger pupils are being encouraged to discuss issues and dilemmas. They are given essential facts and the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to make informed decisions for themselves. For example, Year 1 pupils considered how medicines and injections can keep some people healthy and who are proper people to give them medicines and injections. Aspects related to sex education are taught as they arise and drugs awareness is taught in the science curriculum. A weakness is the omission of Issues associated with racism.
48. The curriculum provision is satisfactory for pupils with special educational needs. Early identification procedures enable the co-ordinator to work closely with colleagues and parents to provide clear and well focused individual educational plans for each pupil and guidance to teachers on how to use them. These plans are of good quality; they have precise, manageable and achievable targets and realistic strategies for achieving them. However, they are helped to attain them more through adult support than through specially prepared curriculum tasks. Similarly, the curriculum does not always challenge higher attaining pupils enough, especially in English.
49. The school organises a varied programme of extra-curricular activities, which are well attended by boys and girls. Several members of staff give of their free time to provide a good variety of aesthetic, creative, cultural, intellectual and sporting activities including French, drama, choir and short tennis. In addition Key Stage 2 pupils go on residential visits to Devon, Cornwall and the Isle of Wight. This does much to promote their personal, social and emotional development. For example, 38 pupils in Years 5 and 6 have visited the Eden project in Cornwall. They have gained much confidence in talking about environmental issues.
50. The school makes good provision for the pupils' personal development. The provision for their spiritual and moral development is good; it is very good for social development and satisfactory for cultural development. This is an area of improvement since the last inspection when social and cultural provision were deemed unsatisfactory. Each subject policy now includes a statement on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
51. The pupils' spiritual development is successfully promoted throughout the school. The aims of the school underscore the school's Christian ethos and the importance of spiritual values. These aims are effectively addressed through collective worship, the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. The requirements for collective worship are fully met and assemblies are reverent and joyful celebrations in which the pupils participate in singing and prayer. At the end of morning and afternoon sessions, the pupils often lead with their own prayer. In music, art and literature the spiritual content is very evident. For example, in a Year 5 music lesson, pupils listened appreciatively to part of Pachelbel's Canon and in mathematics, they considered shape and the

concept of infinity. In ICT, Year 6 pupils showed delight and wonder when they managed to patch music onto their website page.

52. The school makes good provision for the pupils' moral development. Pupils are expected to be well behaved, courteous and polite. The school's mission statement and its aims and objectives uphold high standards of care, respect and positive relationships. The pupils have a clear appreciation of right from wrong and understand how their actions and behaviour might affect others. They are encouraged to accept responsibility and this helps to raise their self esteem and enables them to contribute in a mature manner towards the school community. For example, Year 5 pupils elect their own house captains and pupils take responsibility for the overhead projector and slides in assemblies. The pupils are presented with many opportunities to consider each other's point of view and to be aware of the needs of other people. They support a range of charities including the Children's Society and Children in Need.
53. Very good provision is made for the pupils' social development. Pupils are encouraged to be helpful to adults and to each other in and out of school. Parents commented on how well their children knew others in different year groups and how all got on with each other. In lessons the teachers expect them to work well on their own or in groups. The strong network of support through the church and the community gives pupils very positive adult role models. The Parents as Educators training organised through the school has resulted in effective parent support in the classroom. Out of lesson activities such as hand chime playing, athletics, cricket and computer club, contribute significantly to pupils' skills in organising themselves and getting on with others.
54. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. It is effectively promoted through subjects and through an interesting range of educational visits. These help pupils to appreciate their own local heritage and history but are less effective in highlighting the rich diversity of cultures and life in a multi racial society. The pupils learn to recognise and respect the beliefs of other faiths. Pupils study Judaism and Islam and they sing African songs. Strengths of the provision are in the "In the news" board and the fact that the school has adopted and supports the education of a boy in the Republic of Western Congo giving them an effective insight into Congolese culture.
55. The school has satisfactory links with the local community and close ties with the church. These are used effectively to support the pupils' learning. Year 6 pupils really enjoyed working on a business project with a local company making crisps. School events such as the musical, 'Mice and Mozart' are well supported by the whole community. The school enjoys constructive relationships with the local secondary school and provides placements for pupils on work experience.

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

56. As in 1996, the school provides good pastoral care for its pupils. Parents at the meeting with inspectors commented positively on this aspect of the school's work. Arrangements for the care and welfare of pupils are good and the procedures to monitor pupils' progress and to provide personal support are satisfactory overall.
57. The procedures to promote and ensure pupils' well-being are good. The school has good arrangements to ease the children's entry to the reception class. Pupils confirm that they are well cared for when they are ill or otherwise distressed and that they feel able to go to any member of teaching and support staff to discuss problems. Child protection procedures are good and all in the school know the agreed procedures in cases of concern. The school has close links with external agencies and in the prospectus, parents are clearly informed of the school's responsibilities. A strength is the way pupils are made appropriately aware of this issue as part of their personal and social education.
58. Procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety are good overall. The zoning of the playgrounds into areas for infants, juniors and a calm area, makes the play area inherently safer. The teachers make pupils aware of health and safety issues in lessons, such as, personal, social and health education, science, design and technology and physical education. This effectively contributes to the development of a safety conscious attitude. A health and safety week in the summer term provides opportunities for pupils to hear about the hazards and risks associated with roads, railway lines, farms and ponds. First aid arrangements are well established and appropriate.
59. An area of improvement since the last inspection is in the procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour and discipline, which are now good overall. Teaching and support staff, including the lunchtime staff, follow the 'Pupils Code of Conduct'. This provides a coherent basis for pupils' behaviour, discipline and personal development. The main emphasis is on recognising, praising and rewarding good behaviour. The pupils generally respond positively to the adults' comments on what counts as acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. In a few cases, staff have drawn up behaviour improvement plans to help pupils develop more self-discipline. The pupils and parents know that there is a clear set of sanctions in relation to classroom and playground behaviour and parents are effectively involved when incidents occur. Pupils confirm that they feel comfortable reporting rare incidents of bullying or other anti-social behaviour and that steps taken are usually very effective.
60. The procedures to monitor and improve attendance are satisfactory. The school works closely with the Educational Welfare Officer to deal with cases where there is persistently unsatisfactory attendance. The school expects all pupils to attend regularly and does not recognise full term or annual attendance as an aspect to be celebrated.
61. Procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Since the last inspection, the school has started to track the pupils' progress from the reception year onwards through assessments and tests. Current tracking procedures include noting reading test scores, national test results as well as samples of mathematics, writing, drawing and map compilation for pupils in each year. This is providing useful information to aid the target setting process. A positive step was the analysis of pupils' responses in last year's national tests. This helped to identify areas of knowledge and skill that required improvement in science

and mathematics. It has been less successful in English as not enough was done to analyse the problem in writing and to identify school factors.

62. Overall assessment procedures are satisfactory. The teachers know their pupils well but all do not keep sufficient information so that strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment can be highlighted. For example, all teachers keep a record of the books the pupils have read but few have detailed information on pupils' reading strategies or their skills in reading for information. As a result the teachers miss opportunities to plan relevant, small changes to their planning or to match work more closely to pupils' needs. This contributes to under achievement, especially by the higher attaining pupils. A scrutiny of pupils' work highlighted the similarity of work for both the average and the higher attaining pupils. The procedures are satisfactory in recording teachers' initial concerns and the assessment of pupils' special educational needs.
63. Procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal development are good. The headteacher takes the lead in showing an interest in how each pupil is doing and how they are achieving in and out of school. Pupils' good work and attitudes are regularly celebrated in assemblies. This recognition and reward provides pupils with frequent, public affirmation and helps to raise their self-esteem. The school creates good opportunities for older pupils to take significant responsibility for themselves and others through the system of house captains, vice-captains and monitors. The range of sports and music clubs also provides good opportunities for pupils to develop individual skills and talents and to develop self-discipline, personal application, team spirit and a sense of fair play.

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

64. As noted in the 1996 inspection, the good partnership with parents makes "a *positive contribution to the life of the school*", especially the quality of education and the ethos. The school is an open, welcoming place and the headteacher takes the lead in being available at the start and end of the day to talk with parents and listen any concerns. The good links between the school and parents is best seen in the fact that five of the governors are parent governors.
65. The parents are very positive, supportive and praising about what the school provides and achieves. Nine parents attended the meeting with inspectors and nearly 60 per cent returned the questionnaire. In most areas, such as finding it comfortable to approach the school with problems, the level of agreement is higher than in 1996. Nearly all parents agree that their children like school, behave well and make good progress. They consider the school has high expectations of their children and helps them become more mature and responsible. They are positive about the teaching and see the school as well led and managed and working closely with them. The inspection team largely endorse these views. A small number of parents raised concerns about the amount of, and arrangements for homework and commented that it was not always clear what their children had to do. Parents are right to raise this comment as the homework diary does not always explain the task.



66. A relatively high percentage of parents disagree, or do not know, that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The school has a good range of extra activities and events for pupils during the year and the general quality of information for parents is good. Many parents meet teachers when they bring or collect their children and regular newsletters keep parents updated on events. Parents at the meeting commented that they would like to know even more about curriculum topics. The prospectus, which is attractively presented, gives a clear outline of the school's expectations and character although there is very little on the foundation stage. The governors' annual report provides a good picture of the main issues concerning governors as well as an update on the previous year.
67. Each pupil takes home a reading and homework diary and in all the reading diaries examined, the parents had written their comments. Not all the teachers give a good lead in keeping the dialogue going. The parents were very appreciative that the school sends home their children's work at the end of the year. This is a useful practice as the school does not hold a formal meeting in the summer term for parents to meet the teachers and discuss their child's progress. The annual progress reports convey a clear sense of what each child has done in each subject and identify targets for improvement. Most parents add their own comment to the report. An omission in this otherwise good programme of links is the sharing of information from the baseline assessments with parents of children in the reception class.
68. The school is successful in fostering the good contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and at home. The parents are generally conscientious in ensuring their children are punctual and attend regularly. Pupils from Years 2 and 6, all indicated that they had someone at home who checked that they did their homework. Nearly all pupils are represented at the parents' evenings and parents of pupils with special educational needs attend the review meetings. The parents themselves, commented on the high turnout of parents and family members to attend the productions and school services held in the church, the annual sports day and other events. This keeps the school at the heart of the community.
69. The school welcomes help from parents in school and for special events. During the inspection, several parents helped in classes. Parents' help in the reception class enabled the introduction of new activities. Through their help with a range of extra-curricular sports clubs and transport to sporting fixtures, parents help the school to provide a wide programme of physical education activities. The active friends of the school association organises and runs a number of social and fundraising events which typically raise up to £4,000 annually.

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

70. The overall quality of leadership and management by the governors, headteacher and key staff is satisfactory but there are several areas for

improvement. A key issue was the need to “*adopt and implement formal and systematic monitoring by the senior management team of classroom practice*”. This has not been dealt with sufficiently to allow the governors a full role in directing the work of the school.

71. As noted in the last inspection, the governors and staff are committed to the continuance of the school’s good links with the community and to the way the adults and pupils reflect Christian values and principles in how they act and get on with each other. Weaknesses in the monitoring and evaluation of how well the school is doing have softened the sense of purpose and direction for the school. Governors and staff work together to agree priorities for school improvement, but have not yet established efficient systems to provide best quality information on how effective they are in meeting their aims and targets.
72. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in dealing with two of the three key issues and areas for improvement included in the report.
73. The last report pointed out that the school development plan covered too short a timescale. The current plan covers two years and continues to be well organised and to include all aspects of the school’s work with resource and time implications. It is less effective in identifying clearly how proposed action is linked to raising standards, especially where targets have been set for the school, year groups and subjects. This is also reflected in co-ordinators’ action plans which list things to do. For example, there is little to indicate exactly what is to be done to increase pupils’ writing progress or what will count as acceptable improvement. Similarly, there is little to show how the initial five year curriculum plan, started in 1997, is being extended year on year. This contributes to the vagueness of the educational direction for the school.
74. The governing body is very supportive of the school and fulfils its legal requirements through its committee structure. The links between individual governors and subject co-ordinators has been a valuable initiative since the last inspection in ensuring that the governing body is kept updated on how the school works and what co-ordinators are doing. Not enough has been done to use such information to evaluate the school’s effectiveness.
75. The school is in the early stages of monitoring and evaluating what it does. The governors are beginning to use available information to see how the school compares with others. A good step forward in the programme to raise standards has been the development of systems to track pupils’ progress and to set targets. The systems to monitor teachers’ planning and to observe the quality of teaching and learning are yielding valuable information. There is still some way to go to ensure that the information is used critically to strengthen teaching and learning.

76. The smooth day-to-day running of the school owes much to the efficient work of the school secretary and to the good working partnership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They draw very effectively on each other's skills and expertise to sustain and develop everyday routines, and to maintain very good team relationships and close links with the community. The headteacher is well respected by parents, staff and pupils. His sincerity and high concern for the pupils shows in the considerable amount of time he spends with the pupils in the playground, and also in talking with parents. This is much valued by the parents and sets the tone for the school's positive, caring, family ethos.
77. The school's success in gaining Investors In People status, and in setting up Parents as Educators courses, is a measure of the way the headteacher encourages and values the involvement of all. This is also echoed in the school's applications to be reassessed for Investors in People and to gain the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Healthy Schools award. However, many of these projects have not been explicitly linked to school improvement work to ensure that the school makes full benefit of the systems and information gained.
78. The school has an adequate number of qualified teachers to meet the needs of pupils in the Foundation Stage, those with special educational needs and to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. Appointments since the last inspection have given a good blend of experience and expertise. Teachers new to the profession have been given much support and all staff benefit from training and professional development courses. Arrangements for performance management have been agreed. The resignation at the end of the Spring term of a key member of staff has left the school without a literacy and foundation stage co-ordinator at a time when aspects of literacy and the development of the foundation stage curriculum are key school priorities.
79. The management of special educational needs is sound. The school follows nationally recommended procedures in identifying pupils' needs and providing for them. Statutory requirements are met. The newly appointed co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a good awareness of her responsibilities and areas for improvement in school practice. She has rightly identified the need to review pupils' individual plans more frequently and also to assess the value added through the provision of additional materials such as specially chosen books to help pupils who have difficulties in reading.
80. The accommodation is barely adequate for the school's needs. The main building dates from 1880 and is far from ideal as rooms differ in size with several opening off others. The library in the hall is inadequate and the placing of computers in the library is not conducive to good learning. The governors are aware of this and proposed building extensions and alterations will provide a useful chance to reorganise storage arrangements throughout the school.

81. During the inspection, the two temporary classrooms behind the school became hot and stuffy very quickly and Year 4 pupils only just had enough room to move about. The reception children are in a large classroom with direct access to the outdoors. This has not been exploited enough over the year to provide the richness of curriculum recommended in national guidance.
82. As noted in the last inspection, the school hall is too small for the number of pupils and does not allow class lessons to be taught effectively in physical education at Key Stage 2. The school does well to squeeze in all pupils for assemblies although the storage of equipment in the hall reduces the space considerably. Similarly, too many classrooms, especially that for Year 2 pupils, are cluttered and cramped. This inhibits the pupils moving around easily and getting what they need.
83. The governors have tried unsuccessfully to acquire additional land to extend the area of the school. The two playgrounds are small for the number of pupils and the planned school extension will reduce the infant playground considerably. The headteacher has considered this carefully and proposed alterations to playground times and arrangements indicate a suitable solution. The school benefits from access to the community centre and a playing field a short distance away.
84. The school has not yet organised the timetable to ensure that all pupils have access to the computers in the Year 6 classroom. Resources are generally adequate in all subjects but there are some outdated books and equipment.
85. As in 1996, financial planning and management are sound. The governing body makes effective use of bursary help from the local education authority and spending decisions relate closely to priorities for improvement and to aspects that will benefit the pupils. Good use is made of governors with expertise in financial matters to work with the headteacher to manage and monitor the budget carefully. They actively seek additional funding and ensure that grants are used for appropriate purposes. A good example is the use of a small grant to create small flower beds around the temporary classrooms.
86. Having voluntary aided status, the school is beholden to the church for its part of any major costs. This has placed a strain on funds, such as those needed to pay for repairs to the roof, but the Parents' Association assist by raising considerable amounts through social events for the school and community. The pupils have also contributed from the funds raised as part of their business project. Reserve funds have been used effectively to provide additional ICT resources and grant money to allow an ICT specialist to work with groups of pupils two days a week. This has raised standards and the quality of provision significantly. The two recommendations of the auditors report have been fully implemented and the systems for financial administration are unobtrusive, efficient and responsive to need.
87. The school receive average funds per pupil and in the year 1999/2000 did not spend all its income. This year, the governors have agreed to draw on

reserve funds to maintain staffing and to make alterations to the building. This will still leave the school with a relatively high reserve fund. The governing body is beginning to develop systems to meet 'best value' principles. Parents have been consulted on the content of key policies and aspects of the school development plan.

88. As in 1996, the school gives sound value for money. It achieves good standards in mathematics and science, and fosters pupils' very positive attitudes to school. There are strengths but also areas for improvement in the quality of education and in ensuring that the school keeps a closer eye on its own effectiveness.

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

89. In order to continue the programme of school improvement, the governors, headteacher and staff should :

- Raise pupils' achievement in writing by
  - ensuring that pupils are encouraged to write independently from the time they start school;
  - developing the pupils' skills in expressing themselves fluently and confidently in speech and in writing;
  - ensuring that the teachers make clear to the pupils what they need to know in order to improve their writing.  
(paragraphs 2, 8,12,15, 45, 97, 112, 117, 118, 137)
  
- Improve the quality of teaching by
  - raising the teachers' expectations of what the pupils can achieve, particularly the higher attaining pupils;
  - ensuring that teachers' planning identifies clearly what pupils of differing attainment will learn and how this will be achieved;
  - increasing the pace of teaching and learning.  
(paragraphs 15, 35, 37-9, 45, 119, 133, 139)
  
- Provide clear educational direction for the school by strengthening the quality and effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school by the governors, headteacher and staff to provide clear information about what needs to be done and how it can be achieved and evaluated.  
(Paragraphs 61, 70-1, 73-5, 77-8, 120, 140, 172, 184)
  
- Introduce systems to track pupils' progress in subject skills, knowledge and understanding and use the information to inform changes to the curriculum and to decide the next steps in each pupil's learning.  
(Paragraphs 17, 37, 41-2, 62, 67, 91, 114, 130, 139, 152)

In drawing up their action plan, the governors, headteacher and staff may wish to consider the following minor issues:

- the limited use of the outdoors and planning for physical development in the foundation stage (paragraphs 81, 91,106)
- the inadequate library provision (paragraphs 80, 116)
- the minimal time pupils have to use ICT equipment (paragraphs 84, 163, 165)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	41	53	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	193
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	20

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.2
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	14	16	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above 15	Boys	12	13	13
	Girls	16		16
	Total	28	29	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93(100)	97 (96)	93 (96)
	National	83 (92)	84 (83)	90(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	16	15	16
	Total	29	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (96)	93 (96)	97 (96)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	13	11	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	12	13
	Girls	10	11	11
	Total	18	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (65)	96 (76)	100 (97)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	11	11
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	20	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (68)	92 (82)	92 (88)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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



### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	192
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.2
Average class size	27.6

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	87

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A

Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	318,420
Total expenditure	312,237
Expenditure per pupil	1,679
Balance brought forward from previous year	33,912
Balance carried forward to next year	40,095

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	193
Number of questionnaires returned	113

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	39	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	45	3	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	51	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	58	8	1	0
The teaching is good.	59	40	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	50	7	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	22	4	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	33	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	47	45	6	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	58	42	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	53	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	42	9	2	14

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

90. After the resignation of the reception class teacher at Easter, a temporary teacher was working with the children. During the inspection, she was making adjustments to the curriculum and to the layout of the classroom to reflect more fully national guidance for children of this age.
91. Although the overall provision is satisfactory, there are two key weaknesses. Firstly, the lack of detailed assessment of the children's progress to inform curriculum planning; apart from the children's work, there is little to indicate each child's progress through the stepping stones in the six areas of learning or to indicate when the early learning goals were met. The temporary teacher was unable to draw on progress records to inform her planning. Secondly, the limited use of the outdoors; the reception classroom has direct access to the playground but the planning from previous terms contains little reference to the use of the outdoors as a way of extending the children's experiences.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

92. The children are on track to achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. They make good progress in developing self-confidence, assurance and independence because of good provision and teaching. The children have already formed an easy relationship with their new teacher and are responding well to her ways. When she begins "*It doesn't matter if you get it wrong.*", the children join in with "*that's how we learn.*" This, along with her encouragement, is helping many to try things, particularly spelling and writing on their own.
93. The children are curious about what is going to happen and keen to be involved. Their enjoyment of school is evident in how they happily organise themselves at the beginning of the day, share resources with others and play co-operatively. Several show a high level of maturity in their behaviour and attitude to others. When asked to vote, one girl asked her neighbour, "*Do you agree with me? It's OK if you don't.*"
94. The teacher and nursery nurse provide good role models for the children; they treat all with courtesy and care. They have high expectations of the children and praise them for doing things well. As a result, the children tidy away when asked; this is aided by the structured organisation of the classroom and the use of labels and specific containers.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

95. The quality of teaching and provision is good and the children are making good progress, particularly in reading. By the end of the year, most of the

children are expected to attain the early learning goals in reading, and the higher attaining children are working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum. In writing, the children have a little way to go to reach the standard expected for their age. The children develop confidence in talking about what they do because of the adults' easy conversation with them. The new teacher is placing appropriate emphasis on developing the children's language for thinking. In most sessions, she questions the children to draw out their thoughts. "What do you think it is?" and "How can we find out?" prompted the children to offer a wide range of ideas about what was in a bowl.

96. Through well-structured class and group literacy sessions, the children have made good progress in sharing books, recognising words and learning letter names and sounds. This has been enhanced by the willingness of parents to hear their children read. Most of the children like reading and have favourite books. They talk freely about stories and try to work out new words. In a very effective group reading session, the teacher talked the children through the process of reading a new book. Her confidence in teaching reading shone through. Comments such as "Let's now have a look at the blurb on the back" and references to question marks and apostrophes, not only kept the children fully involved in the reading but also made learning incidental. Later, the children showed this as they pointed out question marks in other books.
97. The children have made less progress in writing as they have not been expected to write for themselves. Consequently, a significant number are too used to copying what an adult has written. Not all are able to write their name without using their name card. For some this process is not helped by their slow progress in learning how to form letters correctly. The higher attaining writers experience little difficulty in learning the joined style but others struggle as they are not sure of what to do.

### **Mathematical development**

98. As a result of daily mathematics lessons, the children have made satisfactory progress in counting and calculating. Most are well on their way to meeting the early learning goals in this area. The higher attaining children are already working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum. They know what they are doing when they record their work formally and complete workbook exercises. The others are still tentative when using number signs or when counting one-to-one above ten. This becomes even more apparent when the children take part in practical activities such as counting and working out the value of the skittles they have knocked down. Similarly in estimating number and in shape, space and measures, the children are not as skilled. They recognise basic shapes and follow repeating patterns.
99. The children confidently chant numbers to 10 forwards and backwards. A growing number count to 20 with adult guidance. Most recognise which numbers are missing from a number line and correctly state which number comes before or after another. Not all are equally competent in writing numbers. When working with children using coins to pay for items from the

shop, the teacher noted that a child had formed the number two incorrectly. Such observation is helping to determine exactly how much progress each child has made.

100. The quality of teaching is good. The nursery nurse and teacher are effective in getting the children to think about number and strategies to help them such as touching a two pence coin twice as they count. The children concentrated hard during the sessions seen because of the interesting activities and use of props. They were keen to wear the donkey man's cap and to charge people for a ride on a hobby-horse. The adults are quick to use opportunities to develop the children's learning. A child's use of a five pence coin led the nursery nurse to introduce the idea of giving change and counting on from one to five.

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

101. Many of the children have good general knowledge and relate what is done in class to their own experiences. Good teaching is stimulating the children's progress in investigating, solving problems and trying things out. The children are on stream to reach the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.
102. The provision is, and has been thoughtfully planned to give the children first hand experiences such as seeing what happens when liquids mix or when cress seeds are not watered. The children readily commented on what they saw, felt, heard and smelt when exploring and investigating sounds, tastes and textures but were less able to evaluate their views once away from the activities. Consequently, the adults missed good opportunities to show the children how to record their responses.
103. A scrutiny of planning shows that more emphasis has been given to promoting the children's skills and knowledge in science than in the other areas, such as designing and making skills and a sense of place. Not enough has been done to use the outdoors to widen the provision. This is linked to the absence of clear information on how well the children are doing in all the early learning goals.
104. The children learn how to operate the tape recorder and computer mouse to click on icons and drag and drop items on screen. They use the direction keys to move the screen pointer. The teacher's timely showing of a credit card allowed several children to explain to the others how to use them in the class shop.
105. The children develop a sound understanding of time and place through daily routines. Class books help the children to recall what they have done. The provision to develop the children's designing and making skills is less strong. The children learn to use tools such as scissors and cutters but there is less opportunity for them to try out different ways of fixing, sticking and joining.

## **Physical development**

106. The quality of teaching is satisfactory although the provision is narrow. Although the children have opportunities for regular and frequent physical activity indoors and outdoors through daily playtimes with Key Stage 1 children and physical education sessions in the hall, this goes only part way to meeting the national guidance for provision in this area of learning. When outside, the children have few resources to play with. The school has little equipment to encourage the children to explore different ways of moving, or different environments and different tools and materials.
107. The children are well co-ordinated. They use space sensibly. Children carefully stepped over games and books on the carpet. They cope well when playing with older pupils, running and moving around. Most have met the standard expected for their age in this aspect of physical development. They are not all as skilled in manipulating and using tools such as pencils and scissors or in handling fiddly, small items. When adults take over the task, this reduces the opportunities for the children to learn from their mistakes and to master a skill through repetition.

## **Creative development**

108. The quality of the provision and teaching is satisfactory overall. The children will meet the standard expected at the end of the reception year although the curriculum has not been as rich as recommended in national guidance. The adults tend to decide what the children will do and the classroom is not organised to encourage and facilitate the children's choice and combination of resources, such as paints, glues and materials. The children have few opportunities to express themselves creatively in art, craft and music. They have had little experience of working on a large scale or of mixing different media.
109. Over time the children improve their skills in drawing, crayoning, painting and using materials to create collages. They learn to look carefully at details such as leaves and petals when sketching spring flowers. The children enjoy singing and learn a range of songs and rhymes. They know how to play percussion instruments and a few were able to keep the beat on an African drum while the rest sang.
110. When playing on "the beach" or in "the shop", the children willingly take on different roles. Five children developed a complex storyline about a picnic and showed a good awareness of family routines and sayings. This good quality of play reflects the way the teacher has provided relevant props and talked with the children about picnics and days spent at the seaside.

## **ENGLISH**

111. Since the last inspection, standards have risen in line with the national trend at both Key Stage 1 and 2. Inspection evidence indicates that standards overall are typical of seven and eleven year olds nationally. At Key Stage 1, current standards are not as high as in 2000 when the national test results were well above average in reading and above average in writing. In both reading and writing, not as many pupils are attaining Level 2, the level expected for their age, as last year.
112. A school priority has been to improve pupils' writing. The teachers have worked with a literacy consultant to strengthen the provision and teaching. The impact is not evident in overall standards but the school has been successful in helping higher attaining Year 2 writers to attain Level 3. Similarly, a scrutiny of Year 6 pupils' books and the teacher's records shows that they have made considerable progress this year. Focused teaching in Year 6 has boosted the pupils' writing skills. Standards have risen; more pupils are working at Level 4 than was the case last year and the school is closer to meeting its target this year. A few pupils do better than expected for their age but not as many as in mathematics or science. The boys do not do as well in writing and a significant number of pupils underachieve.
113. At both key stages, the pupils with special educational needs receive satisfactory support and make satisfactory progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans.
114. In speaking and listening, the great majority of the pupils make satisfactory progress. They participate well in question and answer sessions and group discussions. At all ages, pupils are confident conversationalists. They quickly pick up new words and often use good phrases to describe and explain. For example, in a lesson based on the book "My Little Boat", pupils in Year 1 used a range of words to describe what happened as the boat was swept out to sea. Although there are times when pupils discuss what they are doing, such as looking at photographs in geography in Years 2 and 4, or making a circuit to represent the blood system in a Year 5 science lesson, the pupils do not all find it easy to answer "Why?" and "How do you know?" questions. A small but significant group of higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged. The oldest pupils communicate their ideas and views effectively. Year 6 pupils came up with some convincing arguments when discussing 'TV - a blessing or a curse'.
115. In reading, pupils' progress is satisfactory and at Key Stage 1 is assisted by parents hearing their children read regularly. The teachers miss opportunities to use the reading diaries to inform parents more about reading progress, targets and how they may help. A few pupils are reading books that give too little challenge. By the end of Year 2, the vast majority of the pupils achieve the level expected for their age. Average and higher attaining pupils pay attention to the pictures and story when reading and use them as well as their secure knowledge of letters and their sounds to tackle new words. Higher attaining pupils check that new words make sense, self correct and show

good recall of stories read previously. The substantial majority read with expression and growing confidence.

116. Throughout the school, lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs lack confidence in reading and frequently struggle to work out unfamiliar words. They tend to look to an adult to help them. Very few classrooms have an attractive reading area that would encourage pupils to read more. In one reading time, Year 2 pupils were reading a good selection of fiction and non-fiction books. Discussions with Year 6 pupils showed they like Roald Dahl, R.L.Stine and J.K. Rowling but have less awareness of poets and classical authors. This is partly due to the limited stock in the hall library. Some pupils talked of having joined Kirkham library to satisfy their growing appetite for reading.
117. The pupils make slower progress in writing than in reading. Three prime factors contribute to this. Firstly, several parents voiced concern that the youngest children were finding it hard to use the joined handwriting style. Inspection evidence shows that a significant number take considerable time to acquire a smooth, neat joined style. This is often because they form the letters incorrectly. The teaching is not frequent or systematic enough to ensure that all the pupils learn correct habits early. As a result, many pupils struggle and are slow to get their ideas on paper. Even in Year 6, some pupils' handwriting is immature. Secondly, the pupils are often expected to copy an adult's writing rather than have a go at spelling and writing on their own. This was evident in the work of pupils in the nursery and Years 1 and 2. Thirdly, the use of a commercial scheme to guide literacy lessons results in the frequent use of worksheets which cut down the opportunities for the pupils to write in their own way.
118. By Year 2, most of the pupils know how to form a sentence correctly. Only the higher attaining pupils express their ideas fluently and at length, such as stories entitled "Scared of a Bear". Pupils learn how to write for a range of purposes. Key Stage 2 pupils refine and improve their knowledge of different types of writing – journal entries, book reviews, instructions, verse – as they revisit them in different years. By Year 6, the able writers produce work of good quality. This is typified by well organised writing with paragraphs, imaginative vocabulary and the use of speech to move the story on. More limited expertise in spelling and punctuation lets down many pupils, especially in Year 6, where careless spelling and presentation often spoils the quality of the pupils' work in English and other subjects. Younger pupils are learning different strategies to help them such as seeing words within words and breaking a long word into parts.
119. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall at both key stages with good lessons at Key Stage 2. The teachers have a sound knowledge of English although not all use relevant terms when talking about language or follow the guidance of the National Literacy Strategy in structuring their lessons. They do not have high enough expectations of what the pupils can do. When the teachers develop ideas and show enthusiasm, the teaching is



often more lively and focussed. Year 3 pupils much enjoyed reading excerpts from Roald Dahl's books and identifying characteristics of Dahl's style. In a very good lesson, Year 4 pupils learnt a lot about syllables, rhyme and the use of commas when their teacher took playground rhymes as the theme. Her good questioning and well organised group work kept all pupils engaged. The better lessons are delivered within a set time frame. The pupils are told about the purpose of the lesson and encouraged to review it in the plenary. In many classes, but not all, the teachers give good feedback to pupils through their marking. This is at its best when the teacher refers to a pupil's writing or reading target.

120. The headteacher is co-ordinating the subject until the new co-ordinator joins the school in September. Although writing is a school priority, there has been little monitoring of teaching in writing. The governors have appointed an experienced literacy teacher as they recognise the need to continue to develop assessment systems to inform curriculum planning and target setting.

## **MATHEMATICS**

121. Standards are similar to the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above it at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards have improved since the last inspection, particularly in the percentage of pupils who do better than expected for their age. Inspection evidence indicates that the number of pupils attaining Level 4 is not as last year although more are working at the higher Level 5. The school is on course to exceed its Level 4 target for mathematics as it did in 2000. Boys and girls do equally well.
122. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress over time but progress is more rapid at Key Stage 2 for most pupils. At Key Stage 1, many pupils are slow to develop a ready facility with number. This is partly due to the teaching. Mental mathematics sessions are too often taken at a slow pace. Not enough is done to speed up the pupils' use of and feel for numbers. They rely on using their fingers rather than knowing number bonds and seeing number relationships. The higher attaining pupils often under achieve as there is little to challenge them.
123. By the age of seven, most pupils have attained Level 2 as expected for their age. They have a sound knowledge of numbers to 100. They count in tens confidently but are less accurate in counting in twos and fives. Only the higher attaining pupils know some multiplication tables by heart. While all pupils add numbers competently, they are less secure and accurate in subtracting them. The higher attainers are more confident than the others in using their own strategies to solve problems. For example, pupils talked of seeing the coins in their head as they listed what they needed to make £3.25. Most pupils recognise and name common shapes such as rectangles and circles and some know more complex shapes such as cylinders and pyramids. Pupils have a good understanding of symmetry and most can sketch in the lines of symmetry in letters of the alphabet.

124. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop a stronger understanding of place value, including work with numbers of 1,000 and above. They learn quick methods and useful strategies. For example, Year 4 pupils have learned to use a four step approach which involves identifying the important parts of the information, choosing the appropriate calculation, carrying out the calculation and finally referring back to the problem. This is guiding their problem solving work very effectively. Year 4 pupils understand the principle of approximation and rounding but it does not feature strongly as a mathematical strategy in their work. They learn to collect and record data. Most have used a computer program to produce graphs and charts from a data-base. They readily use this knowledge in other subjects such as drawing bar charts to compare rainfall records in geography.
125. By the age of eleven, most pupils confidently use all four number operations to two decimal places and quickly calculate fractions and percentages of numbers and quantities. They understand that multiplication is the inverse of division and use this to check their results. Most show a real facility in multiplication, ably partitioning numbers. They work equally happily with positive and negative numbers and create co-ordinates that they record on four quadrants.
126. A key strength is the pupils' ability to explain how they have arrived at an answer and their use of relevant technical language. A Year 6 pupil explained how she had mentally calibrated a metric scale from zero to 876 kilograms and then, by using her knowledge of fractions and scales, worked out half and quarter values in grams and kilograms.
127. Pupils like mathematics and talk positively about the teachers' enthusiasm and the fun in working things out. Their positive attitudes contribute to their progress. They are confident and willing to persevere with challenging tasks when given the opportunity. Many demonstrate pride in their work. However, there are examples in some classes of poorly presented work with misspellings of key words.
128. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall at both key stages with examples of good teaching at Key Stage 2. In the more effective lessons, the teachers give the pupils thinking time and involve them in mathematical dialogue, expecting them to explain their methods of working. This ensures the pupils develop a good understanding of their own learning. The Year 6 pupils benefit greatly from their teacher's very good knowledge of test requirements. This is reinforced by his appraisal of the pupils' work to ensure they have the opportunity to work on things they previously found difficult.
129. In the less effective lessons, the learning objectives are not always shared or evaluated with the pupils. The questioning and discussions are too brief to ensure that the pupils develop new understanding. Pupils often work on formal text-book activities and worksheets when practical activities would be more appropriate.

130. The leadership and management of mathematics is sound. The co-ordinator has given a good lead to the rest of the school in analysing test results and making curriculum changes. The planning of the mathematics curriculum has improved since the last inspection. The school is following the framework for the National Numeracy Strategy to guide teachers' planning. Pupils' attainment is being tracked and targets set. However, the teachers' use of ongoing assessment is not focused sufficiently well on identifying pupils' individual strengths and areas for improvement. This means that pupils' targets are not specific enough to their needs.

## **SCIENCE**

131. Standards are comparable to the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and well above it at the end of Key Stage 2.
132. Standards have risen since the last inspection. This is due to several reasons. Firstly, the staff are giving a higher emphasis to scientific investigation, which the boys particularly enjoy. There is often a buzz of excitement and interest in many of the practical sessions. The pupils are learning to look for evidence when carrying out investigations and most concentrate hard and work well with others in their group. As a result, they learn from each other as well from their teachers. Year 5 pupils were very engrossed in using stethoscopes to listen to their heartbeat before and after jumping up and down. Their discussion about what they found out showed a developing ability to summarise and hypothesise. Secondly, the pupils are being taught relevant scientific terms. This enhances the quality of their written work and also their understanding of scientific concepts and principles. Thirdly, changes are made to the curriculum to reflect the gaps identified through an analysis of pupils' responses in the national tests.
133. By the age of seven, most pupils attain the standard expected for their age. Teacher assessment of the Year 2 pupils' attainment in 2000 was in line with the national average. Inspection findings show a similar picture but indicate that the higher attaining pupils are not all doing as well as they should. The pupils acquire a sound grounding in scientific information and develop skills in carrying out simple investigations, but there is not enough challenge to extend the ideas of the higher attaining pupils.
134. Inspection evidence shows that by Year 6, pupils have good scientific knowledge. They have attained Level 4, as expected for their age, and a significant number are working at the higher Level 5 although inspection findings show that fewer pupils are working at Level 5 compared with last year.
135. Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress. Through trying things out, such as exploring the effect of magnets, they learn about physical processes. They also learn to record their observations and findings in simple records and matrices. Year 2 pupil's writing about their churchyard survey showed good understanding and knowledge of different mini beasts. Before looking

at pond water, Year 2 pupils suggested they might find pond skaters and tadpoles. They justified their opinions by referring to ponds they had visited and things they had seen in books. This is also evident in the work of Key Stage 2 pupils. For example, Year 4 pupils discussed how evaporation and condensation take place in their homes. On such occasions, more especially at Key Stage 1, chances are missed to turn the pupils' comments and ideas into questions or areas for further investigation.

136. The rate of progress increases at Key Stage 2 because much of the teaching is good. The adoption of national guidance has heightened the teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve. By the time they leave, pupils have acquired a good bank of scientific knowledge and understanding in all aspects of science. A good example is Year 6 pupils' understanding of electrical circuits, insulators and conductors. They use standard symbols when drawing circuit diagrams and the higher attaining pupils make more complex circuits. In talking about what they have done, pupils readily use relevant scientific terms. Year 3 pupils spontaneously used 'nocturnal', 'humid', 'barren' and 'environment' as part of their discussion about different habitats. Through a range of activities, pupils develop an understanding of the steps in scientific enquiry and come to understand how to make a test 'fair'. For example, when investigating questions on evaporation, Year 4 pupils knew they needed to keep everything identical and only test one variable at a time.
137. Pupils learn to write reports and incorporate tables, charts and labelled diagrams. They learn how to use keys to classify information quickly and accurately. This is much aided by the use of a standard recording method throughout the key stage. Pupils make sound use of their literacy and mathematical skills in science. Good examples were seen of pupils taking measurements of length, weight and volume, and displaying them in graphical form. Year 6 pupils have used a computer program to log data and compile and interrogate results tables. A weakness is the teachers' use of commercially produced materials which sometimes limit the opportunities for pupils to devise and carry out their own enquiries and also to write up their findings in their own way.
138. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. It is often good especially at Key Stage 2. The teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of the programmes of study for science in the National Curriculum. They use relevant scientific terms and usually explain tasks well. The teacher's frequent use of "How?", "What?" and "Why?" questions challenged Year 3 pupils to think about how animals and plants living in extreme environments adapt to survive. The teachers plan and prepare well and share the purpose of the lesson with the pupils. The more effective teaching is characterised by activities which are well matched to pupils' needs and which motivate them. This is especially noticeable in lessons for pupils in Years 3 and 6. Through acting out a drug-related incident the Year 6 teacher highlighted effectively both the beneficial and harmful effects of drugs.

139. The teachers do not always plan sufficiently well to meet the needs of all pupils. The same work is generally set for all regardless of ability. The teachers sometimes concentrate too much on completing the work rather than ensuring it is challenging the pupils, especially the higher attaining. In some lessons the teachers talk too much and do not give enough time or encouragement to the pupils to share their predictions or to talk about why things worked out differently than they thought.
140. Subject management is satisfactory. As a result of a comprehensive audit, the co-ordinator has a good grasp of what needs to be done to improve standards further. He has rightly identified the need for more rigour in scientific enquiry, the more effective use of available assessment data to inform future planning, and more systematic monitoring of lessons and the use of ICT.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

141. As in the last inspection, standards are similar to those found in most schools at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.
142. Pupils learn a wide range of techniques and work with different media and tools. They develop their drawing skills and experiment with natural and man-made materials in collage work. Pupils' work shows satisfactory progress in learning how to record what they see so that by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' drawings include perspective and tone. Sketches of plants show pupils' developing skills in recording fine detail using different thicknesses and strengths of pencil. Some sketches are of a high standard with good application of shading techniques.
143. Pupils also learn about the work, style and methods of well known artists. Year 6 pupils used Seurat's painting of "The lighthouse at Honfleur" as the model for their work in pointillist style. Year 3 pupils drew on the patterns of William Morris to design their own Mothering Sunday cards and used a range of techniques from block printing to overlapping contrasting shades. Pupils have used computer programs to design and create patterns and also to find out about different artists.
144. As only two lessons were seen, no overall judgements about the quality of teaching can be made. In both lessons, the pupils enjoyed the work and took pride in what they did. Year 5 pupils, moulding salt dough, advised each other on different techniques and effects.
145. A strength of the curriculum is the effective link between art and other subjects which enhances pupils' personal development. For example, elements of art and design, mathematics and science fused when pupils in Year 1 made sculptures from branches and twigs to produce visually attractive displays; they noted shapes and forms in nature and the differences between man-made and natural objects. Similarly, after a visit to the church as part of their studies in religious education, Year 2 pupils used clay to make tiles. They talked confidently about what they had done and what had inspired their ideas. There are few opportunities for pupils to see and experience the art of other cultures. A notable exception is the inclusion of the art of the Ancient Egyptians as part of the Year 4 topic.
146. The quality of leadership in art and design is satisfactory. The headteacher is overseeing the subject in the absence of the co-ordinator. The curriculum has recently been revised to take account of national guidance. A useful development has been the introduction of an assessment file to show pupils' progress from the reception year to Year 6. Not all the teachers display the pupils' work to best advantage and there is little done to celebrate the talents of individuals.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

147. Two design and technology lessons were seen at Key Stage 2. Judgements on standards at Key Stage 1 are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work. It is not possible to make any judgement about the quality of teaching in the key stage.
148. Standards are satisfactory at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. This sustains the judgement made in the last inspection.
149. Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in acquiring joining and assembling skills and learning how to make things out of different materials including card and fabric. For example, pupils in Year 1 made scenes from Little Red Riding Hood that move using sliding mechanisms. They also learn to make choices about suitable materials and processes. Year 2 pupils looked at and evaluated different types of hand puppets before designing their own. They drew and listed the materials they would need. Their finished puppets show good scissors control and the ability to join materials using a running stitch.
150. Pupils make sound progress during Key Stage 2 particularly in learning how to make things move. They draw on knowledge gained from their work in science. Pupils in Year 3 learn about 'levers' and 'linkage', including simple pneumatic systems and have produced some impressive monsters using tubes and boxes and a range of moving parts. They made good progress in evaluating the effectiveness of their work and decided a simple model with strong joints would be easiest to control. In making vehicles, Year 6 pupils develop a sound understanding of how pulleys work. In talking about their work, they use words like cam, chassis and axle. All pupils develop a sound understanding of the design-make-evaluate process. This is best seen in the work done by Year 4 pupils to design sandwiches. They looked initially at different breads before deciding on a range of different combinations of ingredients. They then went on to analyse the appearance, taste, and texture of their sandwiches.
151. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is generally secure and lessons are planned carefully. They understand the importance of pupils having time to look at and disassemble commercial products in order to examine design features. They also encourage pupils to discuss and evaluate their own designs and models, and to share and change ideas where necessary. As a result, pupils work together in a mature manner. For example, two Year 3 pupils discussed different ways to make a monster's ears move and what they would need. They decided that a split pin and a strong bracket would support the levers and the pneumatic control system they wanted. The adults' questions, such as "What would happen if...?", encouraged the pupils to take their experimentation further.
152. The school has adopted the government's recommended curriculum guidelines and the headteacher is monitoring curriculum coverage satisfactorily. This is ensuring that pupils experience a range of projects that

draw on knowledge from mathematics, science and art and design. Good use is made of the expertise of a classroom assistant in supporting pupils and in extending their ideas. Other than lesson plans, the teachers have little to track the pupils' progress and attainment.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

153. Standards are in line with national expectation at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. The 1996 inspection judged standards to be above average at the end of Key Stage 2 but current evidence indicates pupils' attainment to be similar to that expected for their age. Pupils acquire a good knowledge of peoples, places and environments. They also develop skills in carrying out geographical enquiries both in and out of school, including the use of the Internet.
154. Pupils at both key stages make sound progress in developing an awareness of maps and places in the world. This is due to sound teaching with a good emphasis on investigation and the use of maps. Having been shown how to use simple co-ordinates, higher attaining Year 2 pupils were able to apply their knowledge when finding local landmarks on a street map. Pupils in Year 4 looked closely for defining features to help them find the answers to questions about places in photographs. Many used good general knowledge to justify their answers. For example, pupils suggested that the ice cream kiosk was closed because it was not market day and there would be few customers.
155. By Year 6, pupils have learnt how to use a range of maps confidently and to draw their own including a key and scale. They have some knowledge of other communities, such as a village in India, and know that climate and geographical features affect lifestyles. As part of a residential visit, Year 6 pupils look at how the environment can be protected and improved. The "In the news" board helps pupils to keep abreast of current world developments and adds much to their personal development, especially cultural awareness. Pupils are less confident in finding places on world maps or in suggesting how they would carry out their own investigations.
156. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. As noted in the 1996 inspection, a strength is the use made of "*interesting resources*" such as maps, photographs, field trips and items to encourage pupils to use and apply their knowledge and skills. Year 1 pupils enjoy looking at items from the travels of Barnaby Bear and Year 3 pupils benefit from hearing about their teacher's experiences following her visit to India. The teachers plan and prepare their lessons well. For example, much time had been taken to collect resources and to prepare guidance sheets and questions for pupils in Years 2 and 4. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen, Year 4 pupils made limited progress as the teacher allowed the misbehaviour of a few pupils to go unchecked for too long. This affected the concentration of others who did not achieve as much as they should even though the lesson was well structured and interested most of the pupils.



157. The co-ordinator is working effectively to raise the profile of geography in the curriculum. Much has been done to ensure that the teachers have adequate information to guide their teaching. She has widened the range of resources and adapted national curriculum guidance to suit the school programme. The maps drawn by pupils in every year group provide a useful way to monitor pupils' progress and to identify gaps in the teaching.

## **HISTORY**

158. Standards are in line with those in most schools at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2. As in geography, the last inspection indicated that standards were better than average at the end of Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' attainment is as expected for their age and pupils' subject skills are as equally well developed as their knowledge. Higher attaining pupils have a good knowledge of historical facts, often because of personal interest in particular aspects such as inventors. They are less skilled in selecting and organising information in response to a particular area of study.
159. At both key stages, pupils make sound progress in learning about life in the past. They gradually come to appreciate differences in time although pupils from Years 5 and 6 found it hard to place civilisations in chronological order. Younger pupils know about famous events such as The Great Fire of London through stories and pictures. They also learn about how life is different compared with the past by asking their parents how they came to school and which toys their grandparents played with.
160. In line with stated policy, older pupils gain an understanding of ways of life from visits to places of historical interest, such as Wigan Pier, and from re-enactments of events by visiting specialists. Year 4 pupils have enjoyed learning about the Ancient Egyptians and have benefited from access to new resources including replica jewellery. The teacher's use of drama in the form of freeze frame allowed pupils to question their classmates about the scene they were portraying. They remembered well the names and characteristics of gods and also processes such as the embalming of mummies.
161. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. No lessons were seen at Key Stage 1, but a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that it is sound. The teachers prepare lessons well and often make effective links across the curriculum. The Year 6 teacher used the topic of "The Victorians" to develop work in English, ICT and design and technology. In a lesson for Year 6 about the early days of railways, the teacher drew on his own knowledge as well as secondary sources such as accounts from diaries and paintings of the time to question pupils about what they knew. However, the introduction was too long and pupils had minimal time to use the resources to separate fact from opinion in information about the railways.
162. The management of history is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has not yet monitored the quality of teaching and learning but has a good idea of

standards from looking at teachers' planning and pupils' work. She is working on the scheme of work to provide teachers with detailed information on what should be included and how it may be learnt.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

163. Standards are satisfactory at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. The school has lost some of the edge it had in 1996 when standards were judged to be good at Key Stage 2. The school has improved the range of equipment and all classes have at least two computers. Ten recently acquired computers have been used to create a mini ICT-suite in the Year 6 classroom. As yet these computers do not have all the software needed to allow full coverage of the ICT curriculum and only the Year 6 pupils have access to them.
164. To compensate for acknowledged gaps in the teachers' knowledge and skills, the school has wisely used available funding to employ an ICT specialist to work with groups of pupils. This has had a significant impact on pupils' progress in acquiring knowledge of specific programs. For example, during the inspection, two specialists worked with pupils from Year 6 to help them compile a web site for the school.
165. The pupils make good progress in taught sessions by the ICT specialist. This is largely due to three factors. Firstly, the pupils work in small groups away from the classroom using the most up-to-date equipment. They gain much one-to-one guidance. Secondly, the pupils remember what they are told and are very confident in trying things out. Their high enthusiasm and good concentration contribute much to the success of their learning. Thirdly, the specialist introduces new programs and skills in a step-by-step manner, taking the pupils through a planned sequence until they have achieved the purpose of the sessions. A major problem is the lack of opportunity for pupils to repeat, practise and apply their new knowledge and skills. As a result, the pupils are not as confident when working independently.
166. In the classroom, many computers remain unused during lessons. Opportunities are often missed to help all pupils gain greater keyboard facility and to use word processing and data handling skills as part of work across the curriculum, especially in daily literacy and mathematics lessons. This reflects the lack of confidence of some teachers in knowing how to use ICT hardware and software. Older pupils have had limited experience of all the threads in the National Curriculum ICT programme of study including the use of equipment such as sensors and the digital camera.
167. Girls and boys enjoy working on the computers. They are keen, eager and confident in using the computers. They work well in small groups and share ideas. This enhances their learning as many pupils build on their experience from using computers at home. Pupils talked about trying things out at home, especially using CD ROMs and the Internet to find information. In all year groups, the pupils show interest in what is happening, advise each other and discuss alternatives. Pupils often spontaneously act as tutors to others and

use their initiative. Year 6 pupils were quick to help each other in what to do next to realise the sequence of actions needed to record their own voice onto the computer and shared much delight in hearing the results.

168. In all year groups, a significant number of pupils are still unfamiliar with the keyboard and this slows their progress. While some are using two hands to type, the “one finger”, hesitant typing by many older pupils indicates their lack of progress in previous years. Similarly, many pupils are unfamiliar with word processing functions such as highlighting words and phrases to delete or insert information. This slows their work particularly when pupils delete a lot of text and then retype it.
169. Work with the specialist has ensured that all pupils from the reception year onwards, have been shown how to load the correct program, open up, save and print files. This term they have made satisfactory progress in learning how to enter data and display it in different forms such as graphs and charts. National guidance has been followed in structuring the work and the different year groups have achieved the expected standard for their age. Year 2 pupils know how to create a simple database, such as “favourite things” and how to sort through the information to answer questions. Having compiled line graphs to show pupils’ heights at different ages, Year 6 pupils know that the effectiveness of a database is dependent on the accuracy of the entered information.
170. Year 6 pupils made good and often rapid progress in sessions with the ICT specialists because of the clear explanations given, the opportunity to try things immediately and their own high level of motivation. They were very keen to produce pages for the school web-site and grasped quickly how to import pictures and sound.
171. The overall quality of teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory. The teaching and support given by the specialist is good. That of the classteachers varies considerably. The pupils are not getting all the teaching and support they need in class to ensure they use and apply the skills gained in sessions with the specialist. During the inspection, very few teachers or assistants were seen working with individuals or small groups using ICT equipment. Although relevant programs were often loaded onto the computers, the teachers did not then give pupils time to use them. For example, very few Year 2 pupils practised their skills in looking for information in an encyclopaedia CD ROM as the teacher did not include it as part of the activities. Computers were most used in Years 3 and 5 where the teachers had clear learning purposes in mind. Good examples of effective use of the computer were when two Year 3 pupils wrote their story on screen and Year 5 pupils searched CD ROMs for information on the heart.
172. The quality of ICT co-ordination is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and a sound awareness of what needs to be done to improve the school’s ICT provision. Too much reliance has been placed on the ICT specialist to teach skills and not enough has been done to ensure that

classroom practice builds on them. The co-ordinator has rightly identified the need to improve the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning. The specialist has produced a comprehensive portfolio of the pupils' work and a very good set of lesson plans. These provide a helpful guide to what pupils can achieve. She has also produced detailed notes on each pupil's achievement and response but the school lacks a procedure to track pupils' progress in relation to National Curriculum key skills and knowledge.

## MUSIC

173. As in the last inspection, standards in music are satisfactory. Pupils do best in listening to and performing music. Parents praised the quality of the singing and performances at concerts and musical evenings. Standards are not as good in pupils' composing and appraising skills.
174. The provision is good; most pupils enjoy music. Those who learn to sing in the choir and to play the hand chimes, recorder, violin, cello and keyboard develop an awareness of musical notation and how to perform for an audience. Seventeen pupils receive specialist tuition and one pupil achieved a merit in cello playing at grade1 in the Associated Board examination.
175. Pupils learn a range of songs, choruses and modern hymns. They are effectively introduced to the dynamics of music as they sing quiet and loud. By the end of Year 2, the pupils sing a range of action songs such as "The Wise Man Built His House Upon the Rock". They sing equally as well unaccompanied as to the piano or guitar. In talking about their singing, pupils use technical terms including rhythm, pitch, melody and unison. They learn to listen carefully and to appraise music by identifying, for example, loud, quiet, quick and slow musical phrases.
176. The pupils build on these skills at Key Stage 2 through work in listening to and making music. Year 6 pupils' performance on a range of untuned percussion instruments was satisfactory but showed that not all pupils are able to keep a steady rhythm. Pupils learn about music and composers such as Holst's "Planet Suite" and "Il Trovatore" by Verdi. By listening to these pieces, Year 5 pupils learnt to recognise and attribute the musical features of diminuendo, crescendo, fortissimo and mezzo-forte.
177. In the class and group lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good overall. This is because three of the teachers have skills in playing and teaching music. These teachers have high expectations of the pupils and set a good model in their own playing before assemblies and in lessons. Pupils also benefit from good tuition from specialist string and keyboard teachers. The best lessons have clear objectives, good pace and inject a sense of fun for the pupils. Lively warm up activities, together with voice and breathing exercises, help to create a positive attitude at the start of lessons. As a result the pupils concentrate well and listen to each other. They handle the expensive instruments and resources with care. In the less effective lessons,

the teachers relied too much on commercial materials to structure the lesson. Pupils often had little hands-on experience of playing the instruments or of evaluating their own performance.

178. The co-ordination of music is satisfactory. The headteacher oversees the subject and is aware of the need to link the music curriculum more closely to National Curriculum levels of attainment.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

179. As only two lessons in games and simple floor gymnastics, as well as a swimming lesson, it is not possible to make secure judgements about standards, teaching and learning.
180. The school provides a rich and varied programme of sporting opportunities. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, including football, netball, baseball, rounders, cricket, short tennis and athletics. All are open to both sexes and are well organised and popular. Throughout the school year swimming is taught to all pupils in Years 4 and 5. By the time they leave the school most pupils can swim at least 25 metres and a significant number much further than that.
181. The school hall is too small for most classes to have physical education lessons and the school makes occasional use of the community centre although equipment has to be taken there each time. During the inspection, several teachers took their classes outside onto the playground and to the large playing field.
182. Pupils learn about the effect of exercise on their bodies. The majority of Year 1 pupils understand the need to warm up their muscles, and to work safely. They comply with the regulations about removing jewellery and wearing appropriate clothing. In the lesson seen, the pupils used the limited space well. They ran, dodged and changed direction, keeping out of each other's way as they moved at different speeds. Most pupils can sustain a simple balancing position on the floor and on the apparatus. They work very well, both co-operatively and independently but there is little evaluation and discussion of their actions and this limits improvement in their performances.
183. Most pupils develop good hand-eye co-ordination skills. Four pupils playing short tennis kept a rally going for some time and showed good anticipation in moving to the ball. The older pupils are confident footballers and cricketers. The majority have good, close control of the ball and throw a ball accurately to a partner using a variety of over- and under-arm techniques. This is much aided by the playground sessions of cricket when pupils bowl, field and bat in turn using a sponge ball. Their developing skill is even more remarkable given the small area available to them. Pupils are keen to learn and willing to practise so when shown what to do to improve, the pupils worked hard at striking the cricket ball. The higher attaining pupils have good balance and

co-ordination which means that they turn well and have full control of the ball. The majority head a football well and their running style is fluent.

184. In general, lessons are adequately structured and teachers have satisfactory management and control of the pupils. Teachers make effective use of pupils to demonstrate good practice. This was seen to good effect at the swimming pool when pupils proudly demonstrated their skills and responded positively to suggestions for improving their breathing techniques in the water.
185. The leadership of the subject is underdeveloped. The subject co-ordinator oversees curriculum planning to ensure that all elements of the National Curriculum programmes of study are covered. There is no action plan to raise standards and the co-ordinator has yet to monitor provision throughout the school.