

INSPECTION REPORT

PYE GREEN VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hednesford, Cannock

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124217

Headteacher: Mr M J Meades

Reporting inspector: Heather C Evans
21374

Dates of inspection: 5 – 9 June 2000

Inspection number: 190172

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Rose Hill
Hednesford
Cannock
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr K Baker

Date of previous inspection: 7th October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs H Evans	Registered inspector	Information technology	What sort of school is it?
		Design and technology	School's results and achievements
		Physical education	How well are pupils taught?
		English as an additional language	What should the school do to improve further?
Mrs J Madden	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	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?
Mrs M Leah	Team inspector	English	
		History	
		Music	
		Under fives	
Mrs V Brittain	Team inspector	Science	
		Art	
Mr Lafebre-Bailey	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Geography	
		Religious education	
Mr A Margerison	Team inspector	Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Pye Green Valley Primary School is a larger than average primary school which serves a mixed area of Local Authority, Housing Association and private housing in Hednesford on the edge of Cannock Chase. At the time of the inspection there were 412 pupils on roll almost all from indigenous white families. No pupils learn English as an additional language. The school is modern and pupils learn in an open plan environment that has implications for planning and teaching. Pupils are taught in single age parallel classes throughout the school with some withdrawal into quiet rooms for specific small group teaching. There is a high percentage of team teaching. Children enter the school in the year in which they are five and although there is a spread of attainment, overall attainment on entry is below that found for children of the same age nationally chiefly because many pupils enter with only limited social and language skills.

The number of pupils entitled to free school meals fluctuates with the pattern of employment in the area but at the time of the inspection it was 21 per cent, which is above the national average. At the present time 16 per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs which is close to the national average but of these 11 have statements which is higher than average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. The great majority of pupils achieve satisfactory standards at the end of Key Stage 1 where standards in reading are good. Standards are also satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2 and are well above average in physical education and above average in art. Teaching is predominantly good and the process of shared planning has a positive impact on learning and on standards. Leadership is good overall but there is scope for the strengthening of the role of some members of the senior management team to reduce the workload of the headteacher. Overall the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in physical education are well above those found in most schools nationally by the end of Key Stage 2 and are above average in art.
- Pupils behave very well and have good attitudes to their work.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- The dedication and commitment of the key stage co-ordinators and the governors are good.
- There is very good provision for extra curricular activities especially sports.
- Provision for pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The staff are all committed to striving for improvement towards high standards.
- Administrative procedures are very efficient.

What could be improved

- Standards in the core subjects at the end of both key stages especially writing at the end of Key Stage 1.
- The preparation and writing of individual educational plans for pupils with special educational needs in order to promote consistent progress in all classes.
- The unrealistically heavy management load carried by the headteacher.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1996. At the time the school needed to complete curriculum and assessment changes and address the concern of limited progress for pupils capable of higher attainment. Since then the school has addressed all the issues raised with considerable but not total success. The policy documents and schemes of work have all been completed and the National strategies for literacy and numeracy have been introduced successfully. Procedures for assessment are in place but the use of them varies from satisfactory to very good. The great majority of teachers now challenge the most capable pupils well but there are still some instances where teachers inhibit independent learning by setting closed learning opportunities which do not lead to extension work. Where observation and monitoring of teaching is most successful this difficulty is being resolved. The governing body has worked diligently to improve its strategies for managing the budget and the school development plan but there is still room for improvement in evaluating the benefits of all spending against changes in standards. Following the last inspection, standards initially rose but then declined before a new set of improvements have begun to restore them to expected levels. The school now is more prepared for the future than in 1996 and has a much clearer focus for its planned work and is on course to meet the targets set for English and mathematics. Overall the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	C	D	C
Mathematics	B	C	E	D
Science	C	C	D	C

Key	
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

In 1999 pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was below the national average in English and science and was well below in mathematics. When compared with other schools the picture was somewhat better English and science being broadly in line with other schools and mathematics being below their averages. The trend of results over the past three years has been similar to that nationally and the decline in standards in 1999 is not typical of the overall pattern. Evidence from work seen during the inspection shows that pupils in the present Year 6 are attaining standards at or above the average in English mathematics and science. The improvement is due to good teaching by the school's regular teachers, the full implementation of new strategies in literacy and numeracy and to an all-round improvement in curricular provision. Standards are now high enough in all subjects and are above average in physical education and art. The school is on course to achieve the targets it has set in English and mathematics for those pupils in the present Year 6.

At Key Stage 1 standards in English overall, mathematics and science are at the expected level. Pupils are making good gains in reading although the work to raise standards in writing still needs additional effort. Attainment in other subjects reaches satisfactory levels and there is particularly good work in physical education. Standards in religious education match the requirements of the local agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are good and they enjoy their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. There is only a tiny proportion of pupils who ever misbehave.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils are happy to assume responsibility whenever they are given the opportunity. Relationships throughout the school are very good and form the basis of much of the good work done.
Attendance	Attendance is good and is above the national average.

Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. All the adults who work with pupils in the school are very effective role models for the pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

In all of the lessons observed during the inspection teaching was never less than satisfactory. It was judged to be good in 49 per cent of lessons, very good in a further 11per cent and 1 lesson was judged to be excellent. This represents an improvement from the time of the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is predominantly good for children under five in the reception classes and in classes at both key stages. The good teaching is having a positive impact on the quantity and quality of work accomplished and on the improving standards now being attained. Teaching in English and mathematics is most frequently good and very good teaching was seen in classes across the school. Teaching meets the needs of all pupils in the mainstream classes and the great majority of pupils in the special needs withdrawal groups. The planning of work is always satisfactory and the management of pupils is good. Because lessons are interesting and well paced pupils concentrate well and work productively throughout the school. Support staff are used effectively and contribute well to pupils' learning in classes for the youngest pupils and throughout both key stages.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Following careful review the curriculum is now good. There is a good range of supplementary learning opportunities provided which enrich the provision for pupils of all ages.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes satisfactory provision overall. Whilst satisfactory the strategies for writing pupils' individual education plans lack precision.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, and social development is very good and for their cultural development it is good. The pupils have a range of opportunities to reflect on the wonders of the world, share in a range of social activities and learn about non-European cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils.

The school encourages parents to support their children's learning and establishes an effective partnership with them.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher has been instrumental in developing the school's caring ethos and the strong sense of family. Those members of the senior management team seen during the inspection are competent and effective.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils all of its statutory duties and has a great commitment to the future wellbeing of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is aware of its strengths and weaknesses and has developed effective procedures to monitor pupils' progress and the quality of education it provides.
The strategic use of resources	Resources including personnel are used well to help the school achieve its declared aims. Financial management is good.

The school has sufficient teachers and support staff to implement the full National Curriculum and religious education. The accommodation is spacious and is aesthetically beautiful and in good repair. There are acoustic problems with the building that impinge on the planning and structure of the timetable but these are managed well. The new computer suites have meant that the library has had to be re-sited and this work is still incomplete. The school makes very effective use of all its facilities and provides a very attractive learning environment for all pupils. Day-to-day administration is very effective and the governing body, under the leadership of the headteacher, is beginning to apply the principles of best value to the monitoring of its work. The headteacher leads the school well and has a clear vision for the future. For some time he has carried a very heavy workload and the roles and responsibilities of the senior management team are ready for review and clarification. Those members of the management team seen during the inspection work effectively and efficiently.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The fact that their children like school.• The progress they see their children make.• The quality of teaching.• The emphasis placed on good behaviour.• The approachability of the teachers.• The leadership and guidance of the headteacher.• The increasing maturity of their children.• The range of extra-curricular activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A minority would welcome clearer information about pupils' progress and ways of helping their own children.• A small minority feel that the setting of homework is inconsistent between classes.

The inspection team supports the mostly positive views of the large majority of parents. They agree that the written reports, whilst satisfactory, could be more informative with structured targets explained more fully. The homework policy along with the home/school agreement is clear and, if followed in all classes, is a satisfactory model for pupils of all ages.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

- 1 Results of the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests show attainment to be below the national average in English and science and well below average in mathematics. Since the last inspection, standards at Key Stage 2 as measured by National Curriculum test results has been broadly in line with the national trend. The school has provided two reasons for the decline in standards particularly in mathematics in 1999. Firstly, there was a higher percentage than usual of pupils with learning difficulties in the group; this was substantiated by a review of school records. Secondly, both teachers in Year 6 were unavoidably absent from school during the year resulting in the pupils in both classes being taught by supply teachers for almost two terms with some disruption to learning and progress. Whilst most pupils attained the required level 4 standard fewer than usual attained the higher National Curriculum level 5. Compared to similar schools throughout the country, the school's National Curriculum tests were in line with similar schools in English and science but were below in mathematics.

- 2 Results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 show attainment to be in line with the national average in reading and mathematics but well below in writing. The level of attainment in 1999 dropped in English and mathematics because there were more pupils with special educational needs in the classes that year and although more pupils actually achieved the required level, level 2, fewer attained the higher levels in reading and writing. Teachers' assessment of pupils' performance in 1999 follows the downward trend. There is some evidence that boys do least well in all of these subjects. The pattern of attainment over recent years has been above that in 1999 except in writing. Compared to similar schools attainment in 1999 was close to the average in reading and mathematics and below in writing.

- 3 There is no nursery and children join the school in the September of the academic year in which they will be five. The assessment undertaken in the reception classes using a well established scheme indicates that children start school with varied attainments but that overall attainment on entry for the under-fives is below that of children of the same age nationally. Children make satisfactory progress in developing their skills in language and literacy, mathematics, personal and social development, physical and creative development but by the time they are five many are still below average in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Overall, by the time they are five, the majority of children achieve satisfactory standards.

- 4 At Key Stage 1 effective teaching especially in English and mathematics enables pupils of all abilities to make progress that is never less than satisfactory and towards the end of the key stage good in most lessons. Standards of work by the oldest pupils in Key Stage 1 are at or above the levels set by the National Curriculum in English mathematics and science. This finding indicated that the school has identified and redressed the weaknesses that contributed to the lower than usual standards in 1999. Pupils' attainment is improved and is continuing to improve although those pupils with special educational needs are progressing at a slower rate than many of their peers. In literacy, by the end of the key stage many pupils read demanding texts accurately and can discuss the meaning. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and can explain the role of the author and illustrator. Pupils write interesting stories using imaginative vocabulary appropriately. Most have a good understanding of the need to pay close attention to careful punctuation. The quality of handwriting varies but some are developing a joined script and write clearly and legibly. By the end of their key stage almost all pupils can add and subtract accurately both in mental mathematics and when recording work in their books. All of the higher attainers and many of the more average pupils have a sound understanding of multiplication and division and like to engage in mental tests. In discussion pupils use correct mathematical vocabulary and symbols with good understanding. In information technology and religious education standards are at expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1, with pupils showing developing skills in control technology. In all other subjects, standards are at expected levels except in physical education where by the end of the key stage attainments are above those found in most schools nationally.
- 5 At Key Stage 2, pupils of all levels make progress that is at least satisfactory in relation to their prior attainments in all subjects where inspection evidence was available. Standards of work seen by the oldest pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 match the levels set by the National Curriculum in English, mathematics and science. This represents an improvement in levels attained in the National Curriculum tests in 1999 and a return to the standards of previous years. In Year 3 good progress has been made in mathematics and writing. Some of the improvement has been because of systematic good teaching and some because a number of the lower attainers who had joined the class towards the end of Key Stage 1 have again moved to another school and the cohort now has fewer pupils with learning difficulties. Throughout the key stage skilled teaching, particularly in mathematics, is raising standards, progress is good and the improved morale of pupils and teachers is having a positive impact on standards in other subjects such as science and information technology. The improvements in teaching and curricular provision along with improved strategies for evaluation and assessment have all contributed to this improvement especially the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. Almost all pupils at the end of the key stage read fluently and confidently and can locate information accurately using information technology and reference books. They write to a satisfactory standard and although presentation varies, most are developing a pleasing style of handwriting and use reasonably accurate spelling. In numeracy, most pupils understand the value of numbers up to 1000. The majority add and subtract in sums using both decimals and fractions; calculate areas of regular and irregular shapes and have developed good strategies for solving mathematical problems.
- 6 In information technology, standards are broadly in line with the expected levels and since the installation of the new computer suites, are improving rapidly. Pupils use skills learned in information technology to communicate their learning and skills in subjects across the curriculum and to present their work in a range of interesting ways. Attainments in word processing, using research programs and the Internet are satisfactory overall and for those pupils who have had additional experience using the Internet at home they are good. Standards in the younger classes at Key Stage 2 match the expected levels and indicate the progress that is being made in this subject. Standards in religious education are at the level expected and are in line with the requirements of the local agreed syllabus.

- 7 Standards in all other subjects where it was possible to make a judgement match the levels expected except in art at the end of the key stage and in physical education where the expected standard is exceeded. This is because of the high standards set particularly in gymnastics and games, which are an integral part of all physical education lessons. The demanding challenge made on pupils to achieve and set high standards pays great dividends and is a model of how standards are improved by dedication and structured discipline. The standards attained in all subjects at least match those found at the time of the last inspection.
- 8 Taking into account prior attainment, pupils of all levels of ability at the end of both key stages are generally achieving appropriate standards. The exceptions are for a small group of lower attaining pupils in Key Stage 1 who are sometimes so well supported that they do not make enough effort themselves and therefore settle for satisfactory progress when more could be expected. With minor exceptions therefore the work provided almost always challenges pupils to learn successfully and thoroughly. Pupils know what they have learned and recall experiences with pleasure and confidence such as when they acted as Vikings or when they studied how leather is made and worked. The targets set in English and mathematics for pupils in Year 6 for this year and in 2001 are suitably challenging. Work seen during the inspection indicates that the school is making good progress towards achieving the set targets. During the inspection and when scrutinising work in books no significant differences were evident in the work of boys and girls. This is due to the school modifying working groups following its assessment and analysis of the past two years' test results. Parents are very largely satisfied with the standards their children achieve.
- 9 Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. However, the progress they make in developing their literacy and numeracy skills varies between classes. This is dependent upon the degree to which each teacher uses the individual education plan as a guide to structure the lesson and the activities. Where the teacher uses them effectively the pupils make good progress. Pupils who attend the Nurture group, an initiative within the county, intended to support pupils who find difficulty learning in the larger classes, that is not organised by the school, make limited progress in developing their social and interactive skills. The purpose of the Nurture group is to enable pupils to maintain their learning in their own school, by working in small groups within a secure environment. The school is concerned that the proportion of the mainstream timetable missed by these selected pupils when working in the group has an adverse impact upon some other aspects of the curriculum such as science and information technology.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 10 The school has maintained standards since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes to work and learning. The majority arrive on time and work happily and enthusiastically. The morning assembly gives pupils the opportunity to reflect while it reinforces the values and expectations of the school.
- 11 Pupils settle quickly and enthusiastically to the day's work. These positive attitudes, developed in reception, continue through the school. In the main, pupils work well, both as individuals and in collaboration, showing initiative and responding to challenges. The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils in the reception classes and at both key stages is very good. Very occasionally a tiny minority of pupils sometimes exhibit inappropriate behaviour, but these are managed well and are motivated by lively and interesting teaching. All pupils know about what the school expects, and are guided by clear rules. In addition, parents are provided with a well-written, informative booklet about all aspects of behaviour, which successfully reinforces these expectations. The school has received considerable praise for pupils' conduct on visits, and parents are proud to accompany them on these occasions.

- 12 The interest pupils have in the school is maintained and extended beyond the school day through the opportunities provided for sport, music, and the annual theatrical production. Last year, the school performed "The Pirates of Penzance", and the production was filmed by Central Television. Each year some pupils also benefit from the opportunity to attend the residential and camp-craft weeks at the study centre at Shugborough. This year, pupils in Year 6 enjoyed a residential visit to London to visit the Millennium Dome and the Globe Theatre. All these provide rich opportunities for personal development.
- 13 There have been no exclusions from the school. The very few instances of bullying are dealt with swiftly, and monitored very carefully; parents are involved in the work to find solutions where this is necessary. Parents and pupils spoken to during the inspection were sure that oppressive behaviour was not a problem in the school.
- 14 Pupils are involved increasingly in the daily routines as they move through the school. In Year 6, for example, they are given the opportunity to help in taking care of reception class children at lunchtime.
- 15 Relationships in the school are very good, especially between children and adults. There is a warmth and sensitivity in the school, based on these positive relationships. During the inspection pupils in Years 1 and 3 were given the opportunity to recognise the feelings of others and how they might respond appropriately. A games lesson in Year 4 clearly demonstrated that pupils are influenced by this sensitive teaching and by experiences during assemblies. During a game of rounders all the class, including the pupil who was caught out, cheered a superb catch.
- 16 Attendance was above the national average for 1998/99. The unauthorised absence for the same period was in line with national averages.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 17 The overall picture of teaching is good. Teaching was observed in 85 lessons or parts of lessons during the inspection. In all of the lessons seen the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory. Eleven per cent of lessons were very good, 49 per cent were good and one lesson was judged to be excellent. Lessons in the reception classes and for children under five were predominantly good. In all the lessons seen there was no unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection when 4 per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. Since the previous inspection there have been changes in staffing and some teachers are new to the school. During the inspection some teachers were replacing staff who were absent or who were on short-term temporary appointments.
- 18 The school has introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies successfully and this has had a beneficial impact on the overall quality of teaching. The training in planning and evaluating work undertaken in the preparation for the new initiatives has had a positive impact in other subjects particularly in information technology and science. Very few weaknesses in teaching remain although there were isolated instances of teachers having too low expectations for small groups of pupils and there is a tendency for teachers to be over directive and inhibit independent learning. This sometimes occurred in classes or groups where temporary teachers were working who did not know the pupils as well as the permanent staff.

- 19 Teachers secure subject knowledge forms the firm foundation for the successful impact of teaching on pupils' learning. All teachers have a good understanding of literacy and numeracy and as a result they help pupils to develop these skills effectively. Literacy and numeracy lessons are well structured in accordance with the recommendations of the relevant national strategies. Following the introductory session, pupils are taught in matched ability groups to enable work to be matched to their individual needs. Teachers select appropriate methods to teach whole classes and groups in an interesting and challenging way. At both key stages basic skills are taught well. Teachers select suitable resources to support their work such as the collection of sea shells used to develop vocabulary and language at Key Stage 1 when a pupil described a shell as having, 'a lining like pink sugar icing' that looked 'scrumptious'. During this lesson the teacher enabled pupils to use imagery well to develop reflective ideas about magic places. The resultant writing session that followed this work was exciting and productive as pupils worked to out do their neighbours in both the length and quality of the finished product.
- 20 Teachers in the reception classes working with those children still under five demonstrated good understanding of how young children learn by using a wide range of practical strategies. They included these youngest children in the work of the National Curriculum appropriately and effectively. Throughout the school teachers are sure of the purpose of all planned activities and explain them well to their pupils. Occasionally some lessons with the capacity to be good were no more than satisfactory overall because opportunities to extend learning further were missed and the teacher accepted pupils' completed work without increasing the challenge. In these lessons the teachers' knowledge, planning, control, organisation and management of pupils were good but for a small group of pupils the expectations were not sufficiently high. However, in some lessons such as science at Key Stage 1 or physical education at both key stages where the teachers have very high expectations pupils accept the challenge and attain good and sometimes very good standards. Across the school in the great majority of lessons teachers' good subject knowledge and increasingly high expectations are challenging pupils to learn well and develop their skills across a range of subjects.
- 21 Teachers in classes across the school make clear in lessons exactly what they expect pupils to learn. In a lesson in Year 3, for example, the objectives for the lesson were discussed with pupils and displayed on the board. During the lesson the teacher asked pupils to remember the objectives and together they read them again and at the end they checked whether they had all been accomplished. This focused pupils' thinking and attention on what they were doing and why. This process was seen in other classes at both key stages during the inspection. Pupils benefited from reflecting on the purpose of the lesson and enabled them to be sure of what they had learned and how it fitted into the pattern of their work in other lessons.
- 22 This planning for shared learning objectives is a part of the best lesson preparation for all teachers. Where colleagues plan together it is an important feature to ensure equality of access for all pupils. The working together in preparation for teaching new and familiar work is essential with parallel classes at all age groups throughout the school and it is done well. Planning is particularly effective in English, mathematics and science but is also seen in physical education, history and geography. This extends to good use of resources in many lessons including good use of support staff and the environment. Teachers have good procedures for assessing the gains in progress that pupils make. The vast majority use the information gathered on a day-to-day basis well to help them develop the next stage of the learning programme.

- 23 Throughout the school the vast majority of teachers provide pupils with suitably challenging work. This is particularly noticeable in classes towards the end of Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2. For example, pupils in Year 5 were provided with really challenging work in mathematics which stretched pupils of all attainments. In science in Year 6 pupils working on a project linked with the secondary school were working well beyond the level expected for pupils at the age of 11. Teachers are mostly successful in meeting the learning needs of different groups of pupils. Just occasionally this is not the case and pupils working in some of the small withdrawal groups during literacy lessons or when withdrawn in the Nurture group in the afternoons could do more. Teachers mostly ensure that pupils work hard at tasks that extend their learning. Increasingly high expectations are having a strong impact on pupils' learning in the majority of lessons at both key stages.
- 24 Overall, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The majority of pupils on the special needs register have difficulties in literacy. Where pupils with special educational needs are taught in small groups for literacy and numeracy the rate in which they learn appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding varies from group to group. Where the teacher plans activities that refer to specific pupils' difficulties and targets, as described in the individual education plans and takes into account the recommended programmes, the pupils make good progress. However, in a few lessons insufficient regard is taken of the individual needs of the pupils in the planning of specific activities to ensure that work is sufficiently matched to the pupils' particular learning needs.
- 25 The management of all the pupils' is predominantly good and in the great majority of lessons the pupils with special educational needs are managed well and their learning is effective. The teachers use the support staff effectively to provide targeted and appropriate support. For a small number of these pupils in the special needs groups expectations are too low and the carefully planned small steps, provided to ensure success and build confidence, are too easy and lack sufficient challenge.
- 26 The impact of support for pupils with special educational needs in the classroom is positive. The support staff have good relationships with the pupils and use this to encourage and guide the pupils.

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

- 27 The curricular provision for children in the reception classes is good in both quality and range and the early learning opportunities help pupils to reach the set goals. The school follows the pattern of learning identified by the Department for Education and Employment and prepares children for the National Curriculum by work based on the six area of learning. The school is working to introduce children to the early learning goals and is well prepared for the modifications to the curriculum. There is an effective emphasis on providing a curriculum rich in visual and auditory stimuli within a breadth of activities based on clear learning objectives that are planned to promote the required standards of attainment.
- 28 At the time of the previous inspection the school needed to complete policies and schemes of work for some subjects. This has been accomplished successfully as well as introducing the new National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and is based on broad topics that provide good cross-curricular links. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. The school has prepared and implemented a detailed, long-term curriculum development plan where subjects are audited and reviewed in turn as part of the school development plan.

- 29 The school appropriately meets the recommended teaching time, with a sensible balance within the allocation to subjects. Comprehensive and detailed medium- term planning relates directly to the overall curriculum with good references to the strategies for literacy and numeracy; programmes of study within the National Curriculum and attainment benchmarks. It also refers well to the skills, knowledge and understanding that pupils are expected to develop. There are sufficient, consistent planning links to the National Curriculum levels at which learning objectives should be targeted and this means that studies are planned at valid levels. In a positive response to the 1996 Inspection, the curriculum enables teachers to ensure that high attainers are challenged sufficiently.
- 30 Overall, the provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, is satisfactory. There is a policy for special educational needs and this is generally reflected in the provision. The school uses a combination of withdrawal lessons and in-class support to help the pupils with special educational needs. In addition, the school has access to a Nurture Group project, organised within the county but based on the school site that caters for fourteen pupils from Year 2 to Year 5. These pupils attend the Group for up to four afternoons each week.
- 31 Individual education plans, written on a termly basis, are in place for all pupils on the school's register of special educational needs. The quality of these plans varies. Where the school uses the recommendations from the assessments by external specialists to write clear and measurable targets with appropriate strategies, the plans are useful documents. These are mainly limited to pupils with literacy difficulties at Stage 3 of the code of practice. The plans for pupils at Stage 2 of the code of practice and for other areas of difficulty such as social, emotional and behavioural difficulties frequently lack clear, short -term targets and criteria by which progress can be measured. Subsequently, these are insufficient for class teachers to use them to plan consistently targeted activities and to measure pupils' progress. This lack of clear measures of progress means that the senior management team, the special needs co-ordinator and class teachers have insufficient information to evaluate the impact of specific work.
- 32 The great majority of pupils with special educational needs have equal access to the taught curriculum. Those few pupils attending the Nurture Group project for a significant part of the week miss some elements of the curriculum. Despite teachers best efforts, the planned links between the project and the main school timetable are not sufficiently strong to ensure that work of equal merit is always provided. The school is aware of this problem and teachers are seeking to find ways of rectifying it.
- 33 Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. The curriculum is very well supported by visits to local places of interest and opportunities to participate in residential visits. Boys and girls have equal access to sports and the school offers a wide range of extra-curricular clubs where pupils are able to develop a particular interest and expertise. The activities are well-supported and often the school participates very successfully in inter-school sports such as basketball, football, swimming, gymnastics and rounders. Clubs include choir, computers, 'Einstein'-Science, environmental work, line dancing, pottery and recorders. The sports acrobatics and gymnastic club is of national repute. For a number of years it has produced winners of gold and silver medals at the National Championships.
- 34 The school makes good provision for pupils' personal and health education: a natural reflection of the breadth of concern, which underpins all aspects of the school's life. Pupils are made well aware of the problems associated with drugs and their mis-use; sex education is effectively provided through a carefully structured programme of work and parents are kept fully informed.

- 35 The school's provision for fostering pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and, for cultural development it is good. Christian values are successfully nurtured, and underpin all that happens in the school. Pupils are encouraged to grow as individuals, developing their own character and personality whilst relating positively to others and respecting them, including those whose values, opinions, beliefs or cultures differ from their own.
- 36 The school is a joyful place within which the pupils' spirituality and self-awareness are nurtured very effectively across the curriculum. Particularly noteworthy is the contribution made by the daily worship in assemblies. Most are whole school family fellowships; for example, within 'Celebrations', where pupils' interest is maintained by varying the components of worship as the focus swaps from an element of sport to thought provoking spiritual and moral messages. Calm periods of silence and reflection to verbal and musical stimuli are incorporated into the worship to prompt thoughts and prayers.
- 37 Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Strong principles are taught which enable pupils to know right from wrong and to regulate their behaviour. The school's positive behaviour policy is effectively implemented and rules and regulations are unobtrusive. Pupils are trained to be independent and self-disciplined. Staff provide very good role models by their calmness and thoughtful manner in which they relate to their colleagues, pupils, parents and visitors.
- 38 Relationship building is a strong feature of the very good provision for social development. Pupils are enabled to participate in off-site or residential education as that at Shugborough Outdoor Centre where pupils engage in exciting activities. These visits successfully enable class groups and sometimes a whole year group to socialise in unfamiliar surroundings. Friendships across age groups are also successfully promoted through the many whole-school ventures and the wide range of extra-curricular activities. Co-operative and collaborative work feature well and pupils are given increasing opportunities to develop their capacity for personal study through appropriate independent work and research. Pupils play their part in the smooth running of the school. Older pupils are involved in the monitor system, for example, through helping with younger pupils at lunchtime. The practice of giving pupils responsibilities begins in the early years when children are expected to care for each other, their classroom and resources. Pupils are encouraged to care for others and charitable collections are undertaken as part of the school's fellowship with the wider community.
- 39 Much art, music and displayed material make rich contributions to the good provision for the pupils' cultural development. Pupils are effectively taught to appreciate their own cultural heritage and that of others through lessons and educational visits to places of cultural interest such as churches, other worship centres and the theatre. Visiting performers, which include theatre groups and dancers; for example, the African troupe, along with extra curricular activities, further contribute well to pupils' cultural development. The very good provision overall for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development identified at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained very successfully.
- 40 There are very effective links and close liaison with the linked secondary schools including visits in Years 5 and 6. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 41 The school cares well for its pupils. All of the pupils and their families are well known to staff. Social care and monitoring of the welfare of pupils is good. Child protection procedures are well established and are managed effectively. There are effective relationships with the appropriate outside agencies. Health and Safety throughout the school is good with specific emphasis on safety in such subjects as physical education and science. The headteacher, site manager and chair of governors undertake a termly health & safety assessment. A six monthly report is sent to the health and safety executive. Risk assessment inspections are undertaken regularly and a risk assessment policy is in place.
- 42 Provision for introducing children to the school is good. The reception class teachers visit children starting in the reception class at the local nurseries before they begin school. In addition the children make four introductory visits to the school. For the first four weeks of term these pupils attend part-time. This staggered introduction contributes to the pupils being confident and well-behaved in the reception classes.
- 43 Clear effective procedures for monitoring attendance are securely in place and weekly contact with the Education Welfare Officer ensures that any problems are thoroughly investigated. Late comers have to report to the office where detailed notes are kept. Procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating bullying are very good. Policies are well understood by parents. Whenever there are any reported cases of bullying, swift action and monitoring are undertaken by the headteacher which pupils and parents report as being very effective. The behaviour policy is brief and to the point, well supported by the system of house points that celebrates pupils' achievements and penalises inappropriate behaviour. This scheme has clear value for pupils.
- 44 The school is positive in promoting healthy and safe living. It encourages pupils to take part in the many sporting opportunities it provides. It also celebrates the outstanding achievements of pupils, especially in gymnastics, where pupils have had great success in national competitions, as well as in art and music. The dangers of substance abuse are discussed with pupils in Years 5 and 6. In addition, the police drugs liaison officer visits the school and talks to pupils and parents. The school nurse also takes an active role in explaining the dangers of smoking. Appropriate sex education is provided for pupils in Year 6 with a firm emphasis on family values.
- 45 Assessment procedures were reviewed following the previous inspection and are now good, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. School based assessment is carried out in reception, in consultation with parents. This is used to inform planning and ensure work is well-matched to pupils' experiences and abilities. The use of statutory assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 and the tests devised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (Q.C.A). for pupils in Years 3 and 4 are used to inform setting arrangements for the following year. The school is now developing a thorough process of individual pupil assessment in English, mathematics and science to inform lesson planning.
- 46 Administrative software has been introduced to ensure the effective use of assessment to inform planning throughout the school. Day-to-day assessment of work in class for individuals and groups is used to provide work that is well-matched to the learning needs of pupils.
- 47 The school meets statutory requirements in regard to reporting the results of national assessments to parents at the end of each key stage. Parents receive annual written reports which cover the core subjects and all the foundation subjects and explain to parents what their children have learned. There are meetings each term for parents to meet teachers and discuss their children's progress and behaviour. The great majority of parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire, attended the meeting for parents or who spoke with members of the team during the inspection are satisfied with the information they receive about their children's progress.

- 48 The support and monitoring of pupils' personal development is satisfactory. All pupils are well known to the staff, who keep detailed records of their academic achievements and, through house points and certificates, for sport, music and extra-curricular activities. Marking is carried out carefully using agreed procedures that inform pupils of what they are doing well and where they need to improve. Comments are supportive and usually provide pointers to move pupils on. Teachers follow up observed difficulties and provide additional help for pupils who have not grasped any points in lessons.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 49 Parents are pleased that their children enjoy coming to school, and believe they make good progress. They say the children are expected to work hard, and like the fact that behaviour in and out of the classroom is very good. Parents value the leadership and guidance of the Headteacher, and say that he and the other teachers are approachable. They realise their children are developing in maturity and are delighted with the wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- 50 The information that the school provides for parents is satisfactory. Regular correspondence tells parents about termly events and the achievements of pupils. Each year parents are introduced to the new class teacher and the work for that year is explained. Parents are provided with information about new learning and teaching initiatives and of the nature and importance of the annual curriculum tests. The overall quality of the yearly written reports varies, whilst all reports meet essential requirements some contain only the minimum information about what pupils know and can do. The guidance provided on how parents can help their children is then either non-specific or in the nature of 'keep up the good work'. The written reports are followed by interviews with teachers at the consultation meeting with parents where teachers explain the report and provide more complete information. A minority of parents would like more information about their children's progress and would like the school reports to be more precise. In the reception classes, parents are consulted about the baseline assessment. Each year there is an opportunity for parents to attend a core subject evening where the processes used to teach English and mathematics are explained.
- 51 Parents are able to talk to teachers before and after school. If more time is needed, appointments are made. The homework policy is well presented and, if followed as set out in the home/school agreement, is a satisfactory model for pupils' work at home. However, some parents would like the setting and marking of homework to be more regular and consistent.
- 52 The partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The parents are invited to reviews of those pupils on the register of special needs and are informed when the school wants to involve outside specialists. They are involved in preparing the individual education plans for their children and are provided with copies.
- 53 Despite many appeals by the school, few parents help in the school during the day. Those who do organise a well-used lending library and the break-time tuck shop with good humour and great efficiency. Parents regularly help on school trips and sports events as well as the Saturday Football Club. There is a thriving Parents, Teachers and Friends Association which has contributed many thousands of pounds since the school opened in 1991.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 54 The management of the school by the headteacher and the key staff who were present in school during the inspection is good. Where colleagues were covering for an absent member of the senior management team it was not possible to make a judgement about the total effectiveness of that team member. The inspection team concurs with the previous inspection that the headteacher sets a positive example to his staff and pupils. The school has a clear direction that effectively reflects its aims and values as set out in the school prospectus. However, action taken to deal with the key issues identified at the inspection has been only partially successful so far although it is now having a positive impact upon the school. Overall, satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection towards fulfilling all the identified key issues.
- 55 There has been a thorough review of schemes of work and policies and the monitoring of lessons has taken place with the recent focus being upon literacy and numeracy. Those members of the senior management team in school during the inspection clearly support the headteacher and make a valuable contribution to the running of the school on a day-to-day basis. However, too much of the management role still falls to the headteacher. The co-ordinators responsible for managing each key stage manage their designated responsibilities very well. The management roles of the individual members of the senior management team, particularly that of the deputy headteacher who has recently undertaken additional training in the responsibilities involved in the post, are in place but in some instances they are not sufficiently well defined. There is some confusion about what are the designated lines of delegation or responsibility. This limits the capacity of the headteacher to delegate specific initiatives or responsibilities within set timescales. This in turn hampers the senior management team's capacity to evaluate the impact of new initiatives upon improved standards. Despite this difficulty, senior staff and the co-ordinators have been working closely together to promote high standards and to develop effective strategies to promote good teaching.
- 56 Subject co-ordinators provide effective and supportive leadership to their areas. A significant number of co-ordinators have been recently appointed but they have had access to subject specific training and are beginning to make a positive impact in their subjects. There have been opportunities for them to observe lessons and to give advice to colleagues. Their role in checking planning and monitoring completed work is good. Regular opportunities for the structured monitoring of the quality of teaching the curriculum in their subject in the classroom is under-developed except in English and mathematics. In specific subjects, such as information technology, a positive approach to the subject and a good awareness of the opportunities available through national and local funding has resulted in significant improvements in the facilities available to the pupils.
- 57 The school complies with the code of practice for pupils with special educational needs and fulfils its statutory requirements as regards pupils with statements of special educational need. The day-to-day management of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs by the special educational needs co-ordinator is satisfactory. Administrative procedures, files and the maintenance of records are effective. Reports and information produced for review meetings or referral to external specialists is objective and based on evidence. The co-ordinator meets regularly with the class teachers to prepare the individual education plans, but some teachers give insufficient attention to monitoring the quality, implementation and the use of individual education plans.

- 58 The governing body makes a satisfactory contribution to the direction of the school. It fulfils its statutory responsibilities and has a relevant committee structure. The members of the governing body are immensely loyal and hardworking and have given a great deal of time to the school. They are close to and supportive of the headteacher and care deeply for the school. They have a high regard for the professionalism of the teaching staff and consequently they recognise the strength of the team spirit that exists in the school. Certain members of the governing body take a specific interest in subjects and aspects of the school, such as literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. They have undertaken training in these areas and spend time in classrooms working with the teachers and pupils. Overall, the governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have made a significant contribution to developing the school as a supportive and caring community for the pupils. Despite their concern, dedication and commitment the governing body is only partially successful in fulfilling the role of the critical friend to the headteacher in the offering of advice and direction to the ways in which the school can raise educational standards. The governors' increased skills have enabled them to begin a structured approach to evaluating their areas of committed spending and is beginning to apply principles of best value when evaluating its work. There have been several new appointments to the governing body during this academic year and these members have brought to the governing body additional personal skills which they are eager to contribute.
- 59 The school's procedures for monitoring and evaluating its work and development are satisfactory. The school development plan is a useful document that accurately identifies appropriate priorities for the school. Key issues identified in the previous inspection have formed an important element of the plan. These are linked to projected costs. The school's financial planning is good and there is a good commitment to improve and succeed. The very low unit cost per pupil allows little scope for innovative management. The listed priorities in the school development plan are brief and the identification of success criteria, review dates, completion dates or named key staff are not always sufficiently detailed or precise. Additional action plans for listed priorities are more detailed and are used by co-ordinators to manage aspects of the work that fall within their remit. The review of work of previous years is undertaken thoroughly, success is celebrated and amendments are made to the planning document in response to the findings of the review meeting. However, the lack of detail at the planning stage limits the capacity of the senior management team and the governing body to evaluate fully the impact of all the initiatives upon the quality of education and the standards achieved by the pupils.
- 60 The school has all of the recommended procedures in place for the induction of new staff and appraisal. The match of the teachers and the support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. There is a good range of staff experience across the curriculum and named members of staff have responsibility for subjects that match their training and expertise. During the inspection, because of the absence of the deputy headteacher, it was not possible to evaluate her effectiveness. The role is properly defined and her teaching commitment is designed to be both as a model of good practice and is, in part, also a monitoring role of classroom effectiveness in other classes. During the current term the deputy headteacher's management role has been undertaken by the headteacher but, although a supply teacher has undertaken the teaching role, the monitoring of work in other teaching areas has not been maintained.
- 61 In-service training of staff has been effectively linked to the development plan and the school's educational priorities. The day-to-day running of the school by the administrative staff is unobtrusive, very efficient and uses computer-based systems effectively. The most recent audit report highlighted a few minor areas for improvements, all of which have been addressed and remedied. Although the open plan design of the accommodation has an impact upon the organisation of lessons and teaching, overall the accommodation including the extensive playing fields is good. The caretaking and cleaning staff take a genuine pride in the appearance and maintenance of the buildings, which makes a significant and positive contribution to the teaching environment. Resources overall are satisfactory with particular strengths in information technology and physical education.

- 62 Taking into account the context of the school, the standards achieved set against the very low income received by the school per pupil, the very good behaviour, very good relationships, the overall effective management and the predominantly good teaching the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63 In order to raise standards and to continue making improvements the school should:

(1) Raise standards in all core subjects but especially writing at the end of Key Stage 1 by:

- following the planned processes described in the school's existing documentation for raising standards;
- strengthening the monitoring role of both of the end of key stage co-ordinators and the deputy headteacher in all teaching areas to ensure that there is regular monitoring, assessment and review of all planned work;
- improve the quality of teaching of all teachers to that of the best by increased monitoring, relevant training and classroom support.

Paragraphs: 1,4,59,70,73,79,80,

(2) Improve the quality of individual educational plans for pupils with special educational needs by:

- extending the use of the precise diagnostic assessment used at Stage 3 to plans for pupils at Stage 2 in order to fully identify specific learning needs;
- writing clear short-term learning targets that are precise, measurable and attainable so that progress can be monitored and evaluated;
- ensuring that individual education plans are used by all teachers to meet the needs of identified pupils when planning their class lessons.

Paragraphs: 9, 24, 31, 52, 57

(3) Reduce the unrealistically heavy management load carried by the headteacher by:

- reviewing the composition of the senior management team and ensuring that all of its members are secure in the terms of reference set down in their job descriptions;
- establishing formal reporting procedures for accomplished tasks within set deadlines;
- increasing the teaching and monitoring role of the deputy headteacher in order to ensure that the quality of the good teaching matches that of the best and that the teaching that is currently satisfactory is improved that of good quality.

- seeking advice from the local education authority in all aspects of management training for members of the governing body and the senior management team.

Paragraphs: 41,42,48,54,55,58,60,78,137.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	84
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	11	49	39	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	412
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	87

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	55

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	30	30	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	21	22
	Girls	28	27	26
	Total	51	48	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (83)	80 (81)	80 (92)
	National	82 (80)	83 (80)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	22	23
	Girls	28	26	27
	Total	51	48	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (84)	80 (90)	83 (89)
	National	82 (80)	86 (84)	87 (85)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	36	22	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	23	26
	Girls	15	13	16
	Total	41	36	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (72)	62 (61)	72 (77)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	25	26
	Girls	14	15	17
	Total	38	40	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (75)	69 (66)	74 (72)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Figures verified by the school.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	406
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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)	17.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.7
Average class size	28.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	109

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	1998/99
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	£
Total income	587,630
Total expenditure	580,385
Expenditure per pupil	1,392
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,246
Balance carried forward to next year	15,495

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	414
Number of questionnaires returned	110

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.	48	49	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	60	9	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	67	6	2	5
The teaching is good.	45	49	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	52	10	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	33	4	1	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	48	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	35	53	9	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	49	45	2	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	54	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	38	6	1	7

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

- 64 At the time of the inspection, there were eighteen children under five in the reception year of sixty children. They were equally divided between two classes. All of the children had been in school for almost a year. During the inspection, for the great majority of lessons in both reception classes these children worked with pupils who were already five.
- 65 The curriculum for the under fives meets their needs well. It is clearly based on the six areas of learning appropriate for this age group with ample opportunities for children to move on to the National Curriculum, especially in English and mathematics, as they progress through the reception year. All staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children, and provide a good range of first-hand experiences, which involves children actively in their learning. Well-organised team teaching enables all of the children to benefit fully from the particular skills of all teaching and non-teaching staff. Extra support from the school curriculum co-ordinator enhances the provision in music. Appropriate priority is given to personal and social development, language and literacy, and mathematics. Care is taken in the preparation of a stimulating classroom environment, and respect shown in the presentation of the children's work. The reception curriculum continues to provide the good foundation for Key Stage 1 noted in the last inspection report.
- 66 Children are admitted to the reception class in the September of the academic year in which they are five. Links with parents and admission arrangements are good. Attainment on entry is varied but is generally below that found in most schools. A significant percentage of the children have underdeveloped skills in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Formal baseline assessment on entry, together with teacher observation is used to group children according to their attainment. At the time of the inspection, there were nine four-year-olds in each reception class. The vast majority of the children, in both classes make good progress and achieve the desirable learning outcomes in most areas although many still are below this level in their knowledge and understanding of the world. There is however a group of children who are not on course to reach the expected levels, except in physical development, by the time they are five years old.

Personal and social development

- 67 The majority of the children are confident and eager to learn. They relate well to adults and are learning to respond to class rules, for instance, when taking turns and sharing equipment. They co-operate with each other in informal situations in the travel agents, and when taking part in whole class activities. They handle artefacts with care as when examining old toys and show respect for things precious to others. When listening to stories, they show some sympathy with the plight of characters. Almost all children are able to follow simple instructions and with help make choices from a given selection of activities. Their ability to initiate ideas or solve problems is less well developed. All staff have very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and are sensitive and supportive to developing personal and social skills. They take care to build up positive relationships and use praise and encouragement appropriately to build up the children's confidence. Occasionally work is over-directed and opportunities for independent learning not fully explored. Teaching in this area is good.

Language and literacy

- 68 All of the children enjoy listening to stories and joining in repeated refrains. They are becoming confident to join in class discussion. The majority recognise some letters by shape and sound and can match some high frequency words accurately. The higher attainers have begun to work on the National Curriculum and are already confident in reading the first books in the reading scheme. Most children can write their name with appropriate use of upper and lower case, but there are some who have difficulty in pencil control and in forming letters correctly. The majority can compose a simple sentence orally. They copy it under the teacher's writing with varying degrees of control. The teachers use their accurate knowledge of the children's prior attainment to plan work, which closely meets their needs. Planning is very clearly focused so that objectives are met and progress is good. Teaching of language and literacy is consistently good and often very good.

Mathematics

- 69 The majority of the children count, sort and match with a variety of practical apparatus. They recognise numerals to ten. The higher attainers order numbers and count backwards and forwards to twenty. All children join in solving simple addition and subtraction problems practically, for instance, in number rhymes. They enjoy role-play in the shop, and exchange real money for goods. The higher attainers recognise coins of different value and can pay with the exact amount. All children are becoming familiar with mathematical language such as full, empty, heavy and light when playing in the sand or water. Teaching is good in this area. Activities are carefully organised. Tasks usually provide appropriate challenge for the children of differing attainment and provide interesting and relevant practical experiences which support progress well. Resources are well prepared. Plenary sessions are used effectively to consolidate learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 70 Standards and experience vary considerably in this area. Whilst many reach standards that are close to those expected for children of this age, a significant minority have a limited awareness of the world outside the school and the estate. Most children are becoming aware of the elements needed for an address and with help produce post cards addressed to the school. Others are involved in drawing a map to show visitors how to find the school. The majority of children observe changes in the weather and can suggest suitable clothes for a Teddy in the rain or on a sunny day. When handling toys used a generation or two ago, most children show some sense of the past and recognition of change over time. All use technology to support their learning. They use the mouse to move objects on screen, and handle audio equipment competently when listening to a story. Teaching in this area is satisfactory. Pupils are well managed in a range of well-organised first-hand activities. Pace in whole class lessons, however, is sometimes too slow and leads to restlessness and lack of concentration which slows learning. Whilst most children are suitably challenged, expectations of really high standards are not always evident.

Physical development

- 71 Provision of outdoor play facilities and large equipment is good. The children control wheeled toys with increasing confidence and co-ordination. They use space with some awareness of others. In everyday activities, they are developing fine manipulative skills and handle tools such as scissors, paintbrushes and pencils with appropriate care and control. They handle construction toys adeptly to fulfil their own purposes. Teaching is good in this area. Objectives are clear and relevant. The children respond quickly to positive and unobtrusive management strategies so that all can enjoy the space and improve the co-ordination and control of their bodies.

Creative development

- 72 The children explore sound and can recognise opposites like fast, slow, loud and soft when playing percussion. In role-play in the travel agents and shop, they are beginning to extend their own imaginative ideas. Evidence from photographs and from displays of artwork indicates that the children use a wide range of media to express their ideas. Pupils enjoy drawing. Little direct evidence of teaching in this area was seen during the inspection.

ENGLISH

- 73 Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English are in line with those found in most schools nationally. This is an improvement on the results of statutory tests in 1999 when standards (adversely affected by long-term staff absence and the higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs in the group.) were below the national average and but were in line with those of similar schools. Current performance is in line with the school's test results in 1997 and 1998 and with the findings of the last report. The school is in line to exceed the targets it has set itself for this year. In statutory tests in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1, the school's performance in reading was close to the national average and was also close to that attained in similar schools. In writing, standards were below national average and below those of similar schools. Over the three years to 1999, there has been a decline in the standards the school has reached in national tests in Key Stage 1. However, there are signs of improvement in the present Year 2 cohort with a higher percentage of the pupils working at the higher grades in both reading and writing. Reading standards are improving to an above average level but overall writing standards are still below those recorded in the last inspection report.
- 74 Standards in speaking and listening are high. The vast majority of pupils make good progress in reaching the expected level. The school gives high priority to the development of speaking and listening skills, both in literacy classes, and in imaginative drama sessions. In all classes the pupils listen carefully and speak clearly. Stories and poems are used effectively to extend pupils' vocabulary and higher attainers are able to choose words carefully and imaginatively, for instance, when describing a shell. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority are confident and articulate in speaking to the class, whether telling their own news or reporting back on groupwork, for instance, in history or geography. In Year 2, the pupils suggest synonyms such as gigantic and massive when describing an enormous dinosaur. Work in Key Stage 2 builds appropriately on earlier skills. Pupils join confidently in debate and discussion across the curriculum. The majority make their case clearly, for instance, on the pros and cons of homework. By the end of the key stage, the pupils are articulate in communicating ideas. They use imagination and creative vocabulary to improvise and extend role-play. The vast majority are keen to perform for others, for instance, by reading prayers in assembly or by taking part in the annual, impressive, dramatic production for friends and parents.

- 75 Positive attitudes to reading and to books are promoted throughout the school. Almost all pupils enjoy a range of literature and handle books with care. There are collections of attractive fiction and topic books in each class as well as graded readers. By the end of Key Stage 1, over 85 percent of the pupils read accurately with understanding from their reading books. They tackle class texts of increasing difficulty with confidence. They recognise many words by sight and use their knowledge of letter sounds and blends, together with picture and context clues to decode new words and establish meaning. Lower attainers are beginning to build up simple three-letter words correctly and recognise a number of high frequency words in set texts. The ability of this group of pupils to read unfamiliar text is very limited. Higher attainers read fluently with confidence and understanding from a wide range of texts. By the end of Key Stage 2, the vast majority of the pupils use their reading skills effectively to promote their learning across most curriculum areas. They are familiar with a range of genre and with the works of famous writers such as Shakespeare and R. L. Stevenson. Most pupils have favourite authors and are able to explain why they enjoy particular books. They are beginning to analyse text in detail. For instance, they discriminate between fact and opinion. Lower attainers show understanding at a literal level but have difficulty making inferences from what they have read. In both key stages, pupils are efficient at finding information and discovering meaning in set comprehension exercises. Whilst there are very good examples in some classes of pupils using books, CD-ROM and the Internet, skills in independent research are less consistently developed. Few pupils have efficient skills of skimming and scanning for information. Plans to develop the library to enable its use for private study have not yet been fulfilled.
- 76 By the end of Key Stage 1, about three-quarters of the pupils are reaching standards in writing which are appropriate for their age. They write in a variety of forms, for instance, diary, story and poem. In subjects such as science, they write factually for specific purposes. For example, they record their first-hand observations of the life cycle of a frog using appropriate language and clear description. They write in short sentences, sometimes punctuated with capitals and full stops. The majority of pupils usually spell simple words accurately and use their knowledge of letters and their sounds to spell unfamiliar words phonetically. Most of the pupils present their work satisfactorily. Letters are generally formed correctly but are not joined. Extended writing is not well developed and the majority of the pupils have difficulty in extending their ideas with interesting vocabulary. Little evidence was seen of pupils planning and redrafting their work. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils write purposefully, for instance, to review books, to record investigations, or to produce a newspaper report. They write constructively and learn to assess and sometimes criticise each other's work. The majority are beginning to sustain and develop their ideas, and to choose words carefully for effect as when composing a poem. Experience of choral speaking in the music curriculum has drawn attention to beats and syllables, and is enabling pupils to make good progress in the spelling of polysyllabic words. Basic punctuation is used accurately and higher attainers use punctuation within sentences correctly. Handwriting is legible and joined with many pupils developing a fluent cursive script. The majority of the pupils plan their work carefully and improve their first draft through review.

- 77 The overall quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good. All teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and use the Framework efficiently. This supports their teaching of the basic skills and provides continuity from class to class, which particularly promotes the development of reading. Teachers in each year group work very closely together as a team, and plan their work jointly with clear focus and relevant objectives. The organisation of matched ability groups between parallel classes by prior attainment helps teachers to plan precisely to meet the needs of all pupils in groupwork sessions. In most classes, this supports progress well. There are occasions however, when expectations for some groups of the lower attainers are not high enough and the work set does not provide sufficient challenge for these children to make good progress. Relationships are good in all classes and teachers manage pupils well with positive unobtrusive discipline. Praise and encouragement is used appropriately to spur pupils to greater effort and little time is wasted on bringing the class to order. The purposeful working atmosphere in almost all classes sustains concentration and supports learning. All teachers are skilled in asking questions that extend the pupils, thinking. Pupils' ideas are valued and used to make teaching points significantly. Plenary sessions are used effectively to consolidate learning and to assess what has been learnt. Most teachers use this information to plan future work, which builds on what the pupils already know. Classes are usually well organised and each element of the lesson is effectively taught. However, the policy of teaching the first part of the lesson to the whole year group is not always successful. Not all of the pupils are able to sustain concentration in such a large group and this detracts from their learning. The work of non-teaching staff is efficiently organised and well directed. Non-teaching staff work very closely as part of the teaching team and make a significant contribution to the pupils' progress.
- 78 Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to improve its assessment practice. Recently implemented systems are being used effectively to support progress in speaking and listening, spelling and reading. Assessment of writing is less well developed and does not focus sufficiently on the development of specific writing skills. The current process used does not enable the teachers to fully identify the difficulties individual pupils have in this area and so plan directly to improve the performance in identified areas of weakness.
- 79 The curriculum co-ordinators and the headteacher have carried out some monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom and have provided appropriate support for the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. There now needs to be a sharper focus to monitoring in the classroom in order to raise the improved standards to a higher level.

MATHEMATICS

80. Inspection evidence with that from recent tests shows that by the end of Key Stage 2 standards in mathematics are in line with the national average. This is a tremendous improvement from the test results in 1999, which showed a dip in standards when compared to schools nationally and when compared with similar schools. At that time although 62 per cent of pupils attained the expected level, level 4 less than average pupils attained the higher level, level 5. The fall in standards is explained by the fact that there was a higher than average number of pupils in the group with special educational needs and the fact that both Year 6 classes were being taught for most of the year by substitute teachers. The usual classteachers were, in the case of one, in hospital undergoing an operation and, the other was on maternity leave.

81. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment overall was not as good as in previous years. Although 81 per cent of pupils attained the expected level 2 there were fewer pupils who attained higher levels. This meant that attainment overall was similar to that both in schools nationally and when compared to similar schools. This was because there was a higher than usual number of pupils in the group who had special educational needs. The school analysed the results at both key stages very carefully, as the fall in overall standards nationally was disappointing. Significant changes were made to the curriculum and teaching strategies as well as the introduction of the National Numeracy strategy. The results of school based tests and inspection evidence indicates that attainment at both key stages is now broadly in line with the national average and a significant percentage of pupils are working at higher levels than level 2 at the end of Key Stage 1. The great majority of pupils are attaining level 4 at the end of Key Stage 2 and a high percentage are at or close to level 5, a big improvement on the results of 1999. The school expects to exceed the targets for the year 2000 agreed with the local education authority. This means that standards are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection and the targets set for next year, which the pupils in Year 5 are set to meet, are challenging and well above the standards achieved in the recent past.
82. At both key stages teaching, as observed during the inspection, was predominantly good. It was never less than satisfactory at both key stages with 50 per cent of teaching in Key Stage 1 judged to be good and in Key Stage 2, 70 per cent judged to be good and a further 10 per cent judged to be very good. The most effective lessons have clear learning objectives, which teachers share with pupils, expectations are demanding, and the work is particularly well matched to pupils' previous attainments. Overall the day-to-day marking is consistent but on a very few occasions teachers lack time to work alongside pupils to evaluate progress or to devise approaches for improvement as a shared process. Within the provision for lower attainers whilst it is satisfactory overall some of the lessons contain too much teacher direction. Support assistants are sensitive to the needs of pupils and work well supporting them effectively under the direction of the teachers.
83. Pupils' progress is always at least satisfactory and is most frequently good. The progress of higher attaining pupils is occasionally restricted because of over-reliance on aspects of the commercial schemes and their accompanying worksheets. Teachers have realised these shortcomings and are beginning to incorporate additional opportunities for co-operative and independent work. In general, pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriately in relation to their abilities and progress satisfactorily towards their personal programmed targets. Most targets are based on pupils' difficulties in reading and do not have a close link to work in mathematics.
84. By the time they are five, in the reception classes, pupils in Key Stage 1 count accurately forwards and backwards up to 10 and for many up to 20. They sort and order objects, and know the names of numbers and primary colours. They recognise and name regular shapes and are aware of known shapes in everyday objects.
85. Throughout both key stages the Numeracy Strategy is well-established. Within Key Stage 1, pupils' knowledge and understanding of number are developed through discussion and practical activities. Many recognise patterns in their work, are very familiar with the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes and describe differences and similarities using the correct mathematical vocabulary. By the age of seven most add and subtract up to twenty accurately and understand multiplication tables and use them to calculate using basic multiplication and division. Pupils' recall of multiplication tables and agility with mental calculations is similar to that found for pupils of the same age nationally. Pupils are beginning to learn about symmetry and look for symmetry in objects around the school with great interest applying the criteria sensibly and mostly accurately.

86. Within Key Stage 2, many pupils use block graphs appropriately and almost all recognise the fundamentals of line symmetry. Pupils understand how to identify a location on a standard grid using co-ordinates and can pose challenges for their friends by writing or solving equations about the grid. In Year 3 pupils hid the pirates treasure and friends had to plot a safe way through shark infested waters to find the treasure taking care to avoid wrecks. By the age of eleven the vast majority have a sound grasp of the four rules of number. Higher attaining pupils further their understanding of fractions and decimals and are beginning to extend their learning using programs for the computers in information technology. Pupils measure angles carefully and accurately, they calculate the area of regular and irregular shapes by counting squares and using formulae. Pupils understand how to measure and calculate the perimeter of shapes. Pupils collect and use data in various forms and enter the information into a database which they can recall and add further data. A recent increase of computers enables all pupils to develop more data handling skills, particularly within the application of mathematics to every day life.
87. Pupils have good attitudes to mathematics and are enthusiastic about the range of tasks set. In the most effective lessons the enthusiasm of the teacher for the subject material is infectious and the pupils display much enjoyment in the content of the lesson eagerly contributing their own ideas. They obviously enjoy the many practical activities, which often support work in other curriculum areas. Pupils are responsive in oral work and concentrate for sustained periods of time. The school indicates that this confidence in mental mathematics and in using mathematics in subjects across the curriculum such as in geography for map work and in science is new. They believe it is directly related to the curriculum review following the last set of results, the increased skills of the teachers and the faster pace to lessons brought about by the introduction of the numeracy strategy.
88. The mathematics policy and scheme of work are well in place. Teachers share their expertise, plan and evaluate within their groups to secure consistent provision and inclusion throughout the Numeracy Strategy sessions. Further, they relate mathematics to other curriculum areas and thus seek to promote numeracy effectively. The subject co-ordinator has a firm grasp of the subject and has a clear vision for future development. Resources are of good quality and are entirely suitable for the pupils' needs.

SCIENCE

89. Teacher assessments of Year 2 pupils' attainment in 1999 were below the national average and below those for similar schools. Only seven per cent reached the higher Level 3 as opposed to twenty per cent nationally. Attainment was lowest in investigative science. These results were lower than those for previous years. Inspection evidence shows that standards are higher this year and that pupils are again achieving in line with national expectations.
90. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 4, and reaching national expectations for their age, in the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 national tests was below the national average but was in line with that of similar schools. The number of pupils achieving at a higher level was also below the national average and was well below that of similar schools. This was a reversal of the general trend over the past four years and can be explained by the long-term absence of both Year 6 teachers during the school year. Inspection evidence is that standards now being achieved in Year 6 are generally in line with the national average. At both key stages standards are now similar to those achieved when the school was previously inspected. Almost all pupils are attaining at the expected level 4 and a high percentage are attaining above this level.

91. In Key Stage 1 most pupils have at least satisfactory and often good scientific knowledge and skills. Year 1 pupils understand, after investigation, that pushes and pulls, twists and stretches make objects move or change shape. They can observe and explore toys carefully and most can make accurate labelled drawings to explain how the toys move. Pupils in Year 2 show an understanding of the effect of heat on a range of materials when they melt chocolate, dissolve jelly cubes in water, cook eggs and change a cake mixture firstly by adding water and then using heat. Most are able to predict what will happen, based on their own experiences, and many are beginning to recognise that some changes are reversible whilst some are not. They can discuss and record their own findings confidently using a range of methods.
92. Within Key Stage 2 the attainment of pupils is satisfactory overall and in some areas of the subject such as in work in Year 2 about materials it is good. In Year 3 pupils can construct electric circuits and their investigations lead them to understand that some materials conduct electricity whilst others do not. Pupils in Year 5 know that the reproductive parts of a flowering plant play an important part in the plant's life cycle. By the end of the key stage pupils have a balanced knowledge and understanding of all aspects of science. They are most confident in their understanding of life processes related to plants, animals and humans. They show a sound understanding of physical concepts such as forces and light. Some pupils are less confident when explaining changes such as evaporation and condensation. Investigational skills have been developed and most pupils can carry out investigations fairly, knowing which variables to change or control. However, until recently, they have had only limited experience of making and testing their own hypotheses.
93. Science lessons were seen in all years except in Year 4. In most years science is taught to the whole year group at the same time. All the teaching seen was good. This shows an improvement in Key Stage 1 since the previous inspection when teacher expectations were too low. In all the lessons seen there was a direct link between the quality of the teaching and the good progress that all pupils were making. Lessons had clear planning with specific learning objectives for both the concepts and the investigative skills to be taught. Work was related to previous learning and was planned to ensure that the content would provide sufficient challenge for all pupils. For example, the task to follow the toy investigation in Year 1 was planned at three levels. Effective questioning techniques, good pupil management and classroom organisation are other factors which contribute to the good progress. Occasionally lessons were too tightly structured to allow pupils to experience sufficient independence; for example, higher attaining pupils in Year 3 would have benefited from deciding for themselves how to record their findings. The scrutiny of pupils' previous work suggests that progress in the development of science skills varies between year groups and, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have had few opportunities to take responsibility for testing their own ideas and choosing their own ways to record findings.
94. Science teaching makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills. At both key stages pupils are encouraged to talk about their ideas and about what they see and do and the use of correct scientific vocabulary is emphasised. Mathematical skills are developed as pupils take measurements and record data. By Year 6 pupils use line graphs to record their findings. No evidence was seen of the use of information technology for collecting and recording data.
95. Pupils' attitudes to science were always good or very good, as was behaviour, and this had a positive impact on the learning taking place. Pupils involved in investigating showed a real sense of enjoyment and interest in what they were doing. This was evident in Year 3 as pupils chose objects from around the classrooms to see which conducted electricity. Relationships between pupils were always good and this resulted in productive co-operative work.

96. The quality of leadership is good. The co-ordinator is committed to raising standards and was keen to introduce the new scheme of work which promotes the systematic development of knowledge and understanding through investigation, providing good guidance and support for teachers. The benefits of this scheme can be seen in the thoroughness of teachers' planning. Assessment opportunities are now clearly identified and the new system of assessment, linked to the scheme, is used well to identify what pupils know and can do. There is some early evidence that this information is being used in planning to build on prior attainment. This is an improvement on the previous system of end of topic tests, which did not assess the development of skills. The monitoring role of the co-ordinator is well developed and includes the evaluation of topic planning, the sampling of pupils' work and lesson observation of all teachers, after which advice and support is given where needed. The results of the end of Key Stage 2 tests in 1998 and 1999 have been carefully analysed to identify weaknesses in provision so that these could be addressed. This modified scheme of work derived as a result of the analysis, with good teaching, has been an important factor in the rise in standards this year.

ART

97. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection. However, there was sufficient evidence to show that standards at both key stages have been maintained since the previous inspection. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment levels are overall in line with those normally expected for pupils of this age. By the end of Key Stage 2 they are above average overall with high quality work being produced by some pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Throughout school pupils make satisfactory, and often good, progress in the acquisition of skills and in their understanding of art as an expressive medium. This includes all pupils with special educational needs. The work seen across the school shows good coverage of the range of two-dimensional media and techniques; there is less evidence of three-dimensional work although this is represented adequately in teachers' planning.
98. During Key Stage 1 pupils have a wide variety of experiences in two and three dimensions. Observational drawings are begun in reception and pupils are encouraged to look closely at themselves and the world around them. Drawings of shells in Years 1 show that pupils are beginning to consider light and shade and attempt to reproduce them. They used magnifiers to look closely at the shells and experimented with the effects made by pens, pencils and pastels on cartridge and hand-made paper. Other pupils sketched fish and sea creatures before choosing designs for a fabric wall hanging. Pupils showed good control of drawing implements. In a Year 2 class some pupils made thumb pots with 'Newclay', trying out various techniques after being shown the basic method, and were able to evaluate their work. The standard of the finished products was good. The work of artists is used in all age groups as a starting point. Year 1 pupils looked at the shapes and bright colours of Mondrian's work before creating their own interpretations using a painting program on the computer.
99. At Key Stage 2 pupils continue to develop their skills and extend their knowledge and understanding. Good standards of observational drawing were seen in Year 5 when pupils produced either a detailed photographic image or line representation of a human figure dressed as a sportsman or sportswoman. They select and used materials well to suggest, for example, textured towelling or smooth leather. Pupils were able to reflect on and evaluate their own work, looking for ways to improve. In Year 6 pupils' observational drawings of various objects showed good attention to detail and the confident use of pencil line and shading to represent accurately what they saw. Art from different countries and times is used to help pupils to understand their own and other cultures. Year 5 pupils who have been studying and re-creating the designs of William Morris have produced high quality work, in the form of classroom blinds. They have experimented with colour blending using fabric pastels to try to reproduce the original shades. As pupils progress through school they are learning to look critically at the work of famous artists. Year 6 pupils have begun to research well-known artists and write passages in appreciation of favourite artists and their paintings. Pupils observe lines, colour and detail such as "the light makes a pattern on the floor." They record their personal responses to artists' work.

100. The teaching seen in all three lessons was good. It was well planned with clear learning objectives and effective use was made of questioning to promote these. For example, the teachers in Year 6 used questioning well in order to develop pupils' recognition of the visual elements of a painting such as pattern, shape and form. Techniques were well taught in both the practical lessons. In addition, the interest and confidence shown by all teachers encouraged pupils to perform well and they made good progress. In one class all pupils were stretched as additional challenges to improve their drawing techniques were added at each review point and planned extension work ensured that talented artists were provided with appropriate tasks.
101. In lessons, pupils were always interested and involved in their work, showing good concentration. Pupils in Year 2 were keen to experiment and develop their own ideas. Their positive attitudes had a beneficial effect on the progress they made.
102. Art is well co-ordinated; the scheme of work meets National Curriculum requirements and enables teachers to ensure that skills are developed. There are at present no formal assessment procedures. The subject leader monitors provision by evaluating teachers' half-termly planning and keeps a check on standards by examining pupils' finished work. She ensures that staff have a wide range of high quality tools and materials, and objects to use as stimuli, and this makes a good contribution to pupils' attainment. Another strength is the enthusiasm of many of the staff, particularly the subject leader, which ensures that art has a high profile. This enables pupils to take part in initiatives for the local and wider community and enriches provision. Work from all year groups is at present exhibited locally to celebrate the Millennium and will be eventually on view in the Millennium Dome. Artwork is displayed well in classrooms, school corridors and other areas, celebrating achievement and creating an attractive and stimulating environment.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. Very few design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection, but the evidence from teachers' plans, photographs and the pupils' work displayed together with designs and plans, indicate that pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. This reflects the position at the time of the last inspection. The great majority of pupils with special educational needs make similar progress. In discussion with the oldest pupils it is clear that they have a good understanding of the design and making process.
104. In Key Stage 1 pupils build effectively on the range of experiences to design and make moving toys. The activities show pupils' design alternatives, select their favourite designs and can cut, join and assemble parts appropriately. The pupils are developing appropriate skills in using scissors to cut materials and choose materials of different colours or texture to convey their ideas. Higher attaining pupils can explain why they have made specific choices and how they intend to complete parts of the process.
105. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in all of the aspects of design and technology, including food technology and the scientific aspects of the subject such as cogs, levers and cams. In Years 3 and 4 pupils develop their abilities to cut materials with a greater degree of accuracy, join shape and strengthen materials and choose the most appropriate material for the required activity. Many of the activities are developed from other areas of the curriculum. For example, the pupils in Year 4 designed and made 'Worry Dolls' after learning about them in literacy lessons. This activity contributed to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development since the idea of the dolls originates in South America. By the end of the key stage the pupils can create complex designs adapting their ideas and drawing upon shared and personal research. For example, pupils have adapted designs by William Morris to make curtains and they have used their recent visit to the Millennium Dome to inspire them to create their own discovery zone. The designs of the oldest pupils are labelled with some annotations and intended measurements although the use of detailed and exploded diagrams is less well developed. The pupils develop making skills in a wide range of media such as fabric, weaving, card and wood. They are aware of how processes of design and technology are used in the wider world.

106. Insufficient lessons were observed during the inspection to form a judgement about the quality of teaching, but in the two sessions seen the management of the pupils was good, resources provided were appropriate and the lessons were well planned. The pupils are enthusiastic and interested in the activities. The oldest pupils are able to describe what they have done and are clear about the purpose of the activities. In the sessions seen the pupils worked diligently with sustained concentration and perseverance. They are willing to help each other and to share the equipment and resources.
107. The co-ordinator has only been in post a few months and has little time to make a significant impact upon the direction of the subject. The scheme of work meets the current statutory requirements, but the co-ordinator is currently reviewing the scheme of work in the light of the Quality and Curriculum Assurance documentation. However, the pupils enjoy a range of activities that are effectively linked to other areas of the curriculum such as science and literacy, although information technology is insufficiently used at present within the subject. Levels of resources for the lessons are adequate and are easily accessible to pupils in all classes.

GEOGRAPHY

108. At both key stages the standards of attainment in geography are broadly typical for the pupils' ages. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the last inspection.
109. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is usually good. The teachers effectively introduce and develop the curriculum to meet the pupils' needs. Where teaching is good, more emphasis is given to first-hand experiences that provide pupils with relevant and exciting activities to discuss and complete. At Key Stage 2, the teaching seen was satisfactory. Scrutiny of planning files indicates that teachers have a sound grasp of the subject and factual content is well developed. There is appropriate provision for the development of investigative skills and the evaluation of evidence, but in some instances there is an over-dependence upon commercial worksheets.
110. Throughout both key stages progress is satisfactory. Within Key Stage 1 most pupils further their knowledge and understanding by making visits out of school and recording their findings. Pupils develop their use of symbols for constructing plans and maps of the locality. They learn about aerial photographs, which they compare and contrast with their own plans of real and imaginary places. At Key Stage 2 pupils continue to progress and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to studies of a range of places and themes within which they identify and solve relevant geographical problems. Pupils experience additional opportunities through work undertaken on field trips and by investigations using research materials such as artefacts, books and most recently stimulating computer programs and simulations. Most pupils with special educational needs are well supported but, to ensure parity with their classmates, smaller groups, withdrawn from the mainstream activities, require all tasks to be more consistently matched to their levels of ability and the experiences of their friends.
111. Within Key Stage 1 pupils acquire an appropriate knowledge and understanding of their immediate environment surrounding the school. They use simple observational skills and talk about the features of the locality. Most understand such terms as 'near' and 'far' and can use basic maps and other suitably chosen resources. By the age of seven, many show a satisfactory grasp of scale and position and are familiar with the geographical vocabulary associated with their various topics. At Key Stage 2, within studies focused on a contrasting locality, pupils show more precise mapping skills and become more confident in explaining the concept of scale. They discover more about the United Kingdom and other named locations in Africa and India. In their investigative activities they know how to interpret weather patterns and set up collaborative and individual researches into pollution and other environmental issues. The work related to weather and the water cycle is a good example of a cross-curricular study between geography and science.

112. Resources are satisfactory and pupils use information technology well to research data. All of the teaching bases, the extensive grounds and local areas are used to good effect and teachers use visits further afield to extend pupils' learning.

HISTORY

113. Standards, as at the time of the last inspection, are similar to those found in most schools with the vast majority of pupils in both key stages working at the levels which are appropriate for their age. As they move through the school, the pupils gain sound knowledge and understanding of the periods studied. They become competent at carrying out historical research.
114. In Key Stage 1, the pupils gain a sense of the past through observing and handling a range of interesting artefacts. They recognise change over time in the development of everyday articles such as irons and audio equipment. By the end of the key stage, they have sound knowledge of some aspects of the Victorian era. For instance, they produce a diary of a leather worker's day that shows an appreciation of Victorian working conditions. They are familiar with the life and times of famous Victorians such as Grace Darling and Florence Nightingale. Through a series of topics from Ancient Greece to Britain since The Thirties, the pupils in Key Stage 2 extend their knowledge of civilisations and societies in the past. The pupils in Year 6 show good recall of topics studied. They have sound knowledge of recent work on World War 2. They show empathy with the plight of evacuees, and debate the pros and cons of rationing. They are enthusiastic to carry out research at home and at school using a variety of sources including the Internet and CD-ROM as well as books, artefacts and field studies. Some of the computer facilities are new and this area of independent learning is not yet developed consistently throughout the key stage.
115. The quality of teaching was satisfactory in all lessons observed. Lessons have clear focus. The objectives are made clear so that the children know what they are expected to learn and can judge their own success. Teachers manage the pupils well. Very little time is wasted by distractions so that all can concentrate on the central purpose of learning. Questions are usually used effectively to extend the pupils' thinking and develop their ideas. Occasionally, there is too much teacher direction and insufficient opportunities for the pupils to ask and answer their own questions. This sometimes leads to a lack of challenge, particularly for the higher attainers.
116. The slimming down of the curriculum has led to a smaller volume of work but this is balanced by the high quality of experiences offered. The curriculum is particularly enhanced by interesting educational visits; such as to the Leather Museum, or Shrewsbury Quest; stimulating workshops; and imaginative learning experiences provided regularly by visiting drama groups. These groups are successful in generating enthusiasm and in bringing to life periods of history such as life in Saxon times. They have a considerable beneficial effect on learning. Resources have been improved since the last inspection. These are generously supplemented by staff and parents and are used effectively to promote progress.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

117. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are broadly in line with those expected from pupils of ages seven and eleven. Across the strands of the programmes of study, the pupils make satisfactory progress in the acquisition of the skills and knowledge as they move through the school and, with the introduction of the new ICT suite, are beginning to have a broader range of opportunities to apply and use these skills. Pupils with special educational needs make progress appropriate to their abilities although there are a few pupils who attend the Nurture group who do not have the same opportunities as their peers to work on the computers in the ICT Suite which affects their progress.

118. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils are confident in the use of the mouse, clicking on appropriate icons to open programs and to select options. They can use simple word processing and create printed work of good quality such as poems about the sea. They can enter text and amend it using the return, backspace and cursor keys. They can follow instructions to open specific files and with some help can save their work to disk. Pupils in Year 1 learn how to use a graph plot program to create simple pictograms to represent data from a class survey on the class's favourite colours. By the age of seven the pupils can enter data to a simple spreadsheet and present the information as bar charts. The majority are well prepared to continue and expand their work into Key Stage 2.
119. By the age of eleven, the pupils can use the computers for a wide range of purposes. They can word process simple documents, are becoming familiar with the range of presentational options available such as word art, different fonts, size of print and how colour can be used to give impact. Higher attaining pupils can work on their own on the computers to produce newsletters combining text and pictures. They can research specific topics by using encyclopaedic software and the Internet. They are able to use email facilities to communicate with other schools and individuals. They develop their data handling skills to present and analyse information obtained from surveys such as traffic survey showing it as pie charts and bar graphs with the columns labelled appropriately and sectors coloured differently to increase the visual impact. The pupils can use paint programs to recreate designs they have made in art lessons using the copy and paste tools to create repeated patterns. The oldest pupils develop their work on control mechanisms using Logo to enter a series of instructions to make geometric shapes and apply the 'build' facility to use the basic shape to create patterns.
120. The pupils are enthusiastic when using the computers. They enjoy using the hardware. They concentrate well and persevere. They work well in pairs and threes sharing the equipment well. They give and accept advice and help from each other and by the end of Key Stage 2 are developing appropriate levels of independence to use the computers as a tool for other subjects.
121. The teaching of information and communications technology is satisfactory. Some teachers have high levels of skills and understanding so they are able to plan and teach lessons in which the pupils make good progress in their learning. However, at the time of the inspection, the ICT suite had been installed for three weeks and the majority of pupils were having only their second or third lesson in the new facility. Consequently, the majority of the teachers, and the pupils, were still developing their own knowledge of the programs and confidence in the procedures for using the system. They know the basics of the operations and with the support of the co-ordinator and the team approach to planning, lessons have clear objectives and direction. They are keen to learn new skills and, with all staff demonstrating good management and control so the pupils are clear about what is expected of them in terms of behaviour and tasks, they are well placed to raise the quality of the work further.
122. The last inspection found that standards were satisfactory. They are still satisfactory, but significant progress has been made in the other aspects of the provision that have not had sufficient time to have an impact upon the standards of attainment. The subject co-ordinator has given positive and very effective leadership to the subject in developing the facilities available to teachers and pupils so that they are now very good. The subject now makes a good contribution to the development of both literacy and numeracy skills and it is well used to support other subjects. For example, as a research tool for geography, art and literacy and as a way of presenting work in geography, art, English and history. The current scheme of work fulfils statutory requirements, but the school is due to introduce a new scheme based on the QCA recommendations at the start of the new academic year. Until very recently there has been no structured assessment process in place although teachers have used a variety of methods for ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the subject. The co-ordinator has begun to implement plans designed to develop a whole school assessment process linked to the new scheme of work.

MUSIC

123. Standards, as at the time of the last inspection, are similar to those in most schools. The vast majority of pupils in both key stages are working at levels that are appropriate for their age. A good number of pupils benefit from extra-curricular activities, for instance, in recorder clubs, choir, or peripatetic music lessons and achieve a higher level in the performance aspects of the subject.
124. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of the pupils have a soundly developed sense of rhythm. They listen carefully and copy rhythms of varying complexity using body parts or percussion. All pupils in Year 3 have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder. They are beginning to acquire basic performance skills and show understanding of tempo and dynamics. Whilst good progress was seen in the lesson, progress over time has been slowed by staff absence. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils can interpret a graphic score. They play well together in small groups to follow notation, and perform musical patterns on tuned percussion. Higher attainers follow more complex notation as well as creating their own simple phrases. Throughout the school, the majority of pupils are learning to enjoy making music. Standards of singing in assembly are good. Little evidence was seen during the inspection of pupils listening to or appraising a range of musical composition. Teacher's planning, however, indicates that this area of the subject receives appropriate attention.
125. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. There is a high level of musical expertise amongst the staff and this is shared well to provide appropriate teaching in all age groups. Work is clearly planned to provide for the systematic development of skills as pupils move through the school. Pupils are well managed and, in lessons they sustain concentration enabling them to make good progress. Teachers provide clear expositions and demonstrations, which show pupils how to succeed. Occasionally, in a few lessons, the brisk pace is slowed, progress then is only satisfactory and there is a slower pace of learning. In the very good lesson, the teacher's own expertise and enthusiasm enabled the majority of the pupils to make very good progress.
126. The curriculum co-ordinator provides clear direction for the subject. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by extracurricular activities. About fifty pupils enthusiastically take part in recorder groups at different levels and, together with the choir, are proud to represent the school in musical festivals. The annual musical production, *Pirates of Penzance* in 1999, involves over ninety pupils and provides excellent opportunities for the pupils to increase their knowledge and extend their skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127. Physical education is a strength of the school. Standards achieved are well above average at the end of both key stages. Throughout the school, for those pupils involved in the gymnastics club attainment levels are excellent. Overall, the good standards observed at the previous inspection have been maintained and in some instances strengthened very successfully.
128. In Key Stage 1, in lessons observed, the main focus was gymnastics and games. All pupils pay careful attention to safety issues. They know that physical activity promotes good health and they are aware of the need to change into suitable clothing. Pupils develop and practise a range of ways in which to send and receive a ball. They improve their skills very well and throw balls accurately, both under and over arm. They work confidently in pairs and show very good control as they bounce the ball into a hoop for their partner to catch. In gymnastics they combine up to six elements in a sequence that includes rolling, stretching travelling and balance. They work well in pairs and small groups and can perform with a partner as in a mirror or in synchronised movements around the room. Pupils are alert to the strengths and weaknesses in their performance and are constructively critical of others as they seek to improve their performance.

129. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to improve and develop their skills and become even more aware of the importance of warming up and cooling down. They sustain vigorous activity easily for an extended period of time. In Year 4 pupils improve and refine skills of controlling balls with a bat. They also work well with a partner and learn to send and receive the ball with increasing accuracy. In dance, pupils in this key stage respond well to music and express their ideas well. They show a good sense of rhythm and confidently perform for others in the class showing both enjoyment and pride in their achievements. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate excellent body control and have a good awareness of their space and the space of others. In football, pupils have well-developed skill and accuracy when they dodge, aim, mark and weave. They learn skills of attack and defence and show a clear understanding of rules and conventions in games. They have a good sense of fair play and participate well in teams. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs; achieve successfully in physical education. In Year 5, all pupils learn to swim twenty-five metres and some can continue their swimming lessons in order to achieve the bronze and silver swimming awards. The confidence demonstrated by pupils who have gained gold and silver awards at national level in gymnastics is translated throughout the school in the poise and control shown in other lessons and when performing for an audience.
130. The quality of teaching is predominantly good in both key stages and in one acrobatics session in gymnastics it was excellent. Teachers manage pupils well and overall they have a good knowledge and understanding of physical education for the age and ability of the pupils they teach. They plan lessons carefully making sure there is a good balance between explanation, demonstration and practical activity for trial and improvement. Teachers use demonstrations effectively to promote learning and they encourage pupils to compare quality in movement. Teachers group pupils well towards the end of Key Stage 2 and make sure that they compete enthusiastically, display good sporting behaviour and follow safety procedures carefully. Lessons have a good pace and pupils are encouraged to work hard. The very good quality resources are used to advantage throughout the school and teachers make sure pupils handle and care for them well.
131. Throughout the year the school provides a very good range of after school activities and clubs in support of physical education including football, rounders, basketball, cricket, cross-country running, gymnastics and dancing. The school is also well involved in local tournaments and has good links with nearby schools and organisations from time to time makes use of the sports' hall facilities at the local leisure centre, particularly when preparing for competition.
132. The leadership and management of physical education are good. The co-ordinator and several teachers are well qualified and experienced in teaching this subject. The school currently uses an effective and well-established scheme of work and is using this for guidance and direction when planning lessons. Resources and accommodation are very good and are used very effectively to promote pupils' physical education. Teachers monitor pupils' performance and progress, although overall there is no formally recognised whole school approach to assessment and recording.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

133. At the end of both key stages, attainment in religious education is typical of that found in most schools nationally and fully complies with the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. There is a considerable element of religious education within assemblies, properly distinguished from the act of collective worship. Very good teaching demonstrated during these sessions, using a wide range of skills, is a model for other teachers. There is very good use of story telling, questioning and choices of music, literature and other resources that reflect the interests of all the pupils.

133. The teaching in both key stages is never less than satisfactory and examples of good teaching were seen at both key stages. All teachers prepare well; create a suitable classroom atmosphere and gain pupils' interests. Their subject knowledge is good and the positive learning climate within the school and the very good relationships between teachers and pupils encourages pupils to be honest about their feelings, which supports their spiritual and moral development. Teachers confidently lead good quality class discussions and this reinforces pupils' speaking and listening skills. The use of circle time in some year groups is well designed to extend pupils' thinking, enhance their ability to reflect on their experiences and deepen their understanding of themselves and others.
134. At both key stages pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their awareness of different religious practices. Pupils learn about the symbols used in various faiths to support the message about their differing beliefs. Pupils explain the significance of the Five Pillars of learning in Islam. They know about the significant religious places for Christians, Jews and Moslems building upon their prior attainment and understanding. By the end of Key Stage 1, the younger pupils reflect on the story elements and contribute well to the discussions of ideas and themes. Within the theme of 'Caring', for example, pupils show a good understanding of the influence of behaviour, values and attitudes to others as when proposing a charitable collection for 'Children in Need'.
135. Within Key Stage 2, the pupils elaborate their thinking and effectively compare similarities and differences between the working practices and rules of different faiths. They engage in mature reflection and sensitive discussions. When considering text setting out "My side of the story, by Judas" they demonstrate a good grasp of the implications of the Christian faith for everyday relationships and attitudes to life. Pupils at both key stages know many parables from a range of faiths and understand how these old stories carry a message for people of today, whatever their personal faith.
136. Pupils respond well to this subject. Within Key Stage 1 the pupils show considerable enthusiasm for story elements, clearly enjoy dramatisation and show increased capability in co-operating with others. At Key Stage 2 pupils take a serious attitude to expressing their feelings in relation to their life and religious experiences. In their written work, the great majority of pupils show careful thought and interest.
137. The co-ordinator was absent at the time of the inspection and the headteacher and other colleagues have ensured that the subject has been maintained in its high profile position within the curriculum. The subject benefits from good co-operation between teachers in both key stages and the curriculum policy and guidelines. An ordained governor who is a regular visitor to the school provides good support. Resources are appropriate and are used effectively. Pupils enjoy a wide range of visits to local churches, mosques and other worship centres which are planned carefully and which take place regularly. Religious education is planned to support, develop and complement the themes incorporated in collective worship. The subject, alongside worship and reflection in assembly, effectively supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.