

INSPECTION REPORT

WOOTTON BASSETT SCHOOL	INFANT
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Wootton Bassett

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126235

Headteacher: Mrs Kate Fullam

Reporting inspector: Geoff Burgess
OIN: 23708

Dates of inspection: 23rd to 26th May 2000

Inspection number: 190224

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	High Street Wootton Bassett Wiltshire
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Telephone number:	01793 852254
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Neil Baldock
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

Information about the inspection team

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
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		Information Technology	Teaching & learning
		Music	Leadership & management
		Physical Education	School improvement
Frances Hurd	Lay inspector		Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development
			Personal welfare & care
			Partnership with parents
Anne Pratt	Team inspector	Under fives: EO	Learning opportunities
		Science	Attitudes, values & personal development
		Geography; History	Attendance
Denise Franklin	Team inspector	English	Assessment & academic monitoring
		Art: Design Technology	Strategic use of resources
		Religious Education	
		SEN	

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The Registrar
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

With no fixed catchment area, pupils come from all over the town of Wootton Bassett and the school serves a wide spectrum of families of mainly British heritage. The number of pupils on roll is currently 161 and pressure on places is decreasing as the number of school age children in the town falls. With Swindon nearby, there is little unemployment in the area and a low number of pupils are entitled to free school meals. However, attainment on entry for the majority of pupils is no better than that found in most schools and the school's inclusive ethos attracts pupils who find learning difficult. Less than a sixth of pupils are on the special needs register but an above average three have statements of special need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective, well led and managed school, where sound teaching enables well-motivated pupils to achieve satisfactory standards. Given its moderate level of funding and average intake, Wootton Bassett Infant School provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to work make a positive impact on their learning
- Very good provision for pupils' moral and social development help them to become caring, sensitive and sensible members of the school community
- The school takes good care to ensure the safety, welfare and happiness of its pupils
- It has very effective links with parents and encourages them to make a very good contribution to their children's learning
- It is very well managed and the head is successful in helping all staff to make a positive contribution to the leadership of the school

What could be improved

- More pupils than might be expected in each year group achieve standards a little below average
- Generally satisfactory assessment procedures are not precise enough to be used by staff to set and monitor challenging targets for individual pupils
- Otherwise appropriate priorities for improvement are not usually related to specific gains in standards

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school maintained standards set at the last inspection in line with the national trend until last year when they dipped as national results took an upturn. Current standards are back to normal this year. All the issues from the last inspection were rigorously addressed and several reviews, some by the local authority, have noted that they have been resolved. Class management is a strength in teaching, more able pupils are catered for, all subjects have effective documentation and spiritual and multicultural development are at least adequately covered. Overall improvement is satisfactory.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
reading	C	C	C	D	well above average A
writing	C	B	E	E	above average B
mathematics	C	C	E	E	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

The school's results had, until last year, been consistently average or above nationally, matching schools in similar situations. Last year's results were poor, especially in writing and mathematics, but nearly half the year group had their birthdays, and only started school, in the summer term and three-quarters of these were boys. This had a disproportionate effect on overall results. Standards this year again generally match the national average in each aspect but the number of pupils achieving a little below average is higher than in most schools. Pupils in the reception classes make sound progress and standards in other subjects in the older classes match those in English and mathematics. Pupils who find learning difficult make satisfactory progress towards their learning goals.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Boys and girls thoroughly enjoy their time in school and make the most of the opportunities presented to them. They listen attentively, work hard without prompting and are proud to share what they have learnt. Their good attitudes consistently enhance learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Almost all behaviour is good and much is very good in class and around the school. Teachers and support staff rarely have to waste time sorting things out and lunch and playtimes are happy, sociable occasions.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils are growing into very sensible and mature citizens who are very happy to take any opportunity to use their initiative and take responsibility for their learning. They work and play harmoniously together following the lead of the grown-ups and contribute to the calm, friendly feel of the school by getting on very well with everyone else.
Attendance	Attendance and punctuality are good with very little unavoidable loss of learning time.

Pupils make a strong contribution to the ordered, happy and secure feel of the school by the way they do what is expected of them in and out of lessons. School is a positive experience for them. They understand its rules and conventions, respect their classmates and adult helpers and recognise their own role in what they achieve.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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.

Almost all lessons are satisfactory with three-tenths good and five per cent very good. Notable features of most teaching are the high quality of relationships and the consistently good way children and activities are managed and controlled. Boys and girls are expected to be sensible, sensitive and polite and minimal actions are needed by staff to maintain a good working ethos. In the very best of lessons this is exploited by providing pupils with engaging and challenging activities and well thought out support so that the pace and depth of learning are sustained at a high level. The basics are generally well taught but there is scope for providing pupils with more opportunities and strategies for writing independently. In the one less successful lesson, activities and organisations did not have sufficient purpose or challenge to make enough demands on individual pupils' capacity to think or do.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is soundly based on first hand experience and the interests of the pupils. Teachers provide a suitably balanced range of subjects with literacy and numeracy well represented. Good planning procedures help to ensure progression and that pupils in parallel classes have a similar diet. The taught curriculum for under-fives is rich and usually appropriate for their needs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils identified by teachers as needing help with their learning are well looked after. Their needs are carefully assessed and recorded and plans drawn up to meet them. Good support enables most to make sound progress. However, given recent test results, not all pupils who would benefit have been included in the process.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Staff make good provision for pupils' personal development with very good arrangements for the development of their social skills and attitudes and moral awareness. Curricular provision for pupils to reflect on life are good and they have sound opportunities to learn about and appreciate their own cultural heritage and to value cultural diversity.
How well the school cares for its pupils	All staff share in making this a very caring community. On a difficult site, pupils' welfare is a priority and all necessary arrangements are in place. Attendance, personal development and behaviour are well monitored and promoted. Assessment procedures are generally satisfactory but lack sufficient detail to make it possible for staff to track progress accurately enough against national expectations.

Parents are very happy with most aspects of their children's school and make a very good contribution themselves to their learning and the life of the school. The school's links with parents are good but, though reports say clearly what pupils have done and know, they do not tell parents what this means in terms of standards.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership & management by the headteacher & other key staff	This is a well-organised and efficiently managed school where the head makes good use of the skills and talents of her staff to lead and manage improvement in their areas of responsibility. Roles and responsibilities are very clearly laid out and good relationships and communications ensure that decisions are made and followed through by the whole team.

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Most of the governing body are fairly new to the job and the school is still looking for three replacement governors. However, they are all very supportive and keen for the school to succeed. Structures and procedures are well established and business is conducted efficiently but, inevitably, it will take the 'new' governing body a little while to become fully effective.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Classroom practice is regularly monitored and frequent professional discussions help to decide priorities for the detailed rolling programme of development. This is updated termly with very specific agendas for all staff. The school's results are analysed and spelling was identified as an area for development but few other priorities are related to, or the actions subsequently measured against, agreed desired improvements in standards. Lack of detail in current assessment arrangements make the on-going monitoring of standards and progress difficult.
The strategic use of resources	The head and staff have done a good job in making the most of a difficult site and complex budgeting arrangements. Steady improvements in provision, especially accommodation, have been made but the school is very vulnerable to variations in the size of its intake. Staff, accommodation and resources are mostly well deployed.

This is an ordered, well led and well managed school on a difficult site making the best of its resources and working for improvement. It inspires great loyalty and affection in its staff and parent body.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy going to school • Teaching is good and their children are making good progress • The school is helping pupils to grow up sensibly and behaviour is good • Pupils are expected to work hard and do their best • The staff are very approachable and the school works closely with parents • They are kept well informed about what is happening in school and how their children are getting on • The school is well led and managed 	

Inspectors generally agree with parents' positive views

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the last report, pupils' attainments in oracy, reading, mathematics and science were described as 'strengths throughout the school'. For three years following the last inspection, standards in reading and mathematics were sustained at, and in writing improved to, a level a little above the national average in the number of pupils achieving National Curriculum Level 2 or above. When compared with schools in a similar situation, overall results were all about average. Last year saw a fall to well below average results in all aspects of National Curriculum testing. However, nearly half the year group had their birthday, and only started school, in the summer term and three-quarters of these were boys. This was reflected in the results in that the performance of boys was well below that of girls who achieved largely average results. This had a disproportionate effect on overall standards. Attainment when children start school is similar to most schools with a fairly normal spread of ability except that the school's caring ethos attracts extra pupils with special needs. Four-year-olds make sound progress in all areas of learning and most are working on the National Curriculum by the end of their foundation year.

2. The quality of current work indicates that seven-year-olds can expect to achieve broadly average results this year in all the core subjects. However, though an appropriate number achieve at least level two in writing and mathematics, the percentage only just reaching this level is more than in most schools. Pupils of all ages and abilities are making satisfactory progress in each of the core subjects which in the case of more able pupils, is an improvement since the last inspection. Good provision for pupils who do find learning difficult, enables most to keep up with their classmates but a few destined to just achieve level two do not receive this help. Targets on individual education plans are specific and used well by the special needs support assistant to enable pupils to make progress. Boys and girls are making similar progress. Standards in the other subjects vary a little more between subjects and teachers but are generally as would be expected for pupils of this age.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

3. Pupils' good attitudes to learning, values and personal development have been well maintained since the last inspection. Parents are very pleased with the way in which the school promotes and values all these aspects of their children's development. Boys and girls enjoy coming to school. The majority settle to tasks quickly, listen well to their teacher and to one another, work hard and are eager to contribute ideas in class discussions. Occasionally however, when tasks fail to motivate pupils in lessons, they lose concentration and interest. Children in the reception classes are secure and happy. They have quickly established good work habits and very good relationships with the adults and other children. Behaviour in and around the school is good. Boys and girls move around a difficult site quietly and sensibly. At play time and lunchtime, pupils play happily together and no incidence of oppressive behaviour was observed. Pupils know the school and classroom rules well, take care to abide by them and are very polite and courteous.

4. Pupils' personal development is very good. Relationships throughout the school are very constructive, supportive and caring and are a real strength of the school. Pupils and adults show great care and concern for one another. This was well demonstrated by a reception class child who sensitively and gently supported a classmate who was in need of help and friendship. Pupils respect and value one another's ideas and opinions. In a science lesson children listened carefully to one another's thoughts on snails. All contributions, however unconventional, were respected and valued by the group. Boys and girls enjoy taking responsibility for routine tasks such as taking registers to the office, helping in the classroom and around school. They clear up sensibly and quickly at the end of lessons. They are willing to get involved in fund raising activities and conscientiously collect tokens and stickers for school projects. They are proud of their efforts to help in these ways. School is a positive experience and pupils are rarely late or absent without a good reason.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

5. All but one lesson observed was at least satisfactory with over a third better in each of the three year groups and some very good teaching in the foundation year and in year one. A common factor of all teaching is the well-established and consistent way teachers manage and control what happens in the classroom and when working around the school. Pupils know and understand what is expected of them and require very little help and few reminders to get on. In most situations this makes it possible for teachers and other helpers to concentrate on the groups or individuals they are focussing on confident that other pupils will work on happily. This is an improvement since the last inspection when disturbance by unsupervised groups was identified as an issue.

6. Whole class sessions are well-organised and managed especially at the beginning and end of literacy and numeracy lessons with pupils encouraged by their answers and suggestions being valued and accepted. This was well shown in a science lesson in a reception class where skilled questioning helped pupils to remember and discuss what they had found out about snails the previous day. Good use of a class 'Floor Book' to write down pupil's responses gave status and value to their comments. Physical education lessons in the hall show the benefit of all the above and are structured to give pupils enough opportunity to exercise vigorously and practice their skills in a safe ordered environment. Classroom assistants are closely involved in and make a good contribution to the teaching process especially in the area of special needs support.

7. Young children in both foundation classes are provided with rich well-organised environments with attractive, relevant displays, well suited to the needs of four-year-olds. They feel secure in what they are asked to do and understand what is required of them. Teachers and other classroom helpers have warm, positive relationships with the boys and girls and rarely have to spend time sorting out upsets or misbehaviour. In better lessons, children are clear about what they are supposed to do and the teacher is focussed on very specific outcomes to her teaching. A very good example of this came in a lesson based on the topic 'Round and round the garden', where four-year-olds designed their own garden in miniature in a seed box. Well chosen pictures inspired them to make some very good suggestions about what they would have in their 'perfect garden' such as a 'garden seat so I can look at the flowers and have a picnic'. In the group work that followed, pairs of children, very well supported by the teacher, solved real problems to create some very imaginative, different gardens. However, not all planned activities have the same clear learning objectives or purpose especially in sessions involving many different activities and, as a consequence, progress for some children in these lessons is slower.

8. Most of the comments noted above, also apply to pupils in the older classes. In a very good numeracy lesson on using coins to 'buy' and working out change in year one, the teacher, the classroom assistant and the pupils were very clear about what the lesson was trying to help pupils to achieve. Very well established classroom 'manners' combined with the teacher's quiet but brisk interaction with the class, kept pupils engaged and thinking. Group activities matched the learning objectives and the needs of the pupils with the teacher and the classroom assistant stretching thinking. In the positive, trusting working atmosphere not one word of control was needed and pupils were very confident about their work and themselves. On the other hand, in an unsatisfactory multi-activity group session, the introductory session was brief and, when pupils moved onto their tasks, many were not really clear about what was expected of them. Most had a go but attention soon wandered and some did their own thing. Several satisfactory lessons needed only an edge of pace and extra challenge to make them good.

9. Literacy and numeracy skills are generally well taught but there is scope for providing pupils with more strategies and opportunities for writing independently. Pupils identified with special educational needs are well supported by the special needs support assistant when withdrawn for additional support either individually or in small groups. Although the quality of teaching observed in the shared year two class largely matches that in the other class, pupils' learning does not. Aspects of the way the job-share is organised, such as the fact that the changeover takes place towards the end of the week on a day disrupted by swimming and a singing assembly, have a negative impact on pupils' learning in that class.

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

10. The curriculum for the under fives includes a wide range of practical activities which ensure that it is generally relevant to the needs and interests of the children. Reception class teachers plan closely together using a suitable scheme of work that takes account of the nationally agreed areas of learning for young children. Longer term planning is sound but learning targets for some lessons are too broad and do not always meet the specific needs of four year olds.

11. In the rest of the school, the curriculum is soundly based on first hand experience and the interests of the pupils. All subjects are appropriately covered with literacy and numeracy well represented and the points for improvement raised in the last inspection have been addressed. Overall long term and medium term planning is thorough but some teachers' short term planning is too vague about what children will learn from activities and, as a consequence, they lack real purpose. Joint planning across the year groups ensures that pupils in parallel classes get similar learning experiences and a two-year rolling programme of topics ensures that learning experiences are meaningful and relevant to the children. Boys and girls have equal access to the curriculum.

12. Other than those elements required by the National Curriculum science orders, the school does not formally teach sex education and issues are dealt with as they arise. The curriculum is generally well organised to meet the needs of pupils who find learning difficult. Individual plans for their learning are carefully drawn up and regularly reviewed.

13. Pupils benefit from regular visits to places of interest, which valuably support work in a variety of curriculum areas. A trip by year two pupils to the seaside enhances learning in subjects such as geography and science, while younger pupils visit a farm as part of their studies. The local environment is very well used, with younger pupils regularly using the school grounds for science and geography and older pupils studying the history and geography of Wootton Bassett. Very good links have been made with the nearby junior school and local playgroups and the school further extends its community links by taking part in some local festivals in the town.

14. At the time of the last inspection, provision for the moral, social and cultural development of the children was described as very good. However, the range of spiritual experiences and the multicultural content of the curriculum needed further attention and this aspect was a key issue for development. Both of these are much improved and the school continues to make good provision for pupils' personal development, placing a strong emphasis on the development of social skills, attitudes and moral awareness.

15. Staff have worked hard to ensure that provision for spiritual development is now good. A full religious education syllabus is now in place incorporating the study of Islam as well as of Christianity. Well-planned time is provided for pupils to sit quietly and reflect on a range of issues such as how we care for our environment and how emotions such as happiness, anger and sadness affect us. Good use is made of the school grounds and the local area to provide them with opportunities to value and consider the man-made and natural world. Young pupils were obviously amazed by how much their seeds had grown in a propagator. Others engaged a classroom assistant in a long and productive discussion about some ants they had found. Assemblies are thoughtfully planned to include opportunities for children to reflect on the subject under discussion.

16. The school places a high value on moral and social development with very good results. All relationships are very good with staff acting as very good role models. Very well established classroom procedures and expectations mean that teachers can concentrate on working with children and others can get on happily. All members of staff and parent helpers know and understand their role in ensuring that high personal standards are maintained. Pupils are always encouraged to be thoughtful towards each other and to work together amicably when required. They have opportunities in assemblies and class time to consider their own and other people's attitudes and actions, and are encouraged to be considerate at all times. The courtesy and friendliness pupils display towards visitors is very impressive. They collect money for various charities and have links with an old people's club in the town.

17. Provision for cultural development overall is good and the school has made praiseworthy efforts to introduce multicultural elements into the curriculum. The presence of several Japanese children

has been used as a stimulus to explore aspects of Japanese culture. Classrooms have some fiction from different cultures but few non-fiction books about other countries or cultures are available for pupils to use in the school library. Teachers make good use of the local area in a range of subjects and through this, pupils gain a good understanding of their own heritage. Children have the opportunity to study and work in the style of various artists such as Monet and Van Gogh. They sing confidently and with enjoyment, and have a reasonable range of hand-held instruments available, but the range of other musical opportunities offered is more limited. There is scope for giving pupils wider experience of the arts by inviting local artists, authors and musicians to visit.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

18. Wootton Bassett School takes good care of its pupils by ensuring that they all have the opportunity to do well in a secure, safe and happy environment. At the time of the last inspection, procedures for ensuring the welfare of pupils were satisfactory. The report commented on the excellent induction programme and described procedures for monitoring attendance and behaviour as good. All aspects of personal care are now good.

19. The school's concern for the well being of the children is central to its ethos. Staff consistently follow clear guidelines on behaviour management, child protection, and health and safety issues. Every child is very well known by several adults and children are dealt with calmly and fairly, and know themselves to be valued and respected as individuals. Although there is a formal risk assessment of the premises every term, all staff are encouraged to raise any health and safety concerns whenever they wish so that problems can be dealt with quickly. The site, by a busy road, is securely fenced and safety measures have recently been improved still further. The induction programme for pre-school children is well planned and much appreciated by parents.

20. Procedures for monitoring attendance are good and the administrative officer quickly follows up any absences. New teaching staff are given written guidance on how to carry out registration correctly. They are also given full information on the various rewards and sanctions which the school employs, but perhaps the best guides to good behaviour the school offers are the staff themselves, who make every effort to provide role models for the children. Relationships are based on trust and respect, and thus make a very real contribution to the positive climate for learning in the school.

21. A recently revised assessment policy clearly sets out the procedures for assessing individual pupil's attainment. Each pupil has a record sheet, which is completed twice a year, building up a profile of social and academic achievements and is used well for writing reports. Samples of work in English, mathematics and science are kept each term, linked to assessment activities identified in teachers' planning. The work is dated and commented on and targets for learning are identified. A level of attainment, using National Curriculum levels, is given for each piece of work and the school is beginning to use this information to set safe and challenging targets for each pupil linked to the levels. However, the school is aware that this is not yet fully refined to indicate the attainment within that level in order to ensure that progress, or the lack of it, can be seen in the shorter term. Portfolios of pupils' work are available to support teachers when deciding National Curriculum levels of attainment but some are in need of updating. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress and personal development are satisfactory.

22. The school has made satisfactory use of results from standardised tests to highlight areas of the curriculum causing concern. Spelling was identified as an issue and the school has taken appropriate steps to improve standards. However, these results are not being used sufficiently to raise standards in other areas, particularly for those pupils who only just achieve the national expectation. Careful reading records kept by the head to highlight those pupils who are causing concerns, are used satisfactorily to identify pupils with special needs and set targets for their individual plans. However earlier identification of some pupils would enable them to make greater progress and achieve higher levels of attainment. Topic review sheets completed to identify the key areas covered in each subject are satisfactorily used to guide future planning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

23. At the time of the last inspection the school's links with parents were good, although the

governors' report to parents did not fulfil statutory requirements and reports did not include targets for improvements. Parents are extremely supportive of the school, raising no significant issues at the parents' meeting or in the questionnaires. They find the school very approachable and always feel welcome there. Almost all were particularly pleased with the high standards of behaviour and courtesy achieved, and with the calm, friendly atmosphere which is found throughout.

24. The school has addressed the points raised at the last inspection. The governors' report now fulfils statutory requirements and reports do include targets. However, these are often vague in nature, such as 'keep on using your pencil and you will get better at drawing'. Reports say what children know, understand and can do but not whether this is appropriate for the age of the child. This reflects the need for the school to be more precise in its use of assessment. Both the school and the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) keep parents well informed about current and future activities. They particularly appreciate the excellent pre-school documentation supplied, which offers guidance on learning activities to do at home, and the 'playbags', containing a variety of items relating to various topics, which are loaned out weekly to pre-school children.

25. Parents show their support for the school in various ways, most noticeably through the support they give helping in class, escorting older pupils on swimming lessons, and during school visits. Parent helpers are given written and verbal guidance on their role in the classroom, and the school makes every effort to utilise their skills to the maximum. The PTA raises about £2,000 a year towards school funds, mainly through its Summer Fair, which is a popular community event often attended by ex-pupils and their families. Overall the school has very good links with its parents, who make a very significant contribution to the quality of their children's learning. The support they give the school has a major impact on its effectiveness.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

26. The head continues to be a positive and effective leader who is ably supported by her hard-working and conscientious deputy in giving the school its educational direction. Well-established procedures, systems and policies noted at the last inspection, ensure that the school is very well managed and that teachers work is supported unobtrusively and efficiently. Communications throughout the school are good and the head's open management style ensures that everyone feels a part of the process by which decisions are made and that they are followed through. Good use is made of the interest and expertise of staff in their leadership roles and they respond by working to a very full rolling agenda for their areas of responsibility. Roles and responsibilities are clearly laid out and known. Leaders monitor planning and standards and support colleagues in their work but have few opportunities to observe classroom practice. Teamwork is emphasised and the importance of the work of support staff is fully valued and recognised. Management of pupils with special educational needs is good. The coordinator gives good support to colleagues with writing targets for individual education plans and these are carefully monitored. She ensures that parents are fully involved and encourages teachers to include a target that can involve parents.

27. With few experienced governors remaining, several new to the job and three vacancies, the governing body is in a transitional phase. Despite this, necessary business is still being conducted efficiently and all statutory responsibilities are being fulfilled. An effective set of structures and procedures has been built up over the years and, with the keenness and willingness of the 'new' governors, they are serving the school well as knowledge and expertise are built up.

28. The head has evolved a very comprehensive system for monitoring the work of the school through formal and informal observation in the classroom. This is followed up by termly professional discussions with the teachers concerned, which in turn helps to set the agenda for that teacher's responsibilities in the following term's development plan. Coordinators monitor standards in their subjects and the school's statutory testing results are analysed. As a result, spelling was identified as a priority for this year and actions taken to improve the situation. However, despite the considerable effort and time expended in the past few years and though aspects of provision have improved, few identifiable gains in academic standards have been made as a result. In this context it is significant that the lack of detail in current assessment arrangements make it very difficult to track improvements in subjects or individual pupils. The monitoring of standards, and from this the identification of where

current standards need to be improved, is therefore imprecise. This is compounded by the fact that the effectiveness of actions taken is rarely judged against clearly identified specific gains in standards.

29. The school's sound financial planning is monitored effectively by the finance sub-committee of the governing body, who receive regular detailed statements from the headteacher and administrator. All are fully aware of budgetary constraints and plan accordingly. Governors are aware of the difficulties of open enrolment and the need to pay money back to the authority if the school's enrolment is less than anticipated. The headteacher plans the use of resources effectively with the support of the governors and priorities are linked closely to the school development plan. She is aware of best value principles and discusses many spending decisions with colleagues in neighbouring schools and with the governing body of the school. Teachers are fully involved in the process and the administrator provides valuable support by ensuring that administrative systems are good. All recommendations in the latest auditors' report have been addressed. Efficient procedures support the day to day running of the school.

30. The school has sufficient well-qualified teaching staff to match pupil numbers and support staff make a valuable contribution to the quality of education provided. They are well deployed and briefed, which has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teaching accommodation, although in a number of different buildings, is used effectively for the benefit of the pupils. The library, which is also used as a television room, is located at the far end of the site, which makes it difficult for children to use without adult support. Largely adequate resources are used well in all subjects but most computers are not powerful enough to be used with up to date software.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

31. To bring its pupils academic standards up to the same high level as their personal standards the governors, headteacher and staff of Wootton Bassett Infant School should:

- (1) Make sure that the proportion of pupils who only just achieve what is expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics is no worse than schools in a similar situation by
 - using national literacy and numeracy materials to establish clearly what the school expects the great majority of its pupils to achieve in each subject
 - setting school targets to achieve this and focussing planning and the organisation of learning on meeting these targets
 - using (2) below to identify children who could be in this category early, and involve parents and staff in helping them to achieve as well as they can.
(Paragraphs 2, 22, 28, 40 & 46)
- (2) Refine existing assessment arrangements so that the progress of individual pupils and year groups against national standards can be clearly shown and challenging but attainable work and targets set by:
 - using the assessment materials used on entry and literacy and numeracy plans to record what pupils know, understand and can do within National Curriculum levels
 - developing good existing procedures for matching samples of pupils work against national levels to check the accuracy of these records
 - using the information gained to set individual targets and monitor progress towards them to show the impact teaching and other provision is having on learning
(Paragraphs 21, 22, 24, 45, 53 & 58)
- (3) Make the criteria by which actions the school takes are judged to be successful, the improvement in standards they produce
(Paragraph 28)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- the way the job share is organised inhibits learning in that class (Paragraph 9)
- pupils have few opportunities to write for extended periods or
share their reading with their classmates (Paragraph 9, 43 & 44)
- learning targets are sometimes not clear in lesson planning (Paragraph 10. 11 & 33)
- most computers are not powerful enough to run modern software (Paragraph 31, 37 & 68)
- reports say what a child is doing but not how well (Paragraph 24)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

46

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

9

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	4	30	62	2		

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	161
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	26

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

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

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.9

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	43	31	74

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	23	29
	Girls	26	29	26
	Total	55	52	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (85)	70 (88)	74 (83)
	National	82 (81)	83 (82)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	31	30
	Girls	27	28	26
	Total	57	59	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (85)	80 (84)	76 (83)
	National	82 (79)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	116
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		
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
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

Number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	2
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	91

Financial information

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	313327
Total expenditure	308567
Expenditure per pupil	1659
Balance brought forward from previous year	31490
Balance carried forward to next year	36250

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	161
Number of questionnaires returned	88

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	22	2		
My child is making good progress in school.	63	35	2		
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	36			5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	56	36	7		
The teaching is good.	70	29	1		
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	41	7		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	21	1		
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	44	1		
The school works closely with parents.	47	46	6		1
The school is well led and managed.	69	30			1

The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

62	36			2
13	26	28	2	30

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

32. Children start school in the September of the academic year in which they become five. At the time of the inspection there were nine four-year-olds, all of them in one of two reception classes. They enter a very caring environment, where they are well supported by a hard working teacher and competent classroom assistant. The school has very good links with the playgroups and other pre school providers in the area. A well-established induction programme ensures that positive relationships are quickly and effectively forged through meetings and other informal contacts. The school has developed an excellent collection of play bags which children can borrow and share with their family in the term before they start school. Parents are very impressed with the induction programme offered and the confident way in which their children settle into school.

33. Attainment at entry is variable but overall judged to be in line with that expected of children in most schools. They make steady progress in the reception class and enter Key Stage 1 achieving most of the targets set nationally for five-year-olds. The planned curriculum suitably takes account of the agreed areas of learning and targets for four-year-olds, but occasionally daily activities lack precise learning objectives and a clear purpose. As a consequence, progress for some children in these lessons is slower.

Social and Personal Development

34. Four-year-olds have well developed personal and social skills. They are very friendly, chatty and happy to talk to adults, take great care of one another and are quick to notice if a classmate is lonely or needs support. Most help one another as for example with fastening aprons and finding resources. Boys and girls work well together as was very evident in a task which involved creating a miniature garden with a friend. They shared the resources without fuss, listened well to one another's suggestions and worked patiently together to fix things in place. Children respond well to requests to tidy up and organise themselves and their clothing for lessons such as physical education. They take great pride in being chosen as a special classroom helper and carry out their duties seriously and responsibly.

Language and Literacy

35. Children make steady progress in their reception year and their overall attainment in language and literacy is in line with that expected of pupils on entry to Key Stage 1. Most children speak clearly and confidently and are given a good range of suitable opportunities to practise and develop these skills. A role-play area well set up as a 'Vet's' Surgery makes good provision for speaking, listening and writing. Four year olds are beginning to learn how to form letters correctly through regular writing practise and they are suitably encouraged to use these writing skills in role play and in connection with work relating to the current topic. They write their names legibly and in literacy lessons show that they are beginning to recognise letters by sound and name. A significant number know how books are organised and can confidently point out the front cover and title. Some know the illustrator creates the pictures and the author writes the story. The children obviously enjoy listening to stories but few were observed using the well set up book corners to browse through books on their own or with a friend.

Mathematics

36. Four-year-olds' learning in mathematics is steady and by the time they are five their attainment is as expected. They regularly sing and say number rhymes that involve adding and subtracting. Daily routines are used well for counting and number recognition. Four year olds are beginning to understand concepts of length and can use some of the vocabulary associated with this when they

make long and short worms and order socks from longest to shortest, on a washing line. However, sometimes, insufficient time is spent introducing and reinforcing mathematical ideas with the whole group. Most children know which month their birthday falls in and are eager to point this out on a birthday chart.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

37. Four year olds are making steady progress in learning about the world they live in and their attainment is as expected of children of this age. Children are effectively developing their scientific understanding through their current topic on living things in the garden. They are able to name the basic parts of plants and are fascinated by the growth of vegetables which they have planted. Boys and girls examine small garden creatures such as ants and spiders and can discuss their appearance in simple terms. They are gaining a very good understanding of environments when creating miniature gardens in seed trays and exploring the likely habitats of creepy crawlies. Children make sound gains in their understanding of the passage of time when they discuss the immediate past, describing what they did yesterday or last week. They know dinosaurs and fossils are related to long ago but sometimes, they are confused by too many ideas being introduced in one lesson and the original history learning intention is lost. Children have regular suitable opportunities to create their own models and structures with construction kits and recyclable materials. They enjoy specific design tasks such as making a home for a ladybird with plasticine and construction kits. The class computer is in regular use and the children are gaining in confidence and learning to use a variety of programmes. However, the computer is old and children are sometimes frustrated by the length of time it takes to print their designs and drawings.

Creative

38. Children enjoy singing and moving to music and know some rhymes and jingles but no lessons with a specific music focus were observed. They respond well to specific creative tasks such as arranging flowers, observing and drawing spiders' webs, and creating imaginary homes for creatures. No children were observed painting. Creative play is well set up with good links made to children's current interest, much of the creative play being centred on the Vet's Surgery.

Physical

39. Boys and girls have ample opportunity to handle small tools such as pencils, scissors and glue sticks and their manipulative skills are developing well. They regularly practise forming their letters and writing their names. An outside space adjacent to the classroom and a range of outdoor toys are suitably used for children to test and challenge their physical skills. Children have appropriate planned time in the hall to develop their physical skills further but some lessons are tightly directed by the teacher and the structure of these lessons allows little challenge for the children and too few opportunities for developing and improving their skills independently.

ENGLISH

40. Standards in English at the end of Key Stage 1 are just in line with national averages as they were at the time of the previous report. Results from last years' standardised tests in English were well below the national average. However this was different from the general trend over the last few years when standards were slightly above the national average. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make sound progress through good, often individual, support from specially trained support assistants.

41. Attainment in speaking and listening are in line with the national average. By the age of seven most pupils listen carefully to adults and follow their instructions. Pupils in reception participate well in a whole class discussion on how to look after a pet. In Year 1 about half the class can think of their own rhyming sentence in the same style of the poem they are reading. Pupils in year two enjoy asking each other questions about "Mog, the cat", in stories written by Judith Kerr. However, whilst many pupils are confident and fluent speakers some have difficulty in finding the vocabulary to express their thoughts or explain their work.

42. By the age of seven, most pupils achieve the level expected for their age in reading, though there is a wide spread of attainment, with some pupils only just achieving the standard expected.

Higher attaining pupils read accurately and with expression. They use a range of strategies effectively to read unknown words, enjoy reading and have a good knowledge of a range of authors. Average attaining pupils can read simple text, mostly accurately, with some expression and have a satisfactory understanding of the use of simple punctuation when reading. Lower attaining pupils read simple text, mainly accurately and are beginning to use pictures and initial letter sounds to help them read unknown words. Both ability groups can name the author that they are focussing on for the week but have limited knowledge of any others. Research skills are developing satisfactorily.

43. By the end of the key stage pupils' attainment in writing is broadly in line with the national average, although a high number of them are only just attaining this level. Pupils write for a range of purposes, including stories, poems, descriptive writing and information. By the end of the key stage most can write a series of short, simple sentences that show they understand that written ideas have to be developed logically and are making sound progress. However, few examples of more extended or continuous writing were seen and none were set in the literacy hour during the inspection. Most use simple punctuation such as capital letters and full stops correctly. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use a wider range of vocabulary to interest the reader and spellings of key words are mainly correct. Lower attainers show some awareness of spaces between words and know about using full stops at the end of the sentence. Although most pupils are using developmental writing well and are enthusiastic writers, strategies for spelling words correctly are limited and confined mainly to writing down the sounds that they hear in a word. Other strategies such as word banks and dictionaries are sometimes only used for "best writing". Pupils' handwriting is neat and some are beginning to use joined writing.

44. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with thirty seven percent good. Teachers have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the literacy strategy and are beginning to adapt this appropriately to meet the needs of the pupils, which has a positive impact on their progress. Most teachers identify a specific group on which they focus during the main activities session but this is not always apparent in the actual lesson. They manage the pupils well and use praise effectively to encourage participation in lessons. Pupils respond well to this and their behaviour is good in most lessons. Relationships with adults and each other are often very good and this has a positive impact on their learning. Expectations of attainment are generally high, but where year groups do not consistently plan together the expectations vary. Support staff are well deployed to support learning and know exactly what is expected of them. In lessons where teaching is good the learning objectives are clearly shared with the pupils to enable them to make progress in their learning. In a year one class, for example, pupils were asked to look for rhyming words when reading the text. Good use is made of the plenary session to reinforce learning objectives but there is little evidence of consistent use of daily assessment to establish whether the objective has been achieved. Guided reading sessions in school are planned outside the literacy hour but they happen infrequently. Some pupils have to wait several weeks before they can read and discuss a range of literature in small groups with adults and their peers. However, individual reading has a high priority.

45. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in English are satisfactory. Reading tests are used regularly to identify areas of concern and each pupil has a sample of his or her work in English collected every term. These indicate a level of achievement relating to the National Curriculum and give targets for future learning but do not always show the precise detail within that level to enable pupils to achieve a higher standard. The Head Teacher, who coordinates English, regularly monitors all procedures. Results of standardised tests are analysed well to guide planning. For example the school recently identified spelling as an area of concern and has trialled a number of ways to try to address the problem. A satisfactory range of big books and guided-reading sets are available and most used appropriately to promote learning. Each class also has a satisfactory range of fiction and non-fiction books but the central library has limited resources and is not easily accessible for pupils. Good use is being made of recently acquired laptop computers for word-processing activities linked to a religious education lesson.

MATHEMATICS

46. Last year's National Curriculum test results for seven-year-olds were well below the national average after three years of average results. The analysis of current work and observation of lessons

shows that attainment is again broadly average but with rather more pupils only just achieving the average level than in similar schools. At the time of the last inspection, attainment was said to be 'average and above' with 'good progress in the subject'.

47. Older pupils in the reception classes are gaining a sound foundation of skills and understanding in all mathematical areas. They sort and count objects and know what is 'more than' or 'less than' up to 12. All can recognise and write numbers to 10 and most use the language of length confidently. Many pupils are able to demonstrate how to add numbers up to five using their fingers. Good use is made of number rhymes such as 'Five Current buns' to consolidate knowledge of number. In the measuring lesson observed, the range of attainments included simple matching of length using plasticene worms to well-developed measuring skills using homemade 'teddy' tapes. This is broadly average for older pupils in their foundation year.

48. Pupils in year one recognise and use their knowledge of patterns in number to solve problems. They know that the position of a digit in a number is significant, for example in the number 25, the number 2 means two tens. Their use of mathematical language is becoming increasingly refined so that many recognise that subtract, minus and difference are alternative words for take away. Pupils in one class sorted numbers into the 'right' order, the more able up to and above a hundred. Most could give an 'in between' number after sorting the highest and lowest. In the other class pupils of all abilities were fluent in using lower denomination coins to give the 'quickest' way of making up a sum of money. Almost all hands went up to say that 19p could be made of 10p, 5p and two 2ps. In the follow up activities, less confident mathematicians were all able to put the right coins in a sorting tray to make up sums of money up to 20p. Higher attainers quickly learned how to work out the change to expect if they paid with large denomination coins.

50. Year two pupils solving number problems showed a good awareness of number facts and many used good strategies to work out easy ways of doing things. By the age of seven most pupils have a basic understanding of place value, number bonds to 10 or more; they add, subtract small numbers and multiply and divide by repeated addition and subtraction respectively. They handle data and interpret graphs, recognise and name shapes and make comparisons of their properties. Pupils are beginning to ask relevant questions to solve simple problem but many find it difficult to explain how they achieve answers and check their work. Few pupils who find mathematics difficult receive the support necessary for them to succeed and most do not achieve appropriate standards. Although overall standards in year two are similar to what might be expected, a strong minority of less able mathematicians, especially in the class shared by two teachers, are not achieving well.

51. Pupils' learning in mathematics is sound. They have established good work habits and are improving and consolidating their knowledge. Their ability to use appropriate mathematical language is developed from reception onwards. They improve their understanding of mathematical operations and are increasingly able to use appropriate strategies when working out a problem in their head. Pupils generally approach mathematics with confidence and enthusiasm. Most behave well, are motivated and appear enthusiastic in nearly every lesson. They work well independently or with each other. Pupils are willing to share their mental strategies and explain their methods and solutions to others. They work hard, are fully engaged in their work and persevere to complete it.

52. All teaching is at least satisfactory and in some lessons it is good. In these lessons the pace is brisk, planning is closely linked to previous work with clear learning objectives and questioning is skilful and challenging. Teachers give pupils the opportunity to explain their strategies and encourage the use of correct mathematical language. Appropriate resources and equipment are used effectively to ensure understanding. Good use is made of practical activities to reinforce concepts and skills. Several otherwise sound lessons lacked the sharpness and challenge necessary to stimulate the real enthusiasm for number work found in the better lessons.

53. The core curriculum in mathematics is based on the programme outlined in the Numeracy Strategy which is well established in the school. Work is selected from a variety of sources including some produced by the teachers themselves. Overall procedures to assess attainment and progress are generally satisfactory but they are insufficiently precise to track pupils' progress in the subject accurately. Baseline assessment made on entry to the reception is not being used as a starting point to help monitor progress in the early years. Evidence of achievement through the school is monitored

by assessing one piece of work each term and matching this to National Curriculum levels. However, only broad levels are used which means that some pupils apparently make no progress despite working hard. In addition, some of the tasks chosen do not provide scope for showing how well able mathematicians are doing. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, although this generally only consists of an indication of whether the work is right or wrong. Sufficient mathematical resources are stored in the classrooms and used effectively.

SCIENCE

54. In the 1999 teacher assessments, the proportion of pupils attaining Level 2 was well below average when compared with all schools and those in a similar situation. Current standards are better than these results suggest and by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils achieve standards that are in line with national expectations. Pupils make steady progress throughout the school.

55. The school uses a topic based approach to the teaching of science largely determined by the science scheme of work which ensures that the Key Stage 1 programme of study is well covered and all learning targets are systematically addressed. At the time of the inspection five and six year olds were studying life processes and living things, through a topic entitled 'Round and Round the Garden' while seven year olds were exploring physical processes through a topic entitled 'Here, There and Everywhere'. Five and six year olds, through their observations of growing seeds, know that plants need light and water for growth, and can name and recognise the leaf, flower, stem and root of plants. They carefully record the progress of their seeds and eagerly talk about the changes that have taken place. Most make good progress learning about the different creatures that live in the garden, closely observing these mini beasts and describing their features. In one good lesson, a group of five-year-olds talked about the snails which they had handled the previous day. They showed a good ability to describe their important features and some pupils were able to ask very thoughtful and probing questions to obtain further information. Seven year olds make steady progress when they describe the movement of toy cars and explore the effect of different surfaces on distance travelled. Initially they find it difficult to predict what might happen but through experimenting with a range of materials begin to understand the concept, although some find it difficult to find the right language to explain the phenomena.

56. Boys and girls enjoy their work in science. When working with the toy cars they are very interested in predicting what might happen and enthusiastically undertake the practical tasks. In group discussions about scientific matters pupils listen well to one another and to their teacher. They respect the opinions and observations of others, however unconventional they might be. Pupils are careful and considerate of small living things.

57. Teaching in science is satisfactory overall, with some good lessons. Activities are generally well prepared and organised. Teachers provide a wide range of interesting first hand experiences and use the environment around the school well. Science is well linked to other areas of the curriculum such as geography, art, movement, dance, history and religious education. In the best lessons, teachers use questions well to focus children's observations, draw out answers and develop learning. They encourage pupils to ask questions such as why and what will happen if?

58. Science teaching is well supported by a good policy and a very good scheme of work which gives clear guidance on all elements of the science curriculum. The coordinator checks all teachers' plans regularly to ensure coverage. One specific science task each term is suitably annotated and matched to national levels and kept in individual pupil's record of achievement books for assessment purposes. The school portfolio gives good examples of past work in science similarly matched but it requires further review to ensure that the work is up to date and relevant.

ART AND DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

59. Standards in art and design technology are as expected of pupils when they leave the school at seven and similar to those found in the previous inspection. Evidence for this was taken from samples of pupils' work, photographs and observation of one lesson from each subject.

60. In design technology pupils in reception make houses from cardboard using their own very simple designs. They use construction kits to build fire engines, linked to their topic work. In year one, pupils design a boat and write simple instructions for making the boat in pictorial form. Some pupils design and make a class curtain for the independent play area, using fabric crayons. Pupils in year two use card and cello tape to make a moving Humpty Dumpty so that he can fall off his wall. Many use a range of materials effectively to design and make a logo for the Year 2000. They design a wheeled vehicle and decide whether they need a free wheel or a free axle. Pupils can identify the tools and materials they will need to make the vehicle and one group use their plans effectively to make the vehicle. By the end of the key stage pupils have had experience of using a range of construction kits and materials and progress is satisfactory.

61. Pupils demonstrate sound standards in art. In Reception pupils paint poppies in the style of Monet. In year one they use pastels and crayons well to create pictures of their bedrooms in the style of Van Gogh and to paint pictures of sunflowers. Some pupils make accurate close observational drawings of flowers in pencil. They pay close attention to the detail of texture and pattern. In year two pupils learn the technique of building up pictures by painting a background first. They produce effective pictures achieving satisfactory standards. Some pupils have made good observational paintings of buildings in Wootton Bassett as part of their topic of the local area.

62. No judgement can be made on the quality of teaching in art or design technology as only one lesson was observed for each subject. Evidence from planning indicates that the curriculum is satisfactorily covered through topic work over a two year rolling programme. The scheme of work for design technology has almost been completed using teachers' own plans and the national scheme. This has addressed the issue of not having a scheme in the previous inspection. Both subjects are co-ordinated effectively and monitored well to ensure a progression of skills. Resources are satisfactory for both areas of the curriculum.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

63. Only a small number of history and geography lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements have been made on the basis of those observations, photographs, displays of work, discussions with pupils about their finished work and teachers' planning for the subjects. Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in these subjects are as expected for seven year olds at the end of the key stage. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress.

64. Five year olds in the reception classes are gaining a sound understanding of the passing of time through daily routines involving changing the date and talking about yesterday, today and tomorrow. They use language such as long ago, last week, after and before correctly. Work in science involving the growing of vegetables and observing and recording the metamorphosis of frogspawn and caterpillars is providing a valuable introduction to change over a period of time. Six-year-olds clearly understand the differences between old and new when they explore and compare old and new garden tools. They comment on the difference in materials and design and ask and answer some simple questions about them. The work of seven-year-olds is closely related to geography and the study of the local environment. A walk around Wootton Bassett has produced some good work on the local buildings, old and new. Pictures and photographs from the past have enabled some comparisons to be made between now and then and most pupils were able to talk about these and make distinctions between aspects of their own lives and past time.

65. The two topics being studied at the time of the inspection, 'Here, There and Everywhere' and 'Round and Round the Garden' are well used to develop pupils' geographical skills. Reception and year one pupils explore the school grounds enthusiastically looking for mini beasts. They clearly express their views on the features of the locality where they found their creatures and while some are able to give some idea of its place and position, others find this more difficult. Year two work displayed in classrooms related to walks around Wootton Bassett show that pupils are well able to describe some of the features that give the town its character. In two lessons looking at aerial maps and the concept of a bird's eye view, seven year olds showed a sound understanding of position and direction using geographical terms such as hill, river and road. They make simple plans from the birds eye

view perspective and explain features of their work. Pupils in all classes keep daily weather records and use control technology to plot and plan routes. They enjoy their work in both subjects and generally concentrate well on their tasks.

66. Teaching is mainly satisfactory, with two history lessons judged to be good. All teachers use the local environment well and make good links with other areas of the curriculum such as art, science, and technology. Good use is made of role-play where a pirates' ship provides a real purpose for seven-year-olds to use maps and plot positions. Visits are well used to support work in geography and history with recent visits made to Devizes museum and visits planned for this term to Weston Super Mare and a nearby farm. Teachers plan a good range of first hand experiences in both subjects. In the best lessons teachers motivate and interest pupils with well chosen artefacts and stories. Six-year-olds exploring the concept of old and new were captivated by the story of Peter Rabbit which inspired them to make careful and thoughtful comparisons between old and new gardening tools. Weaknesses in the teaching are related to the teacher's failure to fully explain tasks and pupils become confused and lose interest.

67. The good new scheme of work for geography clearly shows the progression of geographical skills and associated activities and is proving very useful in planning coverage of the subject. There is scope to review the history scheme of work to bring it in line with the geography scheme.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

68. Teachers continue to ensure that pupils have regular access to computers and other information technology (IT) hardware and a good range of productive activities was observed during the inspection. However, most machines can only run the up-to-date programmes recently acquired very slowly which inhibits learning. The geography of the school limits the options available to the school in developing its provision in this area but funding has been approved and improvements are imminent. Despite the limitations, standards in most aspects of IT are in line with the national scheme of work.

69. The use of computers is planned into many lessons either as a separate activity or more usually to complement the work going on in the lesson. Pairs of pupils, sometimes with the well-briefed support of classroom assistants, regularly work on numeracy programmes and word-process their written work. Good use is made of a programmable robot in a year two class to give pupils the opportunity to programme a route as part of a geography activity. The build up to this was observed in a taught IT lesson in year one, where the teacher helped pupils to understand how to use the robot and what it could do. A recently acquired set of rechargeable notebook computers were being put to good use in a year two class practising number work but there is considerable scope for them to be used as a writing tool in regular group activities in literacy hour.

70. A great deal has been done to develop provision for IT in the school through staff support and training and the development of planning and monitoring arrangements. Within its present limitations the school is achieving creditable results but further improvements will need much creative thought about how to make the best use of opportunities presented by new funding.

MUSIC

71. Little class music was available for observation during the inspection but from this, teachers' planning and the quality of singing in assemblies; pupils are given a range of musical experiences and achieve satisfactory standards. Pupils enjoy singing which they do enthusiastically mostly carrying the tunes well. Most teaching is related to a commercial scheme which provides the structure and support needed by a staff who are largely non-specialists. However, because of this, much music tends to be taught in a rote way and the creativity and imagination shown in other subjects is less evident. The use of a volunteer to accompany the singing assembly showed the difference some expertise and confidence can make on the quality of children's performance. The use of larger instruments is inhibited by the difficulties of moving about the site but little use is made of the hall for activities that require such instruments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

72. The school provides well for pupils' physical education and pupils achieve standards that are often above those seen in most schools. Almost all teaching observed was good and given the difficulties presented by the site on a wet week, the efficiency and quality of the whole process was very commendable. Every lesson is well planned and structured with good attention paid to warm-ups and cool-downs given the walks to and from the hall. Activities are all based on developing skills and understanding built up over the term and in each class, pupils know exactly what is expected of them. The whole process is well organised with pupils being very sensible about putting on and taking off shoes and coats to move between buildings.

73. Five-year-olds showed good knowledge of body 'points' and 'patches' in moving between them on the floor and on large apparatus. The teacher encouraged and prompted constantly and made good use of 'different' interpretations to inspire the rest to be brave. To fit in with their current topic, pupils in year one were given the opportunity to feel what it might be like to be a seed growing up to be a tree. A well-chosen poem provided the structure and stimulated the movement which pupils interpreted thoughtfully in their own way. Older pupils practised throwing and catching skills using a variety of self-chosen objects, and then worked in groups to 'invent' their own games. This they did with a good deal of animated but sensible discussion. Almost all groups came up with a game they could demonstrate and give the rules for by the end of the lesson. Year twos also had the opportunity to attend a well-organised and well staffed swimming session at the local pool. Parents and pool staff make a very good contribution to ensuring that almost all pupils can swim by the time they move to the junior school.

74. In the last inspection, progress in physical education was described as less than satisfactory in half the lessons. It is to the credit of the coordinator and individual teachers that this is no longer the case. Good planning documentation ensures that pupils receive a balanced and progressive diet of activities. Although outside facilities are limited, the hall is adequate for the purpose and the school has a good stock of suitable apparatus of which teachers make good use.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

75. Standards in Religious Education have been successfully improved since the previous inspection when provision was identified as a key issue. They are now as expected according to the Wiltshire syllabus.

76. This term pupils are concentrating on the Islamic faith and boys and girls in year one know about the festivals celebrated by the Muslims and about their special book, the Qur'an. They discuss the special times that are celebrated by their own families sensibly. In year two pupils, gain satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the importance of prayer mats to the Muslims and compare their customs with those of Christians. Pupils in both years have made class books to illustrate their understanding of special places. By the end of the key stage, most have made sound progress in understanding the importance of Christian religious festivals and gained a satisfactory awareness and understanding of the Islamic faith.

77. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Pupils respond well in lessons and listen carefully to each other's contributions, which has a positive impact on their learning. Lessons are satisfactorily prepared using planning documents recently developed by the authority. Teachers are confident using the materials and use a sensitive approach when questioning, valuing all contributions to discussions. They are well supported by the coordinator, who has effectively overseen the implementation of the new structure. Assessment tasks linked to the scheme of work are being used to see if pupils are acquiring the necessary skills and understanding. Satisfactory resources are used well in lessons.