

INSPECTION REPORT

CALDECOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Caldecote, Cambridge

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110603

Headteacher: Mrs. Prue Rayner

Reporting inspector: Mr M Thompson
25372

Dates of inspection: 15th – 18th January 2001

Inspection number: 190412

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Highfields Road,
Caldecote,
Cambridgeshire.

Postcode: CB3 7NX

Telephone number: 01954 210263

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Les Waters

Date of previous inspection: October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25372	Mike Thompson	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Equal opportunities; English as an additional language; Mathematics; Science; Information and communication technology; Art and design; Design and technology.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
12387	Diane Willson	<i>Lay Inspector</i>		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?
25406	Paul Nicholson	<i>Team Inspector</i>	The Foundation Stage; Special educational needs; English; Geography; History; Music; Physical education; Religious education.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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A:SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Caldecote Primary School is a very small school, situated some seven miles to the west of Cambridge, built on a greenfield site in 1963 to replace Childerly Gate School. The school is popular with parents. The 45 pupils on roll are taught in three classes. One is for children in the Foundation Stage,¹ together with all pupils in Key Stage 1, of the other two, one is for pupils in Years 3 and 4, and the other for Years 5 and 6. All pupils come from Caldecote and the surrounding villages, and are from a broad range of backgrounds. Unemployment levels are low relative to other areas of the country, and just 6 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This proportion is below the national average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs, at 17 per cent, is also below the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need and is, therefore, entitled to extra help. All but four pupils are of white, UK heritage.

Children are admitted to the Foundation Stage year group at the start of the school year in which they are five, and are assessed shortly after admission. At the time of the inspection there were five children in the Foundation Stage. The results of the assessments show that attainment on entry to the school varies widely from year to year. Overall, it is about average.

At the time of its previous full inspection in 1996, the school was judged to require special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. A subsequent re-inspection by HMI² in 1998 judged that significant progress had been made and that special measures were no longer needed.

Housing developments currently underway within the village will result in a significant increase in the number of pupils on roll. Plans for large extensions to the school have been approved and building work is ready to begin.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school, which provides good value for money. Through good teaching, it successfully develops the potential of its pupils, so that by the age of eleven they are confident, learn independently and achieve good academic standards. The headteacher, staff, governors and parents all work closely together in partnership.

¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three. Children complete the stage at the end of the reception year.

² Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Standards are above average in English and science at the end of Key Stage 2, and in mathematics at the end of both key stages.
- Pupils are keen to learn and behave very well both in and around the school. The quality of pupils' personal development is excellent.
- Pupils are well taught, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- The school is very effective in developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- Pupils are well cared for.
- The school is very well led and managed by a hardworking and committed headteacher and governing body.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards in history and geography at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The way in which both the curriculum is planned and pupils are assessed in science and the foundation subjects³.
- The amount of help provided for children in the Foundation Stage, since this affects the way in which the curriculum for these children is planned and taught.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress since its last full inspection in 1996. Considerable improvements in the quality of leadership and management have resulted in much better attainment in English, mathematics and science. Standards have been raised because the quality of teaching is better than it was and because great emphasis has been placed on pupils' personal development; this has resulted in significant improvements in behaviour and in attitudes to work.

³ Foundation subjects are those other than the 'core' subjects of English, mathematics and science.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mathematics	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Science	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

<i>Key</i>	
<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>

Owing to the small size of the groups of pupils tested, grades are not reported, since variations in attainment of individual pupils can disproportionately affect the overall grading for a single year. Published targets for performance are similarly affected by the small size of year groups. For example, although the school achieved its published target for performance in mathematics in the Year 2000, its target for performance in English was exceeded by one third because of the significant improvement made by three pupils in the year since the target was set.

A more statistically reliable method of assessing the school's performance is achieved by combining the results of individual pupils over the past three years. This longer-term view of a larger number of pupils shows that standards achieved over this period are above average in English and science and about average in mathematics. The year-on-year rate of improvement within this period is roughly the same as the national trend.

Inspection findings show that attainment, in terms of the proportion of Year 6 pupils likely to achieve or exceed the national target of Level 4 by the end of the school year, is above average in English, mathematics and science. In art and design, design and technology, information technology, music and physical education, attainment is average. However, in geography and history standards are below those expected nationally. This is because the way in which the curriculum is planned results in gaps between periods of geography or history teaching. The result is that, without regular practice, pupils remember little of what they have learned. In religious education, standards are in line with those expected in the local Agreed Syllabus.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school.	Very good. Pupils are happy to come to school and are eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms.	Very good. Pupils show respect for their teachers and for one another.
Personal development and relationships.	Excellent. Pupils greatly benefit from the well-integrated, family atmosphere within the school. They grow in confidence and become independent learners.
Attendance.	Good. Above the national average. Most pupils arrive at school on time.

A significant feature of the school is the way in which pupils are treated as equal partners in their education.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is good, and it has improved considerably since the last full inspection in 1996. Of the 20 lessons observed, one was very good, eight were good and ten were satisfactory. One lesson was unsatisfactory.

The most consistently good teaching is provided for pupils in the Year 5 and 6 class. Other good features are the 'Plan do and review' lessons in Class 1, in which pupils have a guided choice of activities to select from, and the specialist teaching of music. Strengths of teaching are teachers' subject knowledge, the clear explanations they give to pupils, high expectations of behaviour, and the good quality of individual help for pupils. The chief weakness is that lesson plans sometimes do not clearly show the precise level at which skills are to be taught. The outcome of the good teaching is that pupils are interested in what they have to do, concentrate well and make good progress. Teachers are particularly good at developing pupils' sense of responsibility for their own work. This has a significant effect on the quality of pupils' learning. Skills in literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily at Key Stage 1 and in the early years of Key Stage 2. They are well taught in Years 5 and 6.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. However, planning for science and the foundation subjects lacks important detail. The curriculum for Foundation Stage children needs to be improved.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils benefit from the extra help they receive, and learn at the same rate as their classmates.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	These pupils are fully integrated into all activities and make good progress overall.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Arrangements for developing pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness are good. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good and the way in which pupils' social skills are developed is excellent.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils within a safe environment.

The school has developed a very good partnership with parents and is an important focus for the local community. Parents are kept very well informed and are fully involved in their children's education. The quality of assessment of pupils' achievements in English and mathematics is good, but assessment in science and the foundation subjects does not identify precisely what pupils have achieved.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher manages the school effectively and provides very clear educational direction. All staff work together well as a team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are committed and supportive. They are very effective in monitoring the work of the school and in shaping its future development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Teachers are good at critically evaluating their work and seeking ways to improve. Governors look closely at issues of 'best value' when comparing standards with those achieved by other schools.
The strategic use of resources	Overall, the school uses its staff, premises and equipment well. Additional funding received for specific purposes, such as for special educational needs, is well spent.

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 like coming to school.• Teachers have high expectations, and children are well taught and make good progress.• Behaviour in the school is good.• Parents are kept well informed and find the teachers approachable.• The school works closely with them and helps their children to become mature and responsible.• The school is well led and managed.• Their children get the right amount of homework, and the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No significant negative views were expressed, either through the inspection questionnaires or in the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector.

Inspectors' judgements fully support parents' views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Each year, the numbers of pupils taking the national tests at the end of both key stages are very small. The conclusions drawn from the results achieved in a single year may therefore be unreliable, because the performance of a single pupil can disproportionately affect the overall percentage score. A more statistically reliable sample is achieved by combining the results of individual pupils over the past three years. This method shows that, at the end of Key Stage 1, 95 per cent of seven year olds tested in reading over this period, and 84 per cent of those tested in writing, achieved or exceeded the national target of Level 2. In mathematics, all pupils reached or exceeded Level 2. Standards achieved over this period are well above average in reading, average in writing, and very high in mathematics.
2. When results at the end of Key Stage 2 are viewed over a similar period, 82 per cent of 11 year olds achieved or exceeded the national target of Level 4 in English. Results in mathematics were not as good, with 68 per cent of pupils at or above Level 4. In science, results were better, with 91 per cent of pupils attaining or exceeding the expected level. Standards achieved over this period are above average in English and science and average in mathematics.
3. Published targets for performance are clearly affected by the small size of year groups. For example, although the school achieved its published target for performance in mathematics in the Year 2000, its target for performance in English was exceeded by one third because of the significant improvement made by three pupils in the year since the target was set.
4. Discussions with teachers, scrutiny of assessment records in the core subjects, observations of attainment in lessons, and examination of work in pupils' books indicate that the proportions of pupils likely to achieve the national targets at the end of each key stage are well above average. There is, however, no certainty that this will be the case by the end of the school year, because of the anticipated rapid growth in the school roll. Inspection judgements broadly reflect national test results, but are based on the breadth of the curriculum rather than the relatively narrow areas tested.
5. Attainment is currently above average in mathematics at the end of both key stages and in English and science at the end of Key Stage 2. Attainment in all other subjects, at the end of both key stages, is average except in geography and history, where attainment is below what is normally expected of pupils in Years 2 and 6. This below average attainment occurs because of the way in which the timetable is arranged, with gaps between periods of history or geography teaching. As a result, pupils are unable to regularly practise skills learned and easily forget what they have been taught. Attainment in religious education, at the end of both key stages, is in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus.
6. Shortly after children enter the school at the start of the reception year, their skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematics and personal and social development are assessed by means of the local education authority's 'baseline assessment' scheme. Results of

the assessments carried out over the past three years show that attainment varies considerably from year to year, because of the effects that the performance of individual children can have on a very small yearly sample. However, attainment overall is about average.

7. Children quickly settle into school because of the good induction procedures and the very good quality of communications between school and home. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage year as a result of sound teaching and the teacher's clear understanding of the way in which very young children learn. Owing to the small number on roll, children in the Foundation Stage are taught alongside pupils in Key Stage 1. Consequently, the school has had to try to blend the requirements for the Foundation Stage curriculum into work planned for pupils in Key Stage 1. The result has been that the youngest children have not always been able to participate solely in early learning activities, particularly the strong emphasis on learning through play that is a distinctive feature of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

8. In Key Stage 1 pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. To a degree, academic progress is slowed because of the presence of very young pupils within the class and the attention that has to be given to them. However, a strength of the way in which the pupils are grouped is that older ones have opportunities to develop social skills by helping those younger than themselves and showing them what to do. The acquisition of these skills is an important factor in the development of the strong sense of community, which permeates all aspects of the school's work. In Key Stage 1 and in the early years of Key Stage 2, pupils are given a sound foundation in reading, fluency in writing, and skills in numeracy, and this contributes to the rapid progress made by pupils towards the end of Key Stage 2. This rapid progress is also due to the consistently good quality of teaching combined with the pupils' responsible attitudes and skills of independent learning.

9. In all classes, the small size of teaching groups enables teachers to give more individual attention to pupils than is the case in most schools. Teachers also get to know their pupils very well, because there are so few of them. Consequently, the quality of teachers' assessment of their pupils in the key skills of literacy and numeracy and in their social development is good. The information used from these assessments is well used to help the pupils to focus on what they need to achieve next. In science and the foundation subjects, assessment is not as good, and this is because of the lack of information provided by the curriculum planning on which assessment is based. Therefore, in these subjects pupils do not progress as well as they might because teachers' assessments are not precise enough.

10. Pupils made sound progress in developing skills in literacy at Key Stage 1. They listen carefully and show understanding by being able to follow instructions. By the age of seven they speak with clarity and fluency appropriate to their age. Pupils use their knowledge of letter sounds well to help them to decipher unfamiliar words and to produce phonetically acceptable attempts at spellings. Their growing vocabulary and knowledge of high-frequency words helps them to write with reasonable fluency. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress overall. Skills in speaking and listening develop well as pupils grow in confidence and maturity and begin to take an increasingly active role in their learning. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 frequently explain the method they have used to arrive at an answer. Reading skills also develop

well as pupils use an increasing range of strategies, such as the context of a sentence, to help them to read more demanding text. Their improving skills in research help them to quickly locate information in non-fiction books. Pupils' improved punctuation and good knowledge of grammar, together with the wide range of opportunities to write in a range of different styles, results in generally clear and fluent written work. However, while the style and content of pupils' writing is of a good standard, their spelling and handwriting are only average.

11. Pupils' skills in numeracy develop well at both key stages. At Key Stage 1 pupils' understanding of number and their skills in using numbers progress well. By the time they are in Year 2, pupils show a developing knowledge of the place value of numbers up to 100 and accurately add and subtract two-digit numbers. A good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' skills in recognising the patterns created by numbers. These skills help them to learn about odd and even numbers and to understand concepts such as 'lots of' or 'sets of' when learning their two and five times tables. At Key Stage 2 pupils continue to build on this firm foundation. Pupils successfully develop their skills in estimation, so that by the time they are in Year 6 they have a good idea as to whether or not the answer to a calculation is likely to be correct. Their skills in manipulating numbers also develop well and they show speed and accuracy in mental arithmetic.

12. Skills of scientific enquiry develop satisfactorily at Key Stage 1. Pupils have a basic understanding of the principles of 'fair testing' and learn how to record their answers in a logical way. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress overall, because of specialist teaching and greater opportunities for experimental work. However, because of the way in which the curriculum is planned, there is sometimes little significant difference between the skills taught to pupils in Year 4 and Year 6.

13. Pupils are not always able to improve their skills in literacy through their work in other areas of the curriculum. However, they are given good opportunities to use their skills in numeracy to help them in their work in subjects such as science and design and technology. Skills in information and communication technology are satisfactorily used to help pupils with their work in other subjects.

14. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are provided with work matched to their prior attainment. They play a full part in all activities and achieve at the same rate as their classmates.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

15. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, and personal development, and the relationships within the school, have improved significantly since the last full inspection in 1996, when inspectors judged that they were satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2.

16. When children enter the school, at the start of the reception year, their social skills are at a level normally expected, but when they leave at the age of 11 their skills have improved greatly. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and the quality

relationships is excellent. The response of pupils to opportunities provided for their personal development is also excellent. The school provides a calm, but challenging and purposeful, learning environment where pupils are able to flourish in an atmosphere of trust and co-operation.

17. Pupils displayed good or very good attitudes to their work in more than eight out of ten lessons. Attitudes were particularly good in the Year 5 and 6 class, where pupils' response was very good in two thirds of lessons. Pupils enjoy coming to school very much, and this is reflected in their positive attitudes to their work. This improvement in attitudes since the last inspection has been a significant factor in the improved standards of attainment. Pupils settle quickly to their work and are eager to learn. They listen attentively and respond well to teachers' questioning. Most pupils are eager to do well, and are motivated and enthusiastic about their work. Pupils respond well to extra-curricular activities, with boys and girls alike enthusiastically taking part in football and netball.

18. Behaviour in lessons has improved greatly since the last inspection, particularly in Key Stage 2. The very good behaviour, in and around the school, reflects the school's aims and has a positive effect on the quality of learning. On entry to the school, the very youngest children quickly conform to the school's code of behaviour. Throughout the school, pupils show respect for their teachers. They respond positively to the high expectations of good behaviour. Pupils are always polite and courteous, readily offering to help visitors in their school. No incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour were seen during the inspection. Pupils from all classes, interviewed during the inspection, felt that there was no bullying in their school and that if they did feel unhappy about anything they could talk to a member of their school council or any member of staff. During the previous academic year no pupils were excluded from the school.

19. Relationships between all members of the school community have improved significantly since the last inspection. The fruits of these positive relationships are seen in lessons where pupils co-operate well in paired and group work. By the time they reach Years 5 and 6, pupils respect and trust one another. For example, in a mathematics lesson, pupils felt able to say that they did not fully understand the relationship between percentages and fractions. They knew they could do so without fear of feeling inadequate or being laughed at. Pupils of all ages play well together during break times. The local playgroup, based in a temporary building on site, felt able to allow its playtime to coincide with that of the school, because pupils interact so well with the toddlers.

20. Pupils display very high levels of personal development and maturity. From an early age, pupils start to be closely involved in the development of their own learning. By the end of Key Stage 2 they regularly review their work and, in discussions with their class teacher, seek ways to improve. Pupils show great understanding of the impact of their actions on others, and pay full respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. For example, in a 'forum assembly', organised by the pupils, everyone was asked to reflect upon the youngest members of the school community and those new to the school, offering their support. Pupils respond very well to opportunities to take part in major developments affecting the school. For instance, members of the school council were involved in interviewing applicants for a teaching post and are now looking forward to meeting the architects when the school's new building project gets underway.

21. Attendance at the school is good and is above the national average. The great majority of pupils arrive at school on time. However, the school does have some concern about pupils being taken out of school for annual holidays, particularly at the beginning of the school year. Registration is taken quickly and efficiently. The good attendance and punctuality of pupils reflects their positive attitudes to school and contributes greatly to their levels of attainment and progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

22. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 and is good at Key Stage 2. During the course of the inspection, twenty lessons were observed. One of these was very good, eight were good, ten were satisfactory and one was unsatisfactory. Although statistically the number of good and very good lessons are a minority, evidence from a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work supports the judgement that most lessons are generally of a good quality. Furthermore, during the course of the inspection, one of the three classes was taught by supply teachers, who stepped in at short notice because of staff absence. Therefore, the period of inspection did not provide a true picture of the usual teaching situation.

23. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last full inspection in 1996. At that time, almost six lessons in every ten were unsatisfactory and over one in ten were poor.

24. The most consistently good teaching is provided for pupils in the Year 5 and 6 class. Other good features are the *Plan, do and review* lessons in Class 1 and the specialist teaching of music.

25. The overall quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, as the teacher has sound knowledge of how young children learn. Other features that contribute to the quality of education are the enthusiasm of the teacher and the excellent relationships between staff and children. Learning is at its best when activities are well planned to meet the needs of the Foundation Stage children as well as the pupils in Years 1 and 2. The *Plan, do and review lesson*, in which children have a guided choice of activities to select from, is a good example of this. Minor weaknesses in the teaching occur when activities are not well matched to the needs of all the children in the Foundation Stage and do not involve the children actively in their learning. The school is aware of the need to develop the planning for the Foundation Stage, with greater emphasis on the six areas of learning⁴ and the stepping stones that show progression towards nationally recognised early learning goals.⁵

26. The small numbers of pupils in each class enable teachers to provide good quality individual help for pupils, to develop excellent relationships with them, and to get to know each individual very well. The 'family' atmosphere evident in all classes, with high standards of behaviour and mutual respect, is a significant factor in the progress made by pupils in lessons and over time.

⁴ The six areas of learning are: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development.

⁵ The early learning goals are the targets that most children are expected to achieve by the time that they reach the end of the Foundation Stage.

27. Skills in literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily at Key Stage 1 and in the early years of Key Stage 2. They are well taught in Years 5 and 6.

28. In the best lessons, teachers clearly explain what is to be done and carefully prepare necessary materials. Consequently, pupils are able to start work quickly and know exactly what they have to do. Good subject knowledge, combined with good assessment of the depth of pupils' understanding, enables teachers to respond to the needs of individuals. They rephrase questions, or approach from a different perspective the way in which a particular skill is taught. This occurred in a Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson where the teacher quickly realised that some pupils were experiencing difficulty in understanding the very difficult concept of the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. As a result, a group of these pupils was quickly formed, and teaching was specifically targeted at their needs. All pupils made good gains in understanding and responded well to the teacher's high expectations. This type of response to specific difficulties is possible only where good class routines are in place, and where other pupils have responsible attitudes and can be relied upon to work independently during the period of group teaching.

29. Shortcomings in teaching stem from the lack of clear guidance provided by some of the medium-term curriculum planning, from which teachers' learning objectives are often drawn. Where learning objectives are imprecise, teachers do not know exactly at what level they are to teach and assess. This is particularly important when lessons have to cater for a wide range of ages and abilities. In the single unsatisfactory lesson, work was not matched well enough to the needs of the pupils and some of the direct teaching was too long. As a result, the pace of learning was slow and some pupils lost interest.

30. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not the principal language spoken at home are generally well taught. They enjoy full access to the curriculum and are fully integrated into lessons. Work is well tailored to their needs and they make good progress overall.

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

31. Overall, the school provides pupils with a satisfactory range of learning opportunities through its curriculum. While there is effective planning for the core subjects of literacy and numeracy, there are weaknesses in the planning for children in the Foundation Stage, in science, and in the non-core subjects. Overall, there is very good provision for pupils' personal development. Provision is good for spiritual and cultural development, very good for moral development, and exemplary for social development. This represents an improvement in the school's provision since the last inspection.

32. The school provides an appropriate range of activities for the very small number of children in the Foundation Stage, which results in their making satisfactory progress. Owing to the small sizes of year groups, children in the Foundation Stage are taught alongside pupils in Key Stage 1. The children in the Foundation Stage lack additional, regular support. The result is that many of the activities planned for them are linked to the lessons designed for pupils in Key Stage 1 and amended to provide activities at an appropriate level. It is therefore not clear how children progressively develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes required to reach the early learning goals in the areas of learning. This

situation also makes accurate assessment of children's progress difficult. The shortage of staff for the youngest children has been recognised by the school, and a temporary appointment has been made to help to address the situation. The school's provision for children's physical development is limited by the lack of opportunities to use large outdoor equipment, such as wheeled toys.

33. The curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. It meets statutory requirements by ensuring that all National Curriculum subjects are included. There is a clear focus on the teaching of literacy and numeracy, and teachers have successfully introduced the national strategies for these subjects. The structure these provide has had a positive impact on the teaching and standards achieved in English and mathematics. Although the school does not plan the teaching of religious education solely on Cambridgeshire's locally Agreed Syllabus; it meets its requirements.

34. The school has recently adopted new national guidelines for all subjects other than literacy and numeracy. This has provided teachers with a clear plan of the topics and activities to be taught. The current framework of a two-year cycle of work will allow for future development of the curriculum as the school grows in size. As yet, the school has not adapted the national guidelines to meet its specific needs, nor has it identified the way in which pupils' skills are to be developed in a step-by-step way as they move from Year 1 to Year 6. Outline curriculum plans for science and the foundation subjects provide details of the activities to be taught rather than the levels at which skills are to be taught. This reduces the effectiveness of the teachers' planning, as learning objectives, taken from outline planning, are at times imprecise and undue repetition occasionally occurs. For example, the aim to '*practise speaking and listening skills*' does not focus the teacher on which specific skills pupils need to practise. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that there is sometimes little significant difference between the skills taught in some Year 4 and Year 6 science and design and technology topics. Accurate assessment of pupils' progress is difficult, as the school does not have clear targets against which to assess progress.

35. The curriculum is generally well balanced and it includes appropriate provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. The governors have approved the school's sex education programme and the school has made provision for drug awareness education. The requirements for physical education are not fully met because of the limited resources available when the school uses the village hall for gymnastics. The current system of alternating the teaching of history and geography has led to gaps in which the subjects are not taught. This is having a negative impact on pupils' learning. It prevents the progressive development of historical and geographical skills and understanding, and makes it difficult for pupils to retain knowledge. This has resulted in the below average standards in these subjects.

36. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils on its register of special educational needs. Teachers produce individual education plans with appropriate targets and specific activities to support these pupils' learning. Learning support staff ensure that these pupils have access to a broad and relevant curriculum. Teachers regularly review the pupils' progress towards their targets. However, progress is not always assessed against the individual targets, which makes the setting of future targets less effective.

37. The school has good links with the village playgroup, ensuring a smooth transfer into reception, and satisfactory links with other local schools. It enhances the curriculum with a good range of extra-

curricular activities. These include sporting clubs and inter-school matches in football, netball and cricket, and musical activities, such as recorder club, individual instrument tuition, and orchestra. A large number of pupils take advantage of these additional opportunities, which are organised by staff, parents and community groups. The school makes satisfactory use of the community to enhance pupils' learning, including visits from a storyteller, musicians, theatre groups and the local police. The curriculum is also enhanced by visits to places such as a local farm, museums and a music workshop, and a residential visit for pupils in Year 6.

38. The provision the school makes for pupils' spiritual development is good. Assemblies and religious education lessons provide opportunities for pupils to recognise and reflect upon important issues. Teachers develop a sense of joy within many lessons. For example in Key Stage 1, the final activity in the religious education lesson celebrated pupils' writing, particularly where pupils had made a significant breakthrough in learning. The teacher also gave time for pupils to reflect on their special thoughts they had written on their scrolls, based on prayer scrolls used in the Jewish faith. In Key Stage 2, pupils reflected on artefacts that are special to Muslims and relate this to items, which their teacher considered special. The teacher created a very effective, quiet, reflective mood by playing Greig's '*Morning*' from Peer Gynt. Pupils have good opportunities to reflect on the feelings of others. A pupil in the forum assembly encouraged others to think of how a new pupil would be feeling having recently joined the school.

39. Pupils' moral development is very good and results in the high standards of behaviour observed during the inspection. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour, which are implicit in the way in which they speak to the pupils. Pupils have discussed and agreed the school rules, which provide clear guidance for staff and pupils. Teachers ensure that pupils are aware of the effects of their actions and encourage pupils to discuss how they can solve minor disputes when they arise. Pupils are encouraged to respect each other and to behave sensibly. They have a good understanding of right and wrong.

40. The school makes excellent provision for pupils' social development. Older pupils are encouraged to look after younger ones, and this creates a family atmosphere within the school. In lessons, teachers give pupils many opportunities to work co-operatively and collaboratively. For example, pupils collaborated well in small groups during a music lesson. Members of staff consider pupils as equal partners in the school and this has a very positive impact on relationships within the school and in pupils' personal development. Teachers gave pupils an opportunity to express their views on the planned extension to the building, and welcomed the 'wish list' of ideas they created. There are very good opportunities for pupils to extend their responsibilities throughout the school. Commendable examples of this are the school council, which includes elected members from each class, and the weekly 'forum assembly' organised by pupils.

41. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good overall. Pupils gain a rich understanding of their own culture through local studies and visits, for example to local museums and musical workshops. Visitors, such as musicians and theatre groups, add to this experience. The pupils' understanding of other cultures is less well developed, though satisfactory. In religious education, pupils have studied aspects of other world religions, such as Judaism and Islam. They have handled a range of artefacts to help them gain a deeper understanding of other peoples. However, their knowledge of how people from other parts of the world live is limited.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school creates an atmosphere in which pupils feel very happy and secure. It is a caring community, which supports, encourages and values pupils as individuals. Staff know their pupils very well, and pupils show high levels of concern for one another's welfare. All parents or carers who returned their questionnaires felt that the school helps their child to become mature and responsible.

43. Overall, the procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Child protection procedures are firmly in place and training of staff is up to date. Fully trained first-aiders are in place and all members of staff have regular training in resuscitation techniques. Regular fire checks are carried out and recorded. The governing body has recently reorganised the committee for health and safety, and arrangements are in place to formalise their procedures in readiness for the new building project. The school is clean, tidy and in good repair, and provides a safe environment for pupils.

44. Arrangements for monitoring and promoting good attendance are good. Registers are consistently monitored and any cause for concern is followed up with the support of the educational welfare officer. Parents are made aware of the need for regular attendance and punctuality, through newsletters, verbal communication and leaflets. The reporting and recording of attendance meet statutory requirements.

45. The school has good arrangements for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Pupils know and understand how they should behave and they respond accordingly. Pupils are involved in forming their class and school rules, and abide by them. Pupils value their names being entered in the 'Good Book', and the consequent recognition in assembly of their good work, behaviour or attitude. Any incidents of poor behaviour are very rare. However, should any occur, they are dealt with quickly and appropriately through the school's culture of involving pupils in decision making, and the high levels of fairness and respect for one another.

46. Good procedures are in place for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress and personal development. Teachers keep regular notes of pupils' progress in a 'Record of Achievement'. Three times a year, pupils take part in a review of their work with their class teacher, looking at their previous targets, evaluating progress, and seeking ways to work together to achieve further improvements. Annual written reports to parents contain full information. At consultation evenings in October and March, parents receive very detailed information about their child's personal development and academic progress, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

47. Overall, the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and the use of assessment to guide curriculum planning, are satisfactory. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress in English and mathematics, but those for other subjects are not so clear. The criteria used to assess pupils are imprecise, because they are often based on medium-term curriculum planning which lacks detail, and sometimes leads to rather subjective and vague judgements. The result is that assessment records are only useful in giving information about what pupils have been taught rather than identifying the next steps that need to be taken to develop learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The partnership with parents has improved considerably since the last inspection. It is now very good and a significant strength of the school. Views of parents are very positive. Responses to inspection questionnaires show that, apart from three per cent of parents disagreeing about the amount of homework their child has to do at home, all other questions received a one hundred per cent positive response.

49. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. Annual reports about their children's progress give very good detailed information about academic and personal development, and how children can further improve their work. At consultation evenings, parents receive an interim report on their children's progress, where targets for improvement are reviewed and set. Parents receive very good information through a well-presented school prospectus and governors' annual report. Regular fortnightly newsletters give parents detailed information about day-to-day matters and, at the beginning of each term, information about what their children are to learn.

50. Parents make a very good contribution to children's learning at school and at home. Parents are encouraged to help in school and are able to help with reading, practical activities, swimming and playing the piano. Parents support the school well by their good attendance at consultation evenings, school plays, community assemblies and sporting events. The information parents receive about what their children are to learn gives them good opportunities to contribute to their children's learning at home. The school is very well supported by an active parent-teacher association. Its social and fund-raising events make a significant contribution to the life and work of the school and are an important part of the life of the village community.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The school is very well led by the headteacher. She effectively manages the school in close partnership with the governing body, and has established a very good partnership with parents and the wider community. She knows her pupils very well and has a clear view of the future development of the school. All staff and governors ably support her. Teaching staff are committed to improving pupils' attainment and are good at reflecting critically on their practice. There are excellent relationships within the school and a strong sense of teamwork among all staff. Parents are greatly appreciative of her efforts and her accessibility. All those who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the school is well led and managed.

52. The commitment of governors is considerable. The governing body is effectively organised and successfully fulfils its statutory responsibilities. Its role in shaping the direction of the school is very good. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and make frequent visits. These visits often have a specific focus, since each governor has overview of an area of the curriculum or an aspect of the school's work. An example of the extent of the governors' involvement in the day-to-day activities within the school, and the way, in which they use their expertise or interests for the benefit of the school, is the project to develop a school web site. This was undertaken during the last school year by the current chair of governors, the headteacher, and pupils who are now in Year 6. It is a further example of the school's view of pupils as equal partners in their

education. Governors have formed committees to monitor aspects of the school such as finance, the curriculum, premises and health and safety. Governors who were interviewed displayed a very clear view of the long-term strategic development of the school. They are making good use of data to compare the school against others in terms of its performance and income.

53. Following the previous full inspection in October 1996 the school was judged to be in need of special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. Three key issues for improvement were:

- * the improvement of the quality of teaching;
- * the establishment of sound professional leadership and management;
- * the improvement of pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

The first and third of these issues related specifically to Key Stage 2, where attainment was below average and pupils were making unsatisfactory progress.

54. A subsequent re-inspection by HMI in September and October 1998 judged that good progress had been made in addressing all of the key issues and that the school no longer required special measures. At that time, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was judged to be average and pupils made steady progress. Following that inspection, three issues were identified to help the school to improve further:

- * the improvement of standards in information technology and writing at Key Stage 2;
- * the provision of greater challenge for the more able pupils;
- * the improvement of teachers' assessments of pupils within lessons.

55. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since 1996, with 95 per cent of lessons satisfactory or better, as opposed to just 41 per cent at the time of the first inspection. The quality of leadership is now very good and pupils have positive attitudes towards school and are very well behaved. Good progress has also been made in addressing the issues identified by HMI in 1998. Standards in information technology at Key Stage 2 have improved and are now satisfactory, and standards of writing at Key Stage 2 are now good. Work is generally well matched to pupils' abilities, so that more able pupils are properly challenged. Teachers' assessments of pupils within lessons are generally good in terms of the quality of their questioning to determine the depth of pupils' understanding. On the other hand, assessments are sometimes too subjective because the learning objectives on which they are based lack precision. As a result of the further improvements made since 1998, the standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 2 are now above average and pupils are making good progress.

56. The school development plan is of good quality and sets out a clear outline of future priorities. It provides good detail of initiatives to be put in train during the current academic year and an outline of proposals beyond this. It also contains thorough evaluations of previous initiatives and good contextual information. The plan is not easy to follow, since the user constantly needs to cross-reference information contained in different parts of the document, but it is nevertheless a useful working document for the school.

57. The greatest challenge currently facing the school is the management of its expansion as more pupils are admitted from the local housing developments. One section of the development plan deals with this and shows that a great deal of thought has already been given to it. In previous terms, the governors wisely decided to use part of the contingency fund in their budget to maintain staffing levels. They did this so that in the early stages of its expansion the school would have the capacity to admit new pupils without having to re-organise its classes. The way in which the curriculum has been planned, in a two-year cycle, also allows the school to manage its future growth without having to re-write its schemes of work.

58. The quality of teaching and learning is currently monitored well. There is little need for a formal system of lesson observations because the school is very small and the headteacher knows all pupils very well and knows what is being taught in the other two classes. If necessary, lessons can easily be observed. Responsibilities for the different subjects of the curriculum and aspects of the school's work are shared among the three teachers, so that each is responsible for a number of areas. In reality, however, the teachers work well as a team and help one another as needed. The headteacher is fully aware of the need to develop a more systematic approach to monitoring and a more formalised structure of responsibilities as more teachers are employed.

59. The school makes good use of its resources. Staff are effectively deployed and all available space is very well used. The lack of adult help in Class 1 has been recognised by the school and a temporary appointment has been made. This should enable the teacher to plan better activities for the youngest children. The premises are well maintained and are cleaned to a good standard. The school administrator is both hardworking and capable. The day-to-day administration of the school is efficient and effective, enabling teachers to concentrate on their work with the pupils.

60. A wide range of indicators, including the quality of teaching, the improvement since the last inspections, the quality of leadership and the good standards achieved, shows that the school is effective. Although unit costs are high, they are typical of most small schools and therefore the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. In order to improve further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- Improve standards in geography and history by:
(*Paragraphs 5, 31, 35, 103.*)
 - * ensuring that pupils have regular opportunities to develop and practise their skills.
- Improve curriculum planning and the quality of assessment in science and the foundation subjects by:
(*Paragraphs: 9, 12, 31, 34, 47, 88, 99 100, 103, 113, 121.*)
 - * clearly setting out the way in which skills are to be developed in these subjects as pupils move through the school from Year 1 to Year 6;
 - * indicating, on the curriculum plan, precisely what is expected of each year group in terms of the skills and knowledge to be taught;
 - * ensuring that the criteria used to assess pupils' progress are based on the curriculum plan, and that the criteria are precise and measurable.
- Improve the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage by:
(*Paragraphs: 7, 25, 31, 32, 59, 62, 64, 65, 67.*)
 - * ensuring that additional help is provided for the very youngest children so that greater emphasis can be placed on the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	40	50	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	45
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	16

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	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	4.4	School data	0
National comparative data	5.2	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 and Key Stage 2.

Details of the National Curriculum test results for the Year 2000 are not included in this report because the numbers of pupils tested at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 were very small.

However, the results of the tests can be summarised as follows:

- * Standards achieved in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage, 1 and in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2, were much higher than the national average.

Where there are very few pupils tested, interpretations of results need to be treated with caution, since variations in attainment of individual pupils can disproportionately affect the overall percentages. For example, only five pupils were tested at the end of Key Stage 1, so each pupil achieving the national target of Level 2 contributed 20 per cent of the school's total score.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	38
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14.5
Average class size	15

**Education support staff:
YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	39

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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.

Financial information

Financial year	1999 – 2000
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	£
Total income	137,758.00
Total expenditure	141,662.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,725.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,840.00
Balance carried forward to next year	89,360.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	45
Number of questionnaires returned	32

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81	19	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	81	19	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	88	12	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	53	3	0	3
The teaching is good.	91	9	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	72	28	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	97	3	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	94	6	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	69	31	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	100	0	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	81	19	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	72	28	0	0	0

Other issues raised by parents

Over 70 per cent of the pre-inspection questionnaires were returned. Sixteen parents attended the pre-inspection meeting with the Registered Inspector. The views expressed at the meeting were overwhelmingly positive and supportive of the school.

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

62. Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage ensures a sound basis for their future learning. Children enter reception at the beginning of the academic year in which they are five. The very small number of children come with a wide range of different skills and experiences. Overall, their attainment on entry is similar to that expected of their age. The results of an early assessment of children – the school’s baseline assessment - confirm this. The children join older pupils from Years 1 and 2 in the Key Stage 1 class. The children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and satisfactory progress in all other areas of learning. The exception is in physical development, where children do not reach the expected levels because of the constraints of the accommodation and resources. These shortcomings in the accommodation will be addressed as part of the building development to be carried out. Lack of adult help in Class 1 means that the teacher has to try to plan Foundation Stage activities within lessons for the majority of pupils, who are in Key Stage 1.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. Children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills and achieve the early learning goals for this area of learning by the start of Year 1. They are beginning to concentrate for longer periods, work well together, and converse with each other as they work. For example, they showed sustained effort when making models from clay, and sensibly worked under the guidance of a parent-helper, quietly discussing their work, families and friends. In the activity room, they play together well and co-operate when role-playing in the classroom shop. They work happily alongside classmates from Years 1 and 2. This provides good role models for the younger children. Adults have high expectations of the children, and the effective use of praise and encouragement helps them to settle quickly into the security of the classroom.

Communication, language and literacy

64. Children make sound progress in acquiring the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. They talk together frequently as they work at their tasks. They are beginning to understand that conversation also involves listening to others. During the introduction to lessons, children listen attentively to their teacher and most know and explain clearly what their work entails. Children have many opportunities during the day to observe adults and older pupils handle books. Therefore, they know the conventions of ‘front to back’ and ‘top to bottom’ when reading stories. They are beginning to recognise patterns in sounds and some initial letters in words. Children are keen to write and often choose to make marks on paper of their own volition. Most write their name with clarity and confidence. With help, children rearrange word cards into a simple sentence and then stick them in the correct order into their books. As a result of satisfactory teaching, children achieve appropriate standards. However, some activities, which are shared with older pupils during literacy lessons, are not always at an appropriate level for children of this age.

Mathematical development

65. Overall, children make satisfactory progress in developing their mathematical skills. They make good progress in counting, but progress in other aspects of this area of learning is more limited. Children join in the introductions to the Key Stage 1 numeracy lessons. However, this activity is, at times, too long and generally too difficult for them. They count successfully to twenty, as demonstrated in a dice game. They recognise numbers to ten and some can successfully add more to a number. Many activities do not sufficiently develop the children's mathematical language. For example when exploring balances, the adult working with the children did not highlight specific terms such as *light* and *heavy*. Children know the names of simple shapes, including *circle*, *square* and *triangle*, and the days of the week, but they are not confident in the use of this mathematical vocabulary.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. Children are on course to reach the expected early learning goals for this area of learning by the time they begin Year 1. Staff promote this area well and sound progress is made. Children are curious about the world around them and ask sensible questions and show interest. For example, they have developed an understanding of how they have changed. They looked at the items a baby needs – a bottle, a blanket and a cot – and understand that they themselves no longer need them. Through work connected to a Key Stage 1 geography project, they know that new houses are being built in the village and that there is a farm near the school. The teacher provides useful activities to develop their knowledge of their senses in simple investigations. For example, in a taste quiz they tried different flavours of crisps and decided which was their favourite. Staff gives children a good range of opportunities to use information and communication technology. For example, they use the classroom computer to produce simple pictures, and successfully make a programmable toy robot move forward.

Physical development

67. Staff provide a good range of activities to develop children's fine motor skills, such as when using pencils, paintbrushes, modelling tools, scissors and the computer's mouse. This results in children making satisfactory progress in this aspect of their physical development. They enjoy writing, painting and model making and show appropriate control of the tools they use. The constraints of the accommodation and lack of suitable equipment limit the overall development of children's physical skills. Children's experience on a daily basis of climbing, jumping, balancing and using large apparatus and wheeled toys is severely limited. The school compensates for this by involving the children in the weekly Key Stage 1 physical education lessons and in the daily fitness session where teachers organise playground games. The school is aware of the need to improve the provision for this area of learning.

Creative development

68. Children make satisfactory progress in their creative development. They are on course to reach the expected early learning goals by the time they reach Year 1. Children enjoy using paint and drawing, for instance when exploring colour by mixing primary colours and when using chalks to draw self-portraits. They develop appropriate basic techniques to enable them to use and control tools and materials. Staff provide satisfactory opportunities for imaginative play in the role-play area, where

children visit the classroom shop and office. There is a planned weekly music lesson in which the children learn simple action songs, such as *Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes*. They enjoy the actions and try hard to join in with the singing of the words, from memory.

ENGLISH

69. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' progress was unsatisfactory. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were in line with national expectations, but standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were below average. During the last two years, the school has worked hard at introducing the National Literacy Strategy, and the quality of teaching and learning, particularly at Key Stage 2, has greatly improved. Inspection evidence shows that, by the end of the school year, pupils in Year 6 are in line to achieve standards above those expected nationally.

70. The results of National Curriculum tests over the past three years, together with inspection evidence, reflect the sound start that pupils make in Key Stage 1. Currently, these pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning, and standards are average. By the age of seven, most pupils within the very small year groups achieve the expected standard, Level 2, in reading and writing. Results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 have been more varied. Over the past three years, about eight out of every ten pupils achieved the expected standard, Level 4, which is broadly similar to the proportion found nationally. However, less than half achieved the expected standard in writing. As a result of recent improvements to teaching, pupils' progress has accelerated, particularly in the second part of the key stage. By the age of 11, standards are now above average, as a greater proportion of pupils achieve the higher standard, Level 5, than is found nationally.

71. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates and they achieve appropriate standards, given their prior attainment. Teachers clearly identify appropriate targets within these pupils' individual education plans. Specific activities supported by learning support assistants ensure that sound progress is made. Pupils with English as an additional language similarly make sound progress in their development of language skills.

72. Teaching in literacy lessons is satisfactory overall. Two of the three lessons observed were satisfactory and the other was good. This results in sound learning in Key Stage 1 and at the beginning of Key Stage 2. Standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing for these pupils are average. Good teaching at the end of Key Stage 2 ensures that pupils achieve above average standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing by the age of 11. Teachers have clear expectations of how pupils are to behave, which result in very good behaviour in lessons. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good, and teachers use encouraging praise most effectively to motivate pupils.

73. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to listen carefully to stories. These result in pupils making satisfactory progress in their listening skills at Key Stage 1. The rate of progress accelerates in Key Stage 2, where teachers ensure that pupils are attentive at the start of a story. Teachers read stories well, with enthusiasm and expression, thus capturing the pupils' attention. For example, pupils were engrossed in the story of *'St George and the Dragon'* at the start of a literacy lesson. Older pupils were keen to write their own versions of a frightening scene, having listened with great interest to well

chosen extracts read to them. Throughout the school, pupils speak with confidence. Teachers give pupils regular opportunities to discuss their work and to explain what they have learned.

74. Pupils in Key Stage 1 enjoy reading and achieve appropriate standards for their age. When reading they use their increasing knowledge of letter sounds to help them read unfamiliar words. More able pupils read simple texts with expression and with regard to punctuation. They show good levels of understanding. Pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills in Key Stage 2. By the end of the key stage standards are above average, as the majority of the small number of pupils are in line to achieve the higher standard, Level 5. Teachers introduce pupils to a wide range of books and authors. As a consequence, pupils develop a keen interest in reading. They begin to build up a bank of favourite authors, which currently include Enid Blyton, JK Rowling and Arthur Ransome. They use a range of strategies to predict the meaning of unknown words. For example, one pupil correctly identified the word '*vittles*' from the context of the sentence. Pupils use contents and index pages effectively to locate and retrieve information from non-fiction books. More able pupils are self-motivated and confident readers. They tackle demanding texts and read fluently and with expression, taking on the voice of the characters where relevant. Pupils use reading diaries to record the books they have read, but these do not always form an effective link between home and school.

75. Progress in writing at is at least satisfactory, and is good at the end of Key Stage 2. Teachers concentrate on teaching the basic skills of grammar, spelling and handwriting. They have good subject knowledge and break down the skills that pupils are to learn into small manageable steps. This results in pupils learning well. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 are developing their understanding of punctuation through the use of full stops and question marks and, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils make good use of direct speech in their writing. Teachers provide a wide range of opportunities to write in different styles. For instance, in Year 2, pupils practise writing instructions in a series of steps within a flow diagram. At Key Stage 2, younger pupils write '*Haiku*' poems, while older pupils write well structured arguments on the subject of whether Shakespeare is outdated. As a result, pupils develop a love for language, a wide vocabulary, and an ability to write interesting and exciting stories. For example, pupils produced well-structured 'frightening' stories in which there was very good use of vocabulary. However, while the style and content of pupils' writing is of a good standard, their spelling and handwriting are only average. Teachers give pupils too few opportunities to re-draft their work so that they can identify and correct errors and improve its overall presentation. Pupils make satisfactory use of information and communication technology to present their ideas, but teachers give pupils too few opportunities to develop and use their literacy skills in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

76. Standards in mathematics are above average at the end of both key stages. This is an improvement on the situation reported at the time of the previous full inspection in 1996, when standards were average at the end of Key Stage 1 but below average at the end of Key Stage 2.

77. Owing to the small groups of pupils tested each year, interpretations placed on the results of the national tests for a single year are unreliable. A more statistically sound sample is obtained by looking at test results as a whole over the past three years. This shows that at the end of Key Stage 2 standards achieved have been about average overall, with seven out of every ten eleven year olds

attaining or exceeding the national target of Level 4. Results at the end of Key Stage 1 have been better, although fewer pupils were tested. All seven year olds tested during this period achieved or exceeded the national target of Level 2. Inspection findings reflect the good standards achieved in the tests for seven year olds and the improved results of 11 year olds in the tests for the Year 2000.

78. Almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress over time. This is due to the well-structured curriculum, the careful monitoring of progress through regular assessments, the individual attention pupils receive because of lower class sizes, and the quality of pupils' attitudes developed by the school.

79. At Key Stage 1 pupils progress well in their understanding of number and their skills in using numbers. By the time they are in Year 2 pupils show a developing knowledge of the place value of numbers up to 100 and accurately add and subtract two digit numbers. Recognition of the patterns created by numbers helps pupils to learn about odd and even numbers and to understand concepts such as '*lots of*' or '*sets of*' when learning their two and five times tables. In the single lesson observed at Key Stage 1, pupils in Year 1 were competently counting on and making patterns of numbers on a 100 number-square. In the same lesson, higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 were confidently using their knowledge of place value and their understanding of patterns of numbers to produce sequences in which the tens digit increased while the units digit decreased, thus: 29, 38, 47 and so on. Less confident pupils achieved a similar standard, but needed to use counting apparatus to help them. This lesson also successfully helped pupils to develop their understanding of zero and its function as a '*place holder*' in numbers such as 70 and 106. A scrutiny of work which pupils had completed earlier in the school year shows that a good range of the curriculum is taught. The work of Year 2 pupils showed good levels of understanding and accuracy in recording various concepts. These included telling the time to the hour and half hour, the properties of two-dimensional shapes, basic symmetry, and measurement with the use of simple standard units such as centimetres.

80. At Key Stage 2, pupils successfully build on the firm foundations laid in Key Stage 1. The core skill of estimation is soundly taught in Years 3 and 4 and, as a result, pupils are generally accurate when positioning numbers along an unmarked number line. For instance, pupils correctly placed a number such as 450 in its relative position in the space between 150 and 700. Skills in manipulating numbers also develop well, so that pupils in Year 4 can, for example, quickly arrange four-digit numbers to produce a variety of totals either above or below pre-determined values. In the single lesson observed in Year 5 and 6, pupils were tackling the difficult concept of the relationships between fractions, decimals and percentages. All pupils knew that these were different ways of expressing parts of a whole, and almost all confidently used subject-specific vocabulary when explaining their answers. By the end of the lesson, most pupils were able to move from fractions to decimals to percentages with reasonable confidence and were able to place a wide-ranging mixture of these in the correct order. Higher-attaining pupils, comprising about a quarter of the class, showed speed and accuracy in this work. Work completed earlier in the school year shows good coverage of the breadth of the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 6 accurately record time in both analogue and digit formats, know how to calculate the area and perimeter of shapes, and have a sound understanding of co-ordinates. Higher attaining pupils are developing their skills in using and interpreting co-ordinates in all four quadrants.

81. In both key stages, good emphasis is placed on pupils using and applying the skills learned in a variety of practical situations, and good links are made between mathematics and science. For example, temperature readings are collated and tabulated as graphs. Sometimes skills in information and communication technology are used and these graphs are generated by computer.

82. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Three of the four lessons observed were satisfactory and the other lesson was good. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge. They are good at giving clear explanations, particularly when working with individuals or small groups of pupils, and the small class sizes enable them to do this quite often. Teachers also establish good routines within their classes, and pupils know exactly where to find the necessary equipment. As a consequence, pupils are able to get to work quickly. However, teachers' skills of time management are sometimes not so good, and the demands of catering for a very wide range of abilities and ages result in work not being matched well enough to pupils' abilities. When this occurs, the pace of learning slows.

83. Important factors in pupils' learning in mathematics are their very good attitudes towards work, their very good behaviour, and the excellent quality of relationships within the school. These become even more evident as pupils grow in maturity, so that they become increasingly capable of independent learning. The school is particularly good at involving pupils in their own learning and thereby developing pupils' sense of responsibility for their own work. A very good example of the quality of relationships was observed in a mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6. During the course of the lesson, pupils felt able to let their teacher know that they had not fully grasped aspects of the lesson, without fear of ridicule from the classmates. This quality of dialogue between the teacher and her pupils is one of the reasons for the improved performance in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.

84. Resources for mathematics are generally of good quality, easily accessible, and in reasonably good supply.

SCIENCE

85. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in science was judged to be about average at the end of Key Stage 1 but below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence shows that standards at the end of key stage remain about average, but standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have significantly improved and are now above average. To some degree the improvement throughout Key Stage 2 is undoubtedly due to the specialist teaching the pupils receive, although this was not observed during the course of the inspection because of staff absence.

86. Comparisons between the school's national test and assessment results and those of other schools are unreliable because of the very small numbers of pupils in each year group. When a longer-term view of results is taken, over the past three years, inspection findings broadly reflect the picture of attainment that emerges.

87. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. Owing to the way in which pupils are taught at Key Stage 2, and to the way in which the curriculum is planned, pupils make the most rapid progress in Years 3 and 4.

88. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are taught together as a whole class group, which is possible because of the small numbers of pupils involved. There are two reasons for this arrangement. Pupils can benefit from the subject expertise of the teacher taking the key stage group, and the headteacher can be released from teaching duties for important management and administration tasks. The curriculum for these pupils is planned in a two-year cycle. This is a good feature, since it will enable the school to adjust more easily to a different pattern of class organisation as it expands in future years. Initially, the curriculum for Years 3 and 4 will be able to be separated from that for Years 5 and 6 and then later separated out again into planning for individual year groups. While the two-year plan successfully ensures that the breadth of the National Curriculum requirements is covered, its weakness lies in the way in which it is set out. This weakness also occurs in the planning for Key Stage 1, which is also in a two-year cycle, so the progress of pupils at both key stages is affected. The curriculum sets out the topics to be taught in terms of a very broad outline of the activities to be covered week by week. For example, the following is the outline plan for some of the work about materials and their properties to be covered this term by pupils in Years 1 and 2:

Week 1: 'Clay properties before firing'

Week 2: 'Clay investigation'

Week 3: 'Changes through heating – toasting bread'

This format for planning does not provide clear guidance about the way in which pupils' skills are to be developed in a step-by-step way nor, therefore, about the precise level at which skills are to be taught to different year groups. Since learning objectives for lessons are often taken from the medium-term plan, the use of this format can also result in a lack of precision in teachers' lesson planning. In turn, this makes it difficult for teachers to assess pupils' progress in lessons because no exact criteria for measuring understanding have been set out. When the teaching is directed to a very wide range of ages and abilities, the lack of detailed guidance in medium-term planning can also result in work being more suited to some age groups than others. Evidence from a scrutiny of work previously completed by pupils in Key Stage 2 indicates that this has sometimes happened. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have sometimes been working at a challenging level for their age group while pupils in Years 5 and 6 have made only satisfactory progress. The school recognises this as a difficulty. It is aware that when the curriculum cycle is reviewed work at a different level needs to be planned for pupils currently in Years 3 and 4 when they progress to Years 5 and 6.

89. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know about our senses and have conducted simple experiments to test some of them, such as feeling different everyday objects or tasting different flavours of crisps. They have a basic understanding of the life cycles of some creatures, including the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly. In their work about 'ourselves', they know that our skeleton provides the framework for our bodies and know the names of the main parts of the human body. There are good links with mathematics, for example in the handling of data about the colours of eyes of pupils in the class. From this sound foundation, pupils in Years 3 and 4 develop a greater understanding of how our bodies work and how they are affected by what we eat and how we exercise. For instance, more detailed work is carried out on the movement of joints and the muscles around them, on dental hygiene, and on the effects of exercise on pulse rate. Skills learned in other subjects such as design and technology and mathematics are used well to help pupils to learn, for example in work about hinged joints and in the measurement of pulse rates. In general, work provided for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is very similar. The increased sophistication required of pupils at this level is

achieved only because of the subject teaching expertise of the teacher, and because there are relatively few pupils in these year groups and more individual attention is possible. On occasions, there is evidence of different tasks being provided. One such instance was an experiment carried out by Years 5 and 6 to measure lung capacity. Older pupils also carry out such additional work as research using the computer to find out about blood and blood cells.

90. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory. Of the two lessons observed, one was of good quality and the other was satisfactory. Teachers are good at providing clear explanations and using scientific vocabulary. They generally sustain the pace of lessons well by posing questions from time to time, to provide further challenges, and by setting time limits for activities. A shortcoming is the lack of precision of learning objectives in lesson plans. This leads to a lack of absolute clarity as to the level at which skills are to be taught to different year groups.

91. Pupils' very good attitudes to work, their high standard of behaviour, and the excellent quality of relationships contribute strongly to the standards achieved. Resources for science are adequate.

ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

92. During the course of the inspection only one art and design lesson and two design and technology lessons were observed. Judgements are based on these observations, together with scrutiny of pupils' work, examination of planning, and discussions with pupils and teachers.

93. During the previous two school years, the National Curriculum requirements for these subjects were relaxed to allow time for the national strategies for literacy and numeracy to be put into practice. Evidence from the inspection shows that during this period, in common with most schools, the curriculum was 'slimmed down', but a reasonable balance between the different elements of the subjects was retained. Work produced during this period appears to have been broadly in line with the requirements at the time, at the end of both key stages, and pupils appear to have made satisfactory progress. Work produced during the course of this academic year is also of a satisfactory standard overall, and pupils are making steady progress.

94. Comparisons between standards currently achieved and those observed at the time of the previous inspection cannot be made, except in art at the end of Key Stage 1. At the time of the previous inspection in 1996, standards in art at the end of Key Stage 1 were also judged to be satisfactory, but there was insufficient evidence of pupils' work for a judgement to be made at the end of Key Stage 2. In design and technology, not enough work was available for a judgement to be made about standards at the end of either key stage.

95. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language enjoy the full range of activities experienced by their classmates, and progress at a similar rate to them.

96. Work displayed in the corridor and in classrooms, and samples of previously completed work, shows that pupils have experience in using a reasonable range of media in art and design lessons, although work with fabrics, such as tie-dye and batik, is under-represented. Pupils interviewed also indicated that work with clay has not been a regular feature of art in previous years. In design and

technology, a satisfactory range of activities is provided, though work with electrical and mechanical components appears to be underdeveloped.

97. Firm foundations for work in art and design are established in the Key Stage 1 class, where pupils learn about colour mixing and develop sound skills in brush control when painting. A scrutiny of a sketchbook during a discussion with a Year 2 pupil showed that skills in pencil drawing, such as shading techniques, are taught and practised. Observational drawing is of a satisfactory standard. For example, head and shoulders self-portraits show correct positioning and proportion of facial features, and good attention to small details. In design and technology, the required elements of planning, making, evaluating and learning about the properties of different materials are properly developed. Work displayed in the classroom, on a topic of 'Underwater Sea Creatures'; showed good use of sliding mechanisms to produce eye movements in cut-out pictures of octopuses, and the use of paper fasteners to make hinged joints for the creatures' legs. In a lesson about designing glove puppets, the teacher ensured that the pupils had a good understanding of what materials might be suitable for joining pieces of fabric before they began to sketch out their designs. She did this by testing out joins which the pupils had previously made with materials such as cotton thread, staples, adhesive tape and different types of glue. This activity also linked well with science work as pupils learned about how to test the strength of the joins fairly. Throughout the lesson, pupils worked well together, and during the period in which they designed their puppets they concentrated well.

98. All pupils in Key Stage 2 are taught together once a week. The single art and design lesson observed was with this key stage group. In this lesson there was good teaching of techniques with charcoal. Pupils were given adequate opportunities to practise and refine skills in producing different depths of shading and to experiment in using their sticks of charcoal in different ways to produce various effects. Observational drawings produced later in the lesson reflected the range of attainment expected in such a grouping. Some of the older pupils created some well-proportioned work, using the properties of the medium to good effect. Pupils sustained good levels of concentration throughout the lesson, behaved very well and listened carefully to what their teacher had to say. Many of the pieces of work previously produced were of a 'still life' nature, with subjects such as fruit, vegetables, flowers, twigs and an ear of corn depicted in a variety of media, ranging from pencil to pastels and paint. Other work included colourful and thoughtfully composed collages and careful wax rubbings obtained from different parts of the school grounds. Almost all of the work covered in design and technology in Key Stage 2 during the autumn term focused on food technology. Good links were made with science work about healthy eating habits and about the changes that can occur in different materials. For instance, all Key Stage 2 pupils experienced making different types of bread and biscuits. Good examples of planning, making and evaluating were seen in pupils' work on making sandwiches. Good links with art are also evident in carefully constructed three-dimensional representations of Monet's well-known painting of the bridge over the lily pond at Giverny. In an example of particularly good quality, the pupil had made the bridge from matchsticks. This was carefully glued together and well finished, and placed over a collage background inside a section of a cardboard box.

99. There is evidence that the work of a variety of famous artists, such as Millais, Seurat and Munch is used to stimulate pupils' interest and to illustrate different techniques. However, pupils from Years 5 and 6 interviewed during the course of the inspection remembered the names and work of only a few. They confidently named Monet, Van Gogh and Picasso and knew a little about different styles of art such as abstract and impressionism, but beyond this their knowledge was limited. Art appreciation is an

integral part of many lessons but is not linked into the curriculum plan in a systematic and progressive way. This is because curriculum planning does not clearly set out the step-by-step development of skills in art, but instead gives a rough outline of the activities to be taught. As a result, teachers do not know precisely at what level they are to teach different year groups. The lack of clear guidance about the development of pupils' skills in the curriculum plan also leads to lack of precision in the teachers' planning for individual lessons. For example, in the single lesson observed, the learning objective was '*To use charcoal in different ways*' rather than stating precisely what skills were to be taught and at what level of difficulty. Without precision in learning objectives, teachers are unable to properly assess pupils' progress.

100. Judgements about design and technology are of a similar nature. The curriculum plan for design and technology focuses on what topics are to be taught rather than on how pupils' skills are to be developed from year to year as they progress through the school. This then results in a lack of precision in lesson plans, since these are directly derived from the overall curriculum plan.

101. The quality of teaching in the single art and design lesson and the two design and technology lessons was satisfactory. In all of the lessons, teachers gave clear instructions and demonstrations, so that pupils knew exactly what they had to do. Lessons contained a satisfactory balance between direct teaching, time for pupils to develop and practise their skills, and time to review what had been learned.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

102. At the time of the last inspection, standards at the end of Key Stage 2, in both history and geography, were below national expectations. The quality of teaching was unsatisfactory. During this inspection, it was possible to observe only one lesson of geography in Key Stage 2. This, together with a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers, shows that standards by the age of eleven remain below national expectations in both subjects. However, the quality of teaching has improved.

103. The standard of work observed in pupils' most recent topic work in either history or geography indicates that they make satisfactory progress in lessons. This was confirmed in the one lesson that was observed. As a result of good teaching, pupils made sound progress in their understanding of rivers. However, pupils have not progressively developed their knowledge and understanding of the two subjects over a longer period. Consequently, their knowledge and skills are below average for their age. The school, like many others, reduced the coverage of history and geography while it introduced the national literacy and numeracy strategies. Although it has now increased the time spent on teaching the two subjects this has not yet had an impact on raising standards. The school's new curriculum alternates the teaching of history and geography topics. This has led to long periods, up to six months in some cases, between the teaching of one history topic and the next, and similarly in geography. This prevents pupils from progressively developing their knowledge and understanding of the two subjects. Discussions with some of the older pupils showed that they remembered little of the knowledge and skills they have learned. Since curriculum planning also does not clearly identify the way in which pupils' skills are to be developed, there is little to help teachers to decide precisely at what level topics are to be taught.

104. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have an appropriate understanding for their age of their own locality. They know that there is a new village hall, a cricket club, and a pig farm close to the school. They understand their village is changing as workmen are building many new houses, and that the school will need more classrooms to cope with the extra children in the village. At the start of Key Stage 2, pupils further develop their understanding that Caldecote is a village, Cambridge a town, and London a city. However, they retain little knowledge of this topic and are unsure of the position of these places on a map of the British Isles. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have not fully developed their geographical skills. For example, they can successfully use the index in an atlas to find major features such as major rivers, as this is a skill used in their current topic. However, other mapping skills, such as the use four-figure grid references to show position on a map, or the use of scales, have not been developed or retained. Their knowledge of other localities either in the United Kingdom or in another country is very limited.

105. A similar picture exists in history, with pupils' knowledge and understanding not being progressively developed due to the long gaps between the teaching of topics. Pupils are not developing a clear understanding of chronology. They are unclear of the time-periods and order of the units they have studied. From their current history topic on the Romans, pupils in the beginning of Key Stage 2 know the story of Romulus and Remus and that the Romans invaded Britain. They do not understand where the Roman invasion might appear on a timeline of historical events. While older pupils in the key stage use appropriate ways of historical enquiry, for example by questioning their parents and grandparents about Britain since 1930, they have gained little factual information about the period. They do not have an appropriate knowledge of famous people or social changes that have taken place in, for instance, Victorian times.

106. The quality of teaching in the one geography lesson observed was good. The teacher's high expectations of pupils ensured that behaviour was very good. The teacher's enthusiasm resulted in pupils showing a keen interest in the subject. While planning showed the particular activities to be covered, there is currently no clear progression in the teaching of skills and knowledge, in either subject, to guide teachers. The school has recently adopted national guidelines for both subjects but has yet to adapt these to meet the needs of the pupils. Teachers make use of information and communication technology in lessons, but there are insufficient opportunities to use and develop the pupils' good literacy skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

107. Attainment in ICT is broadly in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. No comparison can be made with standards at the end of Key Stage 2 because not enough evidence was available to enable a judgement to be made for this key stage when the school was previously inspected.

108. During the course of the inspection, no direct class teaching of ICT skills was observed and therefore no judgement can be made about the quality of teaching. Evidence is drawn from observations of pupils working with computers during the course of lessons, discussions with pupils and teachers, and scrutiny of pupils' completed work and teachers' planning.

109. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are working at levels expected nationally across the breadth of the curriculum. All pupils in the key stage use their class computer regularly, and work displayed shows that word processing, data handling and graphics programs are all used as an integral part of studies in subjects such as mathematics and art and design. Pupils interviewed showed confidence in using the keyboard and in selecting from screen menus to load required programs. Pupils also use the school's Internet facility to find information and to send and receive e-mails. For example, during the period of the inspection an e-mail was received from a student-teacher who had worked with the class during the autumn term. Skills in control technology are satisfactorily developed through activities such as programming a 'floor robot' to move around the classroom.

110. The firm foundations provided at Key Stage 1 are satisfactorily built on at Key Stage 2, so that by the end of the key stage pupils have skills in word processing and in using the Internet which are appropriate to their age. Pupils interviewed showed familiarity and confidence in the use of modelling and control technology, and work in data handling, through the use of spreadsheet software at the level expected of pupils in Year 6 is just underway. Pupils competently use calculators as tools to help them in mathematical investigations and problem solving, for example when exploring the relationship between fractions and percentages.

111. Pupils using computers in class are enthusiastic, responsible, and work well independently. When working with these pupils, teachers showed good subject knowledge and gave clear instructions. Pupils treat equipment with respect and show considerable patience when working with software which is not always reliable, such as the school's Internet connection. The school has a reasonable ratio of computers to pupils at present, and therefore all pupils are able to use the machines regularly. However, this situation may very quickly change in light of the forecast increase in the number of pupils on roll.

112. A particularly good feature of ICT within the school has been the pupils' involvement in a project to develop a school web site, which has been carried out in partnership with the headteacher and one of the governors. This work has been done by pupils in Years 5 and 6. One of the pupils' contributions was a 'rap' designed to become part of the front page of the site.

113. The curriculum for ICT is broad and balanced, but medium-term planning does not set out the way in which pupils' skills are to be developed in each of the different strands of the subject as they progress from Year 1 through to Year 6. This shortcoming leads to lack of precision in teachers' weekly plans and lack of clarity in the assessment of pupils.

MUSIC

114. Pupils' standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are in line with national expectations. The school has maintained the satisfactory standards in composing and performing which were observed at the last inspection. It has improved the opportunities for pupils to listen to and appraise music and has raised the standard of singing in Key Stage 2.

115. The school makes effective use of the specialist expertise of a visiting teacher and a parent. Pupils in Key Stage 1 sing from memory such songs as *'In a Cottage in a Wood'* and *'My Pigeon House'*. They sing with enthusiasm to the accompaniment of piano or guitar, provided by a parent. Most are developing appropriate control of dynamics and pitch. For example, pupils enjoy simple action songs, including *'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes'*, which they perform with gusto. They enjoy playing a range of percussion instruments, but their playing is unrefined and many handle the instruments carelessly.

116. Pupils in Key Stage 2 also benefit from the good quality teaching of a visiting, specialist music teacher. Her very good subject knowledge ensures that pupils develop a clear understanding of musical terms. For example, pupils understand that *ostinato* means repeating the rhythm several times. In small groups, they successfully use a rhythm box to rehearse and then perform complex clapping rhythms. Pupils enjoy singing, which they do with enthusiasm. They sing tunefully and with good diction. Pupils listen carefully to others while singing in two parts. Pupils listen to music from different musical traditions and satisfactorily express their ideas and opinions of it. For instance, after listening to Saint-Saens' *'Carnival of the Animals'* they record their feelings by producing pictures of the images suggested by the music.

117. The school values music highly. Extra-curricular musical activities of good quality enhance the curriculum and add to pupils' enjoyment of music. Individual instrumental lessons, recorder groups and orchestra are well supported by pupils and are much appreciated. Pupils learning to play instruments are encouraged to share their achievements by joining the orchestra. The orchestra consists of a good range of instruments and performs in end of term concerts. Musical activities make a positive contribution to pupils' social development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

118. At the time of the last inspection it was not possible to make any judgements on the standards pupils achieved by the age of eleven. During the present inspection, a gymnastics lesson in Key Stage 1 and a games lesson in Key Stage 2 were observed and discussions were held with teachers and pupils. Currently, standards at the end of both key stages are in line with national expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the development of their understanding and skills. The school does as much as it can to compensate for its limited accommodation.

119. Pupils in Key Stage 1 satisfactorily develop the basic actions, such as running, jumping and skipping. During their weekly lesson in the nearby village hall, they develop an awareness of space as they move around, using hands and feet. They demonstrate appropriate control for their age, for example when they balance on different parts of their body or move along the top of a bench. In games, pupils in Key Stage 2 satisfactorily develop skills such as throwing, catching, dodging and an awareness of other players. They understand the basic rules of popular games, such as netball.

120. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Of the two lessons observed, one was of good quality and the other was satisfactory. Teachers manage the pupils well and ensure that pupils work safely on their activities. Consequently, pupils' behaviour in lessons is very good. They work hard at

improving their performance, particularly when the teacher's interest in the subject is evident. For example, the teacher's enthusiasm, when netball skills were being practised, produced a very positive response from the pupils, both boys and girls. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and satisfactorily plan their activities. The lessons include suitable warm-up activities, and teachers make satisfactory use of the resources available. Learning is best where teachers give pupils opportunities to assess their performance, for example through using pupils to give demonstrations of techniques while others watch and assess. This method also helps pupils to understand how to improve their own performance.

121. The school's curriculum ensures that all appropriate areas of activity are taught, including dance, games and athletics. Teachers make effective use of published guidelines when planning activities but have yet to identify a clear progression of the skills to be taught. The school has no indoor space suitable for the teaching of gymnastics or dance. Though good use is made of the facilities in the new village hall, the lack of equipment greatly limits the effectiveness of the teaching of gymnastics. Currently, only two benches and two mats are available. Pupils do not have the opportunity to use larger apparatus, climbing frames or ropes. The limited resources also reduce the pace of learning, as pupils have to wait for their turn on the equipment that is available. Pupils throughout the school learn to swim. They make use of the school's small learner-pool during the summer term. By the age of 11, pupils swim unaided for at least 25 metres but are unable to gain confidence in deeper water or fully develop the skills of water safety and survival.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

122. The school has maintained standards in religious education since the last inspection. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils achieve levels of knowledge and understanding broadly in line with those expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

123. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge. As a result, pupils know, for example, the main Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter. Pupils in Key Stage 1 gain an appropriate understanding of the Christian faith when studying the Christmas story through the eyes of some of the main characters, including Mary, Joseph and the donkey. They understand that Jesus is an important person and that people go to church to learn about Him. Pupils in Key Stage 2 know that the Bible is a significant book to Christians, and that it is split into Old and New testaments and contains important messages such as the Ten Commandments. They can retell stories from the Bible, such as those about Adam and Eve and Noah. Younger pupils gain an early insight into the Jewish faith. They know that Jews worship in a temple and that their prayer scrolls are precious documents. Older pupils' knowledge of most other world religions is limited, though they understand that some pupils in the school fasted during Ramadan and that a journey to Mecca is important to a Muslim.

124. Teachers plan carefully to give pupils opportunities to explore their own feelings, and pupils gain a good understanding of the significance of religion in people's lives. For example, in making their own Jewish prayer scrolls, pupils in Key Stage 1 record their special thoughts, such as 'Look after my Mum and Dad' and 'Be kind to my little sister'. Pupils in Key Stage 2 recognise the importance of the Bible to Christians and the Qur'an to Muslims. The very good relationships within the class and the teacher's

high expectations ensure that pupils develop a respect for special items in their own lives and the lives of others.

125. The quality of teaching in the one lesson observed during the inspection was good. Effective use is made of artefacts and classroom displays to develop pupils' understanding. Pupils respond very well and listen attentively to stories. During a story about Mohammed, the teacher made effective use of comparisons between the Muslim and Christian faiths. Consequently, pupils gained a clear understanding that both Mohammed and Jesus came to deliver important messages to the world on how we should treat others. However, a scrutiny of pupils' previous work indicates that the standard of their written work is below that achieved in English.