

INSPECTION REPORT

COLEBROOK INFANT SCHOOL

Swindon

LEA area: Swindon

Unique reference number: 126268

Headteacher: Mrs Sue Carvey

Reporting inspector: Mrs Stephanie Lacey
003764

Dates of inspection: 7 - 10 February 2000

Inspection number: 190697
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Towcester Road Swindon Wiltshire
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Appropriate authority: Name of chair of governors:	The Governing Body Mrs Carol Kimmens
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Stephanie Lacey	Registered inspector	Areas of learning for children under five	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Mathematics Science	How well are pupils taught?
		Art History Geography	How well is the school led and managed?
Derek Bowers	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
Anna Sims	Team inspector	English Information technology Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Design and technology Music Physical education	How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
		Special educational needs.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Colebrook Infants is a small community school with 113 boys and girls on roll between the ages of four and seven. The school is under-subscribed because of the reducing numbers of families with young children in the area. When children start school their achievements are usually about average, with some variation from year to year. Eight per cent of the pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, which is more than in most schools. Six pupils are learning English as an additional language and one of these is at an early stage of learning English. Sixteen per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational need, which is broadly average. Most of these pupils need extra help with literacy and numeracy.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Colebrook is a good school with many strengths. It provides a good start for pupils in their formal education. The teaching is good and this helps pupils to achieve well and reach high standards by the time that they leave the school. The school is led and managed very well and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils reach high standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Good quality teaching helps pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils are very positive about school, behave very well and work hard.
- The dedicated staff team works very well together.
- The headteacher provides strong, sensitive leadership and is well supported by the governors.
- The curriculum is rich and interesting.
- There is a very good partnership with parents.

What could be improved

- There are no significant areas for improvement in the school's work. Some minor points for improvement are included in the full report. These are related to the teaching of handwriting and music, curriculum balance, measuring school improvement and long-term damp problems in the building structure.

These minor 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 good progress since its last inspection just over three years ago. It has successfully tackled all the areas for improvement identified at that time. One of these was curriculum planning and staff have made great strides in this area. They have established policies and schemes of work for all subjects and have adopted the literacy and numeracy strategies in order to underpin work in English and mathematics. The other main area for development was the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work. This has also improved and governors and staff have developed clear roles and responsibilities in relation to monitoring and the raising of standards. Results of national assessments in English, mathematics and science continue to be well above average and the quality of teaching has improved considerably. The school is in a good position to move forward further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	A	C	A	C
Writing	B	D	A	C
Mathematics	A	C	A	B

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

This table shows that standards were well above average in last year's statutory tests and that the attainment of pupils at Colebrook matched those of pupils in similar schools in reading and writing. (Similar schools are those who also have less than eight per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals.) Pupils at Colebrook did better in mathematics than their peers elsewhere. Except for a drop in 1998, linked to a higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs, standards have been above or well above average at Colebrook since the time of the last inspection. The school has set realistic targets for attainment levels in this year's statutory tests, which it is likely to meet.

The inspection found that children under five make good progress and most achieve the skills, knowledge and understanding expected at age five before their fifth birthdays. Throughout the school pupils achieve well in almost all subjects because of the good teaching. The exception is music, in which their achievement is satisfactory. Many pupils do well in Year 1 and all make good progress, but this year group has a higher than normal number of pupils with special educational needs, who achieve well, but are a little behind the levels expected for their age. Standards remain well above average in the current Year 2 in English, mathematics and science. They are also high in information technology and religious education. Throughout the school pupils also do well in art, design and technology, history, geography and physical education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are happy at school and show obvious enjoyment in learning. They are enthusiastic and interested in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in classrooms and at lunch times and playtimes. They are polite and courteous to staff and visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are friendly and outgoing. They play and work well together. They act responsibly and show initiative in the classrooms and playground. Most are confident in all school situations.
Attendance	Very good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The good quality of the teaching is a strength of the school and has improved since the last inspection, when there was a high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good or better in 79 per cent of lessons and was of high quality in 23 per cent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This good teaching has a direct impact on pupils' learning and they make good progress in most subjects.

Strengths in the teaching include very good relationships, very good teamwork and careful planning. This results in pupils being enthusiastic about learning and working on suitably challenging tasks with good support. English and mathematics are both taught well. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language often work in small groups with extra help. This helps them to move forward faster. Higher attaining pupils are also challenged suitably and provision for these pupils has improved since the last inspection.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is interesting and relevant. Planning is much improved, especially in religious education. Particular strengths in the curriculum are the rich variety of interesting activities planned in all subjects that grasp pupils' imaginations.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are well supported in class and when they are withdrawn for extra help; as a result they progress well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Staff are sensitive to the individual learning needs of these pupils and this helps them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school provides very well for pupils' personal development, including their social, moral and spiritual development. Opportunities for cultural development are satisfactory, but need some development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Staff are very caring and supportive and have every regard for pupils' health and safety. They know the pupils well and track their progress carefully. A particular strength is the monitoring of their academic progress and the subsequent measures taken to ensure that they progress further.

The school has a very good partnership with parents, who value all that staff do to help their children. Some parents help in classrooms and most help their children with reading at home. The Friends' Association works hard to raise money for the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. There is a very clear educational direction for the school, with a commitment to high standards. The headteacher is a strong, sensitive leader and enables other staff members to share in the leadership and management of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Effectively. The new governing body has made a good start since its formation in September. Governors are aware of their roles and responsibilities and are involved well in the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. This has improved since the last inspection and the school's plans for development are based on careful monitoring and evaluation.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Governors and headteacher budget very well. Staff are deployed imaginatively to support the pupils.

The strengths in the leadership are the clear direction and gentle encouragement of the headteacher and the commitment of staff and governors to improving provision and raising standards. There are no significant weaknesses. The governors and headteacher are careful to ensure that they seek best value for money. The staff are well qualified and teachers and assistants work very well together. The building is adequate, but ongoing damp problems have not yet been fully resolved.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children make good progress. • Children like school. • The teaching is good. • The behaviour is good. • The commitment of the headteacher and staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • Opportunities to talk to the teacher who takes their child for numeracy and literacy. • The amount of homework.

Inspection findings unreservedly support parents' positive views. The inspection found that, apart from the games library, there were no regular activities, such as clubs, planned for pupils after school or at lunchtimes. This is not uncommon in infant schools, although some do provide out-of-school activities. Staff at Colebrook feel that pupils are often too tired at the end of the school day to benefit from extra-curricular arrangements. There are currently no formal arrangements for parents to talk to the teacher who teaches their child for literacy and numeracy, if she is not the class teacher. The school is considering ways to address this problem. The inspection found that the homework given was appropriate for the age of the pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 Baseline assessment shows that when children start school in the September after their fourth birthdays their achievements are broadly average in most years. They make good progress in the reception year. By the time they reach their fifth birthdays, most children have reached the recommended desirable learning outcomes in their personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and their physical and creative development. Many are already working at the early stages of the National Curriculum.

2 National tests and assessments for 1999 showed that in Year 2 pupils' attainment was well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This was largely because more pupils than average reached higher levels and indicates the success of the school's improved provision for higher attaining pupils. In 1999 pupils did slightly better in mathematics than in reading and writing. Pupils' attainment in reading and writing matched the standards in schools similar to Colebrook, in relation to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. Pupils at Colebrook did better in mathematics than their peers in similar schools. The school has set realistic targets for pupils' performance in this year's statutory tests, which are likely to be met.

3 Standards have been above average or well above average in three out of the last four years. In 1998 standards dropped to average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. This was because there was a higher than usual percentage of pupils with special educational needs in this particular year group. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

4 The inspection confirmed this picture of high standards indicated by statutory tests. In the current Year 2, standards are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This represents an improvement from the last inspection, which found that attainment was average in English and mathematics and above average in science.

5 All pupils make good progress in English. They develop their speaking and listening skills well in all subjects. They also progress well in the development of their literacy skills. The high focus on enhancing reading skills has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and they make very good progress in this aspect of English. Pupils write for a purpose and their pieces are often lively and imaginative. Pupils' handwriting is sometimes untidy because there is some inconsistency in teaching letter formation. Pupils' literacy skills are developed well in other curriculum areas, such as history and geography.

6 Pupils also make good progress in developing their numeracy skills. This good progress is fostered well by the good attention that teachers pay to the development of strategies for working out problems and the good emphasis on providing relevant and interesting tasks. The school has successfully increased the challenge for higher attaining pupils. This has been particularly effective in the Year 1 numeracy sessions, where higher attaining pupils are doing very well.

7 Pupils make good progress in science because of the very good emphasis on investigative and experimental work. This means that pupils are developing their knowledge and understanding well through practical work.

8 Attainment is well above average in information technology and religious education. This again marks an improvement since the last inspection, particularly in religious education, which was an area highlighted for development. Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching.

9 Good teaching has also had a positive impact on standards in art, design technology and physical education, which are better than one would expect for pupils of this age. Standards are at least in line with national expectations in history and geography. Standards in music are about average and the relative weakness of this subject is linked to some teachers' lack of confidence in their own musical ability.

10 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans because of the good support given to them by educational assistants and teachers. They are sometimes withdrawn for extra help and benefit especially from the targeted support. Most of these pupils have particular problems with reading and writing.

11 Pupils learning English as an additional language also make good progress because staff are aware of their particular learning needs. Some have some difficulty in understanding English, but are making great strides in their language acquisition. They are happy and confident learners.

12 Gifted and talented pupils do well at Colebrook because they are challenged well by appropriate tasks. This is particularly the case in English, mathematics and science. In the literacy and numeracy hours, setting arrangements have had a positive impact on the level of support that is offered to these pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13 Pupils at Colebrook are enthusiastic about learning. Their positive attitudes and behaviour signify an improvement since the last inspection. They behave very well at all times and are developing very well as confident, friendly and responsible children.

14 Children settle quickly into the routines of school in the reception class and are happy and secure in their new surroundings. They adapt well to working with a number of different adults during the course of the school day. Most children have had some pre-school experience in the local playgroup or a nursery and this has helped them to learn and play more easily with others. They share toys and equipment well, for example. All children clearly know the difference between right and wrong.

15 Throughout the school pupils respond well in all lessons to the very positive learning environment created by the staff. The attitudes of older pupils to their work have improved considerably since the previous inspection. They are always ready to work at the beginnings of lessons and show interest during the introductions. They are keen to participate in the discussions and almost invariably put up their hands to offer answers or information. The pupils work at a good pace and maintain their concentration well.

16 Behaviour is very good throughout the day. Pupils are polite and respond to instructions promptly. They follow the simple, sensible class rules and there is a good degree of self-regulation. There is a very orderly environment at lunchtimes and playtimes. There have been no exclusions and no sanctions of any significance. There is no evidence that bullying is a problem.

17 Pupils are good-natured and friendly. They are polite and courteous to each other and to staff and visitors. Many pupils talk to their teachers and other staff about things they have accomplished or activities outside school. The discussions are relaxed and the staff show genuine interest in the pupils.

18 Pupils are expected to work together on tasks in some lessons and they do this very sensibly, sharing both ideas and equipment. In one numeracy session, for example, pupils shared scales to balance vegetables and tins and were helpful and supportive to each other.

19 Pupils respond well to any opportunities to take responsibility for helping staff in lessons, assemblies and playtimes. The lunch tables include mixed year groups and the older pupils show their awareness of the needs of the younger ones. Children of all ages voluntarily help the staff in a variety of ways. For example, they collect crisp packets for recycling to raise money for the school.

20 Pupils' attendance is very good and there are virtually no unauthorised absences. Each year the attendance levels are consistently above the national average. This has improved since the last inspection. Punctuality has also improved and lessons invariably begin on time. The distribution of mid-morning milk no longer disrupts pupils' learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21 The good overall quality of the teaching is a strength of the school and is a significant contributory factor to the high standards achieved and the good progress pupils make. More than seven out of ten lessons were good or better and more than one in five were of very high quality. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This marks good improvement from the time of the last inspection, when one in five of lessons was unsatisfactory.

22 All teachers are good practitioners, with individual teachers having particular strengths. The more experienced members of staff lead the teaching and support less experienced colleagues well through very effective teamwork.

23 There are a number of strengths that underpin all the teaching. Very good relationships between pupils and staff contribute towards pupils' very good attitudes towards learning. Staff respect pupils and celebrate their achievements. This helps all pupils to feel that they are successful learners. All staff expect pupils to work hard and behave well and pupils respond well to these high expectations. There is no evidence now of the unsettled behaviour that was noted by the last inspection.

24 Teachers and educational support assistants plan and work together very well. Planning was good at the time of the last inspection and this remains a strength. Teachers are very adept at planning very interesting activities, through which they develop pupils' skills, understanding and knowledge in a systematic way. There is a great deal of imaginative pupil grouping within individual sessions. This means that pupils sometimes work in small groups and sometimes with the whole class on tasks that are matched well to their individual attainment levels. Consequently, they achieve well.

25 The grouping arrangements have been of particular benefit to lower attaining pupils, who are given extra support individually or in small groups several times during the week. This support is particularly effective in English and mathematics. The educational support assistants undertake most of the teaching in this area. They plan suitable activities with the teachers and keep careful records of pupils' progress. They explain work carefully and clearly and by their sensitive encouragement ensure that these pupils make good progress. Within literacy and numeracy lessons, assistants support the lower attaining pupils by sitting

with them. They remind them of the earlier group work and enable them to remain on task. They work with them when they use the computers or word-processors and are on hand immediately; this prevents the pupils becoming discouraged. Support assistants monitor sounds and key words known each half term. They keep very careful records of work and know the pupils very well, enabling them to make good progress. Within class lessons teachers are mindful of the needs of lower attaining pupils, plan appropriate tasks for them and give them extra help. This extra support is also given to pupils learning English as an additional language. One pupil has the benefit of extra help from the local authority and other pupils work in smaller groups for some work. Staff are aware of their language challenge and are careful to be clear in spoken English.

26 Teachers have also improved the challenge for gifted and talented pupils since the last inspection. This has been achieved in part by the grouping arrangements. In Year 1, for example, a group of higher attaining pupils work together for three numeracy sessions a week and this has helped them to move on more quickly. In literacy and numeracy particularly, teachers plan special tasks that will challenge pupils' thinking and this has helped them to progress further.

27 All these strengths are evident in the very good and excellent lessons. In these lessons the teachers use creative flair. They make very good use of pupils' contributions, for example, to take the learning forward. These lessons are also very well prepared, with very good use of carefully assembled resources to exemplify and reinforce the main teaching points for the lesson. In one numeracy session, for example, the teacher had designed some very good recording sheets for the pupils to use.

28 Some areas for development were noted in the satisfactory lessons. These include a tendency to spend too long in the introduction to some lessons, which means that the pupils are listening to the teacher for over half of the lesson and do not have sufficient time for the activity part of the session. Sometimes the plenary at the end of the session is also curtailed as a result of this. In a few lessons the purpose of the work is not made sufficiently clear to pupils at the beginning. One weakness remaining from the last inspection was noted in one or two lessons. This is the tendency for pupils to queue to see the teacher when they have finished their work, which wastes time. Individual teachers have particular traits, such as untidy handwriting and an inconsistent use of spoken Standard English. These are not good models for pupils. In the context of strong teaching overall, these features are not significant weaknesses.

29 The quality of teaching in the literacy and numeracy lessons seen ranged from very good to satisfactory. Both subjects are well taught overall. Teachers have worked hard to implement the literacy and numeracy strategies and are successfully challenging all pupils, who consequently achieve well. The planning for both these subjects is detailed, with tasks well matched to pupils' attainment levels. Individual targets for improvement are given to all pupils in the area of literacy and numeracy and these help them to move forward more quickly. Literacy, particularly, is well taught in other subjects such as history and geography.

30 Teaching in all other subjects is also good and this is a major reason for the high standards reached by pupils. In music, although the lessons seen during the inspection were good, some teachers lack subject confidence and, as a result, pupils' achievements are average rather than high.

31 Teachers assess pupils' progress by noting their responses in lessons and by looking at their work. Comments in pupils' books are often helpful. Teachers keep careful records of pupils' progress, especially in reading. Teachers use homework well to help pupils to move forward faster, especially in reading. There is a homework policy with suggestions to

encourage parental and family involvement in pupils' learning. The questionnaire returns show that a few parents are unhappy with the amount of homework given. The inspection found that both the amount and the homework given are appropriate.

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

32 The curriculum is rich and interesting. It is well planned and provides a broad and balanced range of experiences and activities. Curriculum planning was an area identified for improvement by the last inspection and the school has made considerable progress since that time and has developed policies and schemes of work for all subjects.

33 The quality and range of learning opportunities for children under five is good. Teachers are working on a long-term plan which incorporates the recommended six areas of learning and takes account of the new early learning goals and the targets for the first levels of the National Curriculum. Work is based on interesting topics that capture children's imagination. There is a good emphasis on learning through practical activities.

34 All National Curriculum requirements are met. The school appropriately places a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy and has adopted the national literacy and numeracy strategies as a basis for their planning. Imaginative deployment of staff has meant that pupils are taught in year groups for these subjects, which makes the planning easier. Literacy and numeracy are timetabled in the morning, together with assembly. This means that pupils are sometimes listening to their teachers for extended periods and so do not have enough opportunity to work on more practical or written tasks in the mornings. Other subjects are taught in the afternoons and the school has made a sensible decision to teach history and geography, and art and design and technology in alternate half-termly blocks. This means that skills can be taught in more depth. There has been considerable development in the planning for religious education, which was an area highlighted for improvement by the last inspection. The school now bases its planning well on the local agreed syllabus. The length of taught time meets only the minimum recommendations, but this is not having any detrimental effect on standards.

35 Some of the curriculum is taught within the context of a topic. This helps to make areas of learning and subjects interesting for the pupils. Staff also take care to plan a range of interesting and varied activities through the week and this helps pupils to be very positive about what they are learning. Visits are also well used to bring the curriculum alive and take place regularly. The whole school visited the Transport Museum and Sea Life Centre at Weston Super-Mare, for example, with a focus on history and science. Older pupils have visited the Arboretum, where the rangers set up a trail and then gave a talk. The younger pupils have visited an organic farm, looking at animals and vegetables and followed a woodland trail.

36 The school values all pupils equally, irrespective of ability, race, sex or religion. Staff ensure that every pupil has equal entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils on the school's register of special educational need are given individual and small group support. Sometimes they are supported within the class and sometimes they are withdrawn for extra help. Different groups of pupils are withdrawn from assemblies during the week, with parental consent. The curriculum is also adapted well for gifted and talented pupils. A group of higher attaining Year 2 pupils, for example, has been identified and, as time allows, are withdrawn to work on projects designed to challenge them. Planning takes account of pupils of different attainment and members of staff are aware that not all pupils necessarily have the same learning style.

37 The curriculum is adapted well for pupils learning English as an additional language. They are well supported by teachers within class. They follow the same curriculum as their peers, but staff are particularly conscious of the need to speak clearly and to check that these pupils have understood. Additional support is provided for one pupil, who works on a special programme of study during this time.

38 Some parents feel that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspection found that there are few regular activities organised at lunch times or after school, apart from a games library. This is not uncommon in infant schools, although some do provide out of school activities. The school feels that because of the very young age of the pupils, it is not appropriate to provide activities at the end of the school day, when they are tired. There are some occasional events, such as the joint junior and infant schools' carol service and the annual Book Fair, that do contribute to the curriculum provision for the pupils.

39 There are good links with the playgroup which help children to settle easily into school. Colebrook staff spend a morning there before the new intake starts, for example and the playgroup children visit the school on several occasions during the year. There are also good links with the junior school, which ensure that information about pupils is passed on clearly. Curriculum links with the junior school were an area highlighted for improvement by the last inspection and the schools now have regular, joint meetings on curriculum issues.

40 The school also has good links with the wider community. Many of these are channelled through the community centre next door. Visitors come into to school to share their experiences with the pupils. A recent example was the visit of a senior citizen to talk about her early life and bring in a range of artefacts to create a display. On another occasion, a Catholic priest visited the school to show the pupils his vestments, as part of their work in religious education.

41 The provision for pupils' personal and social development is good. 'Circle time' and 'show and tell' activities, for example, are used well to develop pupils' self-esteem. Governors have decided that sex education should not form part of the infant school curriculum, but that pupils' questions should be answered honestly by staff as they arise. This is acceptable for pupils of this age. Health education, which takes place within the science curriculum, has a focus on healthy eating and keeping well. It helps pupils to take care of themselves. In religious education, pupils are also helped to consider their own personal development.

42 The school's overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection. The school now makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and satisfactory provision for their cultural development.

43 Spiritual development is fostered very well by assemblies, which provide very good opportunities for the pupils to reflect on their experiences and those of others. In religious education lessons, pupils are also taught about different faiths and learn to respect those with different beliefs. They are given time in other lessons to reflect on what they have been taught and to appreciate beauty in natural objects. In one session, for example, pupils spent time considering the effect of light upon stone.

44 Staff encourage pupils to develop social skills by providing a wealth of opportunities for them to work together in class. These range from playing together in the 'museum' to working in pairs on the computers. Staff also encourage pupils to think of others less fortunate than themselves, with a focus on caring for the sick, for the environment and about others. Pupils make Christmas cards for the local Age Concern group, for example, and

these are sent out with Christmas parcels. They have also supported guide dogs for the blind, Dr Barnado's and the National Children's Home action for children.

45 An effective behaviour policy promotes good behaviour and good manners, and outlines sanctions for inappropriate behaviour. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and are consistent in their use of encouragement and praise. All classrooms list codes of conduct, to reinforce the teaching of distinguishing right from wrong. Pupils are encouraged to be responsible, to care for their environment, to look after resources and in physical education lessons, for example, to get the equipment out safely and put it away.

46 Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. Pupils are taught about the rich diversity of cultures through appropriate activities that are linked to particular events. For example, a Japanese parent visited to show pupils how to fold paper animals and houses and this led to an effective display on the art of Origami. There is some celebration of Western cultural traditions. Visits from the Storybox Theatre Group, with a focus on traditional stories, take place each year, for example. Works of famous artists are used as a basis for some art work, but although there is a very good selection of reading material, there is no particular focus on the works of different authors. There are no displays of books from a particular author, for example, to help pupils to be aware of our literary traditions. Music is a relatively weak area. Pupils listen to taped music in assembly, but do not often have opportunities to hear live music.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

47 The effective provision for pupils' welfare outlined by the previous inspection has been further developed and is now very good. Staff and governors have been actively involved in the development of the comprehensive, clearly written policies and guidelines on behaviour and aspects of health and safety. These are easily accessible to all staff in their handbooks and help to ensure a consistency of practice in the school. They include very good advice on managing incidents and ensuring safe practices in lessons. The staff prepare good care plans for any pupils who need medication during the school day. Close teamwork helps to disseminate information about any difficulties between pupils. Incidents of bullying are rare, but staff take these very seriously. All teachers have attended courses on child protection. The headteacher is the responsible person and discusses with the staff any recommended modifications to the procedures. The policy and procedures are of good quality and are included in the staff handbook. The staff stress to parents the importance of good attendance and they monitor any absences closely. There are few term-time holidays and very few late arrivals during the year.

48 The governors have used their considerable work experience of aspects of health and safety to help to formulate the policy and develop procedures and good practices. There are regular whole-school safety audits and frequent checks by all staff and they follow the clear guidelines closely in lessons. All members of staff are very caring and alert throughout the day. There are relatively few entries in the accident record book and these are mainly of a minor nature. The staff and governors maintain a safe and secure environment in the school.

49 The school has put in place very effective procedures for monitoring pupils' academic achievements and progress. This whole area has developed well since the last inspection. Staff use the local authority's baseline assessment scheme and also use another published baseline assessment procedure that gives a more detailed picture of pupils' achievements on entry to the school. Children's progress from this point to the statutory national tests and assessments in Year 2 is recorded carefully. An assessment is made early on of pupils' preferred learning styles (visual, auditory or kinaesthetic) and reading progress is carefully recorded in individual record books. Each pupil also has a record book to record progress in

all National Curriculum subjects. There is also a very good level of informal discussion about pupils' academic progress and this ensures that information is passed on to all who work with individual pupils. Pupils' personal development is also monitored informally. Staff keep written notes about this aspect of pupils' progress.

50 The progress of pupils with special educational needs is carefully monitored by the co-ordinator who keeps a master file showing movement across the register and she tracks across the year groups. Individual needs are diagnosed early and wherever possible, members of staff work individually with pupils who are experiencing difficulties in a particular area.

51 Assessment information is used well to plan appropriate work for the pupils. In some subjects, such as literacy and numeracy, teachers use their assessments to group pupils, so pupils of similar attainment levels work together. Assessments are also used in literacy and numeracy to set individual and appropriate written targets for pupils. Staff systematically analyse pupils' performance in statutory tests to see which areas need to be addressed further.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52 The school has established a very effective partnership with parents and this has been developed well since the last inspection. This contributes to the good progress that their children make. The majority of parents are very positive about the school and are happy with their children's progress. They believe that their children like school and that the teaching is good. They are also pleased with the high standards of behaviour and feel that the headteacher and staff are very committed and hardworking. Some parents feel that the range of activities outside lessons is limited. A few would like an opportunity to talk formally with the teacher who takes their child for literacy or numeracy and a few are unhappy with the amount of homework. Inspection findings unreservedly support parents' positive views.

53 The inspection found that the school has taken an appropriate decision in relation to after school activities and that by the end of the school day many pupils are too tired to benefit from further school organised clubs. Unlike some infant schools, there are no activities at lunchtime either. The school is planning to provide written reports for pupils who are not taught literacy or numeracy by their class teacher. The inspection found that the amount and nature of the homework given to pupils is appropriate. Many parents are involved with their children's learning at home. There is an effective booklet with a homework policy and suggestions for practical activities for parents and children. Pupils take home reading books every day and there is a reading record that provides a dialogue for parents and teachers. Parents are invited to support their children in a daily spelling activity before school begins, and they are welcomed into school to share reading at other times during the day. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved at every stage.

54 The information given to parents about the school and the progress of their children is very good. The quality of newsletters is good and parents find the information helpful. This has improved since the previous inspection. The prospectus fully meets statutory requirements. Parent-teacher consultations are well supported. Parents are always welcome to see the teachers informally. Written reports are clear and informative and parents find them helpful.

55 The involvement of parents in the life of the school is good and contributes to pupils' learning and personal development. In a physical education lesson, for example, a parent, focused on a particular group, enabling the class teacher to work with others. The work of the Friends' Association in both the social and fund raising aspects of the school is of

considerable benefit.

56 An effective home-school agreement is in place. It was amended after consultation with parents and distributed with a copy of the behaviour policy. This consultation process has taken the school forward in its relationship with parents, making them aware of their rights and responsibilities. Although home visits do not take place prior to children starting school, parents are invited to a private meeting with the class teacher during the day. An evening is also arranged for all new parents and the members of staff concerned. Curriculum evenings have been organised with a focus on literacy, numeracy and statutory tests, where there was particularly good attendance. Parents have a better understanding of the organisation of lessons in English and mathematics, and what pupils learn.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57 The school is led and managed very well. Headteacher, staff and governors are very strongly committed to raising standards and improving provision. They are successful because they systematically set targets for development, evaluating the impact of these and use the conclusions drawn to move forward further. This area of the school's work has improved since the last inspection.

58 There are several reasons for this improvement. Firstly, the headteacher has a very clear educational vision for the school, and is well supported by staff and governors. This year she has more time to work with colleagues because her class commitment has been reduced. As a result of her sensitive and supportive approach, for example, she has helped colleagues to improve their classroom practice by working alongside them as they teach. The headteacher has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in the school as a result of her work in classrooms, reviews of teachers' planning and more formal monitoring of teaching.

59 Subject co-ordinators have also developed their roles and now have a much clearer view of standards and provision in their subjects through the school. At the time of the last inspection two of the teachers were newly qualified and did not have co-ordinator roles. These responsibilities are now shared more widely and this has helped co-ordinators to focus more sharply on fewer subjects. Teachers have been involved more recently in observing colleagues and this has helped all to review their own practice. The quality of the teaching has improved since the last inspection partly as a result of this work.

60 Another reason for improvement is the formation of a new governing body. Until last September the governors were jointly responsible for both the junior and infant schools. There are now two quite separate bodies and although this means that management links are not so strong, governors have more time to spend on work in the infant school. Many of the existing governors chose to remain with the infant school and so already knew it well. Others are newly appointed. This new beginning has given a renewed impetus to the governing body, who had always been very supportive. They have undertaken recent governor training, for example, and have set down clear structures to help them to undertake their monitoring roles. Individual governors, such as the chair of the finance committee, have particular strengths that contribute to the school's work. Others contribute fresh ideas, such as the plans to send out a governors' newsletter.

61 The management of special educational needs is good. The headteacher is responsible for this area of the school's work. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is experienced. She has attended appropriate courses, including one for the higher attaining pupils. She has an effective monitoring role and provides a written report for the governing body. The funding is appropriately administered and is mainly used for the

provision of the classroom assistants.

62 The very good quality of the leadership and management of the school is evidenced in the good improvement since the last inspection, just over three years ago. In that time, in spite of the disruption resulting from a member of staff on long term sick leave, the school has successfully addressed all the key issues from the last inspection. There were two major areas to work on. One was curriculum planning. This has improved and is now good. The school now has policies and long term planning documents for all subjects to ensure that pupils make systematic progress.

63 The other main area identified for development was the school's use of monitoring and evaluation to improve standards and provision. This area is now good. Formal procedures have been established and all staff and governors are aware of their roles in this area. Since the last inspection the school has systematically monitored and reviewed its work and based new targets for improvement on areas identified for development. Planning clearly identifies these areas and sets out a clear agenda for how improvement is to be achieved. Currently the criteria to measure the success of new initiatives are not always sufficiently linked to their impact on provision and standards.

64 The headteacher, staff and governors have also addressed the other areas identified for improvement by the last inspection. These included some statutory omissions and the compilation of a job description for the headteacher. All statutory requirements are now met. There were also weaknesses noted in teaching, related to a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils and in holding pupils' attention. These have both been fully addressed and the quality of the teaching is much improved. Overall the school is now in a good position to improve further.

65 The whole area of financial planning and management has been further developed since the last inspection, which noted effective practice. Staff and governors participate actively in preparing the development plan and use this well to help with their financial planning. These are complemented by a clear and manageable four-year site development plan. The school budgets cautiously but is able to meet its requirements each year while accruing a reserve to cover contingencies. The reserve is to be used for site development projects and to enable the school to manage normal variations in the intake. The priority to provide good levels of support staff has had a good impact on raising achievement, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs.

66 The school is applying the principles of best value. The school monitors its contracts well to ensure good value for money. For example, it uses local maintenance companies with proven track records and reasonable charges. The finance service contract is very good value for money and provides excellent support in the management of the accounts and preparation of the budget. The purchase of additional computing equipment at favourable costs has enabled the school to improve the computing skills and experiences of the pupils. The school receives valuable support for purchases from parents and the local community as a result of their fund-raising activities.

67 The administrative staff give very good support and service to the staff, pupils, parents and governors. The office is well managed with clear routines and good access to information. The accounts are in very good order. The most recent audit at the end of 1998 confirmed the good controls and procedures. Suggestions for additional procedures, including local financial guidelines, have been put in place. The school fund records are in good order and the accounts are audited properly each year. The expenditures on special education needs and staff development are accounted for properly. The progress of the budget is reported to staff and governors regularly to help them in their monitoring of

expenditure. Governors feel well informed and are very supportive. The staff, accommodation and resources are deployed efficiently and effectively to support learning and achievement.

68 Taking into account the income per pupil and the average standards on entry and setting these against the good teaching and learning and the good standards of achievement and personal development of the pupils, the school is giving good value for money.

69 The school has an adequate number of teaching staff who are appropriately qualified. They have a range of experience and have covered an appropriate phase of training, meeting all curriculum needs. Two educational support assistants have also completed further training, and together with the other assistants and teachers, they make a very successful team. This level of provision has been maintained since the last inspection. The staff team has developed well as an effective teaching team. Lunchtime supervisors also make an important contribution to the smooth running of the school. The additional support provided for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils learning English as an additional language is very effective and enables pupils to participate confidently in class lessons. All teachers have been involved in training for the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies. A wide range of courses in other curriculum areas have also enhanced teaching skills.

70 The caretaker and cleaning staff keep the school in good order and the caretaker is happy to complete any extra work that may be needed. The accommodation is satisfactory for the teaching of the National Curriculum. It is clean and bright, enhanced by displays of pupils' work. Space is used creatively and the reading areas have attractive storybooks displayed to encourage the pupils to read. However, the building has problems with damp that have never been completely resolved. This is a drain on the school's resources. New carpets have had to be purchased, for example, windows have been replaced and walls treated for damp. New damp patches are beginning to damage carpets in the school office.

71 The library is well organised, books identified appropriately and easily accessible for the youngest children in small boxes on the lower shelves. A clear colour chart with simple numbers (part of the Dewey system) helps pupils to find information quickly. A computer and scanner are located there, well used by the teaching staff. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when good use was made of all areas with the exception of the library.

72 There is a safe play area for the reception children that has been fenced by the caretaker. The school grounds are being developed effectively to provide an outdoor learning environment. There has been consultation with the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and work will start as soon as the weather becomes warmer. Identified staff training will enhance this project.

73 Resources in the school are very good and these are used effectively to enhance the quality of learning experiences, contributing to the raising of standards. There is a wide range of enlarged texts to support the teaching of literacy. The school is very well resourced with computers and the additional purchase of individual word processors has enabled all pupils to improve their keyboard skills. CD Roms are used appropriately to access further information and develop research skills. Resources are well cared for and appropriately used. The school has worked to develop the storage and labelling of materials. Lack of space limits the accessibility of some resources, but the school is aware of this. Funding is effectively used and linked clearly to priorities in the school development plan.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

74 This school has no significant areas for improvement and so there are no key issues for the school to address. In the context of its many strengths, the following minor points for improvement should be considered by the headteacher, staff and governors for inclusion in the action plan.

- Improve the teaching of handwriting. (*Reference paragraphs: 5, 28 and 88*)
- Review the balance of time pupils spend through the day listening to their teachers and the time they spend engaged in active learning. (*Reference paragraphs: 34*)
- Develop staff confidence in teaching music. (*Reference paragraphs: 9, 30 and 133*)
- Link the success criteria for measuring school improvement more closely to the impact of new initiatives. (*Reference paragraph: 63*)
- Investigate further the causes of the long-term damp problems affecting the walls and floor and budget for remedial action. (*Reference paragraphs: 70*)
- Review the extra-curricular arrangements. (*Reference paragraphs: 38*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3%	20%	48%	29%	0%	0%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y1
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	113
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	1
Special educational needs	YR – Y1
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	16
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.17
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.05
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	17	21	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	15	17
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	37	36	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (88)	95(90)	100(100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	16	17
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	35	37	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (83)	97 (88)	100 (90)
	National	82 (81)	86(85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1998/9
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	£
Total income	194,035
Total expenditure	189,753
Expenditure per pupil	1,741
Balance brought forward from previous year	26,045
Balance carried forward to next year	30,357

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	111
Number of questionnaires returned	46

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	22	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	74	22	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	52	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	52	13	2	0
The teaching is good.	67	33	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	37	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	35	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	41	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	48	48	2	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	59	41	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	39	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13	30	26	9	22

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

75 Children start school in the September after their fourth birthday. In line with the local education authority's admission policy, older four year olds attend full time and younger four year olds attend part-time until January. This staggered entry presents some organisational difficulties for the school in the Autumn term. At the moment most of the literacy and numeracy work is undertaken in the mornings and so it is more difficult to give part-time children a fully balanced curriculum. Staff manage this well by adapting the numeracy and literacy hours for the younger children. Younger reception children work in one class and older reception children are in a mixed class with Year 1 pupils. The staffing arrangements are flexible and both sets of children work with the two teachers in the early years classes. At the time of the inspection twenty of the children were still four.

76 When they start school, the local education authority's baseline assessment procedures indicate that children's achievements are about average. The school also uses a more detailed baseline assessment to help them to plan appropriate activities for the children. The children make good progress in their first terms in school in all areas of learning. By the time that they are five, most have reached the desirable learning outcomes for their age in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. By this stage, most are already working on the early stages of the National Curriculum.

Personal and social development

77 Most children have had some form of pre-school education and are used to playing with other children. This helps them to settle quickly into school. The staff have built up very good relationships with the children. They are encouraging and supportive, while at the same time setting high standards for behaviour. Consequently children are very sensible and clearly know the difference between right and wrong. They listen well to the staff in the introductory part of sessions. They are enthusiastic about their work and remain on task for extended periods. Staff expect children to be independent and they respond well to this. They choose activities confidently, for example, and organise themselves well when playing in 'Granny's Cottage' or the 'Colebrook Museum'. They tidy up well at the end of sessions and look after books and equipment carefully.

Language and literacy

78 Teachers plan a balanced and interesting programme of work for this area of learning and pupils achieve well because they enjoy what they are asked to do. Great emphasis is placed on helping children to acquire good speaking and listening skills. All now listen well to the teachers for most of the time. They sit attentively in class sessions and follow the discussions carefully, putting up their hands appropriately to answer questions. Staff have fostered the development of children's speaking skills well by setting aside several sessions a week for pupils to talk to their friends about something of interest. These 'show and tell sessions' are very popular with the children, who speak confidently and at length about a range of topics. Children are learning to enjoy books and stories. This is because the staff value the importance of reading as a key to other worlds and help children to appreciate the relationship between print and story as well as teaching them to read words. This term, for example, there is an emphasis on traditional stories in the younger children's class. Currently much of the work is related to 'Little Red Riding Hood' and this theme is carried on

in their imaginative play. In literacy sessions, there is a good attention paid to reading. In one session, for example, children read *'Floppy the Hero'*, together. They followed the text with their fingers and made sensible comments on the story. Most recognised some words and short phrases. Children also take books home to share with their parents and carers and this also helps them to make good progress. Children understand that writing is a form of communication because the writing that they are asked to do is related well to their own experiences. Often they write about a picture that they have drawn. In their writing children are encouraged to work out the spellings for words by sounding them out. This is also helping pupils to build up their phonic skills. Most children have made a start in writing independently. Handwriting skills are not so well developed and there is some inconsistency in the teaching of handwriting. There are some inconsistencies in the use of flicks on the end of letters, for example. Some staff handwriting is not sufficiently well formed to act as a good model for the children. Overall the quality of teaching in this area ranged from satisfactory to very good.

Mathematics

79 Children are developing numeracy skills well. They enjoy numbers and take great delight in joining in number rhymes and games, such as *'Five currant buns'*. Most are confident with numbers up to ten and many manage well with numbers up to twenty. Teachers plan numeracy sessions very carefully. There is a good balance between discussion and practical work and this helps the children to move forward well. In the inspection week the focus for the work was on using money and understanding the concept of fewer and less than. In one session the teaching was excellent and consequently the children made huge strides in their understanding. The work was very well planned and the teacher used every opportunity to help the children to understand that when they spend money, they have less than when they started. Praise and encouragement were used very well, but at the same time the children were aware that the teacher expected them to do their very best. Children confidently subtracted 2, 3 and 4p from a larger amount by the end of the session. The teaching in the other session seen was good. Again the good planning and preparation helped these younger children to begin to understand that a smaller number is left if you take one away.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

80 Children are building up a good understanding of change over time this term because of the interesting focus on finding out about the past by talking to grannies in one class and looking at old household objects in the other. Younger children recalled the visit of a 'granny' and recounted some of the things that she had told them about her childhood, such as pinning a handkerchief to her jumper when she had a cold. They learnt some old playground games and were anxious for a fine day, so that they could play them with their teacher. Older pupils looked and talked about some household artefacts with their Year 1 friends. This area of learning is developed well in the younger children's class by the planning of work in relation to a traditional tale, to that work on the past, for example, is linked with *'Little Red Riding Hood'* and work on science is linked with the *'Three Little Pigs'*. Children work confidently on the computers and most already have good control of the mouse and manipulate this well to move objects on the screen. Most manage this work independently, with occasional help from adults or other children.

Physical development

81 Pupils move in a controlled way in the classrooms and save their more rumbustious movement for the playground. They are developing good hand control and use scissors and pencils carefully. Good opportunities are provided for them to use construction toys and work with malleable materials, such as salt dough. Consequently they handle these well. Staff

have identified a tendency for boys to use construction toys more than girls and encourage the girls to work with this equipment as well. Often children work on activities to develop their fine motor skills during a less formal part of the day, when they select which activity to undertake. Staff informally monitor which activities children chose, but there is no recorded tracking of their work. Children have regular hall sessions when they have the opportunity to work in a larger space. In one such session, the teacher used a taped programme well as a basis for the lesson. The children moved quickly and slowly, but safely and with good control. They dressed and undressed independently and listened well to the tape and the teacher. In the better weather children use the small courtyard outside their room to ride wheeled toys.

Creative development

82 There is a good balance planned in this area between providing opportunities for children to play imaginatively and teaching skills to help them to express themselves creatively. In the 'Granny's cottage' home corner, for example, children use the costumes and equipment to create their own imaginary world. They work well with each other to take on different roles and this helps them to see the world from another standpoint. Children also make up their own stories when they play with the construction toys and the sand. On other occasions staff work with small groups to teach specific skills. In one session, for example, an educational assistant worked with a few children at a time to show them how to use black and white to make different shades of grey. The children painted some lively wolves as a result. Some skills are taught to the whole class. In a music session, for example, the teacher used a taped programme to teach some songs to the class. This was satisfactory overall, but some children found it hard to keep up with the singing. During this session children were withdrawn for individual reading sessions, which meant that these children missed part of the session.

83 The good standards and overall good progress noted by the last inspection has been maintained. There have been some changes in organisation since the last inspection and children are now grouped in classes by age, rather than being in a mixed class for the whole of their time in school. This makes planning easier. Staff are already planning work with the new early learning goals in mind. These goals will be introduced formally in September. Staff use assessment well to plan work for the children and keep particularly detailed records in language and literacy.

ENGLISH

84 In the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1, standards were well above average in reading and writing. Standards in reading and writing matched those in similar schools. The percentage of pupils who achieved higher levels in reading was above average, and in writing was well above average. Teacher assessment showed that pupils' attainment in speaking and listening was broadly in line with the national average. Standards have been generally above average for the last four years, dipping to average in reading and below average in writing in 1998. There is no difference of attainment between boys and girls.

85 The inspection found that standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are well above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and that pupils make good progress and achieve well in all classes. This marks a considerable improvement from the last inspection, when standards were above average in reading, average in writing and below average in speaking and listening.

86 Teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills,

which help them to become articulate and responsive. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and have a good understanding of the work they do, because of the clear instructions given. These include class discussions. In one session, for example, pupils described clearly the characters in one story and understood that the author had created the reverse of the traditional tale: a mean grandmother and a silly Red Riding Hood. Pupils talk about books. They discuss the stories they read and describe their favourite books. They have 'show and tell' activities where they bring in favourite items from home and talk about them. These opportunities enable them to talk confidently in a range of situations. For example, they discussed enthusiastically with inspectors lessons they had enjoyed, including their work on the Fire of London. They collaborate well together when they work in groups and in one session took on characters from the story '*The Small Good Wolf*.' One pupil was a director and allocated the parts appropriately, recording the type of character to be played. Lessons during the week are organised with time for rehearsal and then performance. A few pupils have speech problems and teachers encourage these pupils well so that they communicate confidently to their friends and the staff.

87 Pupils develop good reading skills. They are well supported by parents, teachers and other adult helpers. A home-school reading record encourages good dialogue between teachers and parents. The school uses a range of reading scheme books as a base for work in reading. Pupils are also helped to enjoy reading by a good emphasis on story and teachers often share books with the whole class. Phonic skills are taught well in the literacy hour and teachers reinforce these when working with pupils in other subjects. Pupils use the reference section of the library and find books for their work in other subjects. Higher attaining pupils are challenged well and work on specific activities. They prepared a wall frieze for the Millennium, for example, researching the information they needed. Pupils work on group reading activities within the literacy hour. In one session they looked at text beyond the literal. The number and range of books is very good. There is a very good collection of enlarged texts, both fiction and non-fiction, which introduce pupils to stories by well-known authors, focusing on traditional tales, poetry, letter-writing, fact-finding and environmental issues. The library is well used to support learning and appropriate books are available there for those pupils who have finished the reading scheme. The high focus on enhancing reading skills has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and they make very good progress.

88 Pupils make good progress in writing, because of the interesting activities planned. When writing stories, pupils attempt their spellings independently first, and then make any corrections necessary. Pupils make good use of the computer when they redraft their stories, although very few examples of written work in English are displayed. They have written stories, poetry, lists, posters, captions and instructions, and more work on poetry is to be a focus later on in the term. In one session, pupils collaborated well in pairs, as they worked on a 'Wanted' poster. They discussed attributes such as qualities, behaviour and appearance, and then one child scribed. They used adjectives effectively to describe appearance. They remained on task and were interested in the activities. Although some pupils write neatly and the older pupils use ink in their practice books, handwriting is not well developed throughout the school. Members of staff are aware of this. They are currently using their literacy scheme to guide planning and are considering teaching the joining of letters earlier. There is currently insufficient emphasis on the teaching of handwriting. Teachers take care to provide opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in other subjects, such as history and geography.

89 Spelling is well taught and pupils try hard. In a class spelling lesson, for example, pupils were eager to contribute their own examples to words which end in *-air*, *-are* and *-ear*, such as *lair*, *care* and *bear*. In another lesson, the older pupils were given cards to pair when looking at antonyms, and quickly found the opposite. Pupils work well independently on

spelling activities, particularly when they first come into school. They settle down quietly with their work, using the *look, cover, write and check* technique, and spell words such as *twelve, number, school, Wednesday* accurately. They practise these each day.

90 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because the work is well matched to their needs and they are well supported by teachers and educational support staff. In one lesson, for example, they worked with the support assistant to look for words beginning with *sm* and *sn* and made up their own selection. They then joined the other pupils in identifying these words in the enlarged text. Pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress because of the sensitive support of the staff. They are encouraged to join in class discussions and most express themselves confidently.

91 All teachers have implemented the literacy strategy well, organising their teaching time into the recommended requirements. The new scheme of work, which has recently been adopted, enables the development of a wide range of language skills and introduces children to some excellent literature. Teaching was good or better in half the lessons seen, and satisfactory in the remainder. It is good overall. Where teaching is good, the pace is brisk ensuring the planned work is completed. Teachers make good use of questioning to assess what pupils know and also to make sure they understand what they read. They prepare well, having all the resources ready for pupils to use so that no time is wasted. They use appropriate technical vocabulary so that pupils understand the words *narrator, character, author and illustrator*. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and are consistent in their approach, ensuring each pupil listens carefully. They use praise and encouragement to good effect, enabling pupils to contribute even if they are unsure of the correct answer.

92 Where teaching is not quite so effective, teachers do not always share the objectives for the lesson with the pupils. On a few occasions, pupils sit for too long because too much work is planned and the timing is poor. This results in inattention and it takes pupils longer to settle to independent work. Sometimes the plenary session is rushed, giving teachers less time to assess pupils' learning.

93 There is careful monitoring of standards and teaching. This is the basis for individual pupil targets to help them to improve. Recent staff training has focused on phonics for the teacher of the reception children. Although there is no formal homework, a homework policy booklet with suggestions for a range of activities has been sent home to parents. Children learn weekly spellings and share reading at home. This helps them to make good progress. Parents have been well informed of the implementation of the literacy hour. This has been recorded for parents with photographs of the pupils at work and curriculum evenings have also taken place.

MATHEMATICS

94 National tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 showed that pupils' attainment was well above average. Many pupils achieved higher levels than expected for their age. Pupils do better at Colebrook than those in similar schools. Pupils' attainment in mathematics tests has been generally above average for the last four years, with a dip to average in 1998, because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this particular year group. There is no difference in the attainment levels of boys and girls. Pupils do well in all aspects of mathematics.

95 The inspection confirmed that pupils' attainment is well above average in Year 2 and that pupils achieve well in all classes. This marks an improvement from the last inspection, when pupils' attainment was broadly in line with levels expected for their age.

96 The school has adopted the national numeracy strategy this year, in spite of the high standards achieved. It is too early to measure the full impact of this new approach, but parents report that pupils' mental mathematics skills have improved as a result. Teachers have worked hard to make the strategy work well at Colebrook. There is a good deal of effective joint planning that ensures that suitably challenging activities are planned for pupils of different attainment levels and different ages. Three teachers in total teach reception children, whose achievements are reported in a previous section. Pupils in Year 1 work with two teachers for part of the week and with one for the other part. Educational support assistants also help in these sessions. This means that for three-quarters of the numeracy sessions pupils are working in three groups according to their attainment. This has had a very positive impact on their achievements. In a session seen with the higher attaining group, for example, pupils were confident in counting back in twos from thirty and in doubling numbers to twenty. They made a range of 3D shapes from nets constructed from plastic shapes and went on to successfully name the shape, number of faces, edges and corners. They achieved beyond the level expected for their age because of the high expectations set by the teacher and the good opportunity that she provided for practical work. Practical activities also made the learning relevant in the middle group, where, in one session, pupils estimated and then weighed tins and vegetables to see which was heavier. They managed this well, but found recording their results more difficult because they could not read all the words on the table prepared for them. Pupils with special educational needs are often supported by an assistant and work on appropriate tasks, matched to their level of understanding.

97 Pupils in Year 2 have covered a good range of work in all aspects of mathematics. They enjoy the numeracy hour and some feel that it has helped them to improve their mental strategies because they find that they are less reliant on unifix cubes. In one session, pupils worked with money to find totals and to use appropriate number operations to solve problems. They all achieved well because the activities were appropriately challenging for all pupils. Pupils added three amounts together and recorded the total correctly, some pupils dealing with amounts more than £1, that required decimal notation. The teacher managed the large class well. Pupils worked sensibly in pairs and remained on task because of the high expectations of the teacher. A small group worked with an educational support assistant in an adjacent area. As work drew to a close there was a tendency for pupils to queue to see the teacher, and a little time was lost. In both year groups it is evident that the challenge for higher attaining pupils has improved since the last inspection.

98 The quality of the teaching is good overall. It ranges from satisfactory to very good. There are several strengths. Lessons are carefully prepared. Activities are interesting and capture the pupils' interests. Teachers and educational assistants work very well together and provide effective support for pupils. Teachers also use assessment well to set individual written targets for pupils to help them to be aware of what they need to do to improve further. Numeracy and literacy are both taught in the mornings, when assembly also takes place. This means that the pupils spend a large part of the morning in class sessions, either listening to the teacher or answering questions. While they usually respond very well and listen carefully, sometimes their concentration wanders because of the more passive nature of the introductory part of the lesson. In one lesson the teacher's use of mathematical language was not sufficiently precise.

99 This subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has given a good lead to staff. Staff reflect well on their own practice and are continually refining what they do. This year they have observed each other teach, made careful notes on an agreed proforma and discussed the lessons seen with each other. All teachers have found this form of monitoring teaching and standards very helpful and have used it well to move forward. One factor that emerged, for example, was the difficulty of challenging gifted and talented pupils in the mental

mathematics session. This was addressed in Year 1 by splitting the class into groups. In Year 2, the teacher builds this challenge into her questioning. There is some evidence of the development of numeracy skills across the curriculum, in science, for example. Within the numeracy hours seen, little use was made of information technology, except in the reception class.

SCIENCE

100 Statutory teacher assessments in 1999 showed that standards were well above average at the end of Key Stage 1. All pupils reached the expected level for their age and a much greater than average percentage reached a higher level. All pupils did well in work on life and living processes, materials and their properties and physical processes. Higher attaining pupils did better than the rest in the area of experimental and investigative science. Standards have risen further since the last inspection, with a temporary drop back in 1998.

101 The inspection confirmed that the good standards noted by the last inspection have been built on and that pupils achieve well throughout the school. This is due in no small part to the very good emphasis placed on experimental and investigative work, which captures pupils' interest and helps them to build up real understanding through practical tasks.

102 Two lessons were seen during the inspection and inspectors also looked at pupils' work. In both Years 1 and 2, pupils have undertaken some interesting work because teachers' planning is good. In Year 1, for example pupils have looked at changes in materials and predicted what would happen when objects like rubber bands, plasticene and 'blu-tak' were squashed, bent, twisted or stretched. They recorded their findings in tabular form. In the lesson seen, pupils experimented with materials to see which would make the most effective window. Most made predictions and tested the materials sensibly. Some made good use of new vocabulary such as transparent, waterproof, windproof, flexible and rigid. Some found the activity initially difficult because the instructions were quite complicated.

103 Pupils in Year 2 have also worked on a good range of activities. Last term, for example, their work shows that they investigated the effect of forces on model cars moving down ramps. They considered how to slow the cars down and wrote about this clearly. In the lesson seen pupils studied the changes that occur when materials are heated. In this session the teacher demonstrated to the whole class and pupils recorded their observations on a grid. They included predictions, observations and conclusions. The pupils worked hard at this task, but had to sit for a long time in a small space and so became a little fidgety. By the end of the session, most clearly understood the effects of heat on a range of substances, such as chocolate, water and egg. They also predicted whether these substances would return to their previous form when they cooled down.

104 The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory. However pupils' attainment, interest and enthusiasm suggests that teaching is usually better. On this particular day, the pupils had been inside the building since the early morning because of wet weather and so the teachers had not had sufficient opportunity to prepare the equipment before the lessons began. In both lessons teachers paid good attention to the development of pupils' scientific language and encouraged them to make predictions before undertaking any investigation. Consequently pupils approached their work in a scientific way and talked about what they were doing in scientific language,

105 The co-ordinator has a clear grip of standards and provision in science and has set a clear agenda for further improvement. Staff have looked at performance in statutory assessments in order to target areas for development. One such was the need to help pupils to record their work in a tabular form and this is now emphasised in investigational and

experimental work. Staff assess pupils' attainment well and these assessments are recorded in a useful individual pupils' assessment book. There are plans to develop a wild life area in the grounds for work on environmental science.

ART

106 The high standards identified by the last inspection have been maintained and pupils achieve well throughout the school. There has been an improvement in planning since that time and a detailed programme of study now sets down clear guidelines for the development of skills.

107 Skills are well taught throughout the school. In this context education assistants and helpers are used well to work with small groups. In one session, for example, a helper worked with a group of pupils on a printing activity. The pupils printed patterns with corks, using three colours only and achieved pleasing results. Another group of pupils looked at the effect of light on stones and undertook some careful observational drawings of stones and their shadow. They understood the impact that light has on an object and interpreted this well.

108 There is a good balance of work across the range of drawing, painting, printing, textiles, collage and three-dimensional activities, with a sensible emphasis on drawing and painting. In one class, for example, there is a very good display of pupils' work on line drawing. Pupils have used charcoal to make zig zags, curves and straight lines and the work is of high quality. The work of famous artists is used well to help pupils to develop their own work. In one class, for example, pupils have looked at Van Gogh's 'Field under thunderclouds' to draw their own pictures, using small dots of blue and green oil pastel to represent the scene. Other work on line and shape using blue and black chalk and paint was based on the work of Georgia O'Keefe, Marc Chagall and Escher. This is also of high quality.

109 Work is well organised. The long practical area at the heart of the school is used well for artwork. Resources and equipment are stored tidily here and are easily accessible to staff and pupils. Pupils are taught how to look after the equipment.

110 Only one art session was seen during the inspection and this was good. Other adults were deployed well to help pupils and there was a good attention to the development of skills. In this particular session the teacher and helpers were enthusiastic about the work and this helped the pupils to enjoy what they were doing. The co-ordinator has a clear view of standards across the school and has compiled a useful portfolio of work to exemplify skills and standards in different areas.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111 Two lessons were observed during the inspection, but judgements were also based on photographs, displays, a class portfolio showing individual examples of planning and design and a very effective school portfolio, showing a range of projects. These show that standards of attainment are above average, and pupils make good progress and achieve well in all classes. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when pupils' attainment was sometimes below levels expected for their age and they did not have the required skills to tackle a task successfully. There is now an effective scheme of work in place that has improved the quality of planning. It is more systematic and ensures coverage of all the elements of the National Curriculum.

112 Pupils listen attentively and are eager to contribute to discussions. The older pupils talk about the problems they have encountered in designing and making an environment in a box to camouflage an animal of their choice. They had already made a plan of their environment,

labelled the features and made a list of the materials needed. They then evaluate what they have made, identifying problems and suggesting changes.

113 The younger pupils have painted backgrounds and creatures to show how animals use camouflage. They have chosen a wide range of animals including tigers, polar bears, chameleons, crocodiles, grasshoppers, fish and lizards. This has involved research to choose an appropriate background. Their task is to fix their animal to the background so that it can move. They select from a range of materials, including magnets, split pins and tape. They discuss what they are doing, and give reasons for their choice. They are polite and share materials well. They enjoy their work, are enthusiastic and eager to learn.

114 Teachers plan work well. It is well matched to the differing needs of both year groups and those working with the support assistant. They give clear instructions, enabling pupils of all three groups to begin work on their activities without further questioning. Resources are well prepared and accessible. The pace is brisk, and pupils have sufficient time to complete their practical work. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and encourage independence, allowing one group to complete their worksheets without direct supervision. The effective plenary session allows pupils to share their activities with the class and focus on the teaching points of the lesson. Support assistants make a valuable contribution. They work very closely with pupils. They ask questions and make appropriate notes to discuss with the teachers after the lessons. They are involved in the display of work and celebrate pupils' achievements by their artistic use of materials.

115 A school portfolio shows a wide range of activities including, for example, the use of construction equipment and toys for a baby. Pupils make models which work and models which solve problems. One book, *How can Jolly Tall the giraffe get out of his house?* includes some wonderful ideas and designs: using Lego to make stairs, constructing a slide or a crane, or using a flying propeller. Pupils use materials and equipment safely.

GEOGRAPHY

116 Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. Based on this, pupils' work and discussions with older pupils, pupils achieve well because of their enthusiasm for the interesting work planned.

117 The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. Geography and history are blocked into half termly units and work is planned on a two-year cycle. This ensures good coverage of the National Curriculum. The school has adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work to help teachers in their planning and this means that pupils build up geographical skills systematically. The study units covered are interesting and relevant to the pupils. One unit, for example, is based on work around the school. This includes map making of the route to school, a pictorial map to indicate where pupils live, a traffic census and a map showing where animals are found in the school grounds. In this particular unit there are good links with science.

118 In the lesson seen, pupils' work was based on the '*Katie Morag*' collection of books, that describe life in the imaginary Scottish western island of Struay. Pupils worked enthusiastically to interpret the map of the island and successfully drew out the differences between Struay and Swindon. Some pupils used notebook computers well to create text, others recorded their findings on paper. Staff gave good support to pupils and this helped them to compare the two localities well. The younger pupils found the interpretation of the map quite challenging, and a few struggled in the early part of the lesson. Overall the teaching in this lesson was satisfactory and pupils made sound progress.

119 Pupils are enthusiastic about their work because it grips their imaginations. Year 2 pupils, for example, spoke confidently to an inspector about their work on Struay. They explained that they used the class 'Post Office' to send postcards and had made a lego farm. They had clear ideas about the differences between Struay and Swindon and explained that Struay was different because it was surrounded by water, had more fields and fewer people. They talked particularly about the differences in transport and the impact that this had on people's lives.

120 Trips and visits are used well to help pupils to appreciate other places and to compare them to the local area. These include outings to Finkley Down, Abbey Home Farm, Lydiard Park, Westonbirt and Weston-Super-Mare. The co-ordinator manages both history and geography and does this well. She has a clear picture of pupils' achievements through the school and of the strengths and weaknesses in both subjects. She has identified the need for more geography resources.

HISTORY

121 Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, based on this, discussions with pupils and their work, it is evident that pupils achieve well. The quality of the teaching in the lesson seen was good. Pupils' achievements and teachers' planning indicates that this is normally the case.

122 There is some improvement since the last inspection in planning for the development of historical skills. The school has adopted a national scheme of work and this now forms a firm basis for teachers' planning. Consequently the development of chronological skills, which was an area outlined for development by the previous inspection, has been fostered well. Pupils in Year 2, for example, were clear about some dates related to the Great Fire of London and knew that it happened 333 years ago. A millennium timeline in the entrance hall also successfully sets the present day in the context of the previous two thousand years. Pupils explained how they had researched for the information presented on the time line, using reference books from the library.

123 Pupils' research skills have also improved since the last inspection. Older pupils are confident in their use of reference books to find information. They know how to find appropriate books in the school library and how to use the contents and index pages. Some have used search engines on the Internet to find information. Pupils appreciate that primary sources are the key to finding out about the past. The good work begun in the early years in looking at artefacts is further developed in Year 1. In one session for example, pupils looked at old household implements. They were fascinated by a range of interesting objects that included a commode, a whatsit and an inhaler. They discussed how household objects have changed over time. They noted, for example, that an old saucepan had to have a long handle because it made it easier to put it on a fire. The skilful questioning of the teacher fostered their interest.

124 Pupils are building up a bank of information about the past. Older pupils, for example, are fascinated by the story of the Fire of London and recall the cause and effect of the fire, as well as interesting details. Teachers continue to plan interesting trips to historical sites to bring the past alive for the pupils and this helps to fire their enthusiasm. Pupils have been to Lydiard House, for example, and spent the day in the role of a Victorian child. Role-play is also used well within school. The 'Toy Museum' in one of the classes is a good example of this and pupils enjoy visiting it to play with the old toys.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

125 Two class lessons were seen and pupils were observed working at computers at different times during the day, and within a variety of curriculum areas. Judgements are also based on work displayed around the school, discussions with the co-ordinator, a policy and scheme of work, and a very comprehensive portfolio, showing assessments and skills achieved. Pupils make good progress and by the end of Key Stage 1 attainment is well above average. This subject is a strength of the school.

126 This is a great improvement since the previous inspection when pupils had insufficient opportunities to build confidence and skills systematically, there was no scheme of work and the co-ordinator's role was not considered effective.

127 Pupils make good progress because of good teaching. The scheme of work clearly identifies the progression of skills and there is sufficient hardware for everyone to practise. Pupils are very enthusiastic and well motivated. Consequently they develop skills well. For example, younger pupils use a mouse to assemble text and pictures, looking at different fonts. They have worked with a robot, giving precise instructions and controlling its movement. They have entered information into a graph package by selecting appropriate icons to create a pictogram of different ways of coming to school. The older pupils have used a CD Rom to search for information. In one lesson, pupils confidently used the mouse and keyboard to edit and re-format a poem with proper line and paragraph breaks. They produced hard copy without assistance. Lower attaining pupils understood the general principles of layout, but did not always know how to achieve a change with particular key sequences. In a second lesson, pupils were beginning to appreciate the need to describe characteristics of objects to enable classification and sorting. They had a good grasp of the concepts and a good understanding of the reasons for classifying objects, and were well prepared for further work on databases.

128 Teaching was good or very good in the lessons seen. Activities were well chosen. They included sorting and classifying information, and laying out documents with proper spacing and line breaks. There were very good introductions, with effective questioning that brought out very good responses from the pupils. A brisk pace ensured that much was achieved. Overall teachers have very good subject knowledge and use the correct terminology. Work is well planned and the choice of task enables the higher attaining pupils to work on more complex activities. Teachers manage their groups well and provide appropriate information for the support assistants to work with their groups independently.

129 Displays on the wall show a range of skills. Pupils write their names creatively; they add design and text to complement their work on the Great Fire of London; they use word-processors to write stories. 'An Imaginary Journey' and 'The Magic Gloves', were good examples of these. Pupils discussed the contents of their future web site with inspectors. They know how to use a search machine to access information on the Internet.

130 The subject is very well co-ordinated. An effective policy and scheme of work are in place. A school portfolio is used for monitoring purposes and includes a range of assessed work. The classroom assistants give very good support. Resources are excellent, with several computers in each classroom, a bank of individual word processors, a computer and scanner in the library and a range of appropriate software. Pupils develop their skills across the curriculum and especially in English.

MUSIC

131 Standards seen are in line with national expectations. A published music scheme with taped programmes is used to provide a structured approach to the teaching of skills and concepts and is a great support to the non-specialist teacher. Standards of attainment have

been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils' listening skills and responses in lessons have improved. In comparison with other subjects, music is not such a strong area.

132 Pupils make sound progress. The older pupils recognise the stave as a musical staircase. They know that notes are written on lines and in spaces, and are high or low. They use graphic notation to show loud and quiet sounds, and they demonstrate voice patterns well. They are quick to learn the new verses of a song and know that the chorus is a repeating pattern, while the verse changes. In one lesson seen, they listened carefully to an extract from the Planet Suite and identified loud and quiet music. They gave examples of night-time creatures and copied the sound patterns of the animals' voices. They used body rhythms to imitate a duck's walk. Pupils identified appropriate instruments to show the type of sound produced. For example, they knew that cymbals produced a loud sound, and that a xylophone had sounds that were high and low. However, there is little opportunity for the majority of pupils to make practical use of this knowledge. All pupils participate with enthusiasm, they sing songs confidently and enjoy investigating sounds.

133 Although teaching methods in the lessons seen were good, with a clear introduction, high expectations of good behaviour and very good control which enables all pupils to listen well and to remain on task, teachers are not confident in their own musical abilities. There is little opportunity for the pupils to perform, either when singing in assembly, or in class lessons. During assemblies pupils remain seated to sing. There is no focus on skills, particularly breathing, although pupils are expected to learn all the words by heart. During lessons, there is whole-class involvement, but constraints of time and space prevent further development of small group work using instruments to reinforce musical ideas, such as pitch, rhythm and dynamics.

134 Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. Teachers have adequate subject knowledge. The older pupils have the opportunity to learn the recorder. They all attend lessons for the first few weeks of term so that they can decide whether or not they would like to continue. Pupils join those at the Junior School for a Christmas service in church, and they take part in a musical concert at the end of the year. There is a small music area where pupils may work independently; resources are good although some instruments need replacing. A range of music for listening in assemblies includes modern and classical music, and music from other cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

135 Pupils make good progress. They are also encouraged to develop good co-ordination, flexibility, agility and enjoyment of physical activity and to develop the conventions of fair play and good sporting behaviour. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

136 All pupils listen attentively throughout and respond immediately. They are very well behaved and well controlled, particularly when they run at speed during the warming up activities. They thoroughly enjoy these lessons and are really interested in trying to improve their performance. They make good progress because of the good organisation of the lessons and the match of activities to their ages and abilities. In one lesson, for example, they rolled in a variety of different ways and the older pupils practised joining these movements together. They took weight on hands and feet and jumped with twisted movements. They took care with equipment and could place benches, mats and tables safely in position. They jumped and landed safely, finishing with a roll. They gave good explanations to the other groups with examples of what they had done. They collaborated well, taking turns on the apparatus and putting it away carefully together.

137 The quality of the teaching was good in all the lessons seen. There is good planning, reinforced by the use of a published scheme, which ensures classes with similar year

groups have identical coverage. Activities are well matched to the different ages of the pupils and appropriate questions assess pupils' understanding of the different types of rolls learnt in previous weeks. Teachers give clear instructions and are very well organised. This enables the different year groups to work at their activities, with no time wasted. Teachers plan good focused warm-up activities and have very good control, ensuring pupils move safely at speed. Teachers give the safety of the pupils a high priority throughout, particularly when they move and place apparatus, and put it away. In one lesson seen, the teacher personally demonstrated the forward roll; in another lesson, different pupils volunteered. Challenging activities, for example to find a way of starting, rather than finishing the activity with a twist, give more scope to the higher attaining pupils.

138 A policy and scheme of work are now in place, and this ensures that skills are taught systematically. The older pupils in the school learn country dancing as well as the timetabled gymnastics, dance and games lessons. Higher attaining pupils are invited to demonstrate their particular skills to other classes. Taped movement and dance programmes are also used and these enhance the skills of the non-specialist teacher. Resources are good. The teacher of the Reception children has recently attended a TOPS course, a scheme for training teachers and loaning equipment, and resources for the youngest children should be delivered shortly.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

139 Pupils make good progress and by the end of Key Stage 1 their attainment more than meets the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, and judgements have also been based on pupils' work, discussions with the co-ordinator and displays around the school.

140 There has been considerable improvement since the last inspection when attainment at Key Stage 1 matched the requirements of the agreed syllabus and progress was satisfactory. Much time has been spent since then in staff training and in implementing the education authority's new scheme of work. The quality of teaching has also improved.

141 Pupils listen attentively to their teacher and the contributions of the other pupils. They respond well when asked to give their own views about caring. They suggested, for example, that '*Caring makes you feel happy inside*', '*People will treat you nicely too*' and '*God is pleased if you help other people.*' They have written and illustrated a range of stories they have heard as part of a topic on special people. These include Old Testament stories of the Creation, Noah, Jonah and David. New Testament work, focusing on Christianity, includes the story of Christmas, the Lost Sheep and a class book of the Good Samaritan. The older pupils have also made individual booklets on the Christmas Story. The work around the school complements pupils' lessons. They have contributed to displays on *Caring for the Environment*, *Caring for Ourselves*, *Caring for our Pets*, *People in the Community who Care* and *Caring Hands*. They learn about the Chinese New Year, the Buddhist festival, Parinirvana, the Muslim festival, Eid-UI-Adha and the Jewish celebration of Purim, as well as the Christian festival of Easter.

142 Teaching is very good and provides opportunities for the pupils to empathise with other points of view. Aims for the lessons are clear and enable pupils to talk about the ways in which they care for each other. In lessons seen, sensitive questioning reminded pupils of their previous work and allowed assessment of their knowledge. A very calm, quiet atmosphere enabled pupils to reflect and give their own ideas. There was very good intervention when the class teacher described examples of pupils' caring that she has seen around the school. Work was well matched to the different age groups and the support assistant worked well with four pupils who use word processors.

143 A two-year rolling programme has recently been implemented. Visitors are used well, when pupils were studying a module of work on Vestments, a Roman Catholic priest visited the school, for example. The subject co-ordination is good. Work is monitored through discussions with teachers, displays of work and regular assessments, within the guidelines of the Agreed Syllabus.