

INSPECTION REPORT

Bramley Vale Primary School

Chesterfield

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique Reference Number: 112503

Headteacher: Mrs. Pamela Allen

Reporting inspector: Mrs. Kath Wallace

Dates of inspection: 13 – 16 September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707153

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Judith Otterwall
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

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Mrs. Linda Buller, Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Accommodation Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mr. John Hicks	Mathematics Information Technology Music Physical Education Special educational needs	
Mr. Geoff Cooper	English Art Design and Technology Equality of opportunity	The curriculum and assessment Staffing and learning resources

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers have worked hard to establish a sense of order and discipline to promote good attitudes to learning in the comparatively short time most of them have been working in this school.
- The shared educational vision and leadership promoted by the head teacher, governors and senior staff is very good.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff are an effective team working to improve and maintain the quality of education provided.
- Pupils work hard and behave well.
- The social and moral development of pupils is very well promoted.
- Standards of attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2) are well above the national average.
- Standards of attainment in science, at the end of Key Stage 2 improved in 1999. There is not yet a national comparison.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and create a good ethos for learning.
- The involvement of parents and the local community in the life of the school is very good. This makes a very positive contribution to the quality of education provided.
- The school has recently set up a new information technology suite to be used by the school and the local community.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Although standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are close to the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2), at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6) they are well below the national average and when compared with similar schools.
- II. The standards attained by boys in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 are considerably lower than those attained by girls.
- III. Standards of attainment in information technology are below those expected at the end of each key stage.
- IV. Teachers plan the curriculum carefully. However, they do not have a clear, shared understanding of what pupils already know and what they need to learn next. This makes it difficult to chart pupils' progress and plan the next steps in their learning.
- V. The school teaches religious education but does not use the locally agreed syllabus.
- VI. The amount of teaching time in Key Stage 2 (22 hours 5 minutes) is below the nationally recommended time of 23 hours 30 minutes.

The school has had a very significant turnover of staff in the past three years. They are aware of the need to raise standards particularly in Key Stage 2. Through the hard work of staff and governors the school has made significant improvements and is in a strong position to improve the quality of education further. The strengths outweigh the weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent out to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

- **How the school has improved since the last inspection**

The school has made significant improvements since 1996. The leadership, management and efficiency of the school are now good and the school provides satisfactory value for money. Discipline and behaviour are good and there is a good ethos for learning. The quality of teaching is consistently good and the school has formed an effective relationship with parents and the local community. There have been significant improvements to the building and grounds, including a computer suite for shared access to the community. Standards of attainment are still low and there is some work to be done to plan the curriculum more effectively. Given the commitment of governors, staff and parents, pupils positive attitudes to learning and high quality teaching, the school is in a good position to improve further.

- **Standards in subjects**

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
			<i>well above average</i> A
			<i>above average</i> B
			<i>average</i> C
English	E	E	<i>below average</i> D
Mathematics	E	E	<i>well below average</i> E
Science	E	E	

- The school has seen considerable improvement in science attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999. The improvement in English is less marked but the standards attained in mathematics were still very disappointing. The national comparative figures have been published but are not yet available to the school. The national trend is for raised levels of attainment in all subjects and therefore in English and mathematics it can be assumed that pupils still attained well below the national average. Standards of attainment in science are stronger.

- **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Good	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science		Good	Satisfactory
Information technology		Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Religious education		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects		Good	Good

The good teaching seen in most subjects in both key stages is commendable given the short time staff have worked together. It is counteracted by the lack of planned assessments for future learning. Teaching in religious education lessons is satisfactory but cannot be measured against the locally agreed syllabus.

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

· **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good. This is evident in classrooms and in the daily life of the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory
Ethos*	Good. Staff and governors share a commitment to creating an atmosphere where pupils learn good work habits and make good progress.
Leadership and management	Good
Curriculum	Unsatisfactory. Although teachers plan lessons carefully, they do not have a clear, shared understanding of what pupils understand and what they need to learn next. This has more impact upon standards in Key Stage 2 where the content of the curriculum is more tightly prescriptive.
Pupils with special educational needs	Pupils make satisfactory progress due to good teaching in lessons. This is counteracted by individual education plans that do not always specify the detailed programme they should be following.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	The social and moral development of pupils is very good, spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory
Value for money	Satisfactory.

**Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

· **The parents' views of the school**

What most parents like about the school

- VII. The way that the school works with parents to improve the quality of education provided.
- VIII. The good levels of information provided for them.
- IX. The good ethos created by good relationships between staff and pupils.
- X. Staff are very approachable.
- XI. Pupils are taught to work hard and behave well.

What some parents are not happy about

- XII. The disruption in some classes where
- XIII. The feedback on homework is not

Parents are very happy with the quality of education provided by the school and the values that it promotes. The inspection findings support this view of the school.

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In order to raise standards of attainment. Governors and staff should:

1. Improve planning and assessment in each curriculum area so that staff have a common understanding of :

- what pupils need to learn to make good progress within the National Curriculum,
- how to assess and record pupils' progress through National Curriculum levels.
- what needs to be taught to comply with the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.

(paragraphs 1, 9-11, 13, 14, 23, 25, 27, 28, 31-36, 39-42, 58-60, 63, 65, 73, 74, 88, 92, 93, 95, 96, 98, 100, 105, 110, 114-116, 119, 122, 123, 126, 131, 138, 146, 155, 159, 179, 185, 186 of the report)

1. Improve the teaching of information technology so that skills are taught in planned steps throughout the school.

(paragraphs 2, 13, 34, 59, 72, 97, 116, 161 of the report)

2. Improve the progress made by boys by identifying their difficulties and planning learning steps to overcome them

(paragraphs 12, 37, 92, 93 of the report)

3. Increase the teaching time in Key Stage 2 to the nationally recommended level.

(paragraphs 31, 58 of the report)

4. Analyse the data generated by standardised tests to pinpoint areas of weakness and target resources to correct them.

(paragraphs 14, 49, 62, 95, 102, 115 of the report)

5. **INTRODUCTION**

5. **Characteristics of the school**

1. Bramley Vale Primary School is a smaller than average size (143 pupils), mixed primary school with a part-time nursery class. Children are admitted into the reception class on a staggered basis from the September after their fourth birthday. The admission policy for the school has changed this year and as a result the nursery now only operates during each week day morning. The school is situated in Bramley Vale, Doe Lea on the outskirts of Chesterfield in what used to be a mining community until the demise of coal mining locally. The school backs onto the grounds of the neighbouring Hardwick Hall estate. Unemployment levels in the area are relatively high and the area is one recognised for high levels of social deprivation. The local population is predominantly white and this is reflected in the school. Attainment on entry to the nursery and reception classes is below average although it is within the range expected of children under five. Around 30% of pupils are entitled to free school meals and that is above the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs, three more require some specialist support and the school has identified a further seventeen pupils who need extra help within school. This is a below average proportion of pupils with identified special educational needs.

2. Governors, the head teacher and the staff are committed to working with the local community to raise standards of education for pupils within the school and adults in the locality. The school has attracted funds to support their endeavours. Through this additional funding it has been able to enhance the school grounds, provided a shared computer suite and establish a loan service of '*story sacks*' to encourage parents to develop literacy skills alongside their children. The school has set out to raise the expectations of parents and children and create a happy and caring atmosphere where children can learn and parents feel that they have a contribution to make to this process.

3. The current school development plan identifies the need to successfully implement the national

literacy and numeracy strategies, devise a scheme of work for science and raise standards of attainment in geography and design and technology. The school is also aware of the need to raise standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science in order to meet the target attainment levels set by the local education authority for the year 2000.

Key indicators

4. Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1998	14	12	26

5. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	11	11	13
	Girls	9	9	10
	Total	20	20	23
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	77	77	86
	National	80 (80)	80 (80)	84(84)

5. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	11	11	13
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	21	20	23
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	81	77	89
	National	81(80)	85(84)	86(85)

5. Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1998	14	8	22

5. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	4	6	7
	Girls	5	3	2
	Total	9	9	9
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	41	41	41
	National	65(63)	59(62)	69(69)

5. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	5	6	7
	Girls	5	4	4
	Total	10	10	11
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	45	45	50
	National	(63)	(64)	(69)

There is no available national comparative data for teacher assessment in 1998

5. **6. Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	7.2
	Absence	National comparative data	5
	Unauthorised	School	0.4
	Absence	National comparative data	0.2

5.

5. **7. Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

5. **8. Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	12
	Satisfactory or better	98
	Less than satisfactory	2

.....

2

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

5. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

5. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

5. **Attainment and progress**

9. The standards attained by pupils at the age of eleven are below where they should be in English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education. The progress made by pupils is improving and is satisfactory overall but there are still concerns about the lack of sustained progress in Key Stage 2.

10. The proportion of pupils that attain the expected level in Mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 is above the national average. In English standards of attainment overall are below the national average. Teacher assessments in science are also close to the average. These assessments compare favourably with similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, in English, mathematics and science, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level is well below the national average. It is also well below average when compared with similar schools. Inspection findings confirm this picture although there is an upturn in levels of attainment in the lower classes in Key Stage 2. The data used to provide this picture was generated from the 1998 end of key stage tests. The pattern of attainment in 1999 looks very similar although there has been a rise in the proportion of pupils attaining the expected levels in science.

11. When children enter the nursery or the reception class, attainment levels are below average although within the normal range expected for children of that age. The attainment levels at the end of Key Stage 1 represent good progress in nursery, reception and Key Stage 1. The progress seen in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall but is not consolidated from one year to another. The school is not yet managing to consolidate the good start provided for pupils lower down the school where a year-on-year improvement is seen in Key Stage 1. There has been a lot of instability among teaching staff which is now more settled. This has affected Key Stage 2 more than the provision for under-fives and Key Stage 1.

12. A significant factor in the low levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is the low attainment of boys in all subjects, but particularly in the writing component of English and in mathematics. In reading, the schools' results have shown remarkable progress over three years. Writing shows a similar upward trend, although progress has not been so rapid. Standards of attainment in reading are rising in all classes. The standards attained by pupils in speaking and listening are those expected for their age but the use of dialect inhibits progress and standards in writing. Because Standard English is not used, words are mis-pronounced and then mis-spelt. Pupils do not have the necessary skills to use information technology for drafting and editing their work.

13. Progress in English and mathematics is improving and this is due to a large extent to the introduction of the national literacy and numeracy strategies. This is more effective in English than mathematics at present as teachers are learning to use the strategies effectively. Pupils do not always retain the knowledge or skills learned to use them in their own work. Grammar and spelling are still weak. Multiplication table facts and number bonds are not secure even among older more able pupils. Pupils at the upper end of Key Stage 2 are very dependent upon fingers for counting. Progress in information technology is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2 where teachers subject knowledge is weak. As a result attainment at the end of the key stage is below expectations. In science, and the remaining subjects of the National Curriculum progress in lessons is often good but progress from one year to another is inhibited because the school has not defined what should be learned in a structured way. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all aspects of physical education and by the time they leave the school most of them can swim the required 25m. In Key Stage 1 progress is better because the content of the National Curriculum is more focused on skills than content. Standards of

attainment in religious education do not meet with those described in the locally agreed syllabus, as the school does not follow it.

14. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in all classes because teachers support them well in lessons. The individual education plans drawn up for these pupils do not give sufficient detailed guidance on what each pupil needs to concentrate upon to make good progress. The progress on boys in both key stages is not as good as that made by girls. The school have not used the data generated by national test to identify this difficulty which becomes more apparent in Key Stage 2 when the curriculum is more prescribed.

15. This reflects deterioration in standards, particularly among boys, since the previous inspection. However, there has been a major turnover of staff who have inherited a school in some turmoil. All but one of the teachers is comparatively new to the school. The head teacher has been in post for 2 ½ years and has appointed the others since then. They have improved the ethos and order in the school and indications are that standards and progress are improving as pupils work their way through the school. The quality of teaching is a major component in this improvement and puts the school in a strong position to improve further.

5. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

16. Attitudes to learning are good throughout the school, including the nursery. Children in the nursery listen well to instructions and start their tasks with enthusiasm and without fuss. They enjoy good relationships with each other, their teacher and the nursery nurse. They co-operate well when required to work closely with their classmates and this enables them to achieve tasks very effectively. They use materials with care and take pride in tidying away at the end of lessons without needing to be prompted. They persevere with their work, happily accepting the support and help of their teachers when needed. Most children show a desire to complete tasks to the best of their ability and accept guidance that enables them to achieve this.

17. In both key stages pupils have good attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic about their learning and well behaved in almost all lessons. They listen carefully to instructions and concentrate well on their work. Only a small number become restless and even mild disruptive behaviour is extremely rare. Most pupils have positive views of themselves and this enables them to tackle work with confidence.

18. Pupils generally behave well in the classrooms and this good behaviour is also apparent when they are moving about the school and in the playgrounds. Pupils enjoy playing together and have respect for the needs and wishes of others when using the recreational spaces. Poor behaviour occurs in a very small number of lessons where pupils are not so motivated to do well and quickly lose interest in their work. Pupils relate well to each other and to the adults in the school, including visitors. They are polite and helpful and take pride in assisting visitors to the school. The older pupils show a particularly caring attitude to younger pupils, for example, helping them during lunchtimes in the hall. There have been no exclusions of pupils in the past year, or indeed in the recent past.

19. Pupils understand that they have a part to play in the wider community and take part in a number of fund-raising events for charities every year. They enjoy meeting representatives of the charities in school and learning how their contribution can make a difference to the lives of others. Older pupils enjoy taking on a number of responsibilities such as acting as monitors or school librarians, helping to keep the grounds tidy and attractive or running the school's "Healthy Eating" tuck shop.

20. Very few pupils engage in extended personal study. Although they show by their positive attitudes that they could take on more responsibility for their own learning.

21. There have been considerable improvements in this aspect of the school since the previous inspection. Governors and parents comment on the improved attitudes to learning in the last two years. The head teacher has seen this aspect of school life as a priority and established a firm basis for on-going improvement.

5. Attendance

22. Attendance levels are satisfactory, they are in line with national average figures and have been maintained since the time of the last inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school and the majority arrive on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

5. Teaching

23. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. This enables pupils to make good progress in the nursery and reception classes and Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. In both key stages the high quality of teaching and good knowledge of the pupils compensates for a lack of detail about what should be taught in each year group. In Key Stage 2, the good teaching is not enough to improve progress over time and is not sufficient to raise standards to the nationally expected level by the end of the key stage.

24. The quality of teaching of children under five in both the nursery and the reception class is consistently good and occasionally very good. Teachers and classroom support assistants have a good understanding of the required areas of learning and very effectively match activities to the learning needs of pupils. Relationships between all staff and the children are excellent and this enable pupils to settle quickly into the routines of school life.

25. In both key stages the quality of teaching is good. However, even where teaching is good, the weakest element is the use of assessment to plan the next steps in learning. In English, teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. However there are examples of good teaching in both key stages. The influence of the national literacy strategy is evident in the way teachers plan lessons and use assessment tasks to check out understanding. In Key Stage 1, the impact of training on the co-ordinator for English is evident. English lessons are organised to take account of the different learning needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs. The school has recently adopted the national numeracy strategy and the impact of this is similarly strong. The quality of teaching in mathematics lessons is very good in Key Stage 1 and is good in Key Stage 2. Teachers have clearly understood the underlying principles behind the strategy and use a good variety of methods to teach mathematics. Lessons are paced well and pupils are learning to respond quickly and retain number facts.

26. In science lessons teaching is usually good with some instance of very good in Key Stage 1. All teachers make good use of volunteer helpers during science lessons. In Key Stage 1 the detailed briefing given to helpers and timely interventions from the teacher combine to enable pupils to make good progress. In all classes the organisation of practical activities and close adult supervision are a feature

of lessons.

27. In geography, design and technology and music the quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school and occasionally very good. This shows some high levels of skill and interest among teachers. In one geography lesson seen the quality of teaching was excellent. The teacher used her own knowledge and interest to develop pupils' understanding of the geography of Derbyshire through some challenging questions. The expertise of some staff in music in both key stages is influential in raising the confidence of others when teaching music. In art, history, physical education and religious education the quality of teaching is satisfactory but usually stronger in Key Stage 1 where some good teaching was seen. In one physical education lesson seen at the upper end of the key stage, teaching was judged to be very good. The teacher maintained a good pace to the lessons and created a very positive attitude to physical education lessons. Information technology is taught satisfactorily in Key Stage 1 but not in Key Stage 2. Teachers in Key Stage 2 have not yet determined what needs to be taught in this key stage or how best to organise lessons to make best use of the new technology suite.

28. Relationships between staff and pupils are good in most classes and this leads to good order and discipline. The organisation of time, resources and adult support is managed well enabling teachers to give help where it is needed. This enables pupils to make at least satisfactory and often good progress in lesson. However, more able pupils are not often set specific tasks to extend their knowledge and understanding. Homework is used effectively to support the work done in class. Pupils' work is marked regularly and pupils are given praise and encouragement but targets for future learning are not closely matched to the requirements of the curriculum.

29. The quality of teaching has improved overall since the previous inspection report. Teaching in the nursery continues to be good and this is now supported by consistently good teaching throughout the school in mathematics, good teaching of English and science in Key Stage 1 and examples of good teaching in most subjects in Key Stage 2. The exception to this is in information technology where teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. The school is well placed to continue to improve the quality of teaching.

5. **The curriculum and assessment**

30. The curriculum is broadly based in that it contains all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. However, despite considerable initiatives taken since the time of last inspection, the content of the curriculum does not provide pupils with the subject knowledge that pupils need for the next stage of their education. Despite this, the amount of improvement since the previous inspection report is satisfactory.

31. The curriculum planned for children under the age of five in both the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory. Teachers plan activities for children that enable them to develop in all the areas of learning prescribed for them. Staff know pupils well and tailor the curriculum to their learning needs. The move from the areas of learning into the National Curriculum programmes of study is less well organised although the experience of staff and the quality of teaching compensates for the lack of detail about steps in learning. This is also the case in Key Stage 1 but not in Key Stage 2 where the content of the curriculum is more clearly defined. At Key Stage 2 the planned teaching time falls short of the time suggested nationally by 1 hour 25 minutes and in all classes there are a significant number of lessons that begin late after morning break times.

32. Since the previous inspection, teachers have initiated a system of long, medium and short term planning under the direction of the head teacher. Teachers plan to take account of the National Curriculum programmes of study and agree which topics should be taught in each term. There is not sufficient detail about what skills, knowledge and understanding are to be gained by pupils from one

year to another. All classes are made up of more than one year group so topics are organised on a two-year cycle to avoid repetition. This action is negated by the overlap from one class to another. Year 1 pupils, for example, may be grouped with reception pupils or Year 2 and Year 4 pupils may be grouped with either Year 3 or 5. The planned curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is not mapped out in steps that can be used to set measurable targets for learning. This prevents them from making more than satisfactory progress overall.

33. The national initiatives for literacy and numeracy have been used effectively to provide the necessary structure to English and mathematics lessons. This is reflected in raised standards at the end of Key Stage 1 but they remain low at the end of Key Stage 2. Teachers have not yet established a means of planning progress from one year to another within classes made up of different age groups.

34. The school has recently received significant grants to establish an information technology suite. However, the required programmes of study are not covered and as a result, pupils at the end of both key stages attain below the levels expected of them. In religious education, the locally agreed syllabus is not taught. The religious education syllabus adopted by the school provides pupils with a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and other major faiths. However, it is not the syllabus agreed locally and therefore the school does not comply with legal requirements. The geography scheme has only recently been drawn up but does not give detailed guidance on what pupils are expected to learn in each year group. In history teachers use the National Curriculum documents to plan work but as there is no agreed route through the curriculum there is some overlap of topics particularly in Key Stage 2.

35. There have been significant staffing changes, a change in the way children are admitted into the reception class, a reduction in nursery provision and three new national initiatives in literacy, numeracy and information technology. As a direct consequence, detailed curriculum planning is not yet secure and this impedes the smooth progress in learning from one year to another. Subject co-ordinators are aware that there is more work to be done.

36. The curriculum planned for pupils with special educational needs is similarly hampered by individual education plans that do not always clearly identify what pupils need to learn to make good progress. Good teaching and the caring ethos of the school enable these pupils to make good progress in nursery and reception and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and 2.

37. The school does not use the data provided by standardised tests to identify inequalities. In other respects, the staff work hard to promote equality of access. However, the school has not yet come to terms with a significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Almost always, girls do better than boys in all subjects and at both key stages. This is a consistent trend. The difference is most marked in English at the end of Key Stage 2. Analysis of standard test results for 1999 shows that about three-quarters of girls achieved the nationally expected Level 4 for eleven-year-olds but that only 50% of boys did so. This is a major factor in low levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2.

38. The school makes good provision for the personal and social development of pupils and properly deals with sex education and drugs awareness through the science curriculum. The curriculum is enriched by a satisfactory variety of extra-curricular activities in sport, music, drama and other areas such as story club and information technology club. Most members of staff have some part to play in these activities and about 40% of pupils take part in one or more out of school time clubs.

39. As the curriculum has not been clearly defined in terms of what pupils need to learn, the assessment of the curriculum is also weak. Teachers work hard to identify where pupils are being successful. Their efforts are acknowledged and pupils' clearly respond to the praise and encouragement given by their teachers. However, it is rare to see comments on pupils' work that set targets for future

learning. Systems for assessment are being put into place and teachers school test reading using a standardised test and target support to pupils who need it.

40. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and this is a major factor in the lack of progress of all pupils in Key Stage 2. Short-term planning sheets have a section for evaluation but the information is not often used to plan what needs to come next. Teachers keep a record of pupils' response to 'key questions' at the end of a topic. These assessments are not linked to identified steps in learning through the National Curriculum or the agreed syllabus for religious education. Without this clear shared understanding of what pupils know, can do and understand, it is difficult for the school to plan successfully for the next stage of learning.

41. A potentially valuable initiative is the compilation of records of achievement for each pupil. They include comments from the pupils on how they would evaluate their work over time and where they need to improve. So far, the work collected in these records gives a good indication of where a pupil has tried, for example, in a well formed piece of handwriting, but there are no pieces of extended writing which shows a grasp of grammar, spelling or creative use of language. Teachers' comments are generally very supportive but do not give guidance on what needs to be done next to make good progress. This lack of clarity on progress and attainment levels makes it difficult for teachers to assess attainment accurately. This has resulted in over-optimistic teacher assessments. In the most recent teacher assessments, at the end of Key Stage 2, there is an accurate match of assessment to attainment in Levels 4 and 5 of the National Curriculum. However, teacher assessment in English below these levels is optimistically inaccurate.

42. The school follows the procedures for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs. The lack of detail in the individual education plans drawn up for them makes it difficult to assess their progress or set future targets for learning.

43. Despite continuing problems in assessing attainment and using that assessment to plan for the future, it is possible to identify some improvements since the previous inspection. The school has paid a great deal of attention to the need for accurate assessment. More work still needs to be done.

5. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

44. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and for spiritual and cultural development it is satisfactory.

45. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Well-planned daily acts of collective worship contribute satisfactorily to pupils' spiritual development although there is not always sufficient time for reflection. There is a religious education and personal and social education policy, which aims to develop awareness of the spiritual dimension of life. It is not fully effective because it is not supported by a detailed scheme to enable teachers to plan for spiritual development. As a result there is little planned spiritual development throughout the curriculum. When it is seen it is in isolated pockets for example, the Year 5/6 class could share the feelings and excitement created by the music of Rimsky Korsakov.

46. Provision for moral development is very good. The school successfully achieves its aim to encourage co-operation, self-esteem and respect and understanding of other ways of life. All staff are good role models for pupils and successfully teach them right from wrong. The school has clear rules, which all pupils know and understand. These rules, together with a consistently implemented behaviour policy give them a solid foundation on which to build their own values and beliefs. Pupils are encouraged to consider the needs of others and take part in a number of charitable fund-raising events each year. Assemblies also help pupils to explore the needs of others in the local and world communities and to understand how they can help others.

47. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. It expects and encourages pupils to relate well to each other and to adults. Within lessons pupils are successfully encouraged to co-operate in pairs and groups in a range of lessons. For example, when Year 2 pupils were using the new computer equipment to develop keyboard skills. Older pupils have many opportunities to exercise responsibility such as being school librarians or monitors. They take great pride in keeping their school and its grounds attractive and well cared for. Pupils in both key stages participate in visits of increasing duration and this helps to develop their self-confidence and maturity. Additionally, the pupils are involved in many local community conservation projects which enables them to understand how they can help to care for their environment. There is an appropriate range of after-school clubs, including sport, which promotes teamwork, leadership, fair play and social development.

48. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. Some study and respond to the work of musicians or artists, for example pupils in a Key Stage 2 class use computers to produce pictures in the style of Klee. A theatre group visits the school each year and all pupils study aspects of literacy such as poetry and drama. Book weeks enable pupils to meet and listen to authors. The provision for pupils' knowledge and understanding of non-western cultures is under-developed and there is very little contact with members of minority ethnic groups. The school has an insufficient number of books to support learning about art and music. Displays such as those on local settlements often have little cultural content. Assemblies do sometimes contain multi-cultural elements but much of the life of the school does little to reflect the multi-race reality of Britain.

5. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

49. The provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is good overall and contributes to the positive ethos of the school. However the effectiveness of monitoring procedures to support pupils' academic progress remains unsatisfactory. The school has made some improvements to these procedures since the time of the previous inspection, for example, the administration of the optional standardised tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. The information gathered from these tests is not yet being used to set detailed targets for pupils or to provide the support needed to ensure pupils' progress. This is also the case for pupils with identified special educational needs. There is good liaison with outside agencies that provide support for these pupils and regular progress reviews are carried out.

50. The monitoring of pupils' personal development, although informal, is good. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection. All staff know pupils well, have built caring relationships and act as good role models. These positive features enable staff to provide effective support, guide pupils and raise their self-esteem.

51. The procedures for monitoring behaviour and promoting discipline are very good and have been a school priority since the previous inspection. An effective reward system is now operated consistently by all staff and is valued by pupils and parents. No bullying was seen during the inspection but the school have effective measures in place to deal with any incidents which may occur. The head teacher monitors attendance carefully each week and works with outside agencies to support families and improve poor attendance or punctuality.

52. Effective child protection procedures are satisfactory and staff have received appropriate training. Health and safety guidelines are followed and staff successfully promote the health and general well-being of pupils. Health education is taught mainly through the science curriculum. For example in the topic of 'My Body' in reception, and Years 1 and 2 where pupils learn to look after their bodies and their teeth. Some safety concerns were raised with the staff and governors during the inspection.

Partnership with parents and the community

53. The partnership between the school, parents and the community is very good and is a strength of the school. The school sees its self as an integral part of the community and the inspection team supports this view. An effective partnership has been built with parents to benefit pupils' learning. This has been a school priority since the previous inspection report.

54. The quality of information provided for parents has improved and is now very good. Parents receive regular information regarding what it is that their children are currently learning and are provided with very good guidance as to how they may best support this at home. Annual reports to parents have also improved, they provide details of the progress made and advise parents of what steps they and their children can take to make further progress. Together with a consistently operated homework policy these measures enable parents to make an effective contribution to their children's learning.

55. Many parents and members of the local community contribute to the quality of education provided by working in classrooms and other areas of the school. When they are supporting pupils' learning, for example, during the *science circus* sessions they are a major factor in the progress made by pupils. They know what is expected of them and provide pupils with the opportunity to work in small groups focused on practical investigative science. Other parents have supported the school by improving the physical environment by painting and clearing the woodland area. The improvement to the school and its grounds is valued by pupils

56. Links with the community have been developed not only to the benefit of the school but also to raise literacy levels and information technology skills among adults. The work of the school received an award for this innovative work.. These links have also been successful in attracting additional funding enabling the creation of an information technology suite and a playground for use by children in the nursery. Parents expressed the view that the standing of the school in the community has improved greatly. Parents and pupils are now proud to belong to Bramley Vale School. All of these initiatives place the school in a good position to continue to improve the quality of education provided.

5. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

5. Leadership and management

57. The head teacher has been an inspiration to governors, staff and parents who have seen her transform the ethos of the school in the two and a half years she has been in post. She has overcome low morale among staff and pupils to establish a sense of order and well-being within the school and the wider community. She has very quickly built up a team of teaching and non-teaching staff who are supportive of her and committed to the school. They share a clear vision of the direction the school is heading and this has a positive impact on the ethos of the school and its commitment to high standards. The governing body share this enthusiasm for the school and through their efforts and those of the head teacher they have succeeded in attracting substantial sums of money to provide facilities for the school and the local community. Funding has also been found to provide breakfasts for pupils who otherwise would come to school without a meal in the morning. The impact of these measures can be seen in the improved school grounds, the new computer suite and the community literacy project. It is also evident in the attitude that pupils and parents have that they have a role to play in shaping the future of the school.

58. The governing body actively promotes the values and aims of the school and plays a full role in the strategic management of the school. They see the school as a major force within the life of the local community and have very successfully promoted this. As a result the school has received several substantial grants for community projects. Parents are most appreciative of this aspect of the school. Governors have not fulfilled their responsibility to ensure that religious education is taught according to the locally agreed syllabus and were unaware that the teaching time for pupils in Key Stage 2 is below the nationally recommended minimum.

59. The head teacher has encouraged teachers to take responsibility for some aspects of the curriculum although there are no posts of additional responsibility within the school. The head teacher has spear headed the changes in literacy and numeracy which were in response to national initiatives. Other areas of the curriculum are not so well advanced as staff have, in most instances, only accepted the responsibility for them in the last year. Even the role of the deputy head teacher is still being developed. Teachers have made a satisfactory start to their new roles as curriculum managers but in some instances this is hindered by lack of curriculum knowledge or the statutory requirements. They are aware of this and have already identified their own training needs. The most significant areas for concern are in information technology where the co-ordinator has no experience of the programme of study and religious education where the local syllabus is not being followed and therefore statutory requirements are not met.

60. Co-ordinators have been given time to monitor the quality of teaching in their own subject areas. However, because the school has not defined the progressive steps in learning in each subject it has been difficult for them to identify the weaknesses within the subject. They have been much more successful at identifying the more generic teaching skills and this has contributed to the good teaching seen in most classes. The deputy head teacher has also set a good example in this regard. His support for the head teacher and the good relations he has established with staff create an atmosphere of trust where change can be managed successfully. The appraisal process and a well-organised system of staff interviews establish staff development needs and in the main these are met. Until the last year the lack of stability within staff has made this very difficult to sustain.

61. The school has clearly set out to raise the expectations of parents and pupils and has done so very successfully. The school building has been enhanced through the efforts of parents and the local community. It has been instrumental in providing access courses for adult literacy and is now established itself within the community as a place where pupils work hard and parents are welcome. The behaviour and discipline in the school has been greatly improved and pupils now have a good attitude to their work. Relationships between the governors, staff, parents and pupils have been a priority for the head teacher and she has been very successful in this respect.

62. The school development plan is used by staff and governors to set priorities for future action. In the first instance this has been to create the right ethos for learning and give staff the confidence to play an active part in the management of the curriculum. Both of these priorities have been met and the school now needs to focus more closely on how to raise levels of attainment. Given the number of changes in the staff the school has done well. However, the school is not using the quantitative data generated from regular testing of pupils to identify where there are weaknesses that can be rectified.

63. The ethos of the school is good. This is seen in the good attitudes of pupils, their good behaviour and courtesy to one another and visitors. There are good relations between staff and pupils and all are confident in their own ability to learn. The school is very good at responding to the needs of pupils with special educational needs on a day-to-day basis. The procedures for monitoring progress and the monitoring of progress in relation to their detailed individual education plans is less effective. Many of these plans are too vague to help teachers set specific targets.

64. In the main, governors meet their statutory responsibilities for the curriculum and see that the necessary procedures for pupils with special educational needs are in place. However, they do not meet their obligation to see that the school follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.

65. In the previous inspection report the leadership and management of the school was judged to need substantial improvement. It is now judged to be good overall with very good leadership with a clear direction given to the work of the school from governors and the senior management team of the school. There are still improvements to be made to the management of the curriculum but this process has begun. The development planning process is used as a satisfactory means of setting priorities. This now needs to be more directly focused upon raising standards. The historically high turnover of staff continues to be a concern but governors hope that this period of instability is drawing to a close.

5.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

66. The staffing, accommodation and learning resources of the school are satisfactory. Staff manage the day-to-day business of the classroom effectively. All teachers are appropriately qualified. Most staff are new to the school since the time of the last inspection. There is an appropriate mix of experienced and more recently qualified teachers. The school makes appropriate use of the expertise of learning support assistants. Most of this support is targeted on younger pupils in nursery and reception or those with special educational needs.

67. The school makes suitable arrangements for the induction of new staff. During the week of inspection a new part-time member of staff was going through a familiarisation programme to prepare her for her teaching duties. There is an induction process for newly qualified teachers when necessary. All teaching and non-teaching staff are prepared well for their duties. Much of the school's recent focus on professional development has been directed towards national initiatives. This is reflected in the quality of teaching in these areas of the curriculum.

68. The accommodation is adequate to teach the curriculum. The majority of classrooms are generous in size and provide good teaching areas for a range of activities. Since the previous inspection classrooms have been decorated and most have received new furniture. An information technology suite has been created and the library has been re-furnished. These rooms are timetabled for use by each class and are beginning to impact positively on pupils' learning. Outdoor areas of the school have continued to be improved and contribute to the quality of education provided in many subjects especially science.

69. Learning resources are adequate for all areas of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum for pupils under the age of five is limited by the lack of outdoor play equipment in the nursery. This is to be corrected during the current term when work will be completed on the nursery play area. This is part of an upgrading of the school grounds through funds accessed and raised by the school. There has been appropriate updating of resources for both English and mathematics to ensure an effective start to the numeracy and literacy strategies. Considerable external funding has been raised to provide a computer suite for school and community use. Since the previous inspection, improvements have been made to the library. Although the collection of books is not generous it is sufficient, well maintained and beginning to be used effectively.

70. There have been improvements in staffing, accommodation and learning resources since the previous inspection report, resources have been enhanced. Teachers are teaching well, they no longer work in isolation and there is a good level of professional development. All of these points were judged to be unsatisfactory in the previous report.

5. **The efficiency of the school**

71. The efficiency of the school is satisfactory overall. The school operates smoothly and staff and governors establish their priorities and organise the funds available to meet those priorities. Procedures for checking that systems are working effectively are not so clearly in place. This was seen in the number of anomalies highlighted in the recent auditors' report. These have all been remedied and the school was commended for the high quality of the administration of finances.

72. The governors of the school, through careful financial planning and considerable fund-raising, have improved the facilities of the school and reversed a year-on-year deficit. They now have a small planned balance in the budget at the end of this financial year. The shared school and community information technology suite, improved school grounds and the new nursery play area are all good examples of their vision. In addition staff morale is high and parents feel that they have a role to play in the education of their children. However, they have not seen that in order to raise standards through these facilities there is a need for some intensive staff training. For example, there is not the expertise among staff to provide an effective information technology curriculum despite the new suite. As a consequence standards of attainment in information technology are low.

73. All of the funds allocated either through the local education authority or elsewhere are properly used and accounted for. The resources made available for pupils with special educational needs are used appropriately but are not carefully enough targeted on their identified learning needs. Support staff are used appropriately although some of the individual education plans drawn up for pupils with special educational needs do not give sufficient guidance on what the pupils should be learning next.

74. Many of the teaching staff are comparatively new to the school and changes to the school admissions policy have meant a significant change in the organisation of the school. Teachers are deployed effectively throughout the school and have taken on responsibilities for aspects of the curriculum. There is a lack of subject expertise that has not been fully recognised. Most subject coordinators would benefit from training in the areas where they have responsibility. The in-house monitoring and evaluation of teaching has been very successful and is reflected in the quality of teaching seen during the inspection.

75. Accommodation is used well to provide an attractive and well-ordered environment for pupils and staff. Where facilities are shared with the community this is managed well. The involvement of the community in the school grounds improvements gives them and their children a sense of ownership in them. Levels of vandalism have reduced as a result and the grounds are now safe enough to be used for lessons. Teachers plan topics in key stage groups and so identify what they need and then share resources. There are sufficient resources for the curriculum at present. There will be an increased demand when staff have more clearly identified what needs to be taught in each year group.

76. The day-to-day running of the school is very good and allows teachers to work with pupils without interruption. The school secretary is very efficient and can readily access information for staff or governors. She is an excellent first point of contact, always courteous and yet businesslike. The head teacher and the secretary are an effective team.

77. Standards of attainment on entry to the school are below average and are still below average when pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2. They have risen considerably at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are good, and the school has created a very positive ethos. The quality of teaching is good and compensates for the weaknesses found in the curriculum and its assessment. The school provides satisfactory value for money with the potential to improve

considerably.

78. This aspect of the school has improved significantly due to good management of resources and considerable fund-raising by governors. The improvements to the building, the grounds and better use of accommodation place the school in a strong position to improve even further now that staff seem to be more settled in the school.

5. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

5. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

79. Attainment on entry to the nursery and reception classes is generally below the average expected for their age. This is borne out by the baseline assessment undertaken by the school in the early weeks of their time in the reception year. Standards attained in early number concepts are slightly higher

80. Pupils, regardless of their initial levels of attainment make good progress in all areas of learning in the nursery and reception class. Despite this pupils still attain below the level expected of them when the school assesses them using the baseline assessment procedures adopted by the local education authority at the beginning of the reception class.

5. **Personal and social development**

81. Children are happy and confident in both classes and form effective relationships with other children and with adults. They are increasingly independent and able to concentrate on tasks and seek help when needed. Small groups of pupils' work well together in the sand or water and help one another with their work. They learn to get dressed and undressed for physical education lessons. They are polite and courteous and listen to the views of one another. They learn to share equipment and take turns. They have a developing sense of what is right and wrong and behave responsibly.

5.

Language and literacy

82. Children listen attentively and when prompted they talk about experiences from their everyday life. Many of them still have a limited vocabulary. They listen and respond to stories, songs, nursery rhymes and number poems. This could be seen in the singing lesson where older children taught them to sing *Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes*. They enact their own stories in the role play corner. These are usually based upon their own experiences of home or visiting the doctor's surgery. Children handle books appropriately and enjoy the opportunity to talk about them with an adult. Only a few are using the words and pictures to tell a story but they have an understanding of the way books are organised. Some associate sounds with patterns in rhymes and recognise their own names and some familiar words. Most recognise their own names but few write their names with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters. They recognise the initial sound made by the letter 'c' and the sound made by 'o' or 'a' in the middle of a word.

5. **Mathematics**

83. Children recognise simple mathematical shapes and post them through the corresponding cut-out shape. They describe position in terms of on top or on the bottom. They are less able to order in terms of *bigger* or *smaller than*. They compare, sort, match, order, sequence and count using everyday objects. They recognise and use numbers to 6 although they are familiar with larger numbers from their everyday lives. They can count on and back in single figures with the support of practical apparatus. Very few record numbers or begin to show awareness of number operations, such as addition and subtraction.

5. Knowledge and understanding of the world

84. Children talk about the area around the school, and understand past and present in relation to their own lives, for example the changes in them as they grow up. They explore and recognise features of living things, such as animals, trees or their teeth. They recognise the similarities between leaves from trees of the same species and see the differences between leaves of different tree types. They use materials and simple tools to cut, build, fold and join. They begin to use the computer to *dress teddy* and have an understanding of the function of the computer mouse to direct the cursor on the screen. They also use listening centre to listen to tapes of favourite stories and songs. Recording what they observe is still at an early stage and they still need a lot of adult support. They represent their families through simple drawings.

5. Physical development

85. Children use the classroom space well. The opportunities for climbing and balancing are restricted at present because the nursery play area is just being developed. They handle tools, dough and construction materials safely and with increasing control.

5. Creative development

86. Children show limited creative skills. They learn to sing simple songs and respond to a rhythm within music. Pictures are usually restricted to basic shapes of people to represent the members of their immediate family. They engage in role play about events they know such as looking after a baby. Only a few more able pupils are able to respond imaginatively to the characters they come across in books and stories.

87. The quality of teaching of children under five in both the nursery and the reception class is consistently good and occasionally very good. Teachers have a good understanding of the curriculum designated for young children. Lessons are planned effectively to make maximum use of staff and volunteer helpers. Lessons, where there is direct teacher input, are carefully structured but also make use of unplanned events. For example, when the children suddenly noticed a cat on the windowsill, the teacher quickly used it to reinforce the initial sound made by the letter 'c'. The routines of the classroom are clearly defined so that children quickly feel secure in either the nursery classroom or in the reception class. Relationships between all staff and the children are excellent. There is a good combination of firmness and good humour. Teachers know the children well and know when to move them on to the next steps in the acquisition of skills in numeracy and literacy. Staff also have a good perception of the concentration span of young children. This was seen in the work with younger reception children on initial sounds. The teacher very effectively moved the children onto a more practical task when their concentration began to wane. This maintained the pace of their learning and contributed to the good progress made.

88. The curriculum planned for children under five is good. All of the areas of learning are covered and teachers see that children experience all of the activities prepared for them. They know how the children are progressing in relation to the desired learning outcomes for children at the age of five. The links between the areas of learning and the National Curriculum programmes of study are less well defined. This is partly due to a change in admissions policy where the teacher previously in charge of the nursery on a full-time basis has moved into reception for part of the day. She has not yet got the experience of the National Curriculum programmes of study to plan this progression. Assessment procedures are satisfactory in the nursery but are unsatisfactory in the reception class. Careful records are kept of the progress made with reading but this is not linked to National Curriculum levels. Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs through the good relationships established by the teacher and nursery nurse. Not enough attention is given to the individual education plans provided for these pupils. The good progress made is due to good teaching rather than planned interventions.

89. The admissions policy into reception class has changed this year. Children are now admitted into the reception class on a staggered basis throughout the year after their fourth birthday. This has reduced the number of children in the nursery – it is now operating on a morning only basis. This has been well thought out but the curriculum for children under fives is not managed overall. The co-ordinator for children under the age of five had until recently only taken responsibility for the nursery. She has little experience of the reception class and is still learning what changes this will mean. The ethos for learning is good. The nursery and reception staff are the same for half of the day and the liaison with the part-time teacher in the class for the rest of the day is good.

90. Staffing levels are appropriate and the experience of staff matches the needs of young children. The accommodation is generally good with generous and well organised work space. Outdoor play facilities are only just being provided so at present this is unsatisfactory but will improve after half-term. The creative use of staff and accommodation ensures that nursery and reception children are eased into school well. Excellent use of and positive relations with parents are well established in both the nursery and reception classes.

91. This is a very similar picture to that given by the previous inspection report although pupils attainment both on entry to the nursery and into the reception class has fallen somewhat. Mathematics continues to be the strongest area as pupils enter reception.

5. ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

5. English

92. End of Key Stage 1 tests in 1998, show that attainment in reading is above the national average for pupils scoring the expected Level 2 but well below the national average for pupils scoring above that. Taking all results into account, the schools' results were below the national average for all schools but broadly similar in comparison with similar schools. In writing attainment is below the national average at both Level 2 and above. However, when compared with similar schools the results are broadly in line. The results of tests for 1999 are a little below the level attained in 1998. Girls generally attain higher levels than boys particularly in writing. In reading, the schools' results have shown remarkable progress over three years, from a starting position that was very low to one now close to the national average. Writing shows a similar upward trend, although progress has not been so rapid.

93. Standards attained at the end of Key Stage tests in 1998 were well below the national average for the expected Level 4. Attainment at the higher level was close to the national average. Standards of attainment are well below the average for similar schools. The results of tests for 1999 show an improvement that is similar to the level of improvement for schools nationally in English. There is a very marked difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Girls attain significantly higher than boys do. For example, in the most recent 1999 tests, more than 79 per cent of girls scored the nationally expected Level 4 while less than 50 per cent of boys did so. This is a consistent trend over the past four years. As there are more boys than girls in the school, this is a very significant factor in the school's attainment figures. Attainment over time has always been below the national average. Although standards are below the national average at the end of Key Stage 2, there are indications that lower down the school pupils are attaining close to that expected for their age.

94. Standards of attainment in speaking and listening are at about the expected level at the end of both key stages. Pupils listen with interest and contribute positively to group discussions. They show their understanding by responding appropriately to instructions. Answers to questions are usually accurate and sensible. They pay close attention when listening as part of a larger audience, for example, when in assembly. Speaking skills are developed to a satisfactory level. Good speaking skills are demonstrated at times, for example, when pupils have to explain their thinking. This happens

particularly in mathematics lessons where in the numeracy strategy lesson pupils are asked to explain their methods of working out by responding to the teacher's question, 'What were you thinking in your head?' Occasionally answers are single word or phrase and this inhibits development. Development is also sometimes restricted by the use of colloquialism and dialect. Some older pupils have still not come to terms with the need to adjust speech patterns according to audience.

95. Attainment in reading is close to the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 but below the nationally expected level at the end of Key Stage 2. Key Stage 1 pupils have a secure knowledge of phonics. This knowledge helps pupils decipher words and understand meaning. Although reading at the end of Key Stage 2, remains below the expected level, there are some strengths in reading in this Key Stage. Attainment in reading is improving in Years 3, 4 and 5. In these year groups reading is at about the expected level. Only in Year 6 is it still below standard. Although Year 6 readers read with some confidence, there is still a general lack of comprehension due sometimes to incorrect reading of individual words. For example, the word 'initials' was read as 'inshals'. As a result a significant part of the passage being read was misunderstood. However, all Year 6 pupils know how the library is arranged; how to find a book of fiction and can find an information book on a particular subject. They know how an information book is arranged and explain how to use the contents and index pages. All had some idea about the glossary in a non-fiction book. All of these skills enable them to make effective use of the school library.

96. Standards in writing are at the standard expected nationally for seven-year-olds. This is at variance with the findings of standard national tests in 1998 where attainment at Level 2 was above the national average. It is clear that the standards of the school are improving. However, some of the skills pupils are learning are still quite fragile and not well established. Pupils know how to spell accurately, to punctuate and how to sustain a longer piece of writing. However, pupils do not always use the skills they have learned in their own work. Pupils understand the structures of written English and use them to re-tell familiar stories and make up their own stories. They write diary entries about events in their lives. They write a simple letter, knowing to start with an address and to sign the letter at the end. The level of presentation is sometimes careless although the writing of some pupils is very neat. A significant number of pupils do not form letters correctly, use capitals in the wrong place and some letters are reversed.

97. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards of attainment in writing are below the national average. Although writing is legible on the whole, the standard is very variable. The school is aware of the need to improve handwriting. During inspection week, Year 6 pupils practised handwriting under exactly the same conditions they will experience when taking their handwriting test in May. Some skills in grammar have still to be learned. A significant number of pupils do not yet distinguish between local dialect and Standard English. For example, one Year 6 pupil used dialect speech patterns when writing a story: 'she as fell off'. Pupils in Key Stage 2 write for a wide range of purposes. They use their literacy skills across the curriculum to record what they observe in science and to interpret their history and geography topics. They write imaginative stories and non-narrative pieces such as a newsletter to parents. The use of information technology to support writing skills is not in place.

98. Progress is satisfactory overall, but it is still unsatisfactory over time in Key Stage 2. At times pupils appear to learn a great deal. But at the same time there are frequently pieces of work incomplete and this hinders progress. Progress in Key Stage 1 is marked by the acquisition of basic skills of grammar and punctuation. Although these skills are established, pupils do not always remember to use them in their own writing. There is some lack of progress for pupils in Years 3 and year 4, particularly boys. Progress is better towards the end of Key Stage 2 where pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have positive attitudes towards their work. In these classes, the pace of lessons is brisk and challenging supporting an atmosphere where progress can be made. Not enough progress has yet been made to raise standards to the expected level. Despite the lack of detailed individual education plans, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in nursery and reception and in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 the lack of focused help impedes their progress in English. There is some good progress made in the acquisition of library skills. Pupils enjoy using the library, finding information and making choices.

99. Almost without exception, pupils have a good attitude to their lessons and respond well to the teaching. In most books, pride is shown in completed tasks. Pupils behave well in lessons, listening carefully to what the teacher and others have to say. This is particularly marked among pupils in Years 5 and 6. They work extremely well together in groups and in pairs, sharing tasks and making constructive decisions. Attitudes are usually good in whole class sessions. However, some pupils have not learned the skills required to work independently in literacy lessons during group work. This slows the pace of the lesson, reduces the progress some pupils make and sometimes affects the overall control of the class.

100. Teaching is satisfactory overall and this is promoting good attitudes to learning and a positive ethos. However, the majority of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good. In Key Stage 2 teaching is satisfactory overall, but there is also some good teaching. Teachers know what to teach and their skills have been sharpened up by the training provided for the literacy strategy. The strategy itself has helped teachers in their planning. This has enabled lessons to become much more purposeful, promoting better progress. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and response and make those expectations clear to pupils. The group sessions within the literacy hour are less well managed and teachers sometimes experience difficulty with the behaviour of a small number of pupils. Most tasks are well thought out and appropriate to the needs of pupils. Teachers make good use of praise and encouragement. Teachers mark work on a regular basis and marking is very positive and raises pupils' self esteem. However, it is rarely evaluative. Even where teaching is good, the weakest element is the use of assessment to plan the next steps in learning. Better progress could be made if teachers pointed out to pupils both what has been done well and what has not been successful, setting targets for what needs to be learned next. There is some very good use of the session at the end of literacy lessons, to sum up what has been done and what has been learned. Such sessions are frequently very brisk with good question and answer sessions that help the teacher understand the progress pupils have made.

101. The school has made an effective start to the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers have developed many skills through their training for the strategy. They have adapted well to the systems being used and the style of teaching. There is no doubt that the strategy is impacting on the standards of the school, although the full fruits of this have still to work through to the end of Key Stage 2. Additional funding has helped the school to improve its resources for English. As well as the provision of books, the school has invested sensibly in classroom equipment to support the management of literacy project lessons. Through the strategy, teachers are very aware of the use of literacy across the curriculum. For example, there is an emphasis on the use of subject specific and technical vocabulary that supports understanding. Teachers frequently require pupils to read aloud to the class from key passages in books. There are constant reminders about spelling and opportunities to spell words aloud.

102. The school has developed policies for the reading and the writing elements of the teaching of English. So far, it has not developed a policy for teaching speaking and listening. The frequent inappropriate use of dialect indicates that this is becoming a pressing priority. The literacy strategy has helped promote a cohesive system for planning in the school. This enables the school to build steadily on existing skills and knowledge. However, the school does not yet make full use of assessment data. Effective use is made of assessment data in reading, where pupils with reading difficulties are identified through the use of a standardised reading test and given support to help them make progress. However, the school does not analyse its standard test data to focus on raising standards.

103. Although standards are not yet sufficiently high at the end of Key Stage 2, the school can identify improvements in the teaching of English and demonstrate the capacity for further improvement. Results at the end of Key Stage 1 are much better. Results at the end of Key Stage 2 are improving. The quality of teaching has improved overall since the previous inspection. The curriculum is now more cohesive and provides a good basis for future progress. The school has initiated strategies for assessment but insufficient use is made of assessment at present. There has been considerable

enhancement to resources, both books for pupils to use and classroom equipment to support the literacy strategy.

5. **Mathematics**

104. In the 1998 statutory tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 the percentage of pupils attaining the expected national level was close to the national average. This was well above average in comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with higher than average attainment was well above the national average and also well above the average for similar schools.

105. At the age of 11 the percentage of pupils attaining the expected national level was well below the national average and also well below the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils with higher than average attainment was well below the national average and the average for similar schools.

106. The 1998 results show an improvement on previous years at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2 results are still lower than they were in 1996 when compared to national averages although there has been a slight improvement since 1997. Boys do better than girls at the end of Key Stage 1 but their performance is about the same at the end of Key Stage 2. The inspection findings indicate that the current Year 2 are likely to improve on past results and Year 6 pupils are likely to achieve similar levels to 1998. The recently released 1999 figures seem to reflect this same pattern of attainment.

107. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils understand the value of digits to 100 and can use different ways of adding and subtracting when dealing with problems. Standards of numeracy are satisfactory. They can recognise and name shapes such as squares, rectangles, pentagons and triangles and can name and describe common three-dimensional shapes. They can count accurately in twos, fives and tens and recognise odd and even numbers. They can estimate length and measure distances using Unifix cubes and centimetres.

108. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils understand place value up to one thousand but they cannot subtract one large number from another by using the adding on process. Their knowledge of the time's tables is extremely limited and pupils have to work their way laboriously through them to answer questions. Standards of numeracy are not satisfactory. They have very little knowledge of percentages and are unsure how to express fractions as decimals or percentages. They know the squares of numbers up to five but not beyond that. Pupils' knowledge of the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes is insecure and many cannot name a pentagon or hexagon with any certainty. Pupils do not have a good mathematical vocabulary and do not readily use words such as numerator and denominator when discussing fractions.

109. Overall, progress is satisfactory. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 but progress is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1 pupils become familiar with the number system and learn that place value is important when understanding what digits represent. They learn to add and subtract and extend that knowledge and skill to involve simple problems with coins. They develop their knowledge of shapes and become adept at describing shapes accurately and recognising descriptions given to them. They begin to measure objects using simple apparatus and rulers. They learn to recognise halves and quarters and can apply their knowledge to shapes and numbers with increasing confidence.

110. In Key Stage 2 progress is much slower and is unsatisfactory over time. Although progress was sometimes good in lessons seen during the inspection it is apparent that many pupils have not learned their earlier lessons securely enough. Some Year 6 pupils demonstrate less knowledge of shape than some Year 2 pupils do. Pupils acquire number skills slowly and do not commit tables and number

bonds to memory with any confidence. They do acquire an increasing mathematical vocabulary but there are many gaps in their knowledge. By Year 6 their knowledge and understanding of fractions, decimals, percentages, shape, area, factors and square numbers is underdeveloped. As a result, they are unable to perform the mathematical operations expected for pupils of their age.

111. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils although work is not matched closely enough to their individual needs. Nevertheless, satisfactory progress is made overall because of the good teaching found in most classrooms.

112. Pupils' response to mathematics is very good in Key Stage 1 and is usually good in Key Stage 2. Most pupils listen attentively and concentrate well during the introductory part of lessons. They behave well throughout and co-operate effectively with each other. They enjoy very good relationships with their teachers and with each other. In group work, they settle very quickly to their tasks and persevere with difficult problems. They enjoy being challenged and are keen to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. Presentation is variable but most pupils take care and pride in their work.

113. The quality of teaching is very good in Key Stage 1 and is good in Key Stage 2. Throughout the school teachers have a good understanding of mathematics and use a range of methods and organisation to gain and hold the pupils' attention. For example, Year 2 pupils begin their numeracy hour at a cracking pace when the teacher uses a flip chart and number lines to get them counting up and back in twos and tens. Pupils are generally managed effectively so that they concentrate and do not disrupt the work of others. Teachers structure the numeracy hour well. They use the time effectively to define the learning objectives, manage the learning tasks and test the pupils' knowledge and understanding by shrewd questioning. Adult helpers are usually well briefed and know how best to support pupils' learning. Pupils are given enough opportunities to display their mastery of the subject as when an able Year 5 pupil gives an excellent explanation of how he collected data in a lesson. Pupils are introduced to correct mathematical vocabulary from an early age. For example a group of Year 2 pupils talk with confidence about their "objectives" when dealing with "regular and irregular shapes". Pupils throughout the school respond well to praise and enjoy having their hard work recognised by their teacher and their classmates.

114. Where teaching is not quite so successful the less well motivated pupils lose interest and do not pay attention. Noise levels rise and the whole class is disrupted when the teacher's voice is raised to regain control. Pupils react adversely when control is by criticism rather than praise and do not relate well to their teacher. At times work is not matched closely to pupils' needs because the planning does not take the variation in ability into consideration. Teachers' expectations of their pupils vary and some of the work is not sufficiently challenging.

115. Teachers make good use of the national numeracy framework when planning lessons and this is a major factor in the quality of teaching in mathematics. Assessment procedures are, however, unsatisfactory. The school does not effectively assess what pupils know and understand and therefore they cannot build upon pupils' learning from one year to another. Teachers do not have a clear enough, shared understanding of what pupils can already do and what they should do next. The school marking policy it is not always applied so marking is then reduced to ticks and very simple comments without identifying future learning.. The school has a great deal of test data from national tests but it has not been examined or analysed. Staff are not able to identify weaknesses in its curriculum or the specific needs of individual pupils or groups of pupils.

116. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and has successfully raised the profile of mathematics in the school. Further training in mathematics has been shared with the staff so ensuring that all members of staff are properly prepared for teaching the numeracy hour. Staff have worked

hard to see that the strategy for numeracy is in place. There is a detailed action plan which sets out future developments in mathematics within the school's overall curriculum development plan. Plans, displays and checks on key learning objectives are routinely examined and commented on. Information technology is not sufficiently well used to support mathematics although there are a few examples of successful data handling. The use of mathematics in other areas of the curriculum is rarely planned for and is generally underdeveloped.

117. There have been major changes in the mathematics curriculum and the teachers are either recently appointed to the school or have changed their roles considerably. Against this background of change it is difficult to measure improvement since the previous inspection report. Standards of attainment have improved at the end of Key Stage 1 but have dropped at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils now make better progress in Key Stage 1 but still the progress in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. The range of the mathematics curriculum is still judged to be satisfactory but planning for, and assessing steps in learning, are still inadequate. The school has laid the foundations for further improvement.

5. Science

118. At the end of Key Stage 1 when pupils are assessed by the school, the proportion of pupils that attain the levels expected in all aspects of science was close to the national average in 1998. Fewer attain above that level. At the end of Key Stage 2, when pupils were tested, the proportion of pupils attaining at either the expected level or above was well below the national average. The school did not compare well with schools from similar areas. This is not such a sound picture as that seen during the previous inspection. However, pupils in both key stages have a satisfactory grasp of the experimental and investigative nature of science in both key stages. It is the knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes that are lacking in Key Stage 2. There was a significant improvement in standards obtained in the 1999 Standard Assessment tests. This was due to a very intensive period of revision at the end of the key stage.

5. 119. The progress made in science is unsatisfactory overall because the content of the curriculum is not organised in clearly identified steps. Progress is good in Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. Despite this, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in all of the strands of the curriculum in Key Stage 1 because teaching is good and volunteer helpers are very well deployed. In Key Stage 2 where the acquisition of knowledge and understanding has more emphasis and careful assessment of progress becomes more critical, ineffective curriculum planning hinders progress. This is most clearly seen in the strand materials and their properties and physical processes. In both key stages this lack of emphasis on what should be taught and when, prevents some pupils from attaining at a higher level. Progress though the strands of the curriculum is not easy to chart because work is not always dated or in order in the files kept. Mixed age groups in all classes make planning for progression in science difficult.

120. Pupils in Year 1 describe what they can see and feel using simple charts prepared by their teachers. By the time they are in Year 2 they conduct simple experiments and predict what they think may happen. They describe the habitat of mini-beasts found in the school ground and present their findings in table format. In Key Stage 1 they learn to name the external parts of their bodies and identify leaves, flowers and roots of plants. They understand that the species of a tree can be identified by the shape of leaves and the fruits they bear. For example, the oak leaves and acorns collected from the school grounds. They describe plants and animals in terms of size or colour and know some of the common species of animals. When listening they can hear changes in pitch or loudness and know that light comes from a variety of sources. Materials are sorted according to their properties and they know that heat or water changes some things.

121. In Key Stage 2 pupils build upon their understanding of investigations and experiments. They make satisfactory progress in this aspect of science so that by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils recognise simple variables in fair tests. They compare similarities and differences between the diet of Saxon times and today and appreciate the greater nutritional value of food in the present time. They have an understanding of cause and effect as explained in their work on air resistance and insulation. They understand the need for accurate measurements and plot patterns using simple graphs and charts.

122. The progress made in *life processes and living things* is satisfactory overall but insufficient opportunity is provided for pupils to attain higher levels. The intensive revision at the end of Year 6 comprises a great deal of work copied from the board. Pupils understand life processes, use scientific names for major body organs and know where they are. They describe the functioning of the respiratory system and know that the heart pumps blood around the body. They label plants using scientific names for the parts and use simple keys to group living things. They begin to appreciate a simple food chain. The progress made in *materials and their properties* is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. Although this strand of science is covered, much of the work seen in books is copied from the board with little opportunity to check out learning. Pupils describe the differences between properties of different materials and appreciate that materials are chosen for their fitness for the purpose for which they are to be used. By the end of the key stage they understand that filtration is used to separate solids from liquids and appreciate that some materials can be changed and that change is sometimes irreversible as in cooking. They have used terms like evaporation and condensation but do not have enough experience of them to connect them to their own lives. The picture is similar in *physical processes*. The work is covered, but the progress made by pupils is hindered by lack of detail in the scheme on what needs to be covered in each year group. As a result pupils learn the same facts in each year groups without building upon their knowledge and understanding from one year to another. The good revision programme at the end of last years Y6 enabled more pupils to gain at the expected level. Pupils obviously have the understanding of electrical circuits and understand that some materials are used to conduct electricity while others are used as insulation. They understand that objects have weight and that the force of gravity causes objects to fall to the ground when dropped. The work done on balanced forces showed that most pupils appreciated that the fall of a parachute is slowed down by the upthrust of the air as it descends.

123. Pupils in all Key Stage classes were studying light during the inspection. The majority of pupils were attaining levels consistent with their age but the lack of detail in the scheme on what to teach at each level meant that similar concepts were being learned in each class. They all learned that light travels in straight lines and can be reflected from shiny surfaces. They learned that shadows are formed when an object blocks light and most measured the length of shadows accurately.

124. Pupils enjoy science lessons, particularly the practical investigations. They behave well and respond very well to the volunteer helpers, present in all of the lessons seen. in their classrooms. They are careful with the resources provided and follow the safety instructions given by staff.

125. The quality of teaching in science is good although it is more consistently so in Key Stage 1. In all lessons seen the quality of teaching was judged to be at least satisfactory. Lessons are planned very carefully by teachers and usually involve volunteer helpers working with groups of pupils in a *science circus*. This involves groups of pupils moving round to each activity in a carousel. There is not any planned differentiation in the tasks. Where teaching is good in both key stages, the teacher overcomes this by intervening to make sure that pupils have understood the concept being taught. Teachers teach the experimental and investigative aspect of science well in both key stages. The impact of this is apparent at the end of Key Stage 1 where almost all pupils attain the level expected in science. In Key Stage 2, there is significantly more content to be taught and therefore it is not sufficient that pupils understand the processes. Groups are highly organised and volunteer helpers are given written guidance on the tasks that they supervise. In the best lessons in both key stages, the class teacher very well supports the adult helpers. Where the teacher has a good understanding of what needs to be learned

during the lesson teaching is good. The lesson is focused on what has to be learned, technical terms are used and reinforced. For example in Key Stage 2 when the teacher discussed the differing depth of a shadow using the terms *umbra* and *penumbra*. In Key Stage 1, good interventions were more to do with the teacher's knowledge of each individual pupil. Marking is not so strong a feature. Work is not always dated and although the teacher's comments are positive they seldom set targets for future learning.

126. Teachers plan the science curriculum carefully in key stage groups. Topics are covered on a two-year cycle to avoid repetition. This is not always effective as the overlap from one class to another is not always taken account of in the planning. The topics that are taught reflect the National Curriculum programmes of study for each key stage. However, the learning steps are not clearly defined and therefore there is a lot of repetition and not enough planned progression from one level to another. Literacy and numeracy skills are not specifically planned into the science curriculum and insufficient use is made of information technology in the science curriculum. Teachers do not have a shared understanding of what needs to be taught at each National Curriculum level. This also applies to pupils with special educational needs and those that are more able. The content of the curriculum is not planned carefully enough to make sure that they are making appropriate progress in each of the strands of the National Curriculum. This is more evident in Key Stage 2 where the content of the curriculum is more clearly defined. At the end of topics, teachers test pupil' knowledge and understanding through the use of key questions. They assess what has been learned but do not give an on-going picture of the progress through the National Curriculum programmes of study. Teachers make little use of the assessment records of teachers in the previous year group.

5.

127. Given that the co-ordinator has only been teaching for a year the subject is managed satisfactorily. She has had the opportunity to observe teachers teaching and has been able to comment on the quality of teaching. Staff have worked collaboratively to establish a route through the science programmes of study. They are aware that they need to define attainment levels more closely and to raises standards at the end of Key Stage 2. This was achieved in 1999. The co-ordinator has also identified her own need for training on planning the curriculum although her own subject knowledge is sound.

128. There is plenty of space in classrooms for practical activities and now that the school grounds have been tidied up they provide a good resource for science lessons. Annual residential visits to an outdoor study centre are also used to enhance the science curriculum.

129. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 have dropped since the previous inspection report. They are similar at the end of Key Stage 1. However, there have been considerable levels of staffing changes, one of which was the science co-ordinator. Teachers are working hard to raise standards in science. The 1999 figures do look better reflecting some measure of success.

5. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Art

130. It was possible to see only one lesson where art was being taught during the week of inspection. Judgements are based on that lesson, the scrutiny of artwork on display around the school, on the work in pupils' sketchbooks and on teachers' planning.

131. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout both key stages. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn to use paint to reflect on their family life and their life in school. They paint 'My family' with bold brush strokes, mixing paint from colour blocks. They work together on collaborative displays on 'Environments', making insects from wire and cellophane. They study the work of Paul Klee and adapt his style to their own purposes. Pupils at this key stage make colour circles showing an understanding of primary colours. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to develop their understanding of line and form. In their sketchbooks, they use pencil and crayon to make observations of the world around them, practising techniques in line, shape, tone and texture. Charcoal is used when pupils draw self-portraits. Although many of these are immature in form, they are completed with a good sense of detail. Year 3 pupils continue work on colour circles and learn about splitting light into its component colours. They use cellophane to study the effect of light through and onto different colours. This helps their understanding of secondary colours. A little three-dimensional work supports the progress pupils make. For example, Key Stage 2 pupils make papier-mâché masks that have bold colour finishes. However, there is insufficient work in three dimensions. Although the school makes some effective use of fabric in display, no evidence was found of pupils' work with textiles.

132. As only one lesson was seen in which art was part of the lesson content, comments about pupils' attitudes to art are largely based upon the work seen. Attitudes are satisfactory. During the lesson seen, pupils at the beginning of Key Stage 1 had great enjoyment using paint. They handled brushes carefully and took pleasure talking to each other and to adults about what they were painting. In the work seen, it is clear that pupils show an interest in what they are designing, making, drawing and painting. Only a small number of pieces of finished work showed real perseverance through the application of detail and finish, for example, in self-portraits and papier-mâché masks. The sketchbooks kept by pupils are a useful way of recording their progress. However, much of this work was completed hastily and without attention to detail.

133. Judgements on the quality of teaching are based on the one lesson seen, the scrutiny of work around the school and in sketchbooks and on teachers' planning. The teaching is satisfactory. Planning is satisfactory overall. A balance is struck between learning the practical aspects of art and developing skills and learning from and about art. For example, planning indicates the use of different media and working in different styles. Planning takes into account the need of pupils to learn about the use of colour and colour mixing. There is some coverage of learning about the style of famous artists. Scrutiny of the work seen indicates satisfactory understanding of the art curriculum.

134. Art has not been a priority subject recently. This is understandable, given recent national initiatives in the literacy and numeracy projects. There is a suitable policy that gives valuable support to the day-to-day teaching and learning of art. However, there is no overall school system that guarantees full coverage of the art curriculum and a progressive acquisition of skills and experience across different media. This is why there is a lack of work with textiles, for example, and why art does not make a great impact on the cultural development of pupils in the school. Keeping a sketchbook is a valuable initiative. However, more guidance is needed about what work should be done in the sketchbooks and how it should be assessed. At present, the only teacher comment in these sketch books is to acknowledge what the pupil has done, rather than to assess how well it has been done and what should be done next to improve.

5. Design and technology

135. Only two lessons of design and technology were seen during inspection week. Judgements are based on the evidence of those lessons, a small sample of work seen around the school and on teachers' planning.

136. Pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages. In the two lessons seen pupils made good progress in beginning to understand the designing and making process. Pupils in Key Stage 1 investigate ways of joining materials and ways of making a hinge to develop a simple puppet with moving limbs. Although the teacher's plan indicated that a range of materials would be used, all the puppets had similar components, for example, all hinges were made with paper clips. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 made a great deal of progress as they altered designs according to the specific purpose. In this particular case it was to design party biscuits for different contexts. Some of the designs created by different groups showed careful thought about purpose, materials to be used, practicality of methods and how products could be improved. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 progressed because the teacher used his good understanding of designing for a purpose to enable them to evaluate their own designs effectively. Although there is clear evidence of progress being made in understanding the principles and processes of design and technology it is not clear that all pupils are building on their experience from one lesson to another. For example, in work on designing torches, it was not clear from the work pupils had completed whether or not they had understood the need to design a product which was possible for them to make.

137. From the evidence of the two lessons seen, pupils have good attitudes to design and technology lessons. They are interested in their tasks. They work very well together in pairs and groups, sharing resources and responsibilities in a very mature fashion. They listen well and as a result respond thoughtfully to the tasks allocated.

138. The quality of teaching in design and technology is satisfactory overall. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good. Both lessons were characterised by teachers who were confident about their own knowledge and that helped the lesson to proceed at a good pace. The management of these lessons was good, both in the way the teacher prepared and used resources and in the way pupils were led. Scrutiny of teachers' plans show that they all have at least a satisfactory knowledge of the processes for designing and making. However, there are also indications that the knowledge of some teachers is quite basic. This has implications for the continuous acquisition of knowledge and skills.

139. There is an appropriate policy for the teaching of design and technology. The school has chosen to adopt a commercial scheme of work. The teachers' plans and the work seen do not give a convincing picture of overall curriculum coverage. The full use of this commercial scheme can ensure that pupils build up skills and understanding in a logical order. An audit of equipment and resources is currently being undertaken. Following this, resources will be augmented.

Geography

140. Pupils attain the standards expected for their age. Pupils in Key Stage 1 recognise and make observations about the physical features of where they live and talk about who lives where in relation to themselves. They talk about the features of the area that they like or dislike. For example they like the woodland areas but not the mess made by local infill sites. They appreciate the improvements made to the school grounds and identify local places of interest from photographs.

141. During Key Stage 2 they learn to use maps and plans and can find rivers or oceans on a map or a globe. They describe the common features of rivers and begin to use terms like mouth or tributary to describe them. They observe similarities between where they live and other parts of Derbyshire as seen in the work on settlements. Most, pupils are aware that they live in Derbyshire, but some are not. They can explain why settlements have sprung up in some places but not in others. For example, they appreciate remoteness of the Dark Peak as compared with the river valley or Chesterfield.

142. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils can read maps and globes and use a sketch map to identify

parts of a town or small village. A residential visit to Bakewell gave pupils the opportunity to read maps, conduct surveys to establish the flow of traffic and identify the reasons why people visit Bakewell. One of the most common reasons given was to buy a Bakewell tart! They make appropriate use of information technology to present their findings in pie charts and tables. They appreciate that people move to areas to find work and that the terrain and climate of an area impacts on the life-style adopted by the people. They compare their every-day lives to that of people living in an African village and show through their writing that they understand the similarities and differences between Bramley Vale and that village. For example, the children all go to school but the actual school buildings look very different.

143. The progress made by most pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory but more able pupils are seldom challenged with the work set for them. As a result pupils attain the levels expected but not above that level. It is often difficult to chart progress as work is not routinely dated.

144. Pupil's behaviour in lessons is generally good and very good when the tasks set are interesting and challenging. When work is not so interesting and is not matched to their previous attainment pupils can become restless.

5. 145. The quality of teaching is generally good and at times excellent. Lessons are planned carefully, resources are organised effectively and teachers have a good understanding of the concepts and skills to be taught during each lesson. When teaching is excellent the teacher clearly defines what is to be learned in the lesson, shares that with the class and checks their understanding through a simple question and answer session at the end of the lesson. Pupils are challenged to think about cause and effect and use technical vocabulary to describe them. For example in the lesson seen on the settlement in Derbyshire, the teacher taught pupils to use terms like, excellent grazing land or major routes when describing the development of farming or the growth of Chesterfield as a market town. Good teaching is also characterised by careful assessment and marking. This is not well established in all classes.

146. The geography curriculum is set out into topics to be covered in each year group and the topics are planned on a two-year cycle in each key stage. All strands of the National Curriculum programmes of study are covered through the scheme and teachers are given some helpful guidance on activities for lessons. Not enough detail is provided on what pupils need to learn at the different levels of the curriculum. The steps in learning are not clearly identified and the overlap of year groups created by mixed age classes exacerbates this problem. Teachers do not have a shared understanding of hierarchy in skills and knowledge and therefore some skills are over taught and others missed. For example all pupils in Key Stage 2 were studying settlements and much of the work covered was exactly the same. The match of the work to the age of the younger pupils was less successful and therefore progress was limited.

147. The subject is satisfactorily managed although the co-ordinator has just taken up responsibility for geography. The scheme agreed by all staff gives some guidance on activities but does not set out the steps to be followed through the National Curriculum. Training for the co-ordinator would alleviate some of these anomalies.

148. The school has sufficient geography resources as the curriculum is currently planned. The school grounds are an excellent resource supplemented by regular visits to the grounds of Hardwick Hall. Visits and visitors are used to enhance the curriculum and good use is made of the regular residential visits.

149. The picture in geography is little improved since the time of the previous inspection although resources have improved and the school grounds are now used for promoting geographical skills.

History

150. Only one lesson of history, in Key Stage 1, was seen during the inspection. Evidence was taken from teachers' planning files and from the samples of work provided by the school. Pupils are covering the programmes of study laid down for them but it is difficult to chart progress accurately as work is not routinely dated.

151. Pupils in Key Stage 1 know about the passage of time by charting events in their own lives from babyhood to the present. They sequence photographs and talk about events in the past. They know that the local area used to depend on coal mining as a source of employment and many pupils know someone who used to work in local pits. They learn about famous people in history and begin to appreciate the context of lives in the past.

152. In Key Stage 2 pupils extend this understanding of the past and learn about periods in history that have shaped their own lives. They can order events from the time of the Ancient Greeks, Tudor England and modern times. They know the order of the kings and queens of Tudor times and have some understanding of the conflicts between the monarchy and the Catholic Church. By the end of the key stage they use computer programs to find out about life in a Tudor manor house or the conflict between Spain and England at this time. They identify differences between life in a Saxon or Viking village and describe their diet in relation to what was available to them. They understand that Britain has been regularly invaded.

153. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall but is better in Key Stage 1 where the programmes of study are less prescriptive about the content of the curriculum. In the lesson seen, pupils responded very well to the history lesson. This does not look so consistent in Key Stage 2 where quite a lot of work is poorly presented.

154. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good. Lessons are matched closely to pupils' previous knowledge and understanding. The teacher knows exactly what she wants the children to learn and organises time and resources effectively for the lesson. Questions are sharply focused on learning and this enables the pupils to make good progress. The work produced by pupils suggests that teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 2.

155. Teachers plan the curriculum from agreed topics but there is no guidance on the order of skills or knowledge to be taught. This is not such an issue in Key Stage 1 where the curriculum is more about understanding chronological order. However, there is a significant amount of over-lap in the curriculum planned for classes in key Stage 2. Pupils could have covered the same topics at similar levels in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. For example all of these age groups studied Greeks and Tudors in very similar ways.

156. Good use is made of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum. There are sufficient books and resources and teachers make good use of them

157. History continues to be an area that requires attention. There has been little improvement since the previous inspection report.

Information Technology

158. By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment is below that expected for pupils aged seven

and eleven. Although a minority of pupils possess some of the skills and knowledge expected in some of the aspects of information technology no-one has attained proficiency in all the necessary elements. Progress in information technology is unsatisfactory. This is because parts of the curriculum are still not being taught or are not covered sufficiently well.

159. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can use a mouse to move the cursor, drag to highlight text, change font size and shut down the computer after using it. They can locate building blocks in a programme and move them to form pictures of houses or cars. They use tape recorders in the classroom to listen to stories. Pupils do not have sufficient experience in controlling devices to produce a variety of outcomes or exploring information technology-based models or simulations. There is very little work on inputting text or tables based on simple data collection.

160. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils can turn on the computer, access programmes and use the mouse to draw patterns of coloured rectangles. Keyboard skills are not fully developed and many pupils take quite a long time to locate specific letters. They can save and retrieve their work. They illustrate how information is communicated into the home. Some pupils gain experience of collecting data and representing it in graphical form using a computer program. Pupils type in text and modify the way in which the page is laid out so that is suitable for its purpose. They do not have experience of control technology or modelling. There are very few pupils who have attained satisfactory standards in data handling, text modification, simulations and graphics. Pupils can not interpret, analyse or reorganise data effectively.

161. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. The progress of pupils with special educational needs follows a similar pattern. Pupils in Key Stage 1 build on skills learned in the nursery unit and become more familiar with the uses of technology in their lives. They develop mouse and keyboard skills to enable them to access and use relevant programmes. Although there has been insufficient coverage of the curriculum in the past, the current pupils have sufficient planned access to the new computer suite to enable them to make satisfactory progress over time.

162. Pupils in Key Stage 2 do not start with the necessary level of skills and knowledge to enable them to make satisfactory progress during the key stage. They have to learn and develop basic skills in the early part of the key stage and do not progress quickly as a result. They are not taught important aspects of the curriculum and most say they have had no experience at all of control technology or modelling. Progress throughout the key stage is therefore erratic and limited to sections of the curriculum. Although the new computer suite will ensure that all pupils have greater access to information technology it will be some time before pupils can make satisfactory progress in all aspects of the curriculum.

163. Most pupils have a positive attitude to information technology and are eager to work on the computer. In the majority of lessons they work well together, taking turns and considering the needs of others. Sometimes they are so excited that they do not listen carefully to instructions and then make slow progress. Most pupils concentrate on their work and persevere with tasks

164. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory but in Key Stage 2 where the demands of the curriculum are greater, teaching is unsatisfactory. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is developing but is not yet satisfactory overall. Teachers pitch lessons at the appropriate level but there is little which challenges pupils to develop their skills and knowledge to high levels. Teachers take care to use the correct vocabulary such as mouse and monitor. Planning is not satisfactory overall although there are exceptions. As a result pupils do not experience all aspects of information technology and do not learn new skills quickly enough as they repeat previous levels of work. Teachers assess pupils' informally during working sessions but do not record or use this knowledge when

planning future lessons.

165. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator lacks sufficient subject expertise and is not confident about supporting Key Stage 2 teachers as they attempt to meet their curriculum requirements. The new computer suite is a very good development and the school is justly proud of its success in raising the money to pay for it. In-service training has not been sufficient to ensure that all staff are confident in their ability to include information technology in their teaching of other subjects and therefore little is planned or undertaken. Planning, delivery and assessment of the information technology curriculum are not sufficiently systematic or well-monitored to ensure that all pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their skills and knowledge.

166. There has been no improvement in the information technology curriculum but the school has the necessary equipment to move forward now.

Music

167. Attainment in music is at nationally expected levels in both key stages as it was during the previous inspection of the school. Progress in both key stages is good which is an improvement on the situation at the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress. Key Stage 1 pupils sing tunefully and with exuberance. They can follow the beat and rhythm accurately and retain them when singing songs in which some words have been missed out. Key Stage 2 pupils respond to the mood and tempo of music and relate what they hear to their own experiences. They recognise and can name several instruments of the orchestra and can group them into such categories as woodwind and percussion. They too sing with confidence and energy which sometimes needs to be restrained so that the tunefulness comes through fully.

168. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in both key stages. They make good progress at recognising and following rhythms beginning in the reception class. By the end of their time in the school they have built up a repertoire of songs which they enjoy singing. In Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in listening to and appraising music such as Rimsky Korsakov's "Procession of the Nobles from Mlada". They develop their ability to recognise and respond to mood such as excitement in music. Some older pupils learn to play the recorder in an after-school club and this extends their musical experience further.

169. Throughout the school pupils respond well to music lessons. They listen attentively and join in singing with enthusiasm. Older pupils particularly are sensitive to the way in which music can express feelings and emotions and enjoy being helped to develop their appraisal skills more fully. Most pupils settle down to work quickly and without fuss in music lessons and this helps them to progress quickly. Pupils in Key Stage 2 organise their work well and are confident enough to proffer opinions when discussing new or difficult musical topics.

170. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. Teachers in both key stages have an interest in music and some have a practical talent in playing instruments. Their enthusiastic teaching ensures that the ethos for teaching music is good. For example, at Key Stage 1, a teacher with a good singing voice plays the piano well and sets the pupils a good example. Relationships are good and control is pleasant but firm. A parent helper gives good support to the younger pupils. Taken together this enables the pupils to try their best and make good progress. At Key Stage 2 a teacher uses his voice and recorded music skilfully to paint images for the pupils to help them appraise music. Praise is used well so that pupils' self-esteem is built up and they try hard to develop their musical skills and knowledge. Sometimes pupils in lessons are not grouped carefully so that some need to twist around to see the teacher properly.

171. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a degree in music and is keen to develop the subject in the face of other pressing curriculum priorities. She teaches singing in both key stages and runs a valuable recorder club after school. There is a brief policy for music which is well supported at Key Stage 1 by a detailed scheme of work. This helps to ensure that musical experiences within the key stage are developed in clearly recognisable steps so that pupils make progress. At Key Stage 2 there is no equivalent scheme in operation at this time. As a result planning which ensures that pupils' learning develops systematically is not satisfactory in the key stage. Procedures for assessment are also unsatisfactory. There are no set procedures and nothing is recorded. Assessment to inform curriculum planning is therefore also unsatisfactory. Resources for music have recently been improved by the purchase of percussion instruments but there are too few samples of recorded music or tuned instruments. In particular there are not enough books, posters or recorded music concerning the music of non-western cultures.

Physical Education

172. Pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages so that they attain satisfactory standards. There are no pupils with physical disabilities, which would prevent them taking a full part in physical education lessons.

173. At Key Stage 1 pupils can use space carefully, moving around in a series of curves and straight lines whilst throwing and catching a bean bag without bumping into each other. They can walk whilst balancing a bean bag on their head and throw and catch with reasonable accuracy when working in pairs. Some pupils are particularly good at interpreting instructions when they are asked to move in individual ways. Key Stage 2 pupils understand the importance of warming up before exercise and use a number of routines to achieve this. They can adopt a range of pleasing positions and hold them with control. They use the sides and soles of their feet to control a ball accurately and dribble in and out of a row of beanbags using patient stick control. By the end of the key stage they can work in pairs effectively, throwing and catching a tennis ball with reasonable accuracy and confidence. Most pupils are able to swim before the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs take an active part in lessons and make satisfactory progress

174. Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to physical education and good attitudes where they are well taught, as in a Year 4/5 lesson on dribbling and ball control where pupils concentrate and persevere well. Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons and join in enthusiastically. They work well on individual tasks and co-operate thoughtfully in pairs and groups when required. When pupils are not actively engaged they tend to fuss and lose concentration at times. There is a desire to do well and to improve on past performance.

175. Teaching is satisfactory in both key stages and is sometimes very good in Key Stage 2. When teachers have confidence in their own skill and good knowledge of the curriculum, teaching is better than satisfactory. Lessons are successful when the learning objectives are clear; activities are well matched to the pupils' abilities and needs and there is a balance between active participation and the need to observe exemplary pupils.

176. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Enough teaching time is allocated to enable pupils to cover the curriculum. Pupils in both key stages learn to swim and this remains strength. There is a whole-school policy and a useful scheme of work supports the teaching in

Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 staff are beginning to use the Derbyshire physical education scheme which will bring much-needed structure and support to their teaching. If used effectively the scheme will help the school to plan better so that skills and knowledge are built up in a coherent way throughout the school. At present the curriculum co-ordinator has insufficient time to help teachers plan or to monitor and support their teaching. After school clubs contribute significantly to the range of skills pupils acquire. The teachers run clubs in football, rounders and netball and staff from Bolsover District Council provide very useful coaching sessions in cricket, rugby and athletics. These are open to pupils aged 6 to 11 years old. Pupils in Key Stage 2 also benefit from regular visits to outdoor education centre where a range of outdoor pursuits is followed.

177. The school accommodation is adequate and all aspects of the physical education curriculum can be taught. There are sufficient resources, many of which have been purchased recently so that they are in good condition.

178. The picture in physical education is very similar to that gained at the time of the previous inspection.

5.

Religious education

179. Standards of attainment at the end of each key stage are below the levels expected because the school is not following the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils learn about Christianity as the major religion of Britain and also that religion is about faith and affects how people think and behave. The progress that they make is satisfactory when judged against the syllabus they have adopted.

180. In Key Stage 1 pupils learn about acts of bravery in the Bible as in the story of *David and Goliath* and relate that to times when they have had to overcome fears. For example, going to the dentist or flying in an aeroplane and relate that to their own fear. They recall the story of Paul and John in the temple and appreciate how the man that Jesus healed would feel. In one lesson seen, pupils were beginning to understand why the disciples wanted to follow Jesus and what it meant to be disciple.

181. During Key Stage 2 pupils learn about the life of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King and understand that the stories from the Bible have messages that last through time to the present day. The stories of Ezekiel were thus linked to the Negro Spiritual songs of the Afro-Americans and the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand was reported as a modern day story. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are able to relate the story of Gideon's army to the Gideon's Society of today. During the inspection pupils were observed talking knowledgeably with a visitor from the society about their work. They also appreciate that the Bible is a holy book revered by Christians and that other faiths have books which they consider holy. They learn about the symbolism of special foods and clothes worn for baptisms, weddings or funerals. They learn to write prayers and appreciate the nature of prayer in their daily lives. At the end of the key stage pupils can discuss the life of William Tyndale and understand his commitment to spreading the word of the Gospels. Through their work they show an understanding of what a commitment means to a person's life.

182. Attitudes to religious education are good. Pupils are attentive and thoughtful in their response to lessons.

183. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but there is good teaching at the end of Key Stage 2. Teachers prepare lessons that match the targets set in the scheme being used by the school.

Resources are well organised and teachers plan the lessons in each week to follow on from one another. The timing and format of lessons is not always appropriate in that pupils are expected to sit and listen on the carpet at the end of the literacy or numeracy hour. The class then becomes restless and the learning outcomes are not truly met. When teaching was good in Key Stage 2, the teacher was able to relate the story of William Tyndale to his own sense of commitment to a religion. Good teaching is characterised by good questions used very skilfully to deepen pupils' understanding. The learning objective of the lesson is assessed by checking understanding rather than completing a piece of written work.

184. The breadth and balance of the curriculum is ensured through the scheme that has been adopted although it is biased towards Christianity. Not enough effort is made to depict the multi-race and religious nature of Britain. Teachers file pieces of work but these are not routinely dated or carefully marked.

185. The co-ordinator has made a good job of making the religious education curriculum accessible to all staff but did not appreciate that the school has to follow the locally agreed syllabus. This highlights a need for training. She is building up a range of resources that give a flavour of other religions. Governors have not fulfilled their statutory responsibility with regard to religious education. The school meets its obligation to provide a daily act of collective worship and they reinforce the messages given during lessons. Local clergy are regular visitors to the act of worship.

186. There is little change in the religious education curriculum since the previous inspection report. At that time the school were criticised for not following the locally agreed syllabus or giving sufficient emphasis to world religions. The lack of improvement is disappointing when the co-ordinator has made so much effort to provide staff with a workable scheme. Until the locally agreed syllabus is adopted progress is not possible.

5.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

5. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

187. Fifty- seven lessons or parts of lessons were observed.

Twenty-four pupils read to inspectors from their current reading book and inspectors talked with groups pupils about their work.

School documents, including the current development plan, previous inspection report and the resultant action plan were scrutinised.

Documents and individual education plans relating to pupils with special educational needs were examined.

Examples of work from all classes, representing all areas of the curriculum, were scrutinised.

Displays in classrooms and central areas of the school were examined.

Resources for learning and the quality of accommodation were evaluated.

All teaching staff were interviewed and the inspection team met with non-teaching staff.

The head teacher met regularly with the Registered Inspector. Members of the inspection team met with her.

Parents gave their views of the school through a meeting with the Registered Inspector and responses to a questionnaire sent out to all families. Eighteen parents attended the meeting and twenty-two responded to the questionnaire

The chair of governors, chair of the finance committee and other governors, met with members of the inspection team.

5. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

5. **188. Pupil data**

Unit/School	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	143	1	21	45
Nursery	7	0	0	0

5. **189. Teachers and classes**

5. **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	5.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	26

5. **Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	25

5. **Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	0.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	14

5. **Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of education support staff:	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	15
Average class size:	29

5. **190. Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	284 549
Total Expenditure	282 297
Expenditure per pupil	1 947
Balance brought forward from previous year	5 774
Balance carried forward to next year	8 025

191. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 152
 Number of questionnaires returned: 22

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	55	45	0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	59	41	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	27	59	5	9	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	32	64	0	5	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	32	55	14	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	27	55	18	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	41	59	0	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	29	62	10	0	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	32	64	5	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	45	45	9	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	36	45	9	9	0