

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Highfield Primary School**

Chorley

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119204

Headteacher: Barry Callander

Reporting inspector: Michael J Cahill  
19623

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 January 2000

Inspection number: 190754

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Wright Street  
Chorley  
Lancashire

Postcode: PR6 0SP

Telephone number: 01257 262783

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Councillor B J Hodson

Date of previous inspection: November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Michael J Cahill	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? How well are pupils taught/ What should the school do to improve further?
Graeme Norval	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Glenys Bramley	Team inspector	Design and technology Physical education English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed?
Will Gale	Team inspector	Religious education Geography Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Tess Galvin	Team inspector	Science Under fives Art Music	The school's results and pupils' achievements
Sanchia Pearse	Team inspector	English History	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

The inspection contractor was:

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London WC2B 6SE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school has 343 pupils on roll (186 boys and 157 girls). At the time of the inspection 31 of the 48 pupils in the two reception classes were under five years of age. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language is high. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is close to the national average. The attainment of most pupils on entry to the school is below the national average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is close to the national average

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an improving school that already achieves well in a number of important areas. The school is particularly effective in promoting good behaviour, relationships and attitudes to work and has established a good partnership with parents and the local community. The headteacher, who has been in post for some two years, has a clear understanding of where the school needs to improve and how. The governing body is supportive but neither it nor the senior management is putting sufficient energy into driving the school forward. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Nearly half of the teaching is of good or better quality and nearly all the rest is at least sound.
- A good start to full time education is provided for the children who are under five years of age.
- The school is successful in encouraging pupils to behave well and to have good attitudes towards their learning. Relationships are good.
- The school supports pupils' personal development well.
- There is a strong partnership with parents and the local community.
- The school provides good support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Good standards are achieved in physical education.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards of attainment in English, mathematics and information and communication technology throughout the school and in science at Key Stage 2 are still not high enough.
- The governing body is not sufficiently involved in planning the future development of the school and does not have enough knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses.
- The senior management team does not provide effective leadership in support of the headteacher towards raising standards throughout the school.
- Most co-ordinators are not effectively raising standards in their subjects throughout the school.
- The planning of the curriculum does not make sure that what is learned in one year group is built on successfully in the next.
- Assessment information is not used effectively to improve the progress of individual pupils.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in November 1996. Since then, the National Literacy and the National Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented. National test results are improving overall and with the exception of writing at Key Stage 1 they are at least in line with those achieved by pupils at schools described as similar. However, the school has not made sufficient progress in improving the provision for information and communication technology, some aspects of curriculum planning and the range and quality of pupils' writing. With the exception of the headteacher, overall leadership and management has not shown a satisfactory level of improvement. The quality of teaching has improved substantially.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

The school's test results at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are on an upward trend as noted above. Targets in Key Stage 2, based on analysis of data obtained from the optional tests are sound. Most of the work seen in lessons was of a broadly satisfactory level, the main weakness being the relatively low expectations and quality of written work across the curriculum.

Evidence from examination of written work and conversations with pupils indicates that standards at the end of both key stages in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and geography are below what is expected nationally as are standards in science at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards and progress in other subjects are satisfactory, except for physical education where standards are above expectations.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to the school and their learning are positive.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well both in and out of the classroom.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good and all pupils demonstrate appropriate maturity and collaborate well with each other and their teachers.
Attendance	Most pupils attend school regularly and on time, this represents a satisfactory level of attendance.

**The school's success in promoting good behaviour, positive attitudes to work and good relationships is one of its most important strengths.**

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

- In total, 93 per cent of the lessons observed were at least satisfactory. Seven per cent were unsatisfactory. Sixteen per cent of lessons were judged to be very good or excellent. This is a high proportion.
- The teaching of English and mathematics is always at least satisfactory and 80 per cent of lessons in mathematics are good or very good. Particular strengths of the teaching include

good questioning skills, good use of resources and good management of pupils' learning. The main weaknesses of teaching in some lessons are that it is not clear enough what the pupils are to learn and that time is not always well managed.

- The skills of literacy and numeracy are not well taught outside of English and mathematics lessons. The needs of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well met. However, pupils who are potentially higher attainers are not always set sufficiently demanding work.

#### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school offers a sound range of learning opportunities except in the development of information and communication technology skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress towards their targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language are well supported and make sound progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is good provision for pupils' moral and social development and sound provision for their spiritual and moral development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a supportive and caring environment for its pupils.

The school's partnership with parents and the community is one of its strengths. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good, as are the educational and personal support provided for pupils. However, the procedures for systematically assessing and tracking pupils' academic progress are unsatisfactory. The school does not meet National Curriculum requirements in information and communications technology.

#### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Despite the headteacher's initiatives on behaviour and target setting, overall the school's leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The senior management team and most co-ordinators are not doing enough to raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body does not fulfil all of its statutory obligations with respect to forward planning and monitoring although individual governors provide good support to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The governing body does not have procedures for monitoring the school's performance. Monitoring of individual pupils' performance in Key Stage 2 is contributing to raising standards.



The strategic use of resources	The governing body has taken appropriate steps to limit the pupil roll to what can be safely accommodated and in most respects is using its resources wisely. However, the school has not developed its computer provision and the role of the deputy head does not at present match the needs of the school.
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- Overall, staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory, the most significant weakness being the lack of provision for information and communication technology.
- The strengths of the leadership and management of the school are the headteacher's clear sense of what needs to be done and the commitment of members of the governing body and staff.
- The main weakness is the lack of monitoring of teaching and learning and of the results of decisions taken.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

The views of the 94 parents who returned completed questionnaires and of the eight parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting with members of the inspection team were taken into account.

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school</li> <li>• School is approachable</li> <li>• Children are helped to become mature and responsible</li> <li>• Teaching is good</li> <li>• Pupils' behaviour is good</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of out of school activities</li> <li>• The setting of homework</li> </ul>

Inspection evidence supports the positive views of parents. The school has recently increased the range of extra-curricular activities and is taking appropriate steps to make sure that homework is being effectively used to raise standards.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. Children enter the reception classes with a wide range of social and early learning skills. For the most part their achievements are below what is expected for children of their age, particularly in speaking, early reading and mathematical skills. There are few high-attaining children. This is confirmed by an initial assessment of children's achievements which is approved by the local education authority.
2. Most children, including those who have special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, make good progress in their learning. In personal and social development progress is very good. This progress is promoted well by the good, and occasionally very good, teaching in the reception classes. By the time they reach the age of five, standards are satisfactory overall. Most children achieve the expected standards in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development. Their achievement in physical development is above expectations and, in personal and social development, it is well above.
3. Most children listen well to adults and to each other and speak with developing confidence in class and group discussions. However, some children have a limited vocabulary for describing their experiences. Children enjoy books and recognise some letter sounds. High- and average-attaining children recognise familiar words and use these to read the new books they encounter. Children copy letters and words with increasing accuracy and high-attaining children are beginning to write sentences with developing independence. Children recognise and write numbers to ten and use mathematical vocabulary, such as 'more than' and 'bigger than'. In knowledge and understanding of the world they are becoming familiar with the computer keyboard and use this or the mouse to work the programs. In creative development, their achievement in music is above expectations. They name percussion instruments correctly and play rhythms with developing accuracy. In physical development, children show good co-ordination and control when travelling in different ways in gymnastics. In personal and social development, children take turns in discussions, share equipment well and persevere with their work. Sometimes they concentrate for considerable lengths of time, for instance in music.
4. The school's 1999 national test results show that, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment was in line with the national average in English and below the national average in mathematics and science. There was no difference in the achievement of girls and boys in mathematics but boys performed better than girls in English and science. This differs from the national picture where girls perform better than boys. Although the school had few high-attaining pupils there were more high-attaining boys than girls in this year group. There is no difference in the performance of different ethnic groups or of pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
5. When compared with pupils at similar schools nationally, Highfield's results are above average in English and average in mathematics and science. This comparison is based upon the proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. In comparison with all schools nationally, the results do not take such variations into account.
6. Since the previous inspection, standards in English have improved gradually. In mathematics and science standards declined until 1999 when they improved significantly. This was because the 1999 cohort had a higher proportion of average-attaining pupils than in previous years.

7. The school's 1999 national test results show that at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics was below the national average and their attainment in writing was very low. Teacher assessments of pupils' work in speaking and listening were in line with national expectations at the expected Level 2 and below expectations at the higher Level 3. In science, pupils' attainment was in line with expectations at the expected Level 2 and well above expectations at the higher Level 3.
8. When compared to that of pupils at similar schools, the performance of Highfield's pupils was average in reading and mathematics, very low in writing and above average in science. Since the previous inspection performance in reading remained the same until 1999, when it improved significantly. Mathematics scores improved gradually and performance in writing declined until 1999, when it improved slightly. The difference in performance between science and the other subjects is because there is sound teaching of work at the higher level. The performance of girls is higher than that of boys and this is similar to the national picture. There is no difference in the attainment of pupils from different ethnic groups or pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
9. At the end of Key Stage 2, inspection evidence shows that pupils' attainment is below national averages in English, mathematics and science. This judgement reflects the 1999 national test results, except in English. The proportion of pupils achieving at the higher Level 5 is lower than the national average because the school has few high-attaining pupils. The proportion of pupils achieving at the expected Level 4 is also lower than the national average. This is because of weaknesses in the curriculum planning, and in some teaching which does not always provide sufficient challenge for the more able pupils. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in speaking and listening, below national expectations in reading and mathematics and well below in writing. The underachievement is partly due to lack of planned reinforcement of these skills across the curriculum. There is also insufficient attention paid to planning for progression in learning as pupils move from one year group to the next. Pupils' attainment in science, however, is above national expectations. This is because there is sound teaching of a significant amount of work at the higher level, consequently pupils' achievement at the end of Key Stage 1 is higher than expected.
10. At the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment is below national expectations in information and communication technology. This is because skills are not taught consistently across both key stages and information and communication technology is underused to support pupils' learning in other subjects. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
11. Pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages in art, music and history. They make good progress in physical education and unsatisfactory progress in geography. Only one lesson was seen in design and technology and insufficient evidence was available to judge progress in this subject. Pupils attain unsatisfactory standards in literacy at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory standards at Key Stage 2. Literacy skills are underused in most subjects. Standards in numeracy are satisfactory at both key stages, except in science at Key Stage 2 where numeracy skills are not promoted sufficiently.
12. Through good teaching and support, children under five who have special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. This good progress continues in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2
13. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make good progress when they are under five because the staff place a strong emphasis on developing the vocabulary of all the reception children. This progress in learning English declines to satisfactory at both key stages. Although individuals receive good support from the

Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant assistant, most class teachers do not plan for or support their language development sufficiently. The few gifted and talented pupils make satisfactory progress at both key stages.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

14. As in the previous report, pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are a strength of the school.
15. Pupils' attitudes to school and work are positive. They enjoy good relationships with adults and with each other, and this leads to an atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Pupils are eager to please and show enthusiasm and interest, especially when suitably challenged. They are attentive and concentrate well on the tasks set. For example, they show a good level of interest and enjoyment in mathematics in Years 5/6. These positive attitudes are particularly evident in lessons, such as physical education, where pupils are well motivated by good teaching and are keen to achieve their best. When the teacher's guidance is clear, pupils develop good working habits, as in science in Year 4. This in turn contributes to establishing a safe, learning environment.
16. Pupils' behaviour is good. They respond well to the positive behaviour code which is consistently applied by all staff. Pupils co-operate well with adults and with each other. On several occasions during the inspection it was noted that pupils showed consideration for others and deliberately drew back from conflict. For example, when playing outside pupils seemed very aware of not crossing the boundary between acceptable physical contact and rough behaviour. Some inattention and misbehaviour did develop with a few pupils in Key Stage 2 when they felt embarrassed at being asked to sing a new song or when work was not well matched to their needs.
17. Pupils have discussed classroom rules and these are prominently displayed in most classrooms. This helps to make sure that pupils understand the high but realistic expectations set for them. Pupils are clearly developing a good sense of self-control. As at the time of the previous inspection, there have not been any exclusions and this confirms the overall good level of behaviour and the success of the positive behaviour strategy. Regular educational visits and residential opportunities are enhanced by the good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils, who express a sense of pride and belonging to their school.
18. There is a high level of trust placed in the pupils and this means that they enjoy a good range of opportunities to take personal responsibility and to show initiative. This is particularly evident with the pupils who run the tuck shop at break times. Although a member of staff checks the money at the end of break, pupils are responsible for collecting the tuck and handling the transactions. Similarly, many pupils willingly volunteer for duties such as wiping the dining room tables, collecting litter and setting out and putting away equipment in physical education lessons. Pupils from Year 6 also act as leaders, for example by supervising younger pupils in the playgrounds and in the classrooms during wet breaks. These older pupils also help at parents' evenings and at events such as school productions. They show evident pride and a sense of responsibility when talking about these duties, which they take very seriously.
19. Pupils enjoy coming to school and the majority have satisfactory attendance records. Overall attendance is close to the national average, although it has fallen slightly over the last three years. A significant proportion of pupils' absence is caused by extended visits to their country of origin. The school recognises the reasons for these visits but discourages prolonged absence whenever possible. A small number of pupils have been absent because of extended long term ill health. There is very little evidence of regular absence patterns and the school has maintained its record of no unauthorised absence.

20. There are a small number of families who find it difficult to get their children to school on time. Lateness is carefully recorded and the education welfare officer is in close and regular contact with the headteacher.
21. A large majority of parents recognise the importance of good attendance and support their children. Procedures to inform parents of any concerns are effective. However, recent statements in the prospectus and last governors' annual report to parents are misleading. They describe attendance as 'very good' or 'excellent'. This does not give an accurate picture as required in the statutory guidelines.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

22. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Of the lessons observed, 47 per cent were judged to be good, very good or excellent, a further 46 per cent were satisfactory. The remaining seven per cent were unsatisfactory. This represents a substantial improvement compared with the previous inspection, when only one quarter of all lessons observed were judged to be good or better and nine per cent were unsatisfactory.
23. Consistently good quality teaching is most evident in Years 1 and 4 and in the teaching of mathematics throughout both key stages. The teaching of children who are under five years of age in the two reception classes is good or better in 62 per cent of lessons. In Key Stage 1, 45 per cent of teaching is good or better and, in Key Stage 2 the corresponding figure is 43 per cent.
24. The teaching in the Literacy Hour is never less than satisfactory and 42 per cent of the lessons are good or very good. The teaching of mathematics, including the National Numeracy Strategy, is never less than satisfactory and almost always good or very good.
25. The improvements in the overall quality of teaching owe something to the structure provided by the two national strategies. The improvements owe more to the good relationships between pupils and their teachers and the establishment of good, sensible classroom routines. Most lessons do have identifiable beginnings, middles and endings, and the balance of whole class teaching and group or individual work is usually well struck. On the few occasions where lesson introductions went on for too long, pupils' attention wandered and the quality of learning suffered.
26. A strong feature of most of the good and very good teaching observed was the skill with which teachers used questions to challenge and extend pupils' learning. For example, teachers often used lesson introductions to find out what the pupils had understood from previous lessons and to consolidate their learning. At the end of lessons, teachers checked up on what had been learned during the lesson and thereby helped pupils to consolidate this as well.
27. . Most of the better teaching seen stemmed from teachers' clear planning, which identified precisely how and what pupils were to learn in lessons. The very good practice of telling pupils what they were going to learn and referring back to this at the end of the lesson was very effective. In some of the weaker lessons seen, the lack of a clear sense of what was to be learned was one reason why learning was less successful. In such lessons the loss of focus meant that time was not well used. This was particularly the case in some of the very long afternoon sessions which teachers inflicted on themselves and their classes.
28. In most cases, teachers set tasks that are appropriate to the learning needs of the different groups or individuals in their classes. However, some of the weaker lessons did not feature this and the result was often that potentially higher attaining pupils marked

time and were not sufficiently challenged. This was more evident in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1.

29. Time and physical resources are used well. A strong feature of some of the better lessons, particularly in Key Stage 1, is the good quality support given by classroom assistants, who all make an important contribution to supporting and extending pupils' learning.
30. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, planning was usually faulty with at least one of inappropriate content, methods and time allocation being present. In these circumstances pupils become inattentive and chatter. If classroom routines and strategies for managing behaviour are not firmly established the quality of learning for all deteriorates.
31. The day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory, although there is little evidence of most teachers keeping records that would help them with subsequent planning. Nevertheless, there are a few good examples of lesson evaluations and of lesson plans being revised on a daily basis. In this respect, some of the weekly learning objectives need more fleshing out on a daily basis so that the purpose of the individual lesson is clear. Work is conscientiously marked but there are very few examples of teachers making written comments that would help pupils and their parents to see what needs to be done to achieve further improvement.
32. Almost all parents are pleased with the quality of teaching in the school and many are happy with the amount of homework set. The inspection confirms the overall quality of the teaching but judges that homework is not yet making a full contribution towards raising pupils' levels of achievement. Further information about teaching can be found in each of the subject sections, paragraphs 78 - 190.

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

33. The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. Children under five are taught all the recommended areas of learning. At Key Stages 1 and 2, all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, although some subject attainment targets are not fully addressed, for example aspects of information and communication technology. The school has attempted to incorporate the most recent guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. This has led to some confusion in planning in science, information and communication technology, geography and music, where previous schemes of work were abandoned at the beginning of the school year. The current programmes of study being followed in these subjects do not fully ensure that pupils' learning builds progressively.
34. The requirements of pupils with special educational needs are well met. Their curriculum is enhanced by well-planned individual and group sessions which focus on improving basic skills and this approach enables pupils to gain greater access to the full curriculum. These sessions are based on clear and frequently updated targets in pupils' individual education plans. Suitable external support from outreach teachers, speech and language therapists and specialists for the sensory impaired, help to meet the requirements of those pupils with statements of special educational needs.
35. The school has implemented strategies for literacy and numeracy, in line with national requirements. Planning for literacy is now well integrated with work across the curriculum and is having a positive effect on the standards of pupils' reading. It has yet to have a significant effect on pupils' writing. The planning for numeracy is less well developed and needs to be refined in the light of assessments of pupils' strengths and weaknesses.



36. The school has satisfactory provision for extra-curricular activities. Arrangements for sport are good. Large numbers of pupils take part in football and skittleball and there are arrangements for the full range of sports in which both boys and girls are actively involved. Other activities include training in cycling proficiency. There is less provision of non-physical activities, and some clubs have ceased to operate in recent times. The Year 6 quiz team has been highly successful and the community police run additional quizzes in school centring on safety, strangers and the Highway Code.
37. The provision of activities for music and drama is developing. Pupils' learning and cultural development benefit from visits to the local mosque as well as residential visits for Year 5 to London and Edinburgh and an annual Year 6 adventure camp.
38. There are satisfactory arrangements to ensure equality of access for all pupils. Planning for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language ensures they can take advantage of curriculum opportunities. Boys and girls have equal access to classroom resources, although older pupils tend to work in single sex groups. Most activities are suitable for the majority of pupils and in some lessons, particularly at Key Stage 1, reading and writing tasks take into account the levels of pupils' literacy skills. However, a substantial amount of planning does not take into account the difference in pupils' reading skills, which reduces their ability to work independently.
39. The school provides satisfactory arrangements for health education, mainly through science. There is no formal programme of personal and social education, but pupils' good progress demonstrates that staff are consistent in their promotion of the essential skills of this part of the curriculum. Pupils' individual education plans indicate that there is good provision to help pupils with special educational needs to develop social skills.
40. The school is well integrated into the local community and receives sponsorship from local industry and commerce. Good use is made of local facilities to enhance pupils' learning. There are, for example, frequent trips to explore the surrounding area, including visits to a superstore. Younger pupils walk in the area near the school to increase their knowledge of geography. Sporting events encourage links with local schools and there are frequent visitors to the school, including drama groups and the police. The multicultural nature of the school is reflected both by visitors and by the visits made.
41. There are close links with the adjacent nursery and frequent meetings within the local cluster of schools. Specialist staff visit from local high schools and a good range of information is provided prior to pupils' transfer, helping their integration into secondary schools. Parents and pupils find the school very supportive when they are choosing the next stage of education.
42. The school makes satisfactory arrangements for pupils' spiritual and cultural development. In art and science, pupils are encouraged to think about the wonders of the natural world, including shape, sunlight and colour. Pupils with special educational needs are helped to reflect on objects they have observed. Whole-school assemblies only take place on three days of the week and so the school does not meet statutory requirements. The assemblies contain sufficient aspects of collective worship to help pupils to think about the importance of prayer and the differences and similarities between different cultural practices. A very good demonstration of their prayers by Muslim pupils encouraged other pupils to think about the importance of spiritual belief. In some lessons, opportunities for spiritual thought are missed and teachers concentrate on providing factual information rather than allowing pupils to reflect on the significance of their experiences.
43. Pupils are provided with a good understanding of their local culture. They understand local pursuits, such as the traditional egg race, and games that are popular in the locality.

They are encouraged to think about where they live and to take advantage of the knowledge of local residents. An awareness of the place of local ethnic cultures is encouraged through assemblies and in lessons in religious education. Pupils have less understanding of cultures beyond their home town and there are only a few opportunities within the school curriculum to develop this understanding.

44. The arrangements for pupils' moral and social development are good. Pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of principle in their behaviour. They are helped to tolerate and understand others, which is reflected in the care that nearly all pupils take to avoid upsetting other children. At Key Stage 1, pupils are encouraged to form friendships and care for each other. They sympathise with those who are unhappy and seek to console them. Throughout the school, pupils show a good understanding of right and wrong. School rules are well understood, leading to good behaviour in the classrooms and the playground. Those who are less confident or who have special educational needs are encouraged to take part in games and activities. On the rare occasions when pupils have to be reprimanded, they show a good understanding of their wrongdoing and seek to correct their actions.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

45. The health, care and happiness of pupils are a high priority for all staff. Pupils and children under five are well known as individuals and not only in their own year groups. Formal procedures for child protection and for the treatment and reporting of any injuries are established. A significant number of staff are qualified in first aid. All teaching, classroom support staff and mid-day supervisors receive regular updates on child protection matters. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection. Pupils are confident that they will receive help from any member of staff when in trouble. There is a very well equipped first aid room, which also contains toilet facilities for physically impaired pupils.
46. The risk assessment procedure concentrates on one third of the school area each term. The procedure is helpful and acceptably detailed. However, it is not prioritised for action and costs are not always allocated. There are no formal follow-up procedures to ensure that risks have been overcome and actions minuted.
47. The response of parents at the meeting, in the questionnaire and those spoken to during inspection week, is supportive of the school's efforts to take care of their children's health and safety. Evidence gathered during inspection week agrees with the parents' view.
48. One of the headteacher's first priorities when appointed was to overcome an element of unacceptable behaviour. An effective behaviour policy has been developed, with appropriate sanctions and awards. The policy has been incorporated in the home/school agreement and is efficiently and consistently used by a significant majority of staff. These actions underpin the good behaviour that was evident during inspection week. Pupils and parents are confident that, should any incidents of bullying or racist behaviour occur, the school would deal with the situation promptly and efficiently.
49. Registration procedures have improved since the last inspection and there was no evidence of failure to comply with statutory requirements. The administration officer, class teachers, headteacher and education welfare officer, work closely with each other to support families where necessary. Follow-up procedures are efficiently carried out.
50. As the following paragraphs show, procedures for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development are variable. The support given to pupils' personal development is very effective. Pupils' attitudes to their work, their relationship to each other, to staff and to visitors, are a good feature of this school. Inspectors were united in their praise for



pupils' politeness, friendliness and support for each other. Personal development is enhanced by both formal and informal delegation of duties in classes, library and playground. For example, a small group from Year 5, using their own initiative, regularly mends books in the library after lunch.

51. Staff make satisfactory use of information from statutory assessment procedures (but see paragraph 53 about other assessments). Teachers use baseline assessment to plan appropriate work for pupils in the reception classes, including developing activities of a suitable level for children of differing attainment. Information from National Curriculum assessments is collated in detail and used to plan extra support in areas of weakness; for example, in writing, to which additional resources are being directed in Year 3. Additional practice in National Curriculum tests is provided for 'booster' groups in Year 6 in recognition of weaknesses shown by pupils when undertaking written assessments.
52. There is reliable assessment of the progress that pupils make towards the targets stated in literacy and numeracy plans, in accordance with the requirements of the national strategies. Assessment in literacy is used to adjust planning, especially for those pupils who have not been challenged by previous tasks. In numeracy, assessment is currently being refined and is not used regularly to amend the planning of future lessons.
53. In the other subjects of the curriculum, assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. Few assessment opportunities are referred to in schemes of work or class teachers' 'medium term planning'. The format of planning documentation was changed recently to encourage more accurate assessment but staff are not yet making the best use of the new procedures. Class teachers' compile sufficient records of pupils' attitudes to learning and completion of tasks. However, there is little information about pupils' achievement in relation to the expected levels of the National Curriculum or the learning objectives of particular lessons. In pupils' reports, there is often only vague reference to the skills which pupils have mastered. There are collections of pupils' finished work in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, which are intended as a record of progress, but these are not up to date.
54. Assessment of the progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. All pupils on the special educational needs register are assessed against specific targets, mainly in literacy, numeracy and social skills. The targets in pupils' individual education plans provide clear measures for assessment and teachers have a clear idea of pupils' rate of progress. As a result of pupils' achievements, their plans are regularly updated to ensure that appropriate challenges are included.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

55. The school has worked hard to establish a good partnership with parents. A particularly effective aspect of this partnership grew from the parental involvement days and parent education days organised by the school's parent co-ordinator. Sadly these are not currently taking place. A number of the school's strong team of classroom support assistants were involved in parental education and their individual contribution to learning is evident. Two parents help children learn to read on a regular basis and a number of others come in when opportunities occur. Two new parent governors are very keen to increase links between the school and parents. They are aware of the urgent need to be trained for their new role.
56. The regular newsletters and other communications from school are helpfully written and some are available in different languages. The multi-lingual support assistant is effectively used by the school to assist in parental links where appropriate.

57. The response from parents indicates that they feel welcome in school. Indeed, during the inspection week regular meetings between parents and teachers were observed. The formal opportunities for parents to discuss their children's work are well attended and year end reports are generally of good standard, but see paragraph 53 in relation to skill development.
58. There is a strong and very supportive Friends of Highfield. They raise significant sums of money and have been involved with the school in deciding how best the money they raise may be used. The school's current financial situation has lessened the room for manoeuvre and the school has had to be more directive in the use of these funds to support its expenditure over the last few months.
59. There is a home/school agreement, described at the parents' meeting as very strong. It is a clear purposeful statement that indicates the school's and parents' responsibilities in the education of pupils.

### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

60. The leadership given by the headteacher and the governing body has promoted a happy and caring school where individuals are valued. The school provides a secure environment where pupils of all abilities and ethnic origins work well together. The school works hard to involve parents and the community in its work, with very positive results. This is a continuation of the good work reported at the last inspection.
61. The governing body is supportive of the school and has dedicated much of its recent effort to addressing issues concerned with finance, premises, community links and the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Some governors demonstrate their support by their active involvement in the introduction of these strategies and the provision for pupils with special educational needs. They have undertaken some monitoring duties in these areas. There is also a nominated governor for child protection. Other governors are not so closely associated with the school. They do not visit the school during the working day.
62. As a whole, the governing body does not play a significantly active role in monitoring the quality of education provided or the progress being made towards the implementation of the action plan resulting from the last inspection. Consequently, little progress has been made in remedying most of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection report. Committees meet regularly but there are no appropriate terms of reference. The school does not meet the legal requirements in respect of acts of collective worship, or the reporting of school information in certain aspects of the governors' annual report to parents. While some governors are aware of the contents of the school improvement plan, they have not been closely involved in its construction and there is little evidence of them monitoring its progress. The governing body should now give attention to these areas. These observations are significantly different from those made during the last inspection.
63. The headteacher, who was appointed two years ago, is committed to the task of creating an improving school. He has successfully implemented a programme to improve behaviour in the school. He recognises the need to raise standards of attainment particularly in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. He has introduced booster classes and a system of target setting for pupils in Key Stage 2. Target setting now needs to be extended to all classes. However, the headteacher has not undertaken a systematic and rigorous programme of monitoring teaching throughout the school. Unless this is carried out, there can be no effective evaluation of strengths and weaknesses on which to base future planning and staff development.

64. The headteacher ensures that there is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. This provision is well organised by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Careful records of pupils' progress are maintained and extra staff are employed to provide additional support. The quality of this provision is good and pupils make sound progress. The appointment of a bilingual assistant provides additional support for pupils and parents for whom English is a second language. These pupils make sound progress overall and parents also appreciate multi-lingual school information.
65. The school's senior management team is ineffective. It does not have a clear shared vision for raising standards through curriculum development and improving teaching and learning. The team has no clearly defined purpose and role and is more concerned with short term responses than planning strategically for the school's improvement. The result is that, although standards of achievement are sound, there is insufficient impetus for improvement. To achieve this the governing body and the headteacher should clearly define the roles of the team, of the deputy head and of the curriculum co-ordinators. The composition of the team also needs to be reviewed in the light of the school's priorities. These actions are particularly pertinent to the development of curriculum planning and assessment, as well as the monitoring of teaching and learning, where there is a lack of focused identification of strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher recognises the need to strengthen the role of the senior management team.
66. The quality of curriculum leadership varies according to the level of confidence, expertise and the amount of time that the staff have to work on developing the subjects for which they have school-wide responsibility. Most co-ordinators have little whole school impact on the quality of work and standards of achievement in their subjects.
67. Members of staff each have a brief job description. These need to be reviewed to include clearly defined targets for development in their subject areas. Skills in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum have to be developed and clear guidance given to subject and key stage co-ordinators about how to develop these aspects of their responsibilities. A planned programme of staff development is required.
68. The development of agreed schemes of work and a clear overall curriculum plan to support teachers should be a priority. It is necessary for the school to discuss and agree the way forward, combining, wherever possible, the strengths of current documentation and practices with externally introduced recommendations. Staff relate well to one another but there is insufficient whole school cohesion. This is gradually developing as staff adjust to the changing demands of their responsibilities.
69. The school improvement plan does not include the development of clear procedures to monitor pupils' progress and academic attainment. It is therefore difficult for the school to judge whether it is making the best strategic use of the financial resources available. The exceptions to this unsatisfactory situation are the use of funds to support pupils with English as an additional language and those with special education needs. The appointment of a bilingual classroom support assistant has made a significant impact on pupils' progress in acquiring English. This has been particularly efficient for children under five and pupils in reception, where the early acquisition of English is vital to their further learning.
70. The use of funds to support special educational needs is both effective and efficient. Progress of these pupils is aided by the effective provision of support staff, special resources and the well-equipped room set aside for additional use by the special educational needs co-ordinator.
71. There has been no audit of the school's financial procedures since 1995. The headteacher, who was appointed two years ago, and the school administrator appointed

in September 1999, have carried out a thorough review of the procedures used to control and check expenditure authorised within the school. There are clear procedures for raising orders, checking the receipt of goods and authorising payment, which follow approved patterns to prevent misuse of funds. In assessing the principles of best value the school currently uses a combination of suppliers recommended by the local education authority and competitive quotations from other suppliers known to the school. There are not yet any procedures after purchase to ensure that the targets and objectives used to justify purchases are being met. There are satisfactory explanations for a small number of apparent anomalies in the financial statistics received before inspection.

72. The school has, as part of its overall ethos of support, developed specific aims and values to ensure that pupils have equal access to the curriculum and the provision for their social and cultural development. There are very good relationships between pupils of different ethnic groups and between staff and pupils. The unsatisfactory formal assessment and recording of pupils' academic and personal development indicates a need to ensure that some pupils, particularly the more able, are encouraged to reach their full potential.
73. The numbers, qualifications and experience of teaching staff are adequate to support the demands of the curriculum. However, the lack of co-ordinator monitoring and professional development leaves room for improved cover of a number of subject areas. Support staff, some of whom were trained by the school's parent co-ordinator, are effective and efficiently used.
74. There have been no recent appointments and there is insufficient evidence to form a judgement on the effectiveness of the induction procedures. The school has no formal procedures for initial teaching training and is currently judged unlikely to be an effective provider. This is a consequence of the lack of effective provision for the professional development of current staff.
75. Overall the school has adequate resources to support learning. Resources for the teaching of science are good but not always effectively used. Resources for information and communication technology are unsatisfactory and there has been inadequate progress in this area since the last inspection. The resources for children under five are adequate in quantity but are old and of unsatisfactory quality.

### **Summary statement**

76. There are important aspects of leadership and management of the school where significant improvement is needed. However, based upon the improvement in behaviour, the good promotion of positive attitudes to work and personal development and the relatively low income per pupil, the school is judged to be giving satisfactory value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

77. The governing body should improve the quality and effectiveness of the school's leadership by:
- a. making sure that all statutory requirements, including that relating to acts of collective worship, are met;
  - b. developing procedures for monitoring educational provision within the school;
  - c. reviewing the composition, roles and responsibilities of the senior management team;
  - d. developing clear terms of reference for the senior management team and precise job descriptions for all members of staff;
  - e. making sure that the role of the deputy head is sharply focused on raising levels of achievement;
  - f. developing the role of subject co-ordinators to include:
    - the provision of effective whole school schemes of work in all subjects, particularly science, information and communication technology, geography and music;
    - regular and systematic monitoring of planning, teaching and learning in the subjects for which they are responsible.

(see paragraphs 60 – 76)

**In order to achieve the targets that the school has set itself in its continuing efforts to improve the quality of education provided and to raise levels of attainment, the governing body, with the headteacher and staff, should:**

### **Improve pupils' writing skills and the presentation of their work by:**

- a. offering a wide range of opportunities for writing for different audiences and purposes throughout the curriculum;
  - b. improving the range of teaching strategies and resources in order to stimulate pupils' enjoyment of writing;
  - c. developing a whole school handwriting policy;
  - d. publicly valuing pupils' written work through good display in Key Stage 2 as it is already in Key Stage 1;
  - e. establishing detailed individual targets so that progress can be regularly monitored;
- (see paragraphs 95 – 105)

### **Improve standards of attainment in mathematics by:**

- a. making sure that daily lesson planning makes clear what the pupils are to learn;
  - b. providing more opportunities for work of an investigative nature and for learning about shape and space;
  - c. regularly monitoring the quality of planning, teaching and learning throughout the school.
- (see paragraphs 106 – 119)

### **Improve standards of attainment in information and communication technology by:**

- a. making sure that all pupils are taught the full National Curriculum in this subject;
  - b. making sure that all pupils have enough time and opportunity to develop and practise skills;
  - c. providing staff training to improve the organisation and planning of this subject;
  - d. making sure that all teachers use information and communication technology to improve achievement in other subjects;
  - e. regularly monitoring the quality of planning, teaching and learning throughout the school.
- (see paragraphs 157 – 163)

### **Improve standards of attainment in science at Key Stage 2 by:**

- a. placing greater emphasis on experimental and investigative work;
- b. making sure that such work is well matched to pupils' differing capabilities;
- c. the planned development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in this subject.  
(see paragraphs 120 – 134)

Improve achievement across the curriculum by:

- a. regularly assessing pupils' progress towards learning objectives;
- b. using assessment information more effectively to make sure that curriculum planning leads to challenging learning goals for all pupils.  
(see paragraphs 35, 50 – 54)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	83
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	68

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1.2	14.5	31.3	45.8	7.2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	343
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	65

#### Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	12
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	77

#### English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	32
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#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.0
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	199	24	25	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	12	15
	Girls	21	20	22
	Total	36	32	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73(74)	65(51)	76(79)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	20
	Girls	21	22	24
	Total	36	37	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73(75)	76(79)	90(83)
	National	82(80)	86(85)	87(86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	22	27	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	17
	Girls	19	14	16
	Total	34	30	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69(54)	61(34)	67(50)
	National	70(65)	69(58)	78(69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	15	17
	Girls	15	14	12
	Total	30	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61(66)	59(64)	59(72)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

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



### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	6
Pakistani	23
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	0
White	304
Any other minority ethnic group	1

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.5
Average class size	28.6

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	240

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	529,456
Total expenditure	520,581
Expenditure per pupil	1,462
Balance brought forward from previous year	37,889
Balance carried forward to next year	46,764

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 31.3%

Number of questionnaires sent out	300
Number of questionnaires returned	94

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	27	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	41	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	52	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	47	14	0	3
The teaching is good.	65	32	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	35	10	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	28	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	35	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	47	39	11	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	51	43	5	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	41	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	37	10	4	14

Lines may not add up to 100 per cent because of rounding.

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents at the meeting endorsed the positive responses in the questionnaire. They also welcomed the significant improvement in pupils' self-confidence as a result of the increased number and scale of drama productions.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS

**AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

78. The provision for the under fives is good and has a significant and positive effect on children's learning and progress. This is a strength of the school. Children enter the reception classes with a range of social and early learning skills which are generally below what is expected for children of their age, particularly in speaking, early reading and mathematical skills. There are few high-attaining children. This is confirmed by an initial assessment of children's achievements which is approved by the local education authority. This assessment is repeated at the end of the year and this information is used to assess the progress children have made. Most of the children have attended a nursery. Children, including those children with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, make good progress in their learning.
79. In personal and social development progress is very good. By the time they reach the age of five children can do what is expected for their age. Most children will achieve the expected learning outcomes in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development. Their achievement in physical development is above expectations and in personal and social development it is well above.
80. Since the last inspection there has been a good improvement in achievement in writing skills. Achievement in personal and social development is higher and achievement in other areas has been maintained. The quality of teaching has improved from satisfactory to good overall.
81. Most children make very good progress in personal and social development as a result of the very good provision in this area of learning and achievement is very good by the age of five. Teaching and support staff work effectively together as a team and are very caring, supportive and encouraging, for instance in praising children's achievements. Adults are very good role models. They listen with genuine interest to what children have to say and speak with courtesy and consideration. This promotes children's self-esteem and confidence and fosters the development of very good relationships with adults and each other. Children settle quickly and happily into daily routines, such as registration and attending assemblies.
82. Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour and work and classroom routines and resources are organised well, for instance in group work. This promotes children's very good behaviour. Children work quietly. They persevere with their work. Levels of concentration are good overall and occasionally very good. For example, in a music lesson children listened throughout the session with quiet concentration to the teacher's explanations and to the performance of the percussion groups. Children co-operate well with each other in pairs and groups, taking care of and sharing equipment with one another. They are beginning to take responsibility and develop initiative and independence. For instance, they tidy equipment away quickly and efficiently at the end of lessons and most children change their clothes for gymnastics or fasten their coats for outdoor play independently. Children are developing a good awareness that some actions are right and some are wrong and are learning to care about the world around them. For instance, reception children talked about their friends and how they would help them.
83. Through good teaching in language and literacy, children reach satisfactory standards by the age of five. In one lesson teaching was very good. The initial assessment of children's achievements is used to group children according to ability and this enables

teachers to provide work which is well-matched to children's needs. Through conversations with the children and questioning, adults develop children's understanding and extend their vocabulary well. This has a beneficial effect on children's progress, particularly those who are learning English as an additional language and those children with special educational needs. The progress of a visually impaired child is enhanced by the effective additional support from a special support assistant who keeps careful records of his progress. Children listen with increasing care and attention to adults and join in readily in discussions and in reading familiar stories or rhymes, such as 'Little Boy Blue'.

84. In one of the reception classes, speaking skills are less well promoted in the afternoon sessions because there are limited opportunities for children to speak in small groups, or for the teacher to intervene effectively in imaginative play situations. This is because there is no support assistant in the afternoons. Many reception children are beginning to speak in phrases and sentences and their vocabulary is increasing. They take part appropriately in imaginative play, for instance in 'the café', and respond with simple answers when they are questioned by an adult. A significant minority of children give one word answers or have a limited vocabulary to express their experiences.
85. Children are beginning to enjoy stories and books and respond to questions about the story. Their reading skills are extended suitably through structured teaching of the early stages of reading and through effective literacy lessons. For instance, in one very good lesson, children identified the differences between different versions of 'Little Boy Blue', rhyming words, capital letters and familiar words, such as 'the' and 'in'. Children have a satisfactory knowledge of letter sounds and the key words for the reading scheme. Low-attaining children know that words and pictures carry meaning. Average- and high-attaining children use these skills appropriately to read the new books they encounter.
86. The use of two reading schemes means that children's progress slows down when they change from one scheme to the other because of the need to learn the specific vocabulary for the second scheme. The lack of a variety of appropriate and interesting fiction and non-fiction books also limits their progress, for example for low-attaining children. The provision could be improved by replacing damaged books and by providing more written signs around the classroom and messages for group work.
87. Suitable opportunities are provided for developing the formal skills of letter formation, such as copying under printed script. Teachers have high expectations that children will write independently and this has a beneficial effect on children's learning. For instance, by the end of the first term some high-attaining children are expected to find the words they need from a word bank and write recognisable words and phrases. Children of average attainment correctly copy sentences, for instance from the board. Low-attaining children copy individual words. Most children form the letters correctly. Although children are given opportunities to experiment with writing in imaginative play situations, the provision could be improved by providing opportunities for this when children write in their books.
88. The overall good quality teaching in mathematics promotes the good learning and progress of children of all abilities. Achievement is satisfactory by the age of five. Teachers show a good understanding of how young children learn. This includes providing interesting activities and work which is matched to children's needs and using correct technical vocabulary. For instance, in one lesson, children counted up to 31 whilst patting a balloon and placed the appropriate size of label on teddy bears of different sizes. Most children recognise, order and write the numbers to ten and use correctly the terms 'more than', 'bigger than', 'before' and 'after'. Some high-attaining children carry out simple addition mentally or use objects to do so, such as the spots on a ladybird picture.
89. Through sound provision in developing knowledge and understanding of the world,

children are helped to make satisfactory progress. By the age of five, their achievement is in line with expectations for their age. Children talk about events in their lives, their homes and where they live. Children are becoming familiar with the computer keyboard and use some of the keys to work the programs. Some children show developing control in using the mouse to work the program menu, for instance to clear the screen. The CD-ROM is shared between the two classes and this limits children's progress, for instance in developing the skills of using the mouse. Children use a range of building materials to make models.

90. Children's learning is limited by the lack of precise learning targets for some of the activities. Their learning is enhanced by visits into the local and wider community which are linked to the work in the classroom; for instance, through looking at the types of houses in the streets nearby, or going to the zoo and by visitors to the classroom, such as the dentist.
91. Through good teaching overall, children make good progress in creative development and standards are satisfactory by the age of five. Children use a variety of materials, such as sponges and potatoes, to print and mix different colours. Many children know the primary colours and that mixing these produces another colour, for instance that blue and yellow makes green and that red and blue makes purple. They take part in imaginative play situations and sing songs tunefully, for instance 'In my little house'. In a very good lesson in music, the teacher had high expectations of what the children should achieve and this resulted in children making good progress and achieving above expectations. Children named some percussion instruments, such as a tambourine and a triangle and played them with a developing awareness of a steady pulse. They displayed a high level of concentration and self-control. For instance, they played the instruments during the performance and did not play them when the teacher was speaking.
92. Through good teaching, children make good progress in physical development and by the age of five their achievements are above expectations for their age. Children show increasing control and co-ordination when using a range of tools, such as pencils, paintbrushes and scissors when they draw, write and paint. They handle construction apparatus competently. In gymnastics lessons children show good control, co-ordination and balance, for example when they jump and perform forward rolls and change the speed and way of travelling. These achievements are promoted well through the praise, support and encouragement they receive from teachers and support assistants.
93. The leadership and management of the under fives is satisfactory overall. However, weaknesses in senior management mean that the monitoring of teaching and learning is not undertaken. There is no specific budget for the under fives and it does not feature in the school development plan. Staff are appropriately qualified and have a good knowledge of how young children learn. Their knowledge of the curriculum for this age is less secure, for instance in knowledge and understanding of the world. Formal, manageable procedures for assessing children's significant achievements on a day-to-day basis and using these to inform the next step in children's learning are not in place. There is a sufficient number of qualified teachers but the number of support staff in the afternoon sessions is inadequate to support children's learning effectively.
94. The quality of the support given by classroom support assistants and the special support assistant for a visually impaired child is good. There are suitable induction arrangements for children entering reception, including home visits by teachers. The resources are unsatisfactory in quality to support teaching and learning and information and communication technology resources are unsatisfactory.

## **ENGLISH**

### **National test results**

95. Standards in English are below national averages at both key stages, although pupils at Key Stage 2 did achieve the national expectations in terms of the proportion reaching Level 4 and above in the 1999 national assessment tests. The school should meet the realistic targets it has set for English over the next few years, if the improvement in the Key Stage 2 results is maintained.

### **Standards and progress**

96. As reported at the time of the last inspection, many pupils enter the school as under-fives with language and literacy skills which are below national expectations. At both key stages, speaking and listening skills are now average rather than good. Reading skills improved significantly in 1999 but are still below national expectations, whilst being average for similar schools. Since the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, the school has concentrated on reading and this shows in improved reading scores, particularly at Key Stage 1. The main area for concern at both key stages is writing. The 1999 national assessment tests showed that writing is very low in comparison to national averages and to similar schools. This was identified as a key issue in the previous report and the school is just beginning to address this weakness.

### **Speaking and listening**

97. Through good teaching in the early years and Key Stage 1, pupils learn to listen attentively to adults and each other. At both key stages, they ask sensible questions and give responses that are expressed clearly and fully. From Year 1, they develop the confidence to speak at some length in front of the class and to adults. The good relationships in the school greatly encourage this and most teachers use opportunities for pupils to express their opinions and ideas well. Where there is good teaching, there is good extension of vocabulary and encouragement for pupils to think of alternative ways of expressing ideas. For example, Year 1 pupils talked through different versions of well-known tales and Year 5 pupils contributed a range of phrases to aid their discursive writing, such as 'On the other hand'; 'Nevertheless'; 'It could be argued that.' However, there is still insufficient linking of pupils' speaking skills with writing overall.

### **Reading**

98. In Key Stage 1, pupils enjoy reading and are learning to identify words and sounds early. Most are beginning to read with understanding by the end of Year 2 and talk with enthusiasm about their books, which they take home daily. Many are not yet reaching the higher levels of understanding needed for the national tests but they are improving. In Year 2, pupils pay attention to the different letter size and fonts in the big books, which helps them to read with appropriate expression.
99. In Key Stage 2, lower attaining pupils rely mainly on the reading schemes when choosing books to take home. Even higher attainers tend to read abridged versions or short stories. A few talked about enjoying longer stories such as *The Worst Witch* or books by Enid Blyton or Roald Dahl. Most are familiar with fiction and non-fiction and have some knowledge of the school library. Some higher attainers use the public library regularly, especially for non-fiction books. Most pupils can talk about the plots and characters and recall favourite incidents. However, few fall into the category of self-motivated and confident readers, or enthusiastic, independent, readers, expected by the end of Key Stage 2. The school has recently started the additional literacy strategy and designated pupils from Year 3 are benefiting from extra small group support with their reading and spelling.



## Writing

100. Writing skills are soundly developed in Key Stage 1. Pupils write in sentences and can explain why and where they need to use full stops and capital letters. They are familiar with word families and can identify patterns and rhymes. They use the clear wall displays of frequently used words to reinforce their own spellings. Year 1 pupils are keen to think of different beginnings for their version of well known fairytales and start to explore the variety of adjectives possible to describe, for example the wolf in Red Riding Hood. They write neatly and take care with illustrations in books that they make themselves, for example retelling the story of Cinderella. They show pride in having these displayed in the classroom. Most pupils form letters correctly and are aware of the need for constant size and spacing. However, the lack of a handwriting policy means that this is not consistently developed throughout the school. Therefore, the key issue identified in the last report, concerning the need to improve handwriting and presentation still stands.
101. Although the school is following the National Literacy strategy, there is insufficient evidence in Key Stage 2 of a wide range of extended writing for a variety of audiences and purposes. The school is planning to address this with focused writing weeks and introducing shared and guided writing in a similar way to the reading undertaken at present. There is generally a lack of stimulating and imaginative approaches to writing. However, some sound lessons were observed. Pupils in Year 5 enjoyed the challenge of presenting a well-organised argument for and against such issues as having pocket money, or playing football in the playground. They worked well together and with the teacher, to create a model argument that they then used to develop their own ideas. Year 6 pupils talked about a variety of writing experiences, including script writing. They were involved in looking at a factual text that could lead to writing about the issues surrounding alcohol. Some classes have regular tests that are helping to improve pupils' handwriting and spelling skills.

## Pupils and English

102. Pupils are co-operative and usually concentrate well on the work in hand. They are willing to do the tasks set but frequently there is a lack of challenge in terms of the variety of activities or the time set. When there is good teaching, which sets a brisk pace and clearly sets out the time allocations and high expectations of pupils, they respond well, for example in Years 1 and 4. Pupils are keen to talk about their ideas. With the right encouragement, they settle well to committing their ideas to paper.
103. Pupils make sound progress but need to be making good progress in order to come in line consistently with national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Their needs are clearly identified and teachers conscientiously work to develop particular skills. Pupils with English as an additional language make sound progress. Where teaching is good, the checking for understanding and exploration of particular words and phrases benefits all pupils, including pupils with English as an additional language.

## Teaching

104. Teaching is sound overall, with good or better teaching in one in three lessons. All teachers know the pupils well and have a good relationship with their class, which encourages an open exchange of ideas. Most teachers use the school's positive behaviour code well and maintain good class management. Where teaching is good or better, teachers offer suitable challenges to pupils and offer different levels of work and activities which are not purely based on a published scheme. The teachers have confidence in their own knowledge of English and present work in a stimulating and imaginative way. Their thorough planning has clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils, for example thinking of different adjectives in order to improve story telling. This helps pupils to understand exactly what is expected and why. All teachers are

following the National Literacy Strategy framework but, on the whole, there is a lack of variety in approaches and resources.

105. The National Literacy Strategy has provided the scheme of work which was a feature lacking in the previous inspection. The school is in the process of modifying this scheme of work appropriately in order to meet the particular needs of the pupils, for example to focus on shared and guided writing as well as reading. During the period when the Literacy Strategy was being introduced to the school, there was some helpful monitoring of teaching and learning which could usefully be continued in order to share the good practice in the school.

### **Assessment**

106. Assessment of pupils takes place through the statutory and non-statutory national tests but there is a lack of regular detailed monitoring of individual pupil progress. A few teachers are developing individual pupil targets. This needs further development to include sharing the targets with the pupils and adopting this effective strategy as a whole school policy.

### **In summary**

107. Now that the school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy, there is a need to:
- continue to exchange good practice in order to enrich the variety of teaching strategies and resources;
  - establish good reinforcement of language and literacy skills across the curriculum;
  - develop consistently high standards of handwriting and presentation skills and adopt a whole school policy for handwriting and display in order to improve the standards of pupils' writing skills;
  - identify detailed individual targets for all pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS**

### **National test results**

108. The results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that attainment was below the national average for all schools and in line with the national average for similar schools. Over the time since the last inspection in 1996, results have shown a consistent improvement when compared with the national average. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 is still too low.
109. The national test results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 show that attainment was below the national average overall for all schools and in line with the national average for schools with pupils of similar backgrounds. Results over the period 1996 to 1998 show a significant deterioration. This was more than made up in 1999, although the school recognises that this recovery is due partly to the presence of more higher attaining pupils in that year group. Despite their presence, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was still below what it should be.

### **Standards and progress overall**

110. At the time of the last inspection, standards of attainment in both key stages were judged to be in line with the national average and national test results reflected this. Currently, whilst there are examples of sound attainment in number work throughout the school and some examples of sound attainment in other aspects of the mathematics curriculum, overall standards in mathematics at the end of both key stages are below expectations. The school is successfully introducing the National Numeracy Strategy and this is leading to improvement in standards, particularly in Key Stage 1 and the earlier part of Key Stage 2.



111. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. However, progress is uneven. It suffers from the lack of emphasis on whole school planning for learning to build on what has been done earlier. Nevertheless, there was good progress in 60 per cent of the lessons observed in Key Stage 1 and in 80 per cent of those observed in Key Stage 2.

### **Key Stage 1**

112. In the reception classes, pupils progress from a situation of below average attainment on entry to one where most are close to the level expected at the start of Key Stage 1. Judging by the work seen in pupils' books the teaching of number work is thorough and pupils make sound progress throughout Key Stage 1. There is good use of concrete apparatus to support learning to count, add and subtract and evidence of care being taken to ensure a smooth transition to written work. Pupils are taught by a very experienced team of teachers.
113. In the lessons observed, teachers used resources well and focused well on pupils' individual difficulties, although this sometimes meant that more able pupils were not sufficiently challenged. There is a wide range of attainment in Year 1. At best, pupils correctly insert whole numbers between 11 and 14 and know pairs of numbers which add to 10. Others, with thorough, patient teaching make good progress in learning addition facts to five and using signs and numerals correctly to represent their additions. In a very well planned and taught lesson, pupils in Year 1 make good progress in their practical understanding of weight and in their recording skills. For example, they write the number of beads that balance a pair of scissors. Pupils make good progress in this lesson as a result of the teacher's careful match of task to learning need. She also used the final part of the lesson well to assess and extend pupils' learning.
114. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrate a good level of mental recall of number facts, at least to 20. Almost all pupils in one very good lesson correctly rounded numbers to the nearest ten. The teacher in this lesson used questioning very well. All the work in the lesson was sharply focused on what she had planned that the pupils would learn. She also made sure that pupils received immediate feedback to reinforce good work and behaviour.

### **Key Stage 2**

115. In Key Stage 2, pupils in the mixed-age Years 3 and 4 class make good progress in their skills of reading straight and circular scales and in recognising the equivalence of  $\frac{3}{4}$  kg and 750g. The teaching is well planned and real scales are used. The teacher uses mathematical language correctly and sets tasks clearly, making appropriate variations for pupils of differing abilities. Work in Year 4 pupils' books is of good quality and includes tasks that have been correctly carried out, for example involving negative numbers and rounding to one decimal place. There is also evidence of thorough teaching of measuring activities as well as number. Pupils make good progress, understanding and carrying out three-figure addition, starting with the most significant digit, in a very well prepared and presented lesson.
116. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 mostly show attainment below what is expected of their age group, although in lessons pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. For example, pupils in the mixed-age Years 5 and 6 class make good progress from a low starting point in developing their understanding of factors. The teacher has an encouraging, confidence-giving manner, coupled with high expectations of work and behaviour to which the pupils respond well. By the end of the lesson all pupils can find the factors of small numbers. More able pupils are confident with 100 and 144.
117. Most pupils in Year 6 cope comfortably when revising short multiplication of decimals in a lesson where the teacher gives good individual support, especially to the pupils of least

ability. As a result they make satisfactory progress but more able pupils do the work easily and are not sufficiently extended in their learning. The books of the current pupils in Year 6 show that there has been thorough and careful teaching of quadrilaterals, construction of triangles, co-ordinates and transformations. Pupils name shapes correctly and use appropriate units, for example cm<sup>2</sup> and cm<sup>3</sup>. They present their work well.

### **Pupils and mathematics**

118. Pupils throughout the school show every sign that they enjoy their mathematics lessons. In particular, many enjoy the challenge of mental arithmetic. Behaviour in lessons is good and pupils work together well when necessary. They clearly welcome opportunities for practical work.
119. **The overall teaching of mathematics is good and it is never less than satisfactory. Important features of the best teaching, which leads to pupils making good progress, often include:**
- good questioning, both to find out what pupils know and to consolidate and extend their learning;
  - good use of practical apparatus, for example objects to count, scales and graduated cylinders, to support learning;
  - clear identification of exactly what pupils are going to learn and telling them;
  - effective recap at the beginning and consolidating at the end of lessons, with assessment built in;
  - work well matched to groups of pupils of differing abilities.
120. **Where teaching is less effective, this is often because:**
- whole class work, especially oral sessions, goes on for too long;
  - learning objectives are not sufficiently focused;
  - work is not planned to build clearly on what has gone before;
  - more-able pupils are not set sufficiently demanding work.

### **In summary**

121. **Strengths of the subject**
- The overall good quality of teaching.
  - Well-chosen and used resources.
  - Successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy.
  - Improving standards of numeracy in both key stages.

### **What could be improved**

- Whole school planning so that learning builds effectively on what came before.
- Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning.
- Number and range of opportunities for investigational work.
- Emphasis on the non-numerical aspects of the mathematics curriculum.

## SCIENCE

### National test results

121. The school's 1999 national teacher assessments show that at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' performance was above national expectations. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected level was close to the national average and the proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was well above. There was no difference in the achievement of girls and boys. Since the last inspection standards have been maintained. When compared with similar schools pupils' performance was above average at the expected Level 2 and well above average at Level 3.
122. The school's 1999 national test results at the end of Key Stage 2 show that pupils' performance was below the national average at the expected Level 4 and at the higher Level 5. The achievement of girls was lower than that of boys. This was because there was a greater number of high-attaining boys in this group. After the last inspection in 1996, pupils' performance declined initially and there was a significant improvement in 1999. When compared with similar schools, pupils' performance at the expected Level 4 was below average and at the higher Level 5 it was average.

### Standards and progress overall

123. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' achievement is below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. This judgement reflects the 1999 national test results. Weaknesses in teaching and in the curriculum mean that fewer pupils than anticipated achieve at the expected level for this age. There is too little development in investigative work and an incorrect match of work to pupils' needs. Achievement at the higher level is also lower and this is because the school has few high-attaining pupils
124. Year 6 pupils have a sound understanding of some organs of the body, including the heart and its function. They can name a range of forces and know the key factors necessary to make a test fair. Through careful teacher support and encouragement, pupils with special educational needs take part equally well and produce results of equal quality to those of low-attaining pupils. Analysis of work done over a longer period of time shows that sufficient work is covered in the knowledge and understanding aspect of science. However, pupils of all abilities are given the same level of work and this sometimes results in a lack of challenge for some pupils.
125. Teacher expectations are not high enough in experimental and investigative work. The level and standard of this work is below that expected for pupils of this age. Discussions with pupils show that they enjoy science and have a good recall of the investigations they have carried out. Low-attaining pupils have difficulty recalling facts or using the correct vocabulary. Some pupils with special educational needs have a limited vocabulary for describing their experiences.
126. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. This judgement reflects the 1999 national teacher assessments. Pupils in Year 2 know which foods are good for their teeth and which are not, and they know the different food groups, such as carbohydrates and fats. Analysis of pupils' work done over a longer period of time, and discussions with pupils, show that they have a satisfactory knowledge of life and living processes. For example, they can sort living things into appropriate groups. They have worked at the higher attainment level with simple electric circuits and switches.
127. Pupils are interested in science and this is confirmed by the work in their books, which is neatly presented and completed on time. Pupils' books also show that teachers ensure that most aspects of science are covered in sufficient depth at the expected level. There

is sound teaching of work at the higher attainment level, except in investigative work. Investigative work is given insufficient emphasis. For instance, there is little evidence of pupils making predictions and this means that they make less progress in this area than in other aspects of science.

## Teaching

128. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Some good teaching was seen at both key stages. In most of the lessons seen there was good management of behaviour. This is based upon established classroom routines and the good relationships between teachers and pupils. This good working atmosphere promotes pupils' good behaviour and positive attitude to their work. In a good lesson at Key Stage 1 the teacher began the lesson by sharing the learning targets with the pupils and identified what she wanted them to achieve by the end of the lesson. This meant that pupils were clear about the work and what they were expected to learn in the lesson.
129. In the most effective lessons in Key Stage 2, teachers have good subject knowledge which is shown in the clear explanations they give and the precise use of subject vocabulary. They use questions effectively to review pupils' knowledge and extend their learning. Lessons are organised well and good resources are used to gain pupils' interest and to support learning. Pupils respond well and are keen to answer questions and to participate in discussions.
130. Analysis of pupils' work, lesson observations and discussions with pupils show that most pupils make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of science. However, they make unsatisfactory progress in experimental and investigative work. This is because pupils consistently plan their own investigations and the level of this work is not sufficiently demanding, particularly for high-attaining pupils. Teacher expectations of the recording of this work are not high enough and marking does not point out to pupils the ways in which they can improve their work. This leads to average and high-attaining pupils making unsatisfactory progress in investigative skills and in the written recording of this work. It is appropriate for pupils to plan their own investigations on some occasions. However, teachers also need to provide structured practical work that is sufficiently challenging yet matched to pupils' capabilities.
131. Some unsatisfactory teaching was seen at both key stages. In one lesson at Key Stage 1 this was because of the teacher's insecure knowledge about the importance of valid data in graph work. This had an adverse effect on pupils' learning and progress in basic scientific principles. In the two unsatisfactory lessons in Key Stage 2 there were weaknesses in the organisation of the lessons and discipline routines were not securely established. For example, teachers did not ensure that all the pupils were listening. A weakness in most of the lessons at this key stage is that teachers do not use a sufficient variety of teaching styles to maintain the pace of the lesson and promote learning. There is too much teacher talk, insufficient questioning of pupils to find out what they know and understand and insufficient use of practical work. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in activities and this affects their interest and learning. Across both key stages, all pupils cover the same work at the same level and so pupils at different levels of attainment are not satisfactorily catered for.
132. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed suitably in Key Stage 1. For instance, there is a suitable amount of written work and pupils produce simple graphs. Literacy and numeracy skills are not promoted sufficiently in Key Stage 2. Analysis of pupils' work shows that much of the work is copied and is of a similar standard. The writing in investigative work is brief and data handling and graph work are not used sufficiently. Across both key stages, information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support and extend pupils' learning.

133. Management of the subject is satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and gives useful advice and support to teachers. However, the co-ordinator is not given time to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school and the subject does not feature in school development planning.

### **Planning and assessment**

134. The school had produced its own good scheme of work with assessments built in at the end of topics. It has recently changed to the exemplar scheme of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. This has not been adapted to the school's needs and assessment has not yet been included. The co-ordinator has written the plans for teachers' lessons at Key Stage 2. Although these have appropriate learning targets, there is sometimes too much content for one lesson. These weaknesses in the curriculum are having an adverse effect on pupils' learning. Teachers need to adapt these plans to their own style of teaching and to the particular class in order to teach more effectively.
135. In some classes, assessment is undertaken at the end of a series of lessons on a topic but this practice is not consistent across the school. There is no system for assessing pupils' achievements regularly in lessons and using this information to plan the next step in pupils' learning. At Key Stage 2, homework is not used sufficiently to support pupils' learning in the classroom. Marking acknowledges pupils' achievements but is not used to point to ways in which the work could be improved. Resources are good in quality and range but they are not used enough to promote pupils' learning through practical work.

### **136. In summary**

- Progress since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory overall.
- Standards in Key Stage 1 have improved from 'satisfactory' to 'good' and this is commendable.
- In Key Stage 2 standards have declined from 'in line with national expectations' to 'below national expectations' and the standard of written work has not improved.
- There are weaknesses in investigative work and in the curriculum planning (see above).

### **ART**

137. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in their learning in both key stages. During the inspection it was possible to observe only a few lessons. Further evidence was gained from interviews with the co-ordinator, discussions with pupils, scrutiny of pupils' sketchbooks and displays of their work.
138. Across both key stages, pupils make sound progress in observing and recording from their experience and expressing their ideas. Pupils in Year 2 make observational drawings of a basket of fruit using oil pastels. Some show close observation of detail, for instance of the ribbon or weave on the basket. These skills of observation are extended satisfactorily in Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 3 use a range of pencils and shading appropriately when they copy a small area of a black and white picture which they have identified with a view finder.
139. Pupils in Year 4 extend their knowledge suitably. They use the vocabulary of tone, such as light, dark and shadow, accurately. Most of their sketches show satisfactory use of shading and good attention to detail. Discussion with these pupils show that they have a sound knowledge of famous artists, such as Van Gogh, and the techniques they used. At both key stages pupils have good attitudes to their work. They work sensibly and concentrate well.
140. Work on display shows that most aspects of art are taught. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 explore pattern when they produce attractive patterns in the style of William Morris. Year



4 pupils improve their knowledge of mixing colour, tints and shades when they make patterns in which they try to reproduce the colours that Van Gogh used in his paintings. Key Stage 1 pupils use a variety of materials in their collage work, for instance in pictures of winter and snowmen. However, there is little evidence of three-dimensional work, for example clay.

141. Insufficient lessons were seen to judge the quality of teaching overall. Teaching was good in one of the lessons observed and in the other two lessons it was satisfactory. In the most effective lessons, behaviour is managed well through the good use of praise, the good relationships which exist between pupils and teachers and securely established classroom routines. Good quality resources are used to illustrate the lessons well and gain pupils' interest. For instance, a variety of interesting fruit was displayed attractively in a basket in the Year 2 lesson. This gained pupils' interest and, through careful teacher questioning, they were led to look closely at the detail on the different fruits and to try to represent this in their pastel drawings. In the good lesson the good pace was achieved by reminding pupils of the time constraints for the work. Skilful, brisk questioning challenged pupils to produce more detailed drawings. In the less effective lesson, which was still satisfactory, the strategies for managing the behaviour of a few pupils who were not concentrating sufficiently were not always successful.
142. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support pupils' learning in art. Literacy and numeracy are taught appropriately, for instance through developing the subject vocabulary, writing about famous artists and in work on shape and perspective.
143. The recently appointed co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership in the subject. The previous inspection identified the need for a scheme of work. This has been achieved and it supports teaching and learning well. A more consistent approach to the display of pupils' work across the school would enhance pupils' learning further. Assessment is not undertaken. Art does not feature in school development planning because of the appropriate emphasis placed upon the core subjects. The co-ordinator has not been given time to monitor teaching and learning in the subject. Sketch books are used to record pupils' achievements in different aspects of art and these could be monitored to track pupils' learning. Although resources are just adequate in quantity the range is too narrow to enhance pupils' learning effectively, particularly with respect to three-dimensional work.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

144. Design and technology is taught in the school on a half-termly basis, alternating with art. Standards at the time of the last inspection were in line with national expectations.
145. During the inspection it was possible to observe only one lesson, which was in Key Stage 2. Evidence, therefore, consists mainly from discussions with pupils about their work, examination of the limited amount of work displayed around the school, discussion with the subject co-ordinator and a review of planning documentation. This evidence indicates that most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language, make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 but barely satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. No secure judgement can be made on the quality of teaching.
146. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop basic skills to make simple constructions and designs using Lego-style building materials. Pupils use ingredients to make playdough for cakes that are later decorated. They observe houses in the local environment and look at different building styles in preparation for their own designs and making of model houses. This supports their work in history lessons. They make simple drawings of the houses they intend to make and

with help explore how they may use effective hinges in their construction. They learn to score and fold card using simple tools. Time is rightly given to improving their products.

147. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 design and make boxes for the packaging of different products of their own choosing. They generate ideas through discussion and evaluate their work. Pupils describe how to make the finished product and assess its suitability for use. They draw labelled sketches and plans and, where necessary, adapt their designs to ensure that they are fit for their purpose. Pupils have a broad understanding of the properties of the materials that they use and measure carefully to ensure accuracy of fit. They join materials using appropriate techniques. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn the processes involved in bread making. They know how the quantities and properties of different ingredients affect the final product.
148. The subject effectively supports other areas of the curriculum. For example, the work on packaging by pupils in Years 3 and 4 connects well with mathematics and literacy, whilst the electrically powered vehicles made by Years 5 and 6 pupils link well to science.
149. Pupils say that they enjoy the practical activities of their lessons and show an understanding of the design and technology processes.
150. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable but has no opportunities for monitoring the subject throughout the school by observing lessons. He has no oversight of planning. Resources are adequate but many are under-used. There is insufficient time given to teaching the subject and the school lacks a well-planned and coherent whole school curriculum to support the progressive development of skills, knowledge and understanding.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

151. At both key stages, pupils achieve levels of knowledge and understanding which are below what is expected for pupils of their ages. At Key Stage 1, nearly all pupils know the essential elements of their address, for example their house number and street name and can talk about where they live in relation to their friends and relatives' houses. Older pupils draw simple plans of the school and its surrounding area. They can describe some of the basic features of houses and comment on features they like. Pupils have little awareness of localities beyond their own and seldom use geographical vocabulary.
152. At Key Stage 2, pupils comment on simple seasonal and climatic changes. They read graphs, such as bar charts to gain information about temperatures but only higher attainers can explain the geographical importance of climate statistics. Most pupils describe how litter can affect the environment. Higher attaining pupils can distinguish between materials that are biodegradable or recyclable and those that are not. Pupils have little understanding of the reasons for the location of settlements and are only beginning to grasp how the environment can be changed and improved. They have an outline understanding of some of the major world environments, such as desert, continental and coastal regions. Most pupils can trace directions on a map but they recognise very few countries of the world
153. Pupils behave well during whole class discussions and offer sensible suggestions to teachers' questions. They are happy to work together and share ideas. Pupils' concentration is more variable when they are engaged in written tasks, especially if these involve reading text books or interpreting maps, which can pose problems for lower attainers and those with English as an additional language. Most pupils, including those of lower attainment or with special educational needs, are willing to explain when they are in difficulty and respond positively to support and advice.

154. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers plan in accordance with the recommended National Curriculum programmes of study. There is a tendency at Key Stage 2 to plan for too large an element of literacy and numeracy rather than for the development of geographical skills. For example, too much time was spent in one lesson on tasks which involved compiling and interpreting graphical information. Whole class introductions provide suitable opportunities for pupils to recall previous learning and are particularly helpful when there is a long gap between lessons in this subject. Teachers are not sufficiently demanding of pupils in their written work and allow a large amount of straightforward copying. Worksheets are produced for whole class groups and are sometimes too difficult for the lowest attainers but too easy for higher attainers. Good use is made of the local environment to supplement the resources available within school. This helps pupils to gain a good impression of the main roads, buildings and facilities in their local area. Written work is marked regularly but not clearly assessed against the acquisition of geographical skills.
155. The subject is temporarily co-ordinated by the headteacher, who has few opportunities for monitoring pupils' progress. The existing scheme of work was abandoned at the beginning of this school year in favour of National Curriculum units based on national guidance. This was intended to ensure that National Curriculum requirements were met within the more restricted time available. However, this approach has led to some confusion amongst class teachers who find it difficult to establish development in learning in the subject. Standards have declined since the last inspection, partly because less time is devoted to geography in favour of a greater emphasis on teaching the skills of literacy and numeracy.

## HISTORY

156. Pupils are achieving according to the expectations for their age. Younger pupils are grasping a sense of 'then' and 'now' and are learning about famous people, such as Florence Nightingale. They are starting to understand that things were different in the past, as was vividly illustrated by Year 2 pupils' response to the state of hospitals during the Crimean War presented on a video. They show a natural curiosity and empathy. For example, they wanted to know why a young boy would have been wounded in battle. They ask sensible questions and show an interest in the people they are learning about. They pay attention to detail when walking round the locality. For example, when looking at different features of local buildings, one pupil described the semi-detached houses with unusual roof shapes as 'the upside-down boat houses'.
157. Older pupils are keen to talk at length about the history they have covered. They recall facts such as the names of kings and queens of England. They describe the conditions in the Victorian era for children in school and at work. Their interest in the subject is stimulated by a range of resources, including videos and by the regular theatre workshops, which bring the period to life and encourage pupils to see more than one side to a sequence of events. They respond well to the active participation encouraged during these workshops. They also enjoy educational visits, for example to Chester, where they vividly remembered dressing up as Romans and parading around the city and the old Roman walls. This first-hand experience is a strength and could lead to exciting writing. Unfortunately, in recent years the time allowed for history has been reduced and the obvious links with writing skills, praised in the previous report, have been lost.
158. As in the previous report, the teaching is at least sound, with two good lessons among the four observed. Pupils' work at the end of Key Stage 2 shows that appropriate topics are being covered, although no teaching was seen in these classes, as the focus this term is on geography. Teachers' planning shows a variety of approaches which are motivating pupils well. Good teaching is well organised to cater for the range of abilities in the class. Teachers ensure that pupils take an active part through careful questioning to elicit pupil



ideas and encouraging pupils to ask their own questions. The better teaching is helping pupils to see differing points of view and to express their own opinions. These strategies make a good contribution to developing pupils' speaking skills. Examining a range of evidence and using artefacts to stimulate research is not as fully developed as it should be. Where teachers do encourage this higher level of debate, this has useful links with discursive writing and using language to persuade. These are necessary to speed the improvement of pupils' writing in Key Stage 2.

**159. The school needs an active co-ordinator**

- to ensure the continuation of the lively presentation and use of resources by sharing the current good practice;
- to develop the links with reading and writing;
- to develop assessment.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

160. The school does not teach the full National Curriculum in information and communication technology; much of the computer stock is outdated and, although there is some direct teaching of computer skills, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise and extend what they are taught. There is one computer (of whatever vintage) to every 57 pupils. The school has not invested adequately in computers or programs to enable teachers and pupils to extend learning in other subjects.
161. There is very little evidence of the regular use of computers being part of most teachers' planning and even less evidence of a whole school plan for progressively developing skills, using them and keeping track of pupils' progress. However, work on display indicates that older pupils have been able to use a data-handling program to draw graphs showing the football team's goal scorers. Pupils in Year 2 created a folder of work last year that shows they learned how to select fonts, font sizes, use headings and layout to enhance their writing. A lesson with one of the current Year 2 classes, in preparation for their carrying out the same task, was effectively taught. However, the time gap between teaching and practising the skill is too great for many pupils.
162. In a good lesson with Year 1 pupils, the limited objective of pupils being able to create their own name label was largely achieved. The teacher had produced good prompt cards to reinforce vocabulary and actions and gave several pupils opportunities to learn at the keyboard. Pupils in one of the reception classes were observed learning to use a mouse in order to work with a painting program. Year 6 pupils were also shown how to use a more sophisticated painting program. Neither the work seen in lessons nor that on display indicated that the progress of the vast majority of pupils is anything other than unsatisfactory.
163. When pupils were observed working at keyboards it was clear that they had not been effectively taught how to use more than one finger, although their knowledge of where to find some of the major keys, such as 'delete', is often sound. The examples of word-processed work that were seen indicate that the school has hardly started to use information and communication technology as a vehicle for improving literacy skills. The same can be said in relation to numeracy, where the opportunity to use a suitable program to enhance the teaching of work on weather statistics in geography was not taken.
164. When pupils are being taught new skills or when they have a turn at the keyboard they show interest and are eager to learn and help each other well. A few pupils have access to computers at home and display confidence and correct use of vocabulary when talking about what they know and can do.

165. It is anticipated that the school will receive financial support for its efforts to improve its provision of computers. There are well-considered plans relating to the accommodation requirements and some teachers have attended relevant courses.
166. **There is much more that needs to happen:**
- Whole staff discussion of the importance and place of information and communication technology in the curriculum.
  - The development of a scheme of work that shows clearly what is to be learned in each year group and built on subsequently.
  - The purchase of a wide range of software to support and extend learning across the curriculum.
  - Appropriate training so that all teachers are confident about their own computer skills and how to organise and assess information and communication technology skill development in their classrooms.
  - Frequent support and monitoring of teaching and learning in classes throughout the school.

## MUSIC

167. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in both key stages. Across the school the standard of singing in lessons and assemblies is good. Pupils sing with enjoyment, good expression and diction. In the Christmas performance girls and boys in Key Stage 2 sang solos confidently and with good expression and Key Stage 1 pupils sang with enthusiasm and good diction. Extra-curricular activities in clarinet and recorder enhance the learning of those pupils who take part. For instance, pupils who have been playing the recorder for one term read and play simple scores with suitable accuracy. During the inspection it was possible to observe only a few lessons. Further evidence was gained from interviews with the co-ordinator, observations of assemblies and hymn practice and analysis of videos.
168. Key Stage 1 pupils develop a sound understanding of pitch, rhythm and pulse. Year 2 pupils clap slow and fast rhythms with developing awareness of tempo and rhythm and identify percussion instruments. They sing with good expression and diction. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. Year 5 pupils follow a score and sing Schubert's lullaby, "The shades of night are falling", with good diction and phrasing. Year 6 pupils recognise the beats in a bar and the mood portrayed in Schubert's music. Pupils have positive attitudes to lessons and are keen to participate in the playing of instruments. They listen with suitable attention to teacher explanations and instructions and to the performance of others.
169. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in both key stages. Most lessons have good features. Pupils' behaviour is managed well through the good use of praise, the good relationships which exist between pupils and teachers and securely established routines, such as playing the instrument at the appropriate time. This promotes the good behaviour of most pupils. Many teachers have good subject knowledge which is shown in the clear explanations and accurate use of the subject vocabulary. Good use is made of reviewing pupils' previous work and linking this to new learning in the lesson. In a lesson in Year 3 the teacher and special support assistant gave effective support to the groups during the instrumental work and this enabled pupils of all abilities to make sound progress, including those pupils with special educational needs.
170. Occasionally the learning targets are not sufficiently precise and this leads to a lack of clarity in the teaching. In one lesson at both key stages the teaching strategies were not effective for controlling the disruptive behaviour of a few pupils. This slowed the pace of the lesson and pupils' learning. Literacy and numeracy are promoted satisfactorily in

lessons through the teaching of the subject vocabulary, reading of simple scores and work on rhythm. In the Key Stage1 hymn practice there was a lost opportunity to promote literacy by displaying the words of the songs on the overhead projector. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support pupils' learning.

171. The two co-ordinators provide satisfactory leadership and management and give useful advice and support to staff. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development, for instance through the range of music used in lessons and assemblies. Visitors to the school enhance the curriculum effectively. For example, last term a percussionist worked with Year 5 pupils on songs and music based upon the life of Henry Tate. These pupils performed their work to local groups, culminating in a final performance at the town hall.
172. There is no scheme of work or unified approach to planning and this means that progression in pupils' learning is not ensured across the key stages. Music is not a focus in school development planning because of the appropriately high priority being given this year to literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. The co-ordinators have not been given time to monitor teaching and learning in the subject and assessment is not in place. The previous report identified the need for a scheme of work and this has not been produced. Extra-curricular activities have declined in number, for instance the choir is convened only for special performances and does not meet regularly.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

173. All pupils' attainment, including those with special educational needs, is above that expected for their ages and they make consistently good progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment and progress was judged to be in line with national averages.
174. At Key Stage 1 pupils show sound body control and co-ordination. Their use of space is good and they respond well to opportunities for movement. Performance of basic skills such as running, jumping and travelling is good. At Key Stage 2 these early gains are consolidated and extended. Pupils improve and refine their performance.
175. The quality of teaching is good and this is a strength that contributes directly to the good standards achieved. Lessons are well structured and proceed at a good pace. Good use is made of warming up and cooling down activities. Time, resources praise and encouragement are used effectively and teachers focus on key points for development. These are taught systematically and pupils are aware of what is expected of them. In the best lessons observed, teachers have high expectations of the pupils. They incorporate the use of demonstration and positive feedback to maintain the challenge. They encourage individuals to improve the skills or quality of their performance. These lessons incorporate a systematic approach to the acquisition of skills. For example, when learning how to bowl, pupils in Year 1 are taught how to hold the ball correctly, to use a back swing and to position their bodies as they deliver the ball. Their skills are then applied and developed as they progressively work with partners, in threes and subsequently in teams. In their outdoor games lesson pupils in Years 3 and 4 practise controlling footballs using the correct part of their feet for different purposes. They learn to judge speed and the amount of control needed to run with the ball and stop it at a given signal. In their dance lessons, pupils in Year 2 are expected to listen carefully to instructions to enable them to build up a simple sequence of moves, which include twisting and bending. Pupils in Year 5 respond with exuberance when they learn to control their footwork and co-ordinate their movements to master the sharp snappy dancing style of the 1950's rock and roll. Most pupils' achievements in dance activities at both key stages show a sensitivity in their interpretation and a good control of body weight.

176. All teachers have a sensitive approach towards pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is a second language. They support them effectively. A positive attitude to equality of provision is reflected in the mixed pairs and grouping in activities and games.
177. Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons and, with very few exceptions, behave sensibly and with consideration for others. They listen carefully and show commitment to improving their skills through practice and perseverance. They behave responsibly when helping to set out or put away equipment.
178. Pupils in Year 5 attend the local swimming pool weekly throughout the year and have the opportunity to achieve their 25-metre certificate and Water Safety and Skills Award.
179. The school provides a range of sporting activities and competitive games to enhance the curriculum. The school is involved in a 'Top Sports' initiative that brings added benefits. Pupils from various year groups receive coaching from Bolton Wanderers Football in the Community Project and pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to enjoy a residential activity week in Shropshire. Football for both boys and girls and rounders for girls are available as extra-curricular activities for pupils in Key Stage 2. The play areas and the range and quality of apparatus and equipment are sufficient to support the subject.
180. The scheme of work provides sufficient detail to ensure that skills develop systematically. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and hard working but has no opportunities to monitor teaching and learning either by seeing teachers' planning or observing their lessons and there is no assessment system in place.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

181. Pupils reach standards that are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieve a sound understanding of what constitutes good moral and social behaviour. They know how friends should behave towards one another and understand the importance of friendship. Pupils know the main events of important Bible stories, such as Noah and the Ark and the Birth of Christ, although most pupils lack an awareness of the religious significance of these events. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand the significance of holy books, especially the Bible and the Qur'an. They can explain in outline the events of The Creation. All pupils develop a knowledge of the places and methods of worship in the major world religions, such as the Five Pillars of Islam and the Five K's in Sikhism. They have a good knowledge of the early events in Muhammed's life and know what occurs during Ramadan and Eid. Only the highest attaining pupils understand the importance of methods of worship and religious events in the faith of Christians and Muslims.
182. Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to learning in the subject. They listen well to whole class introductions and reminders about previous work. They show interest in religious stories. Pupils are usually keen to volunteer answers during whole class discussions and show a willingness to listen to the ideas of others. They are more reluctant to engage in written work and frequently need prompting during extended pieces of writing.
183. Teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. Teachers plan in accordance with the detailed scheme of work. They have sufficient knowledge of the basic facts associated with the major religions, such as the major aspects of worship but many lack the skills to develop a full understanding of faith and belief. Teachers manage whole class sessions well and ask suitable questions to promote whole class discussions. This often helps pupils to develop interesting points of view about moral issues. The knowledge of several Muslim pupils is well used to supplement teacher explanations of Islamic practices, such as Ramadan. Teachers provide reasonable guidelines to help pupils with their written

work. Some reading and writing tasks have a clearer focus on the development of literacy than on an understanding of religious education. There is a lack of variety in the activities provided during lessons. Most lessons follow a similar format of teacher explanation followed by a short piece of writing or drawing work. This sometimes fails to engage pupils' attention. Written work is marked regularly and comments are made about spelling and presentation. Work is rarely assessed for the quality of pupils' religious understanding.

184. The scheme of work, produced since the last inspection, has helped provide a structure for lessons throughout the school and ensures that statutory requirements are met. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has a good understanding of the locally agreed syllabus but does not monitor standards throughout the school. As a result, basic syllabus requirements are fulfilled but it is difficult to guarantee that the level and sophistication of pupils' understanding is constantly being developed. Class teachers are showing an increasing awareness of the needs of the subject and there is a shared commitment to improving standards.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

185. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards meeting the targets in their individual education plans. They are achieving well in mastering basic literacy skills, developing an understanding of phonics that enables them to make good attempts at reading unfamiliar words. Pupils with very low levels of writing skills are increasingly able to write legible letters and many older pupils at Key Stage 2 write in full sentences. Most pupils can recognise numbers and several can name geometric shapes. Their observational skills are developing well. This enables them to comment on the characteristics of shapes and to recognise detail in pictures and photographs.
186. Pupils listen carefully to instructions in individual, group or whole class sessions. They concentrate well, especially when they receive the support of a teacher or classroom assistant (SSA). Occasionally their attention wanders during writing or drawing work but they quickly return to their tasks when reminded. Pupils' behaviour is very good. They listen carefully to adults and behave sensibly in classrooms. Those pupils who are working towards behaviour targets are showing substantial progress. They establish good relations with other pupils and demonstrate an increasing capacity to establish friendships and work as part of groups.
187. Teaching is good throughout the school, especially when pupils are withdrawn from classes for individual or small group sessions. Specialist staff and class teachers have a good understanding of pupils' needs and teach in accordance with the targets in pupils' individual education plans. Specialist staff have a very good understanding of the strategies required to help pupils master basic skills, especially in literacy and numeracy, providing pupils with a carefully structured approach. This enables pupils to develop a good understanding of their own learning. Staff have high expectations of pupils, which promotes a good working atmosphere in class or during special sessions. Pupils' progress is carefully recorded by teachers and support assistants and information is regularly used to update pupil records and amend individual education plans. Good relations are established with pupils, who have trust and confidence in staff. Praise and good humour are well used to encourage extra effort and to help pupils overcome worries about making mistakes.
188. Learning opportunities for pupils with special educational needs are well planned. The focus on the acquisition of basic skills helps pupils to gain access to a broader range of curriculum opportunities, especially when pupils are able to master simple reading techniques. The amount of specialist individual and group sessions to supplement pupils'

learning is well judged and enhances, rather than detracting from, pupils' learning in the classroom.

189. The co-ordinator for special educational needs manages this aspect of the school well. All statutory requirements are met and records are well maintained. Pupils' learning is well monitored and good use is made of external specialists to provide specific educational programmes. Support assistants are well deployed to meet pupils' needs and specific grants are well spent, such as in reinforcing pupils' progress in literacy. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs liaises closely with the co-ordinator and support assistants and takes considerable interest in pupils' progress, providing regular reports for the full governing body.
190. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Pupils continue to make good progress and the school shows an increasing capacity to cater for a wider range of special educational needs. Although the co-ordinator is no longer full-time in her role, very efficient use of her time results in effective provision throughout the school.