

INSPECTION REPORT

BROCKHOLES WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119230

Headteacher: Miss J Webster

Reporting inspector: Mr C D Taylor

Dates of inspection: 20 - 24 March 2000

Inspection number: 190755

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: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Brant Road
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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Williamson

Date of previous inspection: 8 - 10 October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Christopher Taylor	Registered Inspector	Science Music	What sort of school is it ? How high are standards? (a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Roger Williams	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
George Halliday	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
Margaret Lewis	Team inspector	English Information technology Physical education English as an additional language	How high are standards? (b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
Megan Spark	Team inspector	Art Design and technology History Under-fives Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Brockholes Wood is a large primary school for boys and girls aged 3 - 11 years old. It has 225 full-time pupils and 45 part-time children in the nursery. The number of pupils has increased slightly over the past two years. The majority of children enter the nursery with levels of attainment well below the national average, and with limited language, number and social skills. Forty per cent of pupils - twice the national average - are known to be eligible for free school meals. Seventy seven pupils - well above the national average - have special educational needs. The majority of these pupils have emotional and behavioural difficulties, and moderate or specific learning difficulties. Eleven pupils have statements of special needs. Thirteen per cent of pupils are from ethnic minorities. The majority of these pupils are of Black Caribbean heritage. Only four pupils speak English as an additional language and no pupils are at an early stage of English language acquisition.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Brockholes Wood is an effective school with a very good ethos and a warm environment, despite working in difficult circumstances. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school and provision for pupils' personal development is very good. While the majority of children enter the nursery with levels of attainment well below the national average, they make good progress and attainment is in line with national expectations in science and a range of other subjects by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and their behaviour is also very good. The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff are very good. As expenditure is above the national average, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good for the under-fives and at both key stages. Ninety seven per cent is satisfactory or better. As a result, pupils' learning is good throughout the school.
- Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Sound moral values are constantly reinforced. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good. Pupils accept responsibilities and work together in harmony.
- The school's very good ethos ensures that pupils' attitudes and their behaviour are very good.
- Provision for the under-fives is good. Children make good progress in the nursery and in the reception class.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They make good progress throughout the school.
- Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.
- The effectiveness of the school's links with parents and the quality of information provided for them are very good. Pupils benefit greatly from the active involvement of a number of parents and governors in their learning at school.
- The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership. The governing body fulfil their duties very well. Planning for the future is thorough and finances are managed effectively.

What could be improved

- Standards are below national expectations in English, mathematics and information technology at both key stages and in science at Key Stage 1.
- Teachers' assessment and recording of pupils' reading skills does not identify what pupils need to do to improve their reading.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills through role-play and drama.
- Outdoor play facilities for the under-fives are insufficient for children to develop their climbing and balancing skills.
- Procedures for withdrawing some pupils with special needs for individual assistance at the same time every week means they miss the same subject each time.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress overall in addressing the key issues highlighted in the previous report in October 1996. The school has made very good progress in increasing the governors' involvement in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's development. It has made good progress in improving teachers' expertise in information technology and in ensuring that there is clear progression in the teaching of skills and that statutory requirements are met. The school has developed its planning well so that work is now matched more closely to the needs of individual pupils and there is more challenge for high-attainers. Sound progress has been made in developing the range of writing strategies used across the curriculum. In addition to these key issues, there have been other areas of significant improvement. The proportion of teaching that is very good has risen from 12.5 per cent at the previous inspection to 30 per cent. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved from satisfactory to good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour, which were good, are now very good. Attendance has improved considerably from 91 per cent to 93.3 per cent. The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff, which were good, are now very good. There has been sound improvement in standards in English, mathematics and science, and the school is doing all that could be expected in the circumstances.

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	E	E	E
Mathematics	E	E	E	C
Science	E	E	E	E

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

In English, the school's results in 1999 were well below the national average for all schools in the country, and well below the average for schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Over the past three years, standards have not risen as fast as national trends, and in 1999 standards fell. Inspection findings indicate that standards of attainment in English are below the national average. This is better than the 1999 test results as most pupils in the current Year 6 have been at the school for longer than last year's group, and have spent longer benefiting from good teaching of the National Literacy Strategy. Standards are improving, but are not yet high enough. In mathematics, the results of the 1999 tests were below the national average for all schools, and close to the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Inspection findings indicate that standards are still below the national average in mathematics. Pupils are currently making good progress due to improvements in the standard of teaching since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, but standards are not yet high enough. In science, standards in the 1999 tests were well below the national average, and well below the average in similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that attainment is close to the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. This is an improvement on the 1999 test results as teaching is now very good in the current Years 5 and 6. Realistic targets have been set to improve standards in English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2 in 2000. To meet these targets, the school has focused on effective support for pupils with special needs, help for slower readers, additional literacy support and booster classes for pupils in Year 6. Inspection findings indicate that standards are below the national average in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 1.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good attitudes to work. Pupils are very enthusiastic and very keen to learn. They are very interested and fully involved in all activities around the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in class and around school. They are polite and helpful, and treat property with respect. There has been a small number of short-term exclusions in line with the school's discipline policy.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are encouraged to develop responsibility and independence and to widen their experiences. Relationships between pupils and staff, and between pupils, are good.
Attendance	Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now just below the national average. Unauthorised absence is below average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching was satisfactory or better in 97 per cent of the lessons observed. It was good or better in 72 per cent of lessons and very good or better in 29 per cent of lessons. Overall, teaching is good for the under-fives and at both key stages. Teaching of English, including the basic skills of literacy, is good at both key stages. In mathematics, including numeracy skills, teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. Particular strengths of the teaching include very good subject knowledge and expertise at Key Stage 2 and very good planning at both key stages. Teaching methods are particularly effective at Key Stage 2 and management of pupils is particularly good for the under-fives. The deployment of support staff and resources, and the use of ongoing assessment are both particularly strong in the early years. The school meets the needs of higher and lower-attaining pupils well. Pupils generally work at a brisk pace and make good progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding in most subjects. Teachers' reading records, however, often do not record pupils' attainment or what skills they need to improve.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Sound. All statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are met. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for promoting pupils' personal development is good. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is good. Moral development is very good, with clear teaching of right and wrong in assemblies and in personal and social education lessons.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development are good. The school is a very caring community. The school's links with parents are very effective, and the quality of information provided for parents is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The very good leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff ensure strong direction and clear purpose in the work of the school. The school's aims and values are clearly reflected in all its work.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body is very effective in carrying out all its statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Educational priorities are supported very well through the school's financial planning. Specific grants are used effectively and all major spending decisions take into account the principles of best value. Overall, the accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. Staffing meets the needs of the curriculum and support staff work very effectively alongside teachers.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy going to school. • The school enables children to make good progress in their work. • The school achieves high standards of good behaviour. • Children receive the right amount of work to do at home. • The teaching is good. • The school keeps parents well informed about their children's progress. • Parents are comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. • The school expects children to work hard and to achieve their best. • The school works closely with parents. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps children to become mature and responsible. • The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no areas where a significant number of parents would like to see improvements.

The inspection findings support the parents' very positive views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Most children under the age of five join the nursery before entering the reception class. When they join the nursery, most have levels of attainment well below those expected for children of their age in personal and social development, in language and literacy and in mathematics. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world are below the level expected, while creative and physical development are in line with their age. As a result of good teaching, they make good progress overall towards the desirable learning outcomes for five-year-olds. Progress is very good in personal and social development, is good in language and literacy and mathematics, and is sound in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. By the age of five, the attainment of pupils is in line with national expectations in personal and social development, physical development and creative development, but is still below expectations in knowledge and understanding of the world, in language and literacy and in mathematics.
2. By the end of Key Stage 1, the overall attainment of pupils is below national expectations in English, mathematics, science and information technology, while attainment is close to the expected level in all other subjects.
3. In English, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in reading was close to the national average in the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 1999, but the number achieving higher levels was well below the national average. Overall, standards in reading were well below the national average. The overall standard in 1999 was higher than that in 1998. In writing, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in 1999 was below the national average, while no pupils achieved higher levels. Overall, standards in writing were below the national average. In the 1999 tests, standards were higher than in 1998. Inspection findings indicate that standards in English are below the national average at Key Stage 1. In speaking and listening, and in reading, standards are below the national average, while standards in writing are well below the national average. These findings broadly reflect the 1999 test results.
4. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in the 1999 tests at Key Stage 1 was well below the national average, and below the average number achieved higher levels. Overall, standards were below the national average. In the 1999 tests, standards were higher than in 1998. Inspection findings also indicate that attainment in mathematics is below the national average. In science, the percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected level in teachers' assessments in 1999 was close to the national average, but well below the average attained higher levels. Inspection findings indicate that attainment in science is below the national average at Key Stage 1. This reflects the results of the 1999 tests.
5. The level of attainment pupils achieved at Key Stage 1 in the national tests in 1999 compared quite reasonably with those in similar schools. In reading and writing, the school's results were similar to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In mathematics, pupils were below average in comparison with pupils from similar backgrounds. In science, the number of pupils achieving the nationally expected level was well above the average for similar schools, but the number of pupils achieving higher levels was below the average for similar schools.
6. In English, pupils make sound progress in reading at Key Stage 1. Average and higher-attaining pupils learn to read accurately with some expression, and use a range of strategies to work out new words. They read a range of fiction and non-fiction books and make choices about what they like to read. Pupils make slow progress in writing at Key Stage 1. They learn to form their letters at a slower rate than usual, and this hampers the development of their writing skills. The majority of pupils find it difficult to compose sentences correctly or to put them into a longer sequence. Most use capital letters and full stops inconsistently. Simple

words are usually spelt correctly. Pupils make sound progress in the development of their speaking and listening skills. They listen attentively to their teacher, but many are still hesitant to answer questions.

7. Pupils' progress in mathematics is good at Key Stage 1. There is a good focus on developing basic numeracy skills, and mental mathematics skills have improved since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Most pupils add pairs of numbers to 20 and count in 2s, 5s and 10s. In science, pupils make sound progress overall. They classify common types of materials, and recognise which are translucent, transparent or opaque. They know the characteristics of living things, label parts of the human body and know the functions of the major organs.
8. At Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in information technology is below national expectations and they make slow progress. Pupils use the mouse and keyboard controls to write sentences and to produce colourful pictures. There is little use of information technology in other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the standard expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils learn about Christian traditions by hearing stories from the New Testament, and compare the main Christian beliefs with those of Islam and Hinduism. Pupils make sound progress in art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. No lessons were observed in music.
9. Overall, the attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is below national expectations. Standards are below the national average in English, mathematics and information technology, while attainment is close to national expectations in science and all the other subjects.
10. In English, the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level in the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 1999 was very low in comparison with the national average, and the percentage of pupils attaining higher levels was well below average. Overall, the standard of attainment was well below the national average. In the 1999 tests, the school's results were worse than its 1998 results, although results had improved slightly over the previous two years. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level was well below the national average, and no pupils attained higher levels. Overall, the standard was well below the national average. In the 1999 tests, the school's results were better than its 1998 results. In science, the percentage attaining the nationally expected level was well below the national average, while the percentage achieving higher levels was also well below the national average. Overall, the standard was well below the national average. The school's 1999 results were better than its 1998 results.
11. The level of pupils' attainment in the English and science tests at Key Stage 2 in 1999 was well below the average in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In mathematics, pupils' attainment was close to the national average for similar schools.
12. Inspection findings indicate that standards of attainment in English are below the national average. This is better than the 1999 Key Stage 2 test results as most pupils in the current Year 6 have been at the school for longer than last year's group, and have spent longer benefiting from good teaching of the National Literacy Strategy. Attainment in speaking and listening is below the national average, while standards in reading and writing are also below the national average. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in English at Key Stage 2, although they failed to achieve the challenging target set for the National Curriculum Key Stage 2 tests in 1999. They make sound progress in listening and speaking. Many pupils, however, are still hesitant in answering questions at length and cannot always explain their work clearly. Pupils make sound progress in reading, but the majority of pupils in Year 6 struggle with reading fluently and find it difficult to predict and deduce from what they have read. Progress in writing is sound. Work is presented neatly in joined fluent handwriting. Pupils write in a variety of styles and for different purposes including diaries, interviews, book reviews and short stories.

13. In mathematics, inspection findings indicate that attainment is below the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils are currently making good progress, however, due to improvements in the standard of teaching since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. They far exceeded the appropriately challenging target set for the National Curriculum Key Stage 2 tests in 1999. Pupils are more confident with written methods of calculation, but there is a positive effort to develop and use mental methods of calculation. Pupils recognise numbers up to 100 that are squares and can find pairs of numbers totalling 100. Most pupils multiply two-digit numbers, while higher-attaining pupils multiply and divide three-digit numbers.
14. In science, inspection findings indicate that attainment is close to the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. This is an improvement on the 1999 test results as teaching is now very good in the current Years 5 and 6. Pupils determine what is a fair test and identify what they want to observe. They make informed predictions, test their hypotheses in a wide range of contexts, and draw sound conclusions. Pupils undertake their own investigations to explore air pressure and how sound travels.
15. Pupils' attainment in information technology is below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils have sound word-processing skills, and use 'cut and paste' techniques for simple desktop publishing. While pupils in Year 3 use a data-handling programme to draw graphs of temperature and rainfall, pupils in Year 6 have not yet learnt these skills. Similarly, while pupils in Year 4 use a graphics programme competently to produce illustrations for their topic on Egypt, pupils in Year 6 have difficulty in programming a screen turtle.
16. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the standard expected in the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils understand the significance of some of the main festivals and traditions of Christianity, Judaism, and Hinduism. They compare the holy books of Hinduism and Christianity, for example, and study the significance of pilgrimage in both religions. Pupils make sound progress in art, design and technology, history, music and physical education, and very good progress in geography.
17. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress, at both key stages, towards the targets in their individual education plans, particularly when they are withdrawn for specific work on literacy and reading through the Additional Literacy Support and Reading Recovery programmes. In these sessions, pupils make good progress. In lessons where there is no support available, in numeracy and other subjects of the curriculum, pupils make progress that is appropriate to their age and ability. There is no significant variation in attainment by gender, race or background. Differences in attainment between girls and boys generally follow national trends.
18. Pupils' literacy skills are below national expectations at both key stages. Literacy skills are generally improving with the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, though the 1999 national test results were disappointing as pupils performed poorly in writing a piece of non-fiction. The literacy hour has been introduced effectively in all classes. The school has taken care to plan additional opportunities for extended writing. Pupils apply new knowledge and skills gained in the literacy hour to improve their writing, for example, in science, history and geography.
19. Standards in numeracy are below the national average at both key stages, although pupils' understanding and use of number is now developing well at both key stages. The National Numeracy Strategy is being introduced effectively in all classes. Pupils are beginning to carry out mental calculations with increasing accuracy and are beginning to show greater confidence in manipulating numbers and using multiplication tables. There is only limited use of numeracy skills, however, in other subjects such as science and geography.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

20. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good. They are a strength of the school and have improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be good.
21. From the earliest years, pupils are keen to come to school, and in the nursery and reception classes children develop good attitudes to their work and play. Children under five develop their personal and social skills quickly. They interact with a range of adults and work and play happily together. In the nursery, children quickly grow in confidence as they begin to take responsibility for regular tasks such as registering themselves at the beginning of the session and tidying away their activities towards the end of lessons. They wash their hands and go to the toilet independently. They learn to take turns when speaking in discussions, and listen attentively during stories and when teachers recall what they have been learning.
22. Pupils at both key stages have very good attitudes to the school and to their work. They become very involved in a range of activities across the curriculum. For instance, in physical education lessons such as dance, games and swimming, the majority of pupils are keen to take part and to succeed. Pupils with special educational needs generally have good attitudes to learning and they work with concentration in small groups and with individual support. Playtimes are calm and enjoyable sessions, and pupils are fully involved in the games and activities provided for them. Older and younger pupils play well in the same part of the playground, and older pupils often help younger ones. There are no obvious signs of bullying or isolation of individual pupils. There have been a few short-term exclusions as a result of the fair and clear implementation of the well-established school behaviour policy.
23. In lessons, pupils become enthused by the interesting activities teachers provide for them. In a Key Stage 1 lesson, for instance, a poem on "School" by Michael Rosen, followed by a short, amusing film clip of his own views on poetry, was greatly enjoyed and increased pupils' enthusiasm for poetry. Key Stage 2 pupils give their time enthusiastically to support the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them such as the Library, Internet and gymnastic clubs, the choir, swimming gala, high five netball competitions and mini football tournaments.
24. Pupils behave very well in lessons and in the dining hall. They are polite and courteous to teachers and to adults in the school who support them in lessons and during the lunch break. They are aware of teachers' and adults' high expectations of good behaviour and this is reflected in the way that the majority of pupils conduct themselves. They are fully aware of the school rules and have a clear understanding of the procedures and sanctions in place in the school. They enter the school in a quiet and orderly manner, and move from one room to another with a minimum of fuss and disturbance. Pupils settle to their individual group tasks within their lessons very well. They work together in pairs and in larger groups well, co-operating and sharing equipment. During information technology lessons at Key Stage 2, for instance, pupils who are more proficient and experienced assisted and instructed others patiently on how to use a keyboard. Pupils learn to respect other peoples' differences. They work on projects alongside disabled people and are understanding of partially-sighted pupils. The school awards a courtesy cup each year to a deserving pupil in Year 6. Pupils are invited to complete questionnaires twice a year to indicate their attitudes towards teacher effectiveness. They negotiate targets for improving their work with their teachers. They are aware of the difficulties faced by children less fortunate than themselves in other countries, and have initiated collections to be sent to a variety of causes such as the Bethlehem Penny Appeal. Pupils show a willingness to take responsibility in the day to day running of the school. All pupils take responsibility for their own work and pupils at both key stages change and choose their reading books independently in the library. Each half term, older and younger pupils share paired reading opportunities with each other. They are given formal responsibilities for tidying away tools and materials. Older pupils act as monitors for playground equipment and for helping younger pupils in the dining hall and at playtimes during inclement weather. The school house system gives responsibility to a group of older pupils as house captains, and the positions of head boy and head girl provide good opportunities for leadership. The school supports local and national charities such as the Mozambique disaster fund. Pupils make frequent visits in the nearby community to enhance their learning and

observation skills, for instance, during art lessons. They make educational visits to museums as part of the history curriculum, and the oldest pupils experience a four-day residential visit each year. These out of school visits make a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.

25. Pupils' attendance has improved significantly since the last inspection, and is now satisfactory. It is just below the national average, and the school has worked very hard to improve attendance to this level. Illness and family holidays cause most absences, and there is very little absence for unacceptable reasons.
26. Punctuality is good. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and arrive promptly each day so that lessons begin on time. This satisfactory standard of attendance and punctuality has a positive effect on pupils' learning and attainment.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

27. The standard of teaching is good for the under-fives and at Key Stages 1 and 2. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 97 per cent of all lessons observed. In 43 per cent the teaching was good, and in a further 22 per cent it was very good. Teaching was excellent in seven per cent of the lessons seen. The standard of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Twenty nine per cent of teaching was very good or better compared with 12.5 per cent at the last inspection.
28. Teaching is good overall in the six areas leading to the desirable learning outcomes for children under the age of five. Nearly half of all the teaching is very good, and occasionally it is excellent. It is good in language and literacy, mathematics, physical development and in knowledge and understanding of the world, and sound in creative development. The teaching of personal and social development is very good and is incorporated into activities planned for all areas of learning. Children's positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour are directly attributable to the quality of teaching and support they receive. Teachers provide a good variety of interesting experiences and have high expectations that children will select appropriate activities and behave sensibly. Well-qualified nursery nurses provide good support for the work of teachers, and their work has a positive impact on children's learning. Good care is taken to ensure that children with special educational needs feel confident and happy.
29. Teaching is good at Key Stages 1 and 2. In English, religious education and physical education, teaching is good at both key stages. In science and geography, teaching is sound at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. In mathematics, teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. In information technology, teaching is sound at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Teaching of art is sound at both key stages. In design and technology, history and music, insufficient lessons were observed to make a judgement at either key stage. Teaching that is good or better (nearly three-quarters of all lessons observed) is a major factor in ensuring that pupils make good progress at both key stages.
30. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding are good for the under-fives and at Key Stage 1; they are very good at Key Stage 2. Both the class teachers and the support staff in the nursery and reception have a good understanding of how young children learn. The teaching of personal and social skills, for example, is very good, with a consistent approach that enables children to understand what is expected of them in school. In English, at both key stages, all teachers have at least sound subject knowledge and some have very good expertise. Good use is made of the high quality specialist expertise of the co-ordinators in mathematics and science. These specialists teach other classes as well as their own, and provide demonstration lessons and curriculum guidance for teachers from other schools. Very good use is also made of the music co-ordinator's expertise to accompany singing in assemblies and to lead hymn practices at both key stages. Other teachers' musical expertise is generally sound, although individual teachers' skills vary greatly. In information technology, teachers' expertise is very good at Key Stage 2 and sufficient at Key Stage 1. In physical education, sports coaching skills are particularly strong at Key Stage 2, and the specialist swimming instruction is also very

good. In art, some teachers are not as confident as others and pupils' progress is inconsistent as a result.

31. Teaching of appropriate skills in literacy and numeracy is good at Key Stage 1, and is very good for the under-fives and at Key Stage 2. Teaching of language and literacy to the under-fives has many strengths. The structure of the literacy hour is used particularly effectively to develop literacy skills in the reception class, and language and literacy skills are nurtured effectively by detailed questioning and extension of vocabulary in the nursery. There is insufficient direct teaching of letter formation, however, and children are confused by the variety of scripts they meet. At both key stages, teachers plan their English lessons well and follow the structure of the National Literacy Strategy confidently. Opportunities for developing and consolidating writing skills are followed up in subjects such as geography and history, and when describing science investigations. Teaching of numeracy in the nursery includes plenty of activities for children to practise and consolidate their learning, but there are insufficient tasks to encourage children to practise mathematical skills in the reception class. At both key stages, teachers use mental mathematics sessions well to build up pupils' recall and to develop analytical thinking and mathematical vocabulary. Good use is made of the final plenary sessions to consolidate learning and to prepare for the next step. Occasionally, teachers over-estimate how much pupils can learn in a single lesson, and move on before sufficient consolidation of new learning has taken place. Numeracy skills are reinforced appropriately in other subjects, for example, when using time-lines to sequence events in history.
32. Teachers' planning for the under-fives is good. Teachers plan imaginative tasks and offer a wide range of learning experiences to develop, for example, children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Both long-term and medium-term planning are good at both key stages. In English and mathematics, for instance, teachers prepare lessons thoroughly and benefit from following the guidelines in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In science, lessons are carefully planned using local authority guidelines which were written by the co-ordinator herself. In information technology, lessons are planned effectively, but there are not always sufficient planned opportunities for pupils to develop, consolidate and practice their new skills.
33. Teachers' expectations of children under five are high. In personal and social education, for example, all staff act as excellent role models and children learn well from the examples before them. Expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are sound at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Work set during the literacy hour, for instance, is usually matched very well to pupils' individual ability and prior learning. In mathematics, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught in sets based on pupils' mathematical ability. This helps teachers to work to appropriate expectations for both higher and lower-attainers, and to match activities to pupils' needs. High expectations in science at Key Stage 2 lead to pupils testing their own hypotheses effectively, for example, when analysing the effect of air resistance on different designs of helicopters. Occasionally in science at Key Stage 1, work set is not sufficiently challenging for the oldest and most able pupils. In geography at Key Stage 1, teachers occasionally gave insufficient direction and control to maintain pupils' motivation and concentration. In one religious education lesson, the expectations of the supply teacher were too low to motivate the pupils and this led to pupils making unsatisfactory progress.
34. Teaching methods and organisational strategies used by teachers are good for the under-fives and at Key Stage 1 and are very good at Key Stage 2. In the nursery, for example, there is a very effective mix of teacher-directed and child chosen activities. In many lessons at both key stages, teachers refer back to the previous lesson to reinforce pupils' learning before moving on. They usually go over the learning objectives at the start of the lesson and review what pupils have learnt at the end. This helps pupils to understand what they should know by the end of the lesson. In science lessons, plenary sessions are used effectively to enable pupils to explain what they have learnt, to look for patterns and to extend their learning. Teachers give helpful instructions to pupils. In information technology, for example, pupils are given clear oral and written instructions which enable them to move forward and learn independently. Teachers make good use of probing questions, for example in science, while in mathematics, teachers ask challenging questions which encourage pupils to think mathematically. In English, teachers

use questioning skills well, and encourage pupils to improve their speaking skills by engaging in class discussion. There are few planned opportunities for developing pupils' speaking and listening skills, however, by using role-play and drama. Teachers use a wide range of methods and groupings during mathematics lessons, for example, working with the whole class, smaller groups, pairs or individuals according to the needs of the topic or activity. In science, there is a good emphasis on developing investigative skills, while in geography there is a good emphasis on practical activities, for example making wind speed recorders. In physical education, there is a good emphasis on intensive warm-up exercises at the beginning of lessons at Key Stage 2, but at Key Stage 1 not all lessons include sufficiently brisk warm-ups and reminders of the need for safety.

35. Good relationships between teachers and pupils help to produce a pleasant, hard-working and creative atmosphere. The management of pupils is generally sound at Key Stage 1, is good at Key Stage 2 and is excellent with the under-fives. Children are very well managed in the nursery and reception classes. The result is a happy and supportive learning environment where children feel secure and confident. In English lessons, teachers make good use of target-setting, encouragement and the reward system to promote effective learning. In mathematics, enthusiastic teaching leads to an enthusiastic response and an eagerness to participate in learning. This very good class management is reflected in the very good behaviour of pupils and their positive attitudes. Very occasionally, some teachers allow pupils to talk out of turn, and this leads to unproductive noise and pupils straying off the task. Teachers group pupils effectively. In information technology, for example, pupils were grouped to help them to learn from each other and to gain confidence. In a religious education lesson, the teacher re-arranged the seating so that pupils would be able to support each other more effectively.
36. The use of support staff, time and resources is good at both key stages and very good with the under-fives. In the nursery and reception classes, teachers and support staff work very effectively as a team. At both key stages, teachers and support staff assisting pupils with special needs and those from minority ethnic communities work closely together to ensure pupils make good progress. Teachers make good use of teaching resources. In English, good use is made of whole-class texts which appeal to pupils and capture their imagination. In science, good use is made of appropriate resources such as a skeleton, fruits cut in half, a poster showing the working of the human ear and a "big book" with illustrations of different seeds. In geography, good use is made of aerial photographs of the local area before drawing a map of the route to school. In music, appropriate use is made of a good range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Information technology is used effectively to construct maps of towns and to plot graphs of temperature and rainfall in geography, but there is little use of computers to aid learning in most other subjects.
37. The quality of ongoing assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding is sound at Key Stage 1, is good at Key Stage 2 and is very good for the under-fives. Pupils are assessed on entry to the nursery, and regular assessment of children's activities is used constantly to identify areas where learning is still below expectations. At both key stages, teachers make regular assessments of pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics, and use the results to guide their planning and teaching. Assessment and recording of pupils' letter recognition and reading skills, however, is underdeveloped, and teachers' reading records often do not record pupils' attainment or what skills they need to improve. In art, some teachers give pupils opportunities to assess their own artwork and the work of others; in other lessons, insufficient emphasis is placed on pupils reviewing and modifying their work.
38. The use of homework to reinforce and extend what is learned in school is good for the under-fives and at both key stages. From the earliest years, pupils take reading books home to share with their parents and carers. This has a positive effect on their learning. As pupils get older, they are set an appropriate amount of work to do at home in English and mathematics, and occasionally in science and other subjects. Some pupils stay behind to complete their work at the homework club, while others benefit from the interest shown in their work by parents and carers. Marking of pupils' work is carried out regularly by teachers and comments are often added to help raise pupils' self-esteem. Most teachers include helpful comments which indicate how pupils might improve their work.

39. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Work within withdrawal groups is effectively matched to individuals' education plans and is carefully monitored by the co-ordinator. The work provided within class is well matched to pupils' needs, and meets the requirements of their individual education plans well. Teachers and support staff work together well so that pupils with special needs can learn and progress at the same rate as others. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils with special needs and this is very effective in raising their self-esteem.

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

40. The school provides a sufficiently broad and balanced curriculum to promote pupils' intellectual, physical and moral development effectively. Health, drugs awareness and sex education are integrated successfully with the school programme for personal and social education and with science. Religious education is based securely on the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus. The school has introduced and implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies successfully. This is already making a positive impact on pupils' progress. Through its policies and planning, the school ensures that pupils have equal opportunities to learn and to make progress.
41. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural education is good and it is very good for moral education. This remains a strength of the school, as at the last inspection. Collective worship takes place in a calm and peaceful atmosphere. Pupils are very receptive and teachers hold them in rapt attention during assemblies. Teachers make time to discuss spiritual and moral matters, to sing tuneful worship songs such as *'He's got the whole world in his hands'* and for quiet prayer. Pupils say the school prayer thoughtfully. Teachers develop pupils' spiritual understanding when they teach new hymns, such as *'Spirit of Peace'*. Worship is of a broadly Christian nature, but teachers also provide opportunities that help pupils explore the values and beliefs of other religions such as Hinduism. In religious education, teachers help pupils develop their spiritual awareness. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils learned of the meaning of *The Lord's Prayer*. By the time they are eleven, pupils learn of Christian forgiveness through the parables Jesus told. There are few systematically planned opportunities, however, to develop spiritual awareness in lessons such as music, art and English.
42. Teachers promote a very strong moral code and act as very good role models. They provide clear guidelines for acceptable behaviour and for caring attitudes, and they display the rules of the school prominently in classrooms. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong from the earliest age, and teachers expect them to behave very well and to respect the rights of others. Teachers foster values such as honesty and fairness. In an assembly, for example, pupils were given a telling demonstration of the need to rectify the unfairness of life for so many people. As pupils progress through the school, they have many opportunities to consider wider moral and ethical issues. By Year 6, their growing maturity enables them to discuss moral issues sensibly in sex education lessons.
43. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, to show initiative and to develop an understanding of community living. Teachers use assemblies to celebrate and encourage good work, achievements in and out of school and pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Pupils gain confidence on occasions when they are encouraged to tell others of their successes. They accept the rules of the school. Some teachers develop pupils' social skills on a regular week by week basis with the display and application of *'The Rule of the Week'* such as *We put our hands up*. Pupils have good relationships with their teachers and with one another. Teachers encourage pupils to work co-operatively. In one lesson, the teacher made a point of asking higher-attainers to help lower-attaining pupils with research from books. Pupils throughout the school are given monitorial duties. Rotas are displayed on classroom walls. The school house system is organised so that pupils have an increased sense of responsibility for their own actions and for others. As the school's oldest pupils, those in Year

6 have their responsibilities developed further. They are given whole-school duties, such as helping younger pupils at playtimes. Consideration for others is promoted through a considerable amount of charitable work. Pupils are made aware of the needs of others, such as those made homeless by the recent floods in Mozambique, by information displayed on the geography display board.

44. Teachers provide many good opportunities to promote pupils' cultural development. In subjects such as art, history, geography, English, music and religious education, teachers plan work about different cultures and civilisations from the past and present. Pupils learn about the styles of European artists. They learn to play on Latin American musical instruments. Younger pupils compare their own environment with a village in India. The school library promotes authors such as Anne Fine. Pupils are taught playground games that their older relations would have played as children. They learn Christian traditions, and learn of the cultural and ethnic diversity of British society when they study other faiths. The school takes pupils to the theatre and invites theatre groups into school. With community involvement, the school recently made a beautifully hand-crafted Millennium Quilt. A forthcoming visit to the Millennium Dome aims to develop pupils' awareness of British culture and society at the beginning of the new millennium.
45. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good, as it was at the last inspection. The curriculum is enhanced throughout the year by a wide variety of after-school activities such as football, netball, gymnastics, literacy and numeracy booster classes, and homework and library clubs. Teachers give freely of their time to enrich pupils' experiences and to support their learning outside of the school day. There are frequent visits to places of scientific, geographic, religious and cultural interest, and these extend pupils' knowledge of the world outside school in a positive way. An annual residential visit for pupils in Year 6 gives them access to outdoor activities that develop their confidence and initiative, and widen their social experience.
46. There is sound provision for pupils' personal and social education. Appropriate consideration is given to the teaching of sex education and the school has a strong commitment to the personal and social development of its pupils. The school promotes a healthy and safe lifestyle through topics such as healthy eating, anti-smoking, and road safety. Teaching about awareness of drug misuse is to be reviewed in the autumn in conjunction with the local police.
47. Links with the community at large are good, and have been maintained at the high level found in the last inspection. The school has good links with local businesses, an Industry Day is held each year, and curriculum areas are linked to this theme. Pupils role-played the staff of a mail sorting office, for example, after two members of the teaching staff had been seconded to the Royal Mail. Pupils have also visited a local hotel and have seen the work that goes on there.
48. There is effective liaison with local colleges and high schools, and the school is popular with students from a variety of establishments when seeking work experience. Two initial teacher-training institutions work with the school to help train teachers, and this contributes to the range of classroom support available to teachers. A mothers' and toddlers' group is held at the school each week, and staff make pre-nursery school home visits. The school is able to access the Internet, and is beginning to develop information technology to enable international links, for example with a school in Lysekil, Sweden. Pupils also write to Swedish penfriends.
49. There are many worthwhile visits in the local community, and pupils have taken part in a tree-planting project and have visited the Manchester Museum. The school is currently trying to forge closer links with the local police, with a view to more frequent visits from officers.

50. Pupils with special educational needs who are withdrawn from classes for educational support currently miss the same activity each week. This does not give these pupils equal access to the whole curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

51. Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare at the school are good, continuing the professional provision found at the last inspection. There is appropriate training for the designated teacher in child protection matters, and all staff have good knowledge, thorough training and follow well-written care policies specific to the school. Other aspects of school safety are attended to properly and regular risk assessments are carried out by governors and staff. Fire safety equipment is currently being up-dated, in line with recommendations made by the recent local education authority audit, and first aid and medical arrangements are satisfactory.
52. The level of pastoral care at the school is high, and staff are sensitive to the many needs of pupils and know them well. The school places great importance on providing a safe and caring environment for its pupils. This sensitive and caring ambience is instantly apparent to visitors to the school and is totally in keeping with its ethos and aims.
53. Since the last inspection, assessment procedures have been reviewed and an effective range of initiatives has been introduced to raise standards. These initiatives include an assessment on entry to the school, the regular use of national tests in English, mathematics, and science, half-termly reviews of pupils' standards in English, mathematics, and science together with target-setting which is shared with parents and reviewed later in the term. Pupil surveys are also conducted so they can contribute to the assessment of their own learning. Strong emphasis on the analysis of data, target-setting and the tracking of achievement for every pupil plays an important part in the school's efforts to raise levels of attainment in national tests. The school holds booster classes and a homework club after school, which are well attended and are further helping to raise standards. Not all teachers, however, make regular on-going assessment an integral part of all their teaching, and reading records, for example, do not assess pupils' reading skills in most classes. Senior staff carry out a comprehensive analysis of performance data, and assess the attainment of pupils by gender, age, ethnicity and background. There is little evidence of record keeping or formal assessment in the non-core subjects. Day-to-day assessment has not yet become as valuable a tool as more formal assessment in the school's procedures for raising standards.
54. Educational and personal support and guidance at the school are good, and have been maintained at this level since the last inspection. The school places considerable emphasis on pupils' achievements, and there is a weekly praise assembly to celebrate good work, hard effort and regular attendance. Pupils value their awards and the way their efforts are recognised and celebrated by the school. The Year 6 class, for instance, were surprised and gaped with delight when they won the week's award for good attendance.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

55. Parents' and carers' views of the school are very good. This very positive partnership was also evident at the last inspection, and has been continued and developed since then. The high degree of parental satisfaction with the school, which was indicated before the inspection, was confirmed during the inspection at discussions with members of the inspection team.
56. A designated teacher has specific responsibility for co-ordinating links with parents, and the school has provided *Parents as Educators* courses for many of its parents under the auspices of Southport College. Adult literacy courses are also run through the college. Parents are welcomed into the school, and are encouraged to help in classrooms and on visits, which many do, particularly in the nursery. The parent-teacher association has recently been restarted, and contributes to fund raising and social events.

57. Parents are very well informed and the information is of very good quality. A newsletter is sent out each week and half-termly targets are shared with parents. Pupils' annual reports are clear and inform parents about attainment and progress and any weak areas of learning, behaviour and attendance. There are three open evenings for parents each year, and additional opportunities for informal discussion are encouraged by teachers. Schemes of work and school policies are on display for parents' use outside the school office.
58. Pre-school home visits are made by the nursery staff, and there is a mothers' and toddlers' group run by the school. This helps to ease the transition from home to school, and is greatly appreciated by parents. The school also runs a care club after school each day, which is used by working parents as a safe place for their children until they are collected. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved with their children's individual education plans and in the review process.
59. Overall, parents' contributions to children's learning at home and at school are sound. Parents make good use of pupils' reading diaries to share information on progress, and some parents are in the process of making 'Story Sacks' which include toys and games, to help make reading an enjoyable activity. A notable feature of the school is the good use made of the school library, and the large number of books on loan and taken home.
60. The school's work with parents is carefully planned. It is linked to the school development plan, and is reviewed regularly. The effective links with parents are a strength of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

61. The headteacher and senior staff, as at the last inspection, form a very good management team. They share clear aims, and their plans for future developments are well documented. The school is moving forward with a strong sense of direction and clear purpose. The headteacher is highly competent and effective, and provides excellent leadership. Her enthusiastic and open management style and the value she places on the contributions of others encourages staff and pupils to give of their best. She works closely with the deputy headteacher and senior management team. During her four years as headteacher, she has established very good relationships with staff and parents, and has gained the respect of her pupils. She has nurtured good relationships with the community, and has fostered many opportunities for pupils' personal development. She is strongly committed to raising standards in the school and has established a very good ethos to support the effective learning and very good behaviour of pupils.
62. The headteacher monitors teaching and pupils' work very effectively. She has monitored the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and has observed lessons in all classes. She regularly scrutinises teachers' planning and pupils' work, and meets with the senior management team to analyse National Curriculum assessments at the end of each key stage. She has taken action to address weaker areas such as extending the range of writing strategies used by pupils.
63. The aims and values of the school are clearly reflected throughout its work. The school provides a warm, supportive and stimulating environment in which children feel happy and secure, and are eager to learn. The school has high expectations of all children's learning and behaviour, and introduces children to a wide range of experiences and challenges which motivate and enrich their learning.
64. Responsibility for subject areas is delegated effectively to subject co-ordinators who manage spending on resources and monitor teachers' planning and subject displays. There is a rolling programme to enable all co-ordinators to carry out classroom observations. All staff have job descriptions which specify their roles clearly. The management of special educational needs is good, and there is effective caring provision, well supported by the named governor. There is a new co-ordinator and she has effectively developed procedures for early identification of special needs. She is directly responsible for compiling each pupil's individual education plan and is fully involved in reviews and assessing pupils' progress. Record keeping is thorough and

parents are closely involved at all stages. There is very good liaison with outside agencies ensuring very high quality support for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and for pupils from minority ethnic communities. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when management of provision for pupils with special educational needs was deemed to be satisfactory.

65. The governors provide good support for the headteacher, and are fully involved in the management of the school. They are very effective in fulfilling all statutory requirements. They hold regular formal meetings, and there is an appropriate structure of committees that discuss issues fully and report directly to the governing body. Governors are kept well informed by presentations from the headteacher and subject co-ordinators, and receive termly reports on progress made towards targets in the school development plan. All governors have subject responsibilities and visit the school every six months to discuss with co-ordinators and to observe teachers and pupils at work. Several governors visit the school frequently and assist regularly in the classroom, hear pupils read, or help with extra-curricular activities. Several governors have attended accredited training courses, and the headteacher arranges regular in-service training sessions for governors in school. Governors play an important role in discussing management issues, and have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They evaluate the progress of the school and the outcome of their decisions much more effectively than at the last inspection. The governing body has a clear view of the long-term development of the school, and their vision is well documented in the school development plan.
66. The headteacher is a local authority consultant on appraisal and performance management, and the school's strategies in these areas are excellent. Targets for pupil performance are negotiated annually with staff, and these are included in teachers' job descriptions. Teacher effectiveness is subsequently monitored through pupil questionnaires, classroom observation and analysis of performance data, and this contributes to the high quality of teaching.
67. Priorities identified in the school development plan are very appropriate. The governors, headteacher and senior management team have successfully identified areas of the curriculum and other provision where improvement will have the most impact on the standards pupils achieve and the quality of education provided. The school has a very clear commitment to improve standards and to provide equal opportunities for all pupils regardless of race, gender, religion or other personal circumstances. This commitment is shared very strongly by the senior management team and by all staff and governors. Each term, all the staff and several governors meet together to evaluate progress towards the targets in the school development plan. Realistic targets have been set to improve standards in English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2 in 2000. To meet these targets, the school has focussed on raising expectations for higher-attaining pupils, effective support for pupils with special needs, help for slower readers, additional literacy support and booster classes for pupils in Year 6.
68. The school has implemented the staff induction procedures which were being developed at the time of the last inspection and now makes sound provision for the induction of new staff. All newly qualified teachers have a mentor to provide help, advice and support on a daily basis, as well as access to local authority training. The school also makes good provision for initial teacher training students.
69. The school is very effective in supporting educational priorities through its financial planning. The school development plan identifies clear targets that are linked to specific success criteria. Where possible, the cost implications of each initiative are identified. The clarity of the planning enables the school to implement specific programmes such as the Reading Recovery programme and the Additional Literacy Strategy effectively. Budgeting for the school library has increased substantially since the previous inspection. The school uses the latest technology very effectively for school administration and for teaching and learning. The school has an Internet connection in the school library, which is used to assist pupils' research.
70. The school makes very good use of funding which is allocated to specific projects. The planned information technology suite, for example, will be partly funded by grants allocated for

the National Grid for Learning. The school plans to supplement local authority funding to extend the Key Stage 2 classrooms later this year. Spending on these two projects will reduce the high carry over from 1998/99 to an amount close to the five per cent recommended by the Department for Education and Employment. The principles of best value are applied to all major spending decisions to ensure that the school receives good value for money.

71. Teachers have an appropriate range of expertise and experience and between them provide satisfactory coverage of the National Curriculum. The skills and expertise of subject specialists are used very effectively to raise standards at Key Stage 2. Pupils also benefit by receiving extra support from teachers who do not have a class of their own, who assist their colleagues in the classrooms and withdraw pupils with special educational needs for extra support.
72. There is a high number of support staff, who have a wide range of experience and expertise. They work very effectively alongside teachers and provide good support, for example in the numeracy hour. The support offered to pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties is of a particularly high quality and is effectively raising pupils' attainment. The level of expertise offered by support staff ensures that pupils with statements of special educational needs make good progress towards the specific targets in their individual education plans. Support for pupils from minority ethnic communities, to raise their achievement and self-image, is very effective.
73. The school building is well maintained and provides an attractive learning environment. It is in good decorative order, and colourful and informative displays brighten the corridors and classrooms. The accommodation is adequate for the delivery of the curriculum and every available space is used productively. There is, however, inadequate outdoor play space for children under five, and a lack of resources for outdoor play holds back the physical development of these children. The caretaker, office staff and lunchtime supervisors, make a good contribution to the efficiency and ethos of the school.
74. The range and quality of learning resources are satisfactory overall, and are adequate to teach the planned curriculum. They are easily accessible to teachers and pupils, and are used effectively. Resources are very good for science, and are also good for music, although some older instruments need replacing. The infant and junior libraries are organised effectively and are used well by pupils. The range and quality of library books has improved considerably since the last inspection. Resources for pupils with special educational needs have also improved, and are now satisfactory. Although resources for the under-fives are generally satisfactory, better facilities and equipment are needed for outside play. The school is aware of this need, and plans for improving the outdoor play area are currently in hand.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

75. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should
- (1) continue to raise standards in English and mathematics at both key stages and in science at Key Stage 1 by
 - (i) improving teachers' assessment and recording of pupils' reading skills in order to identify what pupils need to do to improve their reading. (see paragraphs 37, 97)
 - (ii) extending the range of planned opportunities for speaking and listening to include role-play and drama at both key stages. (see paragraphs 34, 104)
 - (iii) improving pupils' letter formation and writing skills for the under-fives and at Key Stage 1. (see paragraphs 6, 31, 83, 102)
 - (iv) checking that each step of learning in mathematics is fully understood by all pupils before moving on. (see paragraphs 31, 108)
 - (v) ensuring that work set in science for the oldest pupils at Key Stage 1 is always challenging enough. (see paragraphs 33, 114)
 - (2) continue to develop pupils' information technology skills at both key stages, and use them to assist learning in other subjects of the curriculum. (see paragraphs 8, 15, 36, 136-139)
 - (3) improve facilities for outdoor play for the under-fives in order to assist children's physical development. (see paragraphs 73, 74, 87)

In addition to the key issues above, the school should consider including the following minor issue in its action plan:

- (1) The school should improve procedures for withdrawing pupils with special educational needs from lessons for individual support so that pupils do not miss the same subject every week. (see paragraph 50)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

68

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

33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	22	43	25	3	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

	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	270
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	89

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	76

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	33
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	25

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	22	16	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	16	17
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	31	30	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (78)	79 (75)	82 (78)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	18	20
	Girls	14	14	15
	Total	32	32	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (82)	84 (85)	92 (85)
	National	82 (81)	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	17	11	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	11	10
	Girls	6	5	4
	Total	11	16	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	39 (50)	57 (27)	50 (31)
	National	70 (65)	69 (58)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	11	11
	Girls	6	6	5
	Total	11	17	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	39 (54)	61 (35)	57 (39)
	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	22
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	196
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	5	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	9	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR - Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.1
Average class size	23.9

Education support staff: YR - Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	106

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	437429
Total expenditure	422325
Expenditure per pupil	1683
Balance brought forward from previous year	30478
Balance carried forward to next year	45582

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 19.5%

Number of questionnaires sent out	220
Number of questionnaires returned	43

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	21	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	28	0	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	37	2	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	56	33	7	0	5
The teaching is good.	74	23	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	28	5	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	28	0	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	16	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	63	33	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	74	21	0	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	28	0	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	33	2	2	7

Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by a significant number of parents.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

76. Children under five are taught in the nursery and in the reception class. They are admitted to the nursery on a part-time basis soon after their third birthday and join the reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they become five. At the time of the inspection, all 45 children in the nursery and 21 of the children in the reception class were under the age of five. The school has maintained and built upon the good provision that was observed at the last inspection.
77. The early years unit is a calm and stimulating learning environment where children feel happy, confident and secure in a caring and supportive atmosphere. The curriculum is planned well and provides a good balance of learning experiences which are well matched to the needs of children under five. The mix of teacher-directed and child-chosen activities is very effective in the nursery and tasks are very appropriate. The provision is designed specifically to meet the needs of three and four-year-olds and is of a high quality. Children choose sensible activities to practise and consolidate skills, and they have appropriate resources. The accommodation is spacious and well organised and provides an attractive learning environment. Teachers and support staff work very effectively as a team to promote high educational standards.

Personal and social development

78. The provision for personal and social development of children under five is a strength of the school. Children enter the nursery with social skills that are well below those of other children of their age. The early years staff place a great emphasis on this area of development and the children make very good progress, developing self-confidence as they learn to understand and comply with the routines of the school. Children begin to acquire independence through the strategies employed in the nursery and reception. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to make decisions for themselves. Children in the nursery choose activities for themselves, selecting the appropriate label for their chosen activity and placing it on the designated hook. They select their own materials in artwork, and they are encouraged to take turns and to share toys and equipment. Children take responsibility for their own aprons in creative activities and help one another with zips and fasteners when they put on their own coats for outdoor play sessions. At the end of a session they tidy up the toys, sweep up the sand, and put tools and books back in place with the minimum of fuss and prompting. Attainment in personal and social development is similar to that of many three and four-year-olds in other schools. At lunchtime children who bring sandwiches to school or have school meals sit quietly and responsibly, and behave very politely, asking for help when needed and showing independence whenever possible with help from pupils in Years 5 and 6.
79. Teaching of personal and social skills is very good, with a consistent approach that enables children to understand the behaviour that is expected in school. Teaching is clearly planned and developmental and is a strength of the provision. All staff act as excellent role models and children under five learn very well from the example before them.

Language and literacy

80. The majority of children have oral language skills that are poorly developed for their age when they enter the nursery. Many children display very immature speech patterns and several are unable to communicate effectively with adults. A few children have poor skills in both speaking and listening. The development of children's early language skills is given a high priority by the early years staff. Children's language skills are developed through role-play, stories, and rhymes, and play activities and creative work with an adult. In role-play children communicate freely, but they often do not speak correctly. Children listen to stories attentively and they enjoy songs and rhymes. A few children model and repeat the teacher's language

patterns as they internalise these unfamiliar structures.

81. Children in the reception class listen independently to tape-recorded stories, when they are able to familiarise themselves with new speech patterns in their own time. Children have access to a range of good quality books in the reading areas and they are encouraged to sit quietly to enjoy and “read” a story for themselves from a familiar book. Children handle books appropriately and with confidence, and by the time they are five years old are able to differentiate between pictures and text. Several children are able to recognise letters of the alphabet by sound and shape, and higher-attaining children can relate these sounds to words. A few children are beginning to read. Children take books home to share with their parents and there is a noticeable impact on attainment from this involvement of parents in their children's learning from an early age. Most children write their own name without support, for example on their artwork, but letter formation is poor and letters are often written the wrong way round. Emergent writing is not always incorporated into role-play effectively and few children use writing independently.
82. Teaching of language and literacy for children under five has many strengths, particularly in the literacy hour in reception and in the development of speaking and listening in the nursery. However, there are also some shortcomings. The development of writing is poor. There is not enough direct teaching of letter formation, and many children are confused by the different scripts which they meet at such an early age.

Mathematics

83. Children attain levels in mathematics which are below those of most five-year-olds. Skills and understanding are developed through sorting and matching activities, in sand and water play, in activities using shape, position, size, and quantity, and through songs and rhymes. Children in the nursery were observed, for example, standing beside a tower they had constructed out of large plastic bricks to discover if it was “*taller than me*”. Children practise sequencing and pattern making in painting activities in the nursery, and enjoy counting forwards and backwards, using songs and rhymes to support learning.
84. Children in the reception class copy patterns made with two colours and explain their reasoning with understanding. They make good progress in extending their understanding of numbers through daily use and practice, and quickly learn numbers to ten. They order numerals to ten with understanding, and higher-attainers are confident with numerals to 20. Children make good progress in mathematical skills in the nursery and reception classes. They sequence essential activities appropriately such as deciding the order to put on their outdoor clothes and dressing themselves after lessons in the hall. When taking part in cookery and other activities, children use language such as full/empty, heavy/light and too much/not enough confidently. Teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers provide an appropriate range of activities for children to practise and consolidate their learning. Instructions are clearly explained, and work is well planned to match the differing abilities and concentration spans of both three-year-olds and four-year-olds.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

85. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world are developing appropriately, although they attain levels that are below those of most children of their age. Opportunities are provided in both the nursery and reception for children to develop technological skills through their use of construction toys during play activities with both large and small apparatus. In cookery activities, children in the nursery observe with fascination the changes as they rub margarine into flour for their rock cakes. Children in the nursery have planted nasturtium seeds in compost and wait anxiously for them to appear instantly. Children in the early years thoroughly enjoyed their visit to Docker Park Farm where they were able to feed the horses, stroke the soft fur of a rabbit, and watch in awe as a chick slowly appeared from an egg. As they become more familiar with computers, children are developing early control of the mouse and they all draw and match pictures proudly. Children make sound progress in this area of learning with good teaching. Teachers provide children with imaginative tasks and give them a wide range

of learning experiences to develop their understanding of the world about them.

Physical development

86. The physical development of children under five is similar to that of most four-year-olds and they are on target to reach the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five. Four-year-olds in the reception class do not have access to outdoor play opportunities and the lack of wheeled toys such as bikes, cars and prams, and outdoor climbing and balancing equipment, restricts this aspect of their physical development. Children in the nursery make good use of the secure playground to develop their gross motor skills and to use space safely. They show good control and co-ordination when propelling wheeled vehicles and they use good avoidance techniques as they travel around the playground. They co-operate well, giving one another rides on tandems and taking turns and sharing without any problems. Teachers in the nursery help pupils to develop their gross motor skills by providing appropriate equipment and giving clear instructions. Parent helpers are used effectively, for example, when they join in ring games and when they help children to find numbers on the playground snake. Sometimes, however, when the nursery teacher is playing the piano for school assemblies, there is not enough direct teaching during outdoor play.
87. Fine motor skills are developing appropriately. Most children make steady progress in the skills they demonstrate when using paintbrushes, pencils and crayons, and when completing jigsaw puzzles, building with constructional toys and pouring water into containers of different shape and size. They use the cursors on computers well enough to operate programs. Children in the reception class use safety needles to sew fabric collage pictures with gigantic tacking stitches of which they are extremely proud. Opportunities are provided for children to develop technological skills through their use of construction toys during play activities with both large and small apparatus. Children make sound progress in this area of learning with effective teaching and a good focus for learning through topic work. There is clear teaching of skills, for example, on the handling and use of pencils, and teachers provide sufficient opportunities for children to practice skills on their own.

Creative Development

88. Children's creative and artistic skills are developing appropriately for their age and are evident in the bright displays of work and in the confidence with which the children select materials. They engage in collage work, and enjoy creating their own individual effects with a range of textures, tones, and shades. Creativity and free expression are encouraged. Children use paints, crayons, and pencils to good effect, creating their own self-portraits, and their free painting displays an abundance of brilliant colour and enjoyment. Dough is used regularly in the nursery and children enjoy squeezing, rolling, shaping, cutting and forming their own models. Children attain levels in most areas of creative work which are typical for their age. Children in the reception class were observed creating their own pictures after the styles of Mondrian and Bridget Riley. This was a difficult task which they performed well. Teaching is sound, with secure subject knowledge of the creative arts, although work is sometimes over-directed by the teacher, with too much emphasis on the finished product and not enough on the enjoyment of the creative experience. In the reception class, there are sometimes not enough opportunities for creative play for children to choose themselves once they have completed the teacher-directed activities. Musical expertise is developing appropriately. Children sing together, recite rhymes, and join in appropriate actions to the words and music. Children in the nursery experiment with percussion instruments and thoroughly enjoy making their own shakers. Children in the reception class learn to recognise loud and quiet sections in recorded music, and enjoy listening to *"Oranges and Lemons"* from Quiller's *"Children's Overture"*. Very good use is made of the nursery class teacher's musical expertise to accompany singing on the piano, with other staff leading the singing and performing appropriate actions for the children to follow.

ENGLISH

89. The percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in reading was close to

the national average in the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 1999, but the number achieving higher levels was well below the national average. Overall, standards in reading were well below the national average. In writing, the percentage of pupils achieving the national standard in 1999 was below the national average, and no pupils achieved higher levels. Overall, standards in writing were below the national average.

90. Inspection findings indicate that standards in English are below the national average at Key Stage 1. Standards of reading are below average when pupils begin the National Curriculum programme of study at the age of five, and writing, speaking and listening skills are poor. By the end of the key stage, standards are below the national average in speaking and listening and in reading, while standards in writing are still well below the national average. The levels of attainment pupils achieved at Key Stage 1 in the national tests in 1999 compared reasonably with those in similar schools. Both in reading and in writing, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard was close to the national average for similar schools. Standards have improved in both reading and writing over the past four years to a much greater extent than national trends. Standards in writing are still well below the national average, however, as pupils learn to form their letters very slowly and this hampers the development of writing skills throughout the key stage.
91. The percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level in the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 1999 was very low compared to the national average, and the percentage of pupils achieving higher levels was well below the national average. Overall, the standard of attainment was well below the national average.
92. Inspection findings indicate that standards in the current Year 6 are below the national average. Standards in speaking and listening, and in writing, are below those expected nationally for pupils of this age and standards in reading are well below those usually found. The inspection findings are better than pupils' performance at Key Stage 2 in the 1999 national tests. This is because most pupils in the current Year 6 have been at the school much longer than last year's group, and have spent longer benefiting from good teaching of the National Literacy Strategy. In the 1999 tests, a sixth of pupils had statements of special educational needs and almost a quarter had only recently joined the class.
93. The level of pupils' attainment in the English tests in 1999 was well below the average in similar schools. Results of the national tests over the last four years indicate that standards were similar from 1996 to 1998, then fell in 1999. This disappointing result in 1999 was due, in part, to the majority of pupils writing a piece of non-fiction - a style with which they are less familiar - during the test. The school also has a well above average number of pupils on the register of special educational needs and three times the national average percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs. More than half of the current pupils aged eleven have difficulties with reading and spelling. The current Year 6 class includes almost half the total number of pupils in the school with statements of special educational needs. There are a significant number of transient pupils who join and leave the school other than at the usual times. This also has an effect on the continuity of learning and standards achieved for some pupils in English.
94. There are no pupils in the school at an early stage of learning English as an additional language although the school has a higher proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds than most schools. Of these pupils, the largest group is of Black Caribbean heritage. Just under a quarter of these pupils have been identified as underachieving and they receive additional support in English.
95. The school has carefully tracked the progress of pupils in English over the past three years using the results from standardised tests and performance indicators, National Curriculum tests, internal testing and, more recently, optional national tests taken in Year 4. Targets for literacy are set for groups of pupils each half term and pupils are assessed against these. In order to raise standards in literacy, the school currently focuses on additional time for English lessons in all classes. At Key Stage 1, some pupils in Year 2 benefit from additional intensive reading recovery classes taken by trained staff. Groups of pupils in Years 3 and 4 are targeted to receive additional literacy support. This is improving these pupils' understanding of sounds,

and blends of sounds, and their knowledge of how words are built. In Year 6, booster classes are held after school to help lower-attaining pupils to achieve the nationally expected standard in literacy. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils are withdrawn from lessons to receive valuable assistance to help them meet the literacy targets in their individual education plans. Teachers and classroom assistants provide good support for these pupils during lessons, so they learn effectively and make good progress.

96. Teaching of English is good overall, with some very good or excellent teaching at both key stages. All teachers have at least sound subject knowledge and some have good or very good expertise. Teachers plan their lessons well and follow the structure of the National Literacy Strategy confidently. Most use whole-class texts which appeal to the pupils and hold their interest. This promotes good learning. Pupils in Year 3, for instance, were enthused by the choice and use of a poem to illustrate and explain the meaning of syllables. Teachers give good explanations and directions to pupils. They use questioning skills well, and probe effectively to move pupils' understanding forward and to gain a response. In the best lessons, teachers share the purpose of the lesson at the start and review pupils' learning with them at the end of the lesson. Teachers organise and manage pupils successfully. They pace lessons well, and prepare helpful resources and suitable exercises for pupils during the literacy hour. These tasks are usually matched very well to the ability and prior learning of pupils within the class. Teachers and classroom assistants give good support to pupils during reading and writing activities. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well. Teachers encourage pupils and make good use of the reward system and target setting to promote good learning. They set appropriate homework to consolidate work in class, and mark pupils work conscientiously. Recording of pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds, and the development of their reading skills, however, is underdeveloped. Teachers' reading records generally consist of a list of books read by pupils as they progress through the reading scheme. Few comments are made on pupils' attainment, and records do not usually indicate pupils' reading skills or which skills they need to develop. In some classes, there are no records of pupils' reading skills.

Speaking and listening.

97. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have made steady progress in developing their speaking and listening skills, but the majority have not yet reached the level expected for their age. Pupils listen attentively during the literacy hour. They enjoy listening to stories and work enthusiastically at the tasks set for them. They learn to take turns in discussions. Many are still hesitant to answer questions at length, but as a result of teachers' good questioning skills and encouragement, pupils' confidence in speaking increases. In the small Year 2 class of older and higher-attaining pupils, pupils listen attentively, ask well-formulated questions, and follow the development of the poem "School" by Michael Rosen enthusiastically. They make good progress in their speaking and listening skills and achieve close to what is expected for their age.
98. Pupils' listening and speaking skills develop steadily at the beginning of Key Stage 2. However, they have not developed sufficiently by Year 6 to be in line with national expectations. Many eleven-year-olds are still hesitant in answering questions at length and find it difficult to articulate their ideas clearly during lessons. Most pupils are quite confident speaking to visitors when asked about their work. They are polite and courteous, but cannot always explain their work clearly.

Reading

99. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop their understanding of letters, sounds and blends of letters more slowly than most pupils of this age. Many, but not all, acquire a growing vocabulary of words they recognise on sight. Pupils in the Year 2 classes learn to read with expression as a group during the literacy hour, and many read with expression when reading individually. Pupils use a variety of strategies such as picture clues, punctuation, rhyme and repetition to read new words. Higher-attaining readers begin to choose suitable books by referring to titles and front covers. They often choose favourite stories such as fairy tales, and adventures of characters such as Robin Hood. They develop a good understanding of different types of books such as storybooks, information books and poetry.
100. At Key Stage 2, teachers help pupils to read with greater fluency and expression during the literacy hour. Pupils learn to understand and explore the choice of words and how punctuation affects the meaning of sentences. In Year 5, for example, pupils studied a challenging narrative poem during the week and made good progress in their skills of deduction. The majority of pupils in Year 6, however, struggle to read fluently and expressively, and find it difficult to predict and deduce from what they have read. Pupils choose their own books and borrow books from the school library regularly. Some pupils have favourite books and authors such as *The Twits* by Roald Dahl and the *Harry Potter* series by J K Rowling. They understand the differences between fiction and non-fiction, and use the contents and index reasonably well. Few pupils, however, use information books regularly to find information for themselves. Pupils who receive good support from home with their reading make the best progress at both key stages.

Writing

101. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn to form their letters very slowly and at a slower rate than is usually found in similar schools. This hampers the development of writing skills throughout the key stage and as a result, the majority of pupils' writing both in English and across other subjects is not easily recognisable and legible. Some pupils in Year 2, for instance, have difficulty in reading back what they have just finished writing. They learn about spelling and punctuation in literacy lessons and develop an understanding of word endings and beginnings, the use of commas, full stops, question marks and speech marks. Higher-attaining pupils explain and demonstrate their understanding enthusiastically to their teacher, and transfer their knowledge of sentence writing satisfactorily to their written work. The majority of pupils in Year 2, however, find composing sentences and putting them into a longer sequence difficult.
102. Pupils improve their writing skills steadily during Key Stage 2. By the end of the key stage, pupils' work is presented neatly in fluent, joined handwriting, although pupils rarely use a pen when writing. Pupils in Years 3 and 5 make particularly good progress with their writing skills. They develop their knowledge of punctuation, grammar and spelling well during the literacy hour, and practise these skills in a range of writing activities such as diaries, interviews, book reviews and short stories. Year 6 pupils, however, do not learn to consolidate their writing as rapidly as they should. Few write at length and many do not complete writing tasks in their books. Although a few pupils are beginning to develop an understanding of more advanced skills such as writing in paragraphs and the accurate punctuation of conversation, these are inconsistently used by the majority. Many pupils are insecure when punctuating sentences and when choosing adventurous words to gain an effect in their writing.
103. All the requirements of the National Curriculum are met, though there are few planned opportunities for developing pupils' speaking and listening skills by using role-play and drama across the curriculum. Resources are satisfactory, and the library is used frequently by pupils to extend opportunities for reading at home. Books for pupils to read independently are not, however, organised systematically at Key Stage 2 to enable pupils to choose within a range of books matched to their reading ability. This frequently results in pupils choosing books which are too difficult for them to read on their own.

MATHEMATICS

104. Inspection findings indicate that, at the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in mathematics is below the level expected for their age. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds, attainment was well below the national average overall. The proportion attaining the nationally expected standard was well below the national average, while the number attaining higher levels was below the national average. Compared with similar schools, the results at Key Stage 1 were below average. In the 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds, attainment overall was well below the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard was well below the national average, and no pupils reached a higher level. When compared with similar schools, however, the results were close to the national average. Over the last few years, pupils' performance has been well below the national average at both key stages, but the school is working very hard to improve attainment. As a result, pupils' performances in tests over the past four years have improved to a much greater extent than the rising national trend at both key stages. A large proportion of the school's pupils have special educational needs. Many of these pupils joined the school in Key Stage 2 and therefore have not benefited from the school's provision for mathematics in previous year groups. Thus the school's rising trend is a creditable achievement, which has enabled it to set realistic targets to improve further.
105. By the end of Key Stage 1, the daily mental mathematics session makes a positive impact on pupils' mental ability. Most pupils add pairs of numbers to 20 and many make up problems with 10 as the answer. They know simple multiplication facts and count in 2s, 5s and 10s. Many use their knowledge of multiplication and division facts to double and halve within 20 and some within 30. In written calculations a few can double numbers in tens, such as 80, or 160. Most pupils find difficulty with the concept of division, when for instance sharing 20 equally or in groupings. Many are unable to round numbers to the nearest 10, as in 54 to 50, or 56 to 60. They do, however, compare two-digit numbers and say which is more or less and give a number that lies between. Pupils work at tasks set at an appropriate level. Higher-attainers work more quickly and confidently and at a higher level. They understand the place value in hundreds, tens and units. They recognise and use symbols to stand for unknown numbers in problems such as $\square + 8 = 16$ and $58 = \square + 8$. Lower-attainers add 10 to tens and units and know addition facts within 20. Not all consistently write numbers the right way round.
106. By the end of Key Stage 2, the regular mental mathematics session makes a very positive effect on pupils' attainment. Pupils recognise square numbers up to 100, and a few beyond 200. Many recognise and say large numbers, such as 140,023. Most can find pairs of numbers which total 100. Pupils recognise multiples of 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 up to 100. With the aid of multiple towers pupils make progress in understanding the relationship between factors and multiples, for instance, that 60 is a multiple of several factors such as 6 and 10. Most pupils can multiply two-digit numbers, and some can multiply three-digit numbers by using the method of partitioning with brackets, such as $93 \times 7 = (90 \times 7) + (3 \times 7)$. Pupils are less competent with division. They understand the use of fractions and recognise the equivalence between fractions such as $\frac{8}{10}$ and $\frac{4}{5}$. Most can work out that $1\frac{3}{2}$ is $6\frac{1}{2}$ and that $\frac{3}{4}$ of 16 is 12. They calculate area by counting squares and some can find area by using a simple formula. Pupils classify two-dimensional shapes according to their properties knowing, for instance, that a parallelogram has its opposite sides equal and parallel. Higher-attainers multiply and divide three-digit numbers by tens and units. They measure and draw angles accurately to the nearest degree. They collate information, then draw a line graph and interpret it. Lower-attainers find a quarter of a quantity. They add together two sets of three-digit numbers, but find difficulty with subtraction.
107. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, half the teaching is excellent and the rest is good or satisfactory in equal proportions. The high quality of teaching is having a positive effect on pupils' motivation and their current progress. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught in groups according to their level of mathematical attainment. This helps teachers to focus more clearly on the right level of work to match pupils' needs, and teachers' expertise is deployed to very good effect. Teachers prepare lessons thoroughly and share the learning objectives with pupils to make clear from the beginning what they will learn. Most ask the class at the end of the lesson if they feel they have achieved the objectives. Pupils in Year 2, for example, felt justifiably confident that they had achieved the objective of

learning how to use symbols for an unknown number. Occasionally, teachers over-estimate how much can be taught in a single lesson, and move learning on without step-by-step consolidation. This leads to a loss of motivation and some restlessness. Teachers have very secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and use this to ask challenging questions which encourage pupils' mathematical thinking. A pupil in Year 1, for instance, was required to think hard to formulate a reply in mathematical terms to explain *How do you know that 20 is bigger than 10?* Regular practice using the methods of the National Numeracy Strategy, together with strong teaching, leads to pupils making good progress in their learning. They know and respond to the established routines well. Teachers use the introductory mental session to build up pupils' recall, thinking and vocabulary. They support pupils actively during the activity session when pupils apply their learning. In the final plenary session, teachers and pupils share their learning in preparation for the next stage. Pupils respond enthusiastically in all three sessions.

108. When teaching is excellent, the pupils' response also rises to that level. In a lesson in Year 4, for example, pupils made excellent progress in their learning about fractions and decimals, with lower-attainers being able to identify 0.3 as $\frac{3}{10}$ and higher-attainers recognising 0.25 as $\frac{1}{4}$. Very good relationships between pupils, teachers and adult support staff help pupils to feel confident when offering suggestions and explanations in whole-class sessions without fear of being wrong. Teachers aim to develop positive attitudes in mathematics. Pupils in Year 4 confidently say *"If it's maths, it's easy!"* Teachers use a range of methods during lessons, working with the whole class, smaller groups, pairs or individuals according to the requirements of the session or task. They give pupils positive support so that they work enthusiastically, usually finishing their work in the time allowed. Teachers manage and control lessons well. This is reflected in the very good behaviour of pupils and their very positive attitudes to mathematics lessons. Teachers train pupils from an early stage to participate fully in discussions and to listen carefully. Occasionally, however, in a small minority of lessons, teachers allow some talking out of turn in discussions and this leads to unproductive noise and pupils moving off task during the activity session. This slows the pace of learning and the quality of pupils' work suffers. Teachers make regular and effective assessments of pupils' attainment and progress. They use the results to guide their planning of future work. Their lively presentations, interesting activities and good relationships ensure that pupils find mathematics fun. As a boy in Year 4 enthusiastically explained, *"I love these lessons"*.
109. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers and support staff work together well to provide good learning opportunities so that these pupils learn and progress at the same rate as others.
110. Leadership in mathematics is very good. The co-ordinator has a very clear view of the requirements of the school and the best means of moving the subject forward. He monitors teachers' half-termly planning and also monitors teaching and learning in the classroom. This is having a positive effect on standards. The National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively implemented. The school has taken appropriate action to improve standards as required in the previous inspection report. Pupils' attainment is still below national expectations at present, but the rapidly rising trend in attainment is an indication of the success of the school's action and policies. The school has a good capacity for improving standards further.

SCIENCE

111. The percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected level at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, according to teachers' assessments, was close to the national average. No pupils, however, reached higher levels. This was well below the national average. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in 1999 was well above average. The percentage achieving higher levels was below average for similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is below the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard is close to the national average, but few pupils achieve higher levels. Standards at Key Stage 1 are similar to those at the previous inspection.

112. At the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level was well below the national average in 1999, and the percentage achieving higher levels was also well below average. Overall, the standard was well below the national average. Standards were well below the national average when compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Inspection findings indicate that attainment is close to the national average amongst pupils currently in Year 6. This is an improvement on the 1999 test results because teaching of science in Years 5 and 6 has improved considerably this year following the appointment of an experienced science teacher. All aspects of the subject are covered in appropriate depth, and attainment is satisfactory in all areas. Standards are higher than at the previous inspection at Key Stage 2, and are improving faster than the national trend.
113. The quality of teaching is sound at Key Stage 1 and is very good at Key Stage 2. This is broadly similar to the previous inspection, which found that teaching overall was good. Key features of the most successful lessons include good subject knowledge of teachers and high expectations of pupils. This was seen to good effect when the class teacher helped pupils in Year 3 to name the joints on a human skeleton. Pupils then identified hinge joints and ball and socket joints. Similarly, in a class of pupils in Year 6, the teacher shared her excellent knowledge of forces and air resistance before encouraging pupils to make model helicopters with a range of variables to test air resistance. In both these lessons, good teaching had an important impact on pupils' learning. Expectations for the attainment of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are particularly high. Work is pitched at achievable but challenging levels, and pupils respond to this well. Lessons are carefully planned following local authority guidelines, and learning objectives and activities build appropriately on pupils' developing skills and knowledge. Teachers refer back helpfully to previous work at the start of lessons in order to reinforce pupils' learning, and then introduce learning objectives to focus pupils' attention on the aims of the current lesson. Teachers ask many probing questions to make pupils think through problems, to extract information, and to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. They make good use of appropriate resources such as human bones, fruits cut in half, a poster showing the workings of the human ear and the illustrations from a "big book" showing different seeds. Teachers form very good relationships with pupils, manage classes very well and have good organisational skills. Plenary sessions at the end of lessons are managed effectively to enable pupils to explain what they have achieved, to look for patterns and to extend their learning by further questioning. Occasionally, where elements of lessons were less successful, the oldest pupils at Key Stage 1 were not challenged sufficiently, especially in the conduct of practical activities and in their recording. Useful scientific words written on a flipchart to help pupils' recording were introduced too late in a lesson, and pupils were unable to see what happened when a salt solution was mixed in a foil container. Marking is carried out regularly and comments help to build pupils' self esteem. Most teachers include some helpful comments which show pupils how they might improve.
114. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in their learning at Key Stage 1. Teachers plan together to build on the knowledge which pupils are acquiring. Work is not always pitched at a suitable level, however, to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding sufficiently by the end of the key stage. Practical investigations form an important part of lessons. Older children in reception and those in Year 1 sort seeds effectively by size, texture and colour, though their limited writing skills make it difficult for them to record their investigations accurately. By Year 2, pupils know the characteristics of living things and understand that all fruits have seeds in them. Opportunities for pupils to record their own observations have improved since the last inspection. They describe the seeds they have observed in a range of fruits, though their limited vocabulary sometimes restricts their recording. They learn about the seasonal activities of birds and animals, label parts of the human body, know the functions of the major organs and identify the parts of a plant. Pupils in Year 2 explore which materials are translucent, transparent and opaque. They use mirrors to plot mirror images and understand how to use electricity safely.
115. Pupils' learning at Key Stage 2 is very good, largely due to the very good teaching. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 3, for example, named and identified different types of joints in the human body by referring to very good wall displays and a human skeleton. There is a good emphasis on investigative work, and pupils learn effectively by predicting the outcome of their investigations and then checking and explaining the actual

results. Pupils in Year 4 predicted what would happen when a salt and water solution was heated, and discovered how to separate salt and water by evaporation. By Years 5 and 6, pupils determine what is a fair test and identify clearly what they want to measure. They apply their skills of observation, prediction, identifying patterns and testing hypotheses in a wide range of investigations. Pupils understand that they must change only one variable if they wish to reach a verifiable conclusion. This knowledge was demonstrated when pupils in Year 5 tested different materials and shapes to discover which ones formed the best receivers for a string telephone. A Year 6 class made very good progress when they made model helicopters to evaluate the effects of air resistance.

116. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress at Key Stage 1 and very good progress at Key Stage 2. Individual progress is often very good, at both key stages, when pupils receive additional support. In a Year 3 class, for example, the teacher regularly checked pupils' work and ensured that those with special needs were supported by higher-attaining pupils. Few individual education plans include specific targets which are linked to science, but progress towards literacy targets helps pupils to record the results of investigations more effectively. Higher-attaining pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and very good progress at Key Stage 2.
117. Pupils' attitudes to their work are good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. Attitudes have improved markedly since the previous inspection. Pupils are well behaved and pay good attention in class. They listen carefully to their teachers and are keen to answer questions. They are good observers, and make thoughtful comments when teachers evaluate findings at the end of sessions. They show interest in the subject, concentrate well and respond sensibly when given the responsibility to use equipment and carry out investigations. Pupils have good relationships with their teachers, and are supportive of each other. They co-operate well when working in pairs and small groups, and make positive remarks about each other's work.
118. All requirements of the National Curriculum are met. The recently appointed co-ordinator leads the subject very effectively, and good use is made of her excellent expertise to teach both Years 5 and 6. She has provided in-service training on the scheme of work in an attempt to raise teachers' expectations, and is to lead a workshop on investigative and experimental processes at the beginning of the summer term. Teachers' plans are carefully monitored, and the co-ordinator has been into classes to assist other teachers. There is a useful and comprehensive policy document, and the scheme of work is based on county guidelines written by the co-ordinator in her previous post. The scheme ensures a logical progression of skills, knowledge and understanding, and has good assessment opportunities and clear procedures for record keeping. Health education is included in the science programme. The school successfully delivers the curriculum to mixed-age classes at Key Stage 1 by means of a two-year rolling programme. There are very good resources which are readily accessible to teachers, and a very good selection of science books in the school library. Together with attractive displays about skeletons and muscles, the workings of the ear and the effect of heat on materials, these resources have provided good opportunities for pupils to develop their research skills and to write up the findings of their investigations.

ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

119. In art, standards are similar to those of seven and eleven-year-olds in other schools. Pupils' achievements, including those of pupils with special educational needs, are satisfactory throughout the school but progress is not consistent in all classes. No lessons were observed in design and technology during the inspection, but standards of work seen are in line with national expectations. Inspection findings indicate that the school has maintained the sound provision in both subjects that was observed at the last inspection, although the absence of a co-ordinator for both subjects has had some adverse effect on attainment at Key Stage 2.
120. The teaching of art is satisfactory overall, and teachers demonstrate sound subject knowledge, although some members of staff are not as confident as others. This lack of confidence and expertise results in an unsystematic approach to the teaching of skills, and progress across

year groups is inconsistent as a result. Lessons are resourced appropriately, but assessment opportunities are not always identified. In the best lessons, teachers give pupils opportunities to evaluate their artwork and the work of others. In other lessons, however, this good practice is not followed, and insufficient emphasis is placed on pupils' reviewing and modifying their work.

121. In art at Key Stage 1, pupils study different drawing techniques, experimenting, for example, with line and shade in pencil and then comparing this with the techniques required for charcoal and pastels. Pupils in Year 4 show a sound awareness of basic observational drawing skills as they draw a street scene from different angles, and higher-attaining pupils are beginning to use perspective in their work. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use their sketchbooks to develop ideas and designs. They study carnival and ceremonial masks from around the world and then design their own versions. They use their original designs to create three-dimensional models using papier mâché and brightly coloured poster paints.
122. In their study of the work of famous artists, pupils at Key Stage 1 examine the work of Lowry and create images of their own using white paint printed onto black paper. Pupils in Year 4 study the work of Hundertwasser and begin their own pictures from a study of the street outside the school. They apply the artist's style and techniques of line, colour and pattern to create their own picture collages and three-dimensional street scenes. Older pupils at the end of the key stage study the designs of Georgia O'Keefe and of William Morris, and use small examples of William Morris designs to create large pictures of their own. Younger pupils at Key Stage 1 experience modelling with salt dough and with clay, and make thumb pots with decorations to their own design. By Year 5, pupils use salt dough to form their own original sculptures which are baked, painted, and varnished to their own specific requirements.
123. In design and technology at Key Stage 1, pupils learn about different materials. They use a variety of these to make models of puppets ranging from soft glove and sock puppets to paper plate puppets of ladybirds and clothes peg puppets of butterflies. They plan and make a variety of foods from around the world, including Chinese stir-fry, Indian Balti and Mexican Chilli, and then evaluate their work by eating it! In Years 1 and 2, pupils plan their work carefully through discussion with the teacher and then develop their sewing and woodworking skills when making puppets, corking, or sewing to make calendars. At Key Stage 2, the range of pupils' experiences is more extensive. They carry out investigations of mechanisms such as levers and movable joints, and work in pairs to make pop-up books about the exploration of Tutankhamun's tomb. The most adventurous project has been a very attractive quilt, designed and painted by individual children and sewn together by a professional quilt-maker. This is currently on display at the Harris Museum and Art Gallery in Preston.
124. Pupils' response in lessons is good. They enjoy practical activities and are interested and fully involved. Pupils listen carefully, answer questions appropriately, and settle well to the tasks set. They are able to concentrate for satisfactory amounts of time and talk enthusiastically about what they have learned. Throughout the school, displays of pupils' paintings and prints enhance the corridors and classrooms and demonstrate the satisfactory progress that pupils are making.

GEOGRAPHY

125. Pupils' attainment in geography is typical for their age at the end of both key stages. This is in line with standards seen in the previous inspection.
126. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound knowledge of their own locality and compare some of its features with distant places. They use the area around the school to develop mapwork skills and draw maps of their route to school with features such as houses shown as pictorial symbols. They compare their own locality with a village in India, pointing out the contrasts in features such as houses, activities, landscapes and the weather. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know the basic causes of the variation in world climates and seasons. Their knowledge of geographical concepts and vocabulary extends to an understanding of the hemispheres, the equator and lines of latitude and longitude. They appreciate the importance of location when understanding the growth of places such as Keswick and its tourist industry.
127. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is mainly satisfactory and sometimes good. At Key Stage 2, it is very good. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and make the objectives of each lesson clear at the start. This allows pupils to know what they are expected to learn and to achieve during lessons. Teachers ensure that pupils learn step by step to help them understand their work. In learning how to draw a map of a route at Key Stage 1, for example, pupils had previously studied aerial photographs of the local area. Teachers give lively and interesting introductions to lessons to stimulate pupils' interest. In a lesson for five and six year olds, for instance, the teacher told the story of *Little Red Riding Hood* as she demonstrated the route through the woods, as a way of leading pupils into their task. Very good teaching at Key Stage 2 results from teachers' secure knowledge of the subject and high expectations of pupils' performance and behaviour. This enables pupils to make very good progress in lessons. In a lesson in Year 5, for example, the very strong relationships and understanding between teacher and pupils led to a good pace of learning in a busy working atmosphere. Pupils' concepts of the impact of world weather conditions on human activities was strengthened by using the realistic context of a travel representative on location. Similarly, pupils in a well-resourced lesson in Year 3 were able to co-operate successfully in an atmosphere of involvement and concentration when making wind-speed recorders. This brought alive the next stage of learning about the Beaufort scale for wind speed. At Key Stage 1, teachers do not always apply the highest expectations of performance and discipline needed for pupils to sustain hard and careful work throughout the activity session. In two lessons, while the teachers gave active support to all groups in turn, they gave insufficient overall direction during this part of the lesson to sustain pupils' motivation and concentration. As a result, unproductive noise built up and although pupils made satisfactory progress towards the learning objectives, the quality of their work suffered. In another lesson, pupils responded very positively to the teacher's high expectations and good organisation and support. They made good progress in their mapping skills. Additional adult support in this lesson enabled pupils with special educational needs to make the same good progress as others and for pupils to compile and print a village map using information technology.
128. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, they are at least satisfactory and sometimes very good. Pupils enjoy geography lessons. They listen carefully to their teacher and to each other. They show a very high level of response to their work when support for activities is organised well and focused carefully.
129. Leadership in geography is good. The curriculum is planned effectively so that pupils can progress steadily through each stage of learning. The co-ordinator works actively to move the curriculum forward. She monitors teachers' half-termly planning to ensure the continuity and progression of pupils' learning. The subject has planned links with other subjects, particularly literacy. Information technology, including access to the Internet, is sometimes used to support and extend learning, for instance, in compiling and recording weather statistics. The school holds a European Awareness Week which involves parents in their children's learning. Display is used to good effect in some parts of the school. Pupils are kept involved with current world issues such as the charity appeal for victims of the recent flood disaster in Mozambique.

HISTORY

130. It was not possible to observe the teaching of history during the inspection week as the subject was not featured in the termly curriculum cycle. However, previous work was examined thoroughly and teachers' planning and display work was scrutinised. Inspection findings indicate that the school has maintained the sound provision that was observed at the last inspection.
131. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make steady progress in history. Younger pupils at Key Stage 1 study the changes that have taken place in daily lives over recent decades and relate this information effectively to their own families. They question their own relatives about the decade in which they were born and then research information about the games and lifestyles prevalent when their own parents and grandparents were six or seven years old. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are clearly aware of the vast passage of time which has elapsed when studying Ancient Egypt and are knowledgeable about the importance of archaeology as a primary source of historical evidence. They understand some distinctive features of the lifestyles of people in different eras. They are aware, for example, of the importance of mummification to the inhabitants of Ancient Egypt, and write in graphic detail about the process after an enthralling visit to the Manchester museum. By linking work in history with geographical themes, pupils know the physical features and significance of the River Nile to Egypt both in past and present times. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn to make comparisons between the past and present, for example, when contrasting their own life with that of Victorian children living in Saltaire in the 19th century. This is brought to life even more vividly by the introduction of Victorian playground games during the lunch break at school.
132. The knowledge and understanding of most seven and eleven-year-olds are typical for their age. They are aware that aspects of the past can be studied through the use of historical evidence such as pictures, written accounts, photographs, and visits to sites and museums. They know about changes to industry and transport since Victorian times. They compare and contrast the lifestyles of people who were at different levels of society when at work, at home and at school. They strengthen their knowledge with a visit to the Regimental Museum, and with a walk around "Victorian Preston" in their study of local history.
133. Pupils' attitudes to history are good. They are attentive and show considerable interest in visits that stir their imagination. It is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching as none was seen. Teachers make a conscious effort to reinforce numeracy skills when studying history. Throughout the school, time-lines are used to sequence events, people and changes over time. The management of the subject is satisfactory. Resources are satisfactory and are effectively enriched by loans from the museum service.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

134. Pupils' attainment in information technology is below the level expected nationally at the end of both key stages. Very few pupils at either key stage have experience of using computers outside school, and this limits their appreciation and understanding of the importance of using the latest technology.
135. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils display basic word processing skills. They control the mouse and use the keyboard to type simple words, and write their own names and short sentences. They are given little opportunity to sort information and present their findings using computer graphics, though they draw bar charts on squared paper in their mathematics lessons. Pupils show competent mouse control when using an art programme to draw colourful pictures. Higher-ability pupils in Year 2 use computers to draw maps of imaginary towns when studying settlements in geography. Pupils use computer programs in literacy lessons throughout the key stage to consolidate their knowledge of blends and other sounds. There are only limited uses of information technology, however, to assist learning across the curriculum.

136. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils word process short pieces of text and edit them by using the highlight and delete keys. They understand how to change font sizes to improve the appearance of text and learn to use a spellchecker and to save a piece of work. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn skills appropriate to their age. In Year 3, pupils use a data-handling programme to draw a chart of weather and temperatures over a week. They interrogate the database to answer simple questions. Pupils in Year 4 use a graphics package to produce illustrations to support their history topic on Ancient Egypt. They save and print the pictures, and improve them by adding further detail. These pupils achieve in line with expectations for their age as a result of good teaching over the past two years. In Year 6, however, most pupils are unable to use a simple program to give commands to a screen turtle. They access the program confidently but have difficulty in understanding the need for accurate and systematic instructions when programming the computer. They struggle with their tasks, finding it hard to follow their instruction sheets, and rely on the support from their teacher to succeed. These pupils have not yet built up sufficient skills to reach the standard expected for their age.
137. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1. Pupils have little previous experience of computers, and teachers are effective in raising pupils' performance. Teachers have sufficient expertise and plan their lessons effectively. They provide some opportunity for pupils to learn as a class and to practise their skills of mouse control and word processing, but these are not sufficient to enable pupils to develop, consolidate and practise their skills. Pupils learn quite slowly throughout the key stage. They gain some skills in word processing but do not have the confidence to produce accurate work independently. They appreciate that keys like the space bar separate words, but find difficulty in typing text at a reasonable speed.
138. Teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 are good overall. Teachers have very good expertise and lessons are planned well to enable pupils to learn effectively. The best lessons provide appropriate challenge for pupils of different attainment, and teachers have high, but not unrealistic, expectations of pupils. Teachers support pupils' individual learning well. They intervene appropriately to further the skills of the whole class when needed. Teachers give clear written and verbal instructions to enable pupils to persevere and learn independently. They group pupils carefully to help them learn from each other and gain confidence. Lessons generally maintain a good pace and teachers make good use of their allocated time in the computer room. Some teachers provide further consolidation time for pupils to practise and complete what they have learned during the lesson. As a result, pupils make sound progress in learning word processing skills, although the lack of sufficient computers in the classrooms currently limits opportunities for pupils to consolidate their keyboard skills. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, learn to type and edit short pieces of text satisfactorily.
139. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum at both key stages. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school has improved the quality and quantity of computers since the previous inspection and has developed sound software resources. The school has sufficient software to assist pupils with the development of research skills, but less equipment to teach control skills, remote sensing and computer modelling. The school has located most of its computers in one teaching room and plans are in place to develop a new purpose-built computer suite later this year. Meanwhile, the existing room is also used for the storage of teaching materials and furniture, and is not wholly suitable for teaching large classes of pupils.

MUSIC

140. No lessons were observed at Key Stage 1, and only one lesson was seen at Key Stage 2. Pupils' singing was heard at school assemblies and at key stage hymn practices, but there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about pupils' attainment at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, pupils, including those with special needs, make sound progress. This is in line with the previous inspection report. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop their listening skills and discuss the feelings evoked by different movements from an evocative piece of music recalling the Viking invasion of Lindisfarne. They recognise that different instruments make different sounds, and appreciate that contrasting dynamics are used to convey different moods. They sing simple songs as two-part rounds and sing a song in two parts, with half the class singing

the melody confidently and half making a reasonable attempt to sing the accompaniment.

141. Pupils of all ages have plenty of opportunity to appreciate music during school assemblies, and appropriate music is used well to create a suitable atmosphere for collective worship. Pupils regularly enter and leave assemblies to a variety of recorded music. The composer and the title of the music are not displayed at the front of the hall, but opportunities are taken to discuss the music at the beginning of the week, and the music is referred to again on subsequent days. Pupils sing a wide variety of modern worship songs enthusiastically and with good diction, accurate rhythms and some variation in dynamics. Worship songs at whole-school assemblies are chosen very carefully so that even the youngest children can join in the actions enthusiastically.
142. Insufficient teaching was seen at Key Stage 2 to judge the overall quality of teaching. No lessons were observed at Key Stage 1. In the lessons, assemblies and hymn practices observed, teachers' knowledge and understanding are generally sound, though individual teachers' musical expertise varies greatly. Teachers plan their work carefully, and individual lessons have sound learning objectives. Teachers use a variety of teaching methods, and make satisfactory use of a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Pupils are well managed, and effective use is made of day-to-day assessment to evaluate pupils' work and to improve standards.
143. As a result of the enthusiastic teaching during assemblies and hymn practices, pupils have good attitudes to music at both key stages, and enjoy their lessons and hymn practices. They are well motivated and join in enthusiastically. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and behave very well when singing or listening to music.
144. The music co-ordinator provides good leadership of the subject. She has been in post for only two terms, but has already been on a co-ordinator's course and has received training on the implementation of the new National Curriculum for music. Good use is made of her musical expertise to accompany the singing on the piano during assemblies and hymn practices. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans and has been allocated time to observe other classes during the summer term. She hears pupils singing during hymn practices, school assemblies and concerts. The policy document and scheme of work have recently been updated and discussed by all the staff. The new scheme of work helps pupils to develop musical skills in a logical progression. No formal assessment of musical skills takes place. Little use is made of information technology to assist the teaching of music.
145. The school has a good selection of recorded music, and a good range of percussion and other instruments, including a number of instruments from other cultures such as those in Latin America. These are easily accessible on two trolleys. Some of the older instruments will shortly need replacing. There is more recorded music than at the last inspection, but there are still very few suitable reference books in the school library. No pupils receive instrumental lessons from visiting teachers, and no visiting instrumentalists perform in school. Pupils sing at school concerts and carol services and the school choir, for older pupils, rehearses enthusiastically after school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

146. It was not possible to observe lessons in all areas of the physical education programme during the inspection. Activities seen included dance at Key Stage 1 and games and swimming at Key Stage 2. Inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages.
147. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn to develop control of their bodies in dance lessons when performing sequences of movements. They use their imaginations well to assist them to move with different actions, for example, when moving as slugs, grasshoppers and beetles. They learn to link a variety of swinging movements on the theme of Amazing Acrobats by practising and refining their actions. They explore the different moods and the pace of music to assist them in their interpretations. By the end of the key stage, pupils work confidently with a partner

and show an awareness of the movements of others. At Key Stage 2, pupils quickly develop their games skills and ball work. In hockey, they send, stop and dribble balls around obstacles with good control. The majority of pupils swim unaided for 25 metres by the time they leave the school and all pupils display confidence in the water. Some pupils exceed these requirements and swim for the school in the local schools' swimming gala.

148. The quality of teaching is good overall and pupils learn at a steady rate as they progress through the school. Teachers generally have sound subject knowledge and make effective use of the detailed scheme of work to support their lessons. The specialist swimming instruction at Key Stage 2 is of a high standard. Some teachers have very good knowledge and expertise. In Year 3, for instance, the teacher moved the lesson along at a brisk pace developing pupils' stamina well by ensuring that pupils worked hard throughout. Good coaching of pupils' games skills ensures equal opportunities for all. When practising how to hold hockey sticks correctly, for example, careful teaching is given to those pupils who are left-handed. Teachers ensure that all pupils listen carefully, and are aware of what they are practising and learning even when they are in a large outdoor space. Teachers give plenty of opportunities for pupils to practise and refine their skills. Lessons are generally planned carefully, although not all lessons at Key Stage 1 include sufficiently brisk warm-ups and reminders of the need for safety.
149. Pupils respond positively in physical education lessons. They appreciate the need for safety and for appropriate dress during games lessons. They work co-operatively in pairs and in small groups following their teachers' directions with enthusiasm and enjoyment. At Key Stage 2, they perform intensive warm-up exercises at the outset of their lessons and sustain a brisk pace throughout the lesson. They are proud of their efforts to send and stop hockey balls and try hard during the lesson to raise the standard of their proficiency. At the end of the key stage, a few Year 6 pupils are less prepared to work hard to improve their hockey skills. They become more enthusiastic when playing a small-sided game but find it more difficult to use and apply the skills they have learnt in the lesson.
150. The curriculum for physical education is planned well at both key stages and covers all the areas of the National Curriculum. Older pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to acquire additional skills in outdoor educational activities during a residential visit. A wide range of extra-curricular physical education activities are available for both boys and girls at Key Stage 2, although no activities include younger pupils. These additional activities, including gymnastics, orienteering and netball clubs, are well supported by the older pupils and increase their learning and enthusiasm for physical education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

151. By the end of both key stages attainment in religious education matches the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
152. By the time they are seven, pupils gain a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. They understand why Christians celebrate Christmas and Easter. They recount events such as the calming of the storm from the New Testament, and know some of the parables told by Jesus, for example, *The good Samaritan*. They understand that Jesus was a good and special person. Pupils say the school prayer together with meaning, but repeat the *Lord's Prayer* with less confidence. They relate well to their classmates and write thoughtfully about *My Friend in the Class*. They consider the journey of life from birth, through childhood and teenage years and on into maturity.
153. By the time they are eleven, pupils consider the journey of life more deeply as a pilgrimage. They compare Christian and Hindu traditions and ceremonies such as baptism, weddings and funerals. They know the main features of the celebration of Diwali, and extend their knowledge of other faiths to include Judaism and study of the Torah. They recognise the division of the Christian Bible into the Old and New Testaments. Pupils begin to understand the meaning behind parables such as *The Lost Son* and the relationship between divine and human forgiveness.

154. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and share the aims of the lesson with pupils so that they know what they are expected to learn. Teachers' secure knowledge and understanding of the subject enables them to provide pupils with valuable opportunities to gain insights into religious and moral values, feelings and traditions. Teachers' strong control and good relationships with pupils create a calm atmosphere of quiet, reflective learning. In Year 6 lesson, for example, positive teaching with thoughtful moral and spiritual content led pupils to gain considerably in their understanding of the concept of forgiveness. Pupils at Key Stage 1 improved their understanding of the *Lord's Prayer* in a lesson where the teacher's high level of personal knowledge and understanding showed in her clear explanations. While she successfully controlled this large combined class of Year 2 pupils, its size created problems for maintaining a suitable atmosphere for the lesson. Teachers give positive support to pupils as they work at their tasks. In a Year 3 lesson, for instance, the teacher rearranged the seating so that pupils could offer each other support more effectively. Higher-attaining pupils very willingly co-operated with pupils who were having some difficulty when researching from Bibles and books.
155. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. They take an interest in the subject, concentrate well on their tasks and show good co-operation with each other. In discussions, they listen carefully to their teacher and to each other and are keen to participate. In one lesson, however, where a supply teacher failed to stimulate pupils' interest or maintain motivation during their activities, pupils' attitudes and behaviour deteriorated to an unsatisfactory level. This led to pupils making unsatisfactory progress.
156. Leadership in the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a clear over-view of the curriculum and has planned it carefully so that pupils progress steadily through the age groups. She monitors teachers' half-termly planning to ensure the continuity and progression of pupils' learning. There is a strong moral content throughout the locally agreed syllabus and Religious education makes a significant contribution to the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has maintained the quality of provision since the last inspection report. Consideration is now being given to the next stage of curriculum development and to the extension of monitoring in the classroom.