

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Cottesmore St. Mary's Catholic Primary School**

Hove

LEA area: Brighton & Hove

Unique Reference Number: 114567

Headteacher: Mr G T Hoare

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Reporting inspector: Mrs S Tweddell

Dates of inspection: 18 – 22 October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707280

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant & Junior
Type of control:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Upper Drive Hove East Sussex BN3 6NB
Telephone number:	01273 555811
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Neil Chapman
Date of previous inspection:	3 – 7 June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Margaret Morrissey, Lay Inspector	Equal opportunities	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
David Manuel	Information technology Design and technology Physical education	Partnership with parents and the community
Jacqueline Cousins	Mathematics	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Francis Harrison	Under fives Science Geography Special educational needs	Curriculum and assessment Efficiency
Jozefa O'Hare	English Art Music	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- Attainment in mathematics is well above average.
- The behaviour and attitudes of most pupils towards work are good.
- Pupils are cared for well in a supportive environment and relationships are very good.
- The quality of teaching is good at both key stages.
- The provision for spiritual development is very good.
- The provision for the under-fives is good.
- The leadership is good.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Attainment in writing is not as high as in other areas of English.
- II. Higher attaining pupils do not always make the progress they should in subjects other than in English and mathematics.
- III. Pupils are not always encouraged to be independent in the classroom.

**Cottesmore St Mary's school offers pupils a caring and secure environment within a strong Catholic ethos. New systems have been put into place over the past eighteen months and staff are working hard to implement them. The strengths of the school far outweigh the weaknesses. The weaknesses will form part of the action plan that governors will put together. A copy of the action plan will be sent to all parents and carers of children at the school**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made good progress since the last inspection and the new systems that are in place should ensure that it continues to improve. The aims and objectives of the school have been clarified and a new senior management team has been formed. The effective leadership is giving a clear direction for the school's development. The school improvement plan sets clear priorities and includes targets for all staff. A common approach has been established for curriculum planning but not all subjects have a scheme of work. Assessment is used well to inform planning in English and mathematics but is not used as effectively in other subjects. The provision for design and technology and information and communication technology has improved. Attainment in history at Key Stage 1 has improved. There have been improvements in financial planning. The health and safety issues have been successfully tackled.

### Standards in subjects

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

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

Over the three years to 1998, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in English and science was above the national average and in mathematics it was well above. Attainment in all three subjects declined in 1998 but improved in 1999. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998, attainment in reading and mathematics was well above the national average and in writing was above the national average. Performance at the end of Key Stage 1 improved in 1999. Attainment in writing is improving at both key stages because the school has identified it as an area for improvement and the literacy hour is helping to raise attainment. Attainment in information

technology at the end of both key stages has improved since the last inspection and is now in line with what is expected for pupils aged seven and eleven.



## Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	good	good	good
Mathematics	good	good	good
Science		good	satisfactory
Information technology		satisfactory	satisfactory
Religious education		n/a	n/a
Other subjects		satisfactory	satisfactory

Teaching is satisfactory or better in 100 per cent of lessons and almost three-quarters of teaching is good. There is little difference between the key stages. The teaching of the under-fives is consistently good.

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

## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good overall and most pupils have positive attitudes towards their work. A handful of pupils are less well motivated.
Attendance	Good and pupils arrive on time.
Ethos*	Sound overall. There is a growing focus on high attainment that is having a positive impact on attainment. Relationships throughout the school are very good.
Leadership and management	Good overall. The headteacher offers very good leadership and has set a clear direction for the school to grow. Governors have an overview of the school but few formal systems for monitoring the effect of policies.
Curriculum	Good overall, particularly in relation to English and mathematics. Good procedures are in place for the assessment of English and mathematics.
Pupils with special educational needs	Provision is good overall.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good. Provision for spiritual development is very good, for social and moral development is good and for cultural development is sound.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good. There is a good supply of support staff and professional development is used well to raise attainment.
Value for money	Good.

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

## The parents' views of the school

### What most parents like about the school

IV. They feel welcome.

V. The behaviour is good and they appreciate the values of the school.

VI. Most are pleased with their child's attainment and progress.

VII. Most like the reading diary.

### What some parents are not happy about

VIII. There is inconsistency in the setting of

IX. There is sometimes insufficient feedback about a

X. They do not have much contact with governors.

XI. The playground needs to be developed to provide

XII. About 19 per cent of those who responded

Inspectors found that the school is welcoming to visitors. Behaviour is generally good and few incidents were observed at lunch and play times. The school is developing its facilities for outdoor play. The quality of information for parents is good and the reports on children's progress give good information but in an impersonal format. Attainment in English, mathematics and science is generally good. The reading diary provides a useful way of communication between the school and parents. Homework is regularly set in English but is set inconsistently in other subjects. Governors are trying to establish ways of communicating more easily with parents through the re-establishment of "governor of the month" but many parents seem to be unaware of this.

## · **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In order to raise attainment further, the headteacher, senior management team, governors and staff should:

- XIII. Raise attainment in writing by using it more consistently in subjects other than English so that pupils understand how to use different styles of writing for different purposes. (paragraphs 13, 18, 104, 109, 168)
- XIV. Ensure that the tasks set appropriately challenge the higher attaining pupils. (paragraphs 11, 36, 103, 117, 124, 167, 168)
- XV. Help pupils to gain greater independence by giving them more choices in their work, increasing the amount of investigation in science and mathematics and using fewer worksheets and less copying out. (paragraphs 14, 15, 22, 38, 40, 44, 125, 137, 139, 162, 163)

Other areas of weakness which governors may wish to include in their development plan are:

- XVI. The marking of work is not consistent and often does not give guidance on how pupils can improve their work. (paragraphs 43, 52)
- XVII. Parents have a perception that they have little contact with the governing body. (paragraph 67)
- XVIII. Governors have few formal systems for monitoring the work of the school. (paragraphs 73, 87)
- XIX. Review the timing of history and geography in the curriculum so that there is not a long gap in which pupils can forget what they have learnt. (paragraphs 18, 159)
- XX. Review the placing together of pupils with English as an additional language and with special educational needs when they are taught by specialist staff. (paragraph 34)
- XXI. Ensure that pupils are taught about the full range of cultures. (paragraph 57)
- XXII. Consider how parents who have little confidence in English can be informed about the school. (paragraph 67)

## · **INTRODUCTION**

### · **Characteristics of the school**

1. Cottesmore St Mary's Catholic School serves three parishes within a residential area of Hove. The majority of pupils come from homes that enjoy social advantage. It is a larger than average school with 464 pupils on roll, the majority of whom come from the three parishes. The number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is below average. The number of pupils with special educational needs is 84 which is about average and seven pupils have a statement of special educational need. Twenty-one pupils come from homes in which English is an additional language, the main language of these pupils being Arabic. There are slightly more boys than girls in the school. Children enter the school in the year in which they are five and attend part time until the term in which they are five. There are 60 children in the reception class, 39 of whom attend part time. The attainment on entry is slightly above average but attainment in writing is average.

2. The priorities of the school are to ensure that the shared vision of the school, as described in the mission statement, is realised through the daily actions of every member of the school community. The other key priority is to establish relationships within the school which reflect and ensure care and concern for the well-being and dignity of all.
3. The school aims to create a challenging, stimulating and supportive environment where children can strive for excellence in all areas and in which their abilities and qualities are recognised. It aims also to provide opportunities for members of the school community to develop their faith and love of God through meaningful worship; to provide an atmosphere of warmth, care and support for all members of the school community and to create an environment in which all may live out the Gospel values; to promote the development of every individual in the school community with the teaching of Christ as the underlying principle and to seek to develop a purposeful interaction between school, parish and home to prepare pupils for their responsibilities in the wider community

3.

### 3. Key indicators

### 4. Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1998	37	30	67

4. National Curriculum Test/Task		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
<b>Results</b>				
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	33	30	36
	Girls	25	25	28
	Total	58	55	64
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	87 (85)	82 (81)	96 (94)
	National	80 (80)	81 (80)	85 (85)

4. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	31	36	35
	Girls	24	26	29
	Total	55	62	64
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	82 (85)	93 (95)	96 (85)
	National	81 (80)	85 (84)	86 (85)

5. **Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>1</sup>**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1998	34	30	64

5. <b>National Curriculum Test Results</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	19	25	24
	Girls	25	22	22
	Total	44	47	46
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	69 (72)	73(75)	72(90)
	National	65 (63)	59(62)	69(69)

  

5. <b>Teacher Assessments</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	22	21	22
	Girls	26	25	26
	Total	48	46	48
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	75 (69)	72 (73)	75 (84)
	National	65 (63)	65 (64)	72 (69)

6. **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	4.7
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.2
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

6.

7. **Exclusions**

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

8. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	8
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

8.

.....

1

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

## 8. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

### 8. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

#### 8. Attainment and progress

6. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is above average generally, but in writing is average. In the 1998 national tests, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was above average overall. In mathematics it was well above average and in English and science attainment was in line with the national average. In comparison with schools that take in similar pupils, attainment in mathematics was well above average and in science and English it was in line. Over the last three years to 1998, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been above average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. Boys have attained above average results in all three subjects. Girls have attained well above average in mathematics and science and close to the average in English. In 1999, performance improved in all three subjects.
7. At the end of Key Stage 1 in the 1998 tests, attainment in reading and mathematics was well above average in reading and science and was above average in writing. In comparison with schools that take similar pupils, attainment was well above average in reading and mathematics and was in line with the average in writing. Over the past three years to 1998, attainment has been well above average in all three subjects. There has been little difference in the performance of boys and girls except in writing where girls have attained well above average and boys attained above average. Performance improved slightly in 1999 in reading, writing and in mathematics.
8. Evidence from the inspection indicates that the improved attainment in the 1999 national tests at both key stages is continuing, particularly in writing because the school has focused upon it and the literacy hour is having a positive impact. The attainment of girls in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 is also improving. Progress across the school is good at both key stages. This is because teachers use time in lessons effectively and because the management of pupils' behaviour is good. The progress of higher attaining pupils is satisfactory overall, but is often unsatisfactory in subjects other than English and mathematics, as the work is insufficiently challenging for them. The progress of pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. They receive effective support from specialist staff who liaise regularly with the classroom teachers to ensure that the work is continuous. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress. Their work and classroom support are carefully targeted as part of the good provision for special educational needs.
9. Pupils who are under five are likely to reach the desirable outcomes for learning and many are likely to attain within the lower levels of the National Curriculum. They make good progress in all the areas of learning because the provision is well planned and effective. Their personal and social development is good; they share happily and although the inspection was early in the term, most had established good relationships with adults. They show increasing independence and are able to select appropriately, such as when painting or choosing activities. Many have well developed skills of literacy. They listen carefully and are prepared to talk about events of the day or about their lives at home. They enjoy listening to stories and reading books. They understand that print conveys information; for example, they confidently take and write orders in the café. Their mathematical understanding develops well and they use mathematical language such as *longer than* and *more than*. Pupils using beads recognised that adding others made the string longer. They were also able to add and subtract numbers to five. Most children develop a growing knowledge and understanding of the world from discussions about their lives and their homes. They look at how things change and why things happen. They become adept at sticking, cutting and building using small construction equipment and paper or card. Their physical and creative development is good. Most children move around the classroom and play areas carefully, showing an awareness of others. They choose materials or paint to express their ideas and many show originality of thought.
10. At the end of both key stages, attainment in English is above average, although in writing it is average.

Progress is good in English at both key stages. Each pupil is set a target, using information from assessment which helps them to make good progress. Pupils speak confidently and with clarity and many convey meaning clearly. Most pupils enjoy reading and many use it well to seek information in other subjects. They read fluently, accurately and with understanding. Skills in writing are improving, but it is inconsistently used to express ideas in other subjects as there is much copying, and many subjects use worksheets which do not demand extended writing. Writing is generally accurate, and in English, pupils understand how to use structure to create interesting pieces. The literacy hour is having a positive impact on attainment in writing.

11. Attainment in mathematics is well above average at the end of both key stages and pupils make good progress. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and a good understanding of the subject. Strengths are in pupils' understanding of number and in their knowledge and use of shape, space and measurement. A relative weakness is in investigation for which opportunities are limited. Pupils generally apply skills of numeracy well across the curriculum. In information technology they use data handling skills well, for example in carrying out surveys and in recording the information in graph form. In design and technology and science, skills of measuring are used well.
12. Pupils make good progress in science and attainment is above average at the end of both key stages. This is because teachers ask probing questions which challenge pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers plan effectively and they make good use of scientific language. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils develop a good understanding of scientific ideas and understand a fair test and why it is needed. A relative weakness is in scientific investigation for which there are insufficient opportunities. Pupils are often too dependent on their teachers for information. This is beginning to improve as more investigative work is undertaken.
13. Attainment in information technology is in line with what is expected for seven and eleven year olds at the end of both key stages and pupils make satisfactory progress. This is because there is a high level of direct teaching of skills and the activities are well planned. Information technology is used well in other subjects; for example, in history, CD-ROMs and the internet are used to find information. Strengths are in word processing and control technology.
14. Pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology because teachers focus on the importance of detail in planning including care in the choice of materials. There are strengths in the whole process of designing a product, making it and evaluating its success.
15. Strengths in history are in pupils' knowledge of events, people and places in the past and in their use of historical skills of inquiry. Pupils make sound progress overall. Writing is insufficiently used to develop their understanding of history as there is too much reliance on copying and on worksheets which demand one-word answers. Geography was not taught during the week of the inspection as it alternates with history. Progress is sound at Key Stage 1 but is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2 as pupils forget what they have learnt because of the gap in teaching. Visits support the progress that pupils make.
16. Progress in art and music is good at both key stages. In art, teachers plan thoroughly to ensure that pupils build up their skills. In music, teachers have high expectations of pupils. Strengths in art are in drawing, painting and work with pastels. Observational drawings are often of a high quality and pupils use the techniques of artists such as Cezanne, Klimt and Van Gogh to create their own works. Strengths in music are in the quality of performance when singing or performing their own compositions. Pupils who study instruments perform to a particularly high standard.
17. Progress in physical education is sound at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. This is because teachers have high expectations and focus on the quality of pupils' movement. Strengths are in the quality of performance in gymnastics and dance, skills in team games such as netball and football and in swimming.

18. The last inspection found that there were few opportunities for investigative and exploratory work for the under-fives, and for the development of speaking, listening and writing skills and for investigative tasks in mathematics. Attainment in information technology was below average and pupils had limited experiences and attainment in history at Key Stage 1 was below average. There have been significant improvements in all these areas except for investigative tasks in mathematics which require further development.

## 21. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

19. Since the last inspection the good standard of behaviour has been maintained. Pupils demonstrate good, positive attitudes in lessons. Pupils arrive at school well prepared and keen to work. They settle down quickly, apply themselves to tasks enthusiastically, and concentrate well throughout lessons. When given the opportunity, many display the capacity to undertake their own independent study; however, in many subjects this receives insufficient priority. Pupils take a degree of pride in their work and respond well to teachers' comments for improvement in line with their own personal targets. Across both key stages pupils have a positive attitude to learning and are capable of concentrating for appropriate lengths of time, especially when fully absorbed in the lesson content.
20. Pupils with special educational needs have equally positive attitudes to their learning as their peers. They behave well and enjoy good relationships with teachers and other pupils. They are well integrated into groups and classes.
21. Children under five make good progress in the development of personal skills. They enjoy coming to school. They are secure in their environment and enter school confidently. They work and play alongside each other, take turns using equipment and apparatus and generally respect the environment, books and resources provided for them. Their behaviour is good. They have warm relationships with their teachers and try hard to please their teacher and other adults.
22. Both outside and inside the school behaviour is good. Pupils understand the school rules and code of conduct fully and in general follow them well. Behaviour in many lessons is good and in a number of lessons is very good. Pupils co-operate with their teachers in establishing conditions in which they and others can work productively without fear of distraction or interruption. They observe the code of conduct and absorb the values transmitted by the staff. No instances of bullying were observed or reported during the inspection and pupils do not regard bullying as a major issue in the school. There is no evidence of disharmony with the small minority of pupils from different ethnic groups. Pupils enter and leave the dining hall in an orderly manner and behave very well whilst eating lunch. Pupils show respect for the building; equally they care for displays and equipment. There is no evidence of any vandalism or graffiti. Since the last inspection there have been no exclusions.
23. Relationships within the school are very good. Teachers and pupils relate well to one another and the friendly relaxed and caring manner is built on a basis of mutual respect. Pupils also relate well among themselves, generally listen to and respect each other's views and opinions and are keen to help and support one another. Pupils for whom English is an additional language have the confidence to contribute in class, even when their English is quite limited.
24. Pupils display personal initiative in a variety of ways, such as their work with the school council. They have produced their own school magazine with very little help from the staff and are keen to provide interesting and useful ways through organising competitions to support the school. Many respond positively to opportunities to take responsibility within their own classroom and for older pupils, around the school. They undertake their duties and responsibilities reliably and with pride.
25. Pupils make good contributions to a number of local, national and international charities: these include harvest goods for St Anne's Day Centre, The Bishops Appeal for the Catholic Children's Society, Kosovar refugee appeal, and the Hurricane Appeal. There are very many opportunities with after school clubs for pupils to extend their interests and personal development. These are very well attended and include a wide range of sporting and musical activities and dance.

## 28. **Attendance**

26. Attendance is well above the national average; since the last inspection the level of attendance has been



static.

27. Pupils arrive punctually at school and lessons begin promptly. All teachers register pupils consistently and enquire about absentees. There is a good positive working relationship between the school and parents which contributes to the good attendance pattern across the school. Pupils with special educational needs have as good an attendance record as the rest of the school population and are as punctual.
28. The high attendance rate and prompt start to lessons contributes to the good progress of pupils.

### 31. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

#### 31. Teaching

29. The quality of teaching is good overall and there is little difference between the key stages. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 100 per cent of lessons and in nearly three-quarters it was good. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when 78 per cent of lessons were found to be satisfactory or better.
30. Teaching of the under-fives is good. Teachers have a good understanding of how young children learn and they make good provision for all the areas of learning. A wide range of activities is provided which motivate children so they want to learn. Resources are used effectively and lessons are well prepared so that no time is wasted. Team work in the reception classes is good. Adults are deployed well and the interaction between staff gives children a good model of how adults behave towards one another. Teachers explain what children have to do very clearly and they ask questions that help children to deepen their understanding. This was particularly effective during a session in which children spoke of their weekends. The teacher was not content with the brief descriptions that children gave but she encouraged them to expand on their responses by asking questions.
31. The teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. Specialist staff work effectively, both with individual pupils when they are withdrawn from lessons and in groups in the classroom. Relationships are good and supportive which gives pupils the confidence to respond. Work is well matched to the language needs of the pupils and resources such as games are used well to promote learning. Assessment is used effectively to plan for the next stage of learning. Sometimes, pupils with special educational needs are taught with the pupils for whom English is an additional language. Their needs are often quite different and in one lesson, the progress of pupils for whom English is an additional language was held back by the teacher having to focus on a pupil with special educational needs who was working much more slowly than the rest of the group.
32. Pupils with special educational needs are taught effectively. Specialist staff have a good understanding of the individual needs of the pupils. Support staff work sensitively with pupils in the classroom and ensure that they understand what they have to do. Teachers have copies of individual education plans and use them when planning work.
33. Teaching of English is good at both key stages. Teachers have high expectations of the work they expect pupils to do. This was observed in their use of specialist language, such as *analyse this poem for* and *what kind of character do you think --- is?* Assessment is used well to plan for the next stage of learning for most pupils, but not always for the higher attaining pupils for whom work can be too easy.
34. Teaching is good at both key stages in mathematics. Many teachers ask questions that encourage pupils to think deeply. As in English, teachers have high expectations of the pupils' work. Lessons are well planned and teachers often share the purpose of the lesson with the pupils so they know what is expected of them.

35. In science, teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Teachers plan lessons well so that the tasks match the abilities of the pupils. They use scientific language which encourages pupils to use it themselves and therefore to be precise in their descriptions. There are missed opportunities for practical and investigative work.

36. The teaching of information technology is satisfactory at both key stages. It is taught as a subject in its own right and within other curriculum areas, which ensures that pupils are taught progressively. Design and technology teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. A strength in the teaching is good planning and organisation, particularly with regard to teaching all stages of the design process - designing, making and evaluating.
37. The teaching of history and geography is satisfactory at both key stages. Staff make good use of visits to motivate pupils and to provide them with first hand sources of evidence. In history, staff ask questions which promote historical inquiry. There is an overuse of copying and completing worksheets that demand one answer. These do not encourage pupils to extend their thinking.
38. The teaching of art and music is good overall. In both art and music, the teachers' enthusiasm for the subjects motivates the pupils. The planning of music is good. In art, teachers use the work of famous artists as a stimulus for developing the pupils' own ideas. In physical education, the teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and is good at Key Stage 2. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils will achieve, particularly placing appropriate emphasis on the quality of movement. They also make good use of demonstration by pupils as a model for others and encourage pupils to evaluate the work of others.
39. Generally, teachers have a satisfactory understanding of all the subjects they teach, which enables them to move the pupils' learning forward. In most subjects, pupils are encouraged to use specialist language so that they can talk precisely about their learning. The management of behaviour is good and as a result, pupils are able to listen and learn. Good relationships in all the classes encourage pupils to respond with confidence. Time is used well; for example, in the numeracy hour, resources are ready and the lesson is well planned so that no time is wasted. Teachers are often enthusiastic; in an English lesson, Year 4 pupils studying a school magazine prior to looking at newspapers were highly motivated by the enthusiasm for the idea by the teacher. Similarly, pupils in Year 6 studying artefacts from the 1930s were fired with enthusiasm and produced work of a high quality as a result.
40. Homework is set regularly in English, but is inconsistent in other subjects. This has been recognised by the school and the recent home-school agreement is beginning to improve the consistency. Teachers mark work assiduously but the written comments do not often indicate how the work could be improved.
41. The weaknesses in teaching are similar in all the subjects. Assessment is used well in English and mathematics to plan work for pupils, but in other subjects the use of assessment is inconsistent, particularly with regard to setting work for the high attaining pupils. These pupils are often given work that does not challenge them. In English, although they receive work that is different from that of other pupils, it is sometimes undemanding. As a result, in most subjects, higher attaining pupils sometimes fail to make the progress they should. Another weakness is that pupils' independence is not always fostered in the classroom. They often rely too much on their teachers for information, there is a lack of investigation in mathematics and science and much work is copied.
42. There have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching since the last inspection and most of the points identified for improvement have been successfully tackled, such as low expectations and unsatisfactory use of assessment. There is still some overuse of worksheets and some over-direction.
45. **The curriculum and assessment**
43. Since the last report there have been significant improvements. Schemes of work are now in place for all subjects except geography and history where they are being developed, and assessment is more closely linked to planning. However this needs to be developed further. The curricula for design and technology and information technology have been broadened and the programme of study for history is more closely followed.

44. The school offers a curriculum that is broadly based and reasonably balanced in line with national recommendations. The curriculum for the under-fives is good: teachers plan effectively using the six areas of learning. At Key Stage 2, there is a problem with history and geography which are taught in blocks of time with a gap between. Pupils at Key Stage 2 could not remember what they had learnt in geography as it had been some time since they studied the subject. Statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are satisfactorily met.
45. Equality of access and opportunity in the school is satisfactory. Teachers give good attention to making sure that there is no gender bias. Pupils work well together in mixed gender groups and respect each other's points of view. Pupils from minority groups are integrated well into the school. In all classes, pupils receive equal opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and understanding. On some occasions a few pupils are withdrawn for extra support for literacy which means they miss a few lessons, for example history. Sex education and awareness about the abuse of drugs are provided in a thoughtful, caring and sensitive way through the "Here I am" programme in religious education. In addition the school receives support from the school nurse and the local police, who come to speak to the pupils.
46. The curriculum is appropriately modified for pupils for whom English is an additional language, enabling them to have full access to it. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has a good special educational needs policy, which takes into account the recommendations of the National Code of Practice. Individual education plans are written by the special educational needs co-ordinator after consultation with the class teachers. Teachers use these to provide suitable learning experiences. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and well supported in class. They have full access to the school's out-of-school activities.
47. The school has a "Curriculum Framework", which sets out the parts of the National Curriculum to be included in each year group's work but it does not specify the particular educational experiences to be covered in pupils' topic activities. However the deputy headteacher, supported by senior members of staff, monitors the curriculum to ensure satisfactory planning. With the exception of geography and history all subjects now have a scheme of work and these provide the basis for teachers' plans. There is now a clear progression of skills through the school and this is having a positive impact on standards. The planning and implementation of both the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategy are good; this is having beneficial effects on pupils' learning.
48. The provision of out of school activities is good. The school has made particular efforts to increase the range of activities available. The curriculum is enriched through a residential visit for Year 6 pupils, which involves challenging outdoor physical pursuits as well as academic study skills. There are visits by pupils to places of educational interest and visits to the school by artists, authors and performers. Up to 220 pupils take part in the wide range of out of school activities which include inter-school games and sports, dance club, rugby training, and music activities. Over 60 pupils are receiving instrumental tuition.
49. Procedures for the assessment of English, mathematics and science are good. The school has recently produced a well-written assessment policy, which specifies the range of assessment procedures to be carried out, with the emphasis on English, mathematics and science. On entry to the school the local education authority baseline test is used to provide basic information for the teachers to use in planning their groups and teaching programme. Through the school commercial reading tests are used and teachers carry out their own assessments of pupils' abilities in English, mathematics and science. The school uses national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. All of this information is recorded in individual records of achievement folders. These are valuable sources for teachers. Each pupil has a target setting book, which includes targets in English and mathematics. Assessment in the foundation subjects is less well-structured and unduly dependent upon individual teachers. Assessment is thus not used as well as it should be to inform planning. However the school uses assessment data well in the core subjects to provide realistic targets for pupils' performance in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2. In day-to-day situations, teachers use their skills satisfactorily to provide immediate feedback on the quality of pupils' work which has a positive impact on progress.

The school does not have a formal marking policy, this results in a variation in approach. Written comments often do not indicate how work can be improved. Subject portfolios of pupils' work are being assembled. These will give a good base for teachers to compare standards of completed tasks.

50. The school regularly reviews curriculum and assessment practice. This ensures that good practice is spread through the school.

**53. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

51. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Spiritual development is very well promoted through collective acts of worship, grace, masses and small prayers, which are well planned to provide suitable periods of reflection. This is an even more positive picture than was found during the previous inspection. Parish priests lead a weekly mass on a rota basis. The school is a caring place where the ethos of showing compassion, love and respect for each other and the world is evident. Every class has a spiritually uplifting display, on topics such as making a caring family and helping hands. Discussions in lessons such as religious education, art and music, as well as registration periods, effectively promote pupils' spiritual awareness.
52. The school provides a secure moral framework. All staff set a good example and provide careful moral guidance for pupils in religious education lessons. Relationships are based on mutual respect and trust. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of the difference between right and wrong, which is emphasised by the parish priests.
53. The social ethos is well developed. Pupils are expected to behave well and be aware of the impact their behaviour has upon others. Circle time has been introduced in the last year to support many aspects of pupils' social development. There is a clear policy on behaviour, which is consistently applied by teachers. When given the opportunities the pupils conscientiously undertake responsibilities such as being part of the school council, producing a school newspaper, being register monitors and running stalls at the summer fete. Pupils develop citizenship when they enthusiastically raise money for charities, which in the last year have been for Red Nose Day, St. Vincent De Paul Society and The Bishop's Appeal as well as bringing in harvest gifts for the St Anne's Day Care Centre for the Homeless. The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs take a full part in the school's activities and that they have opportunities to take responsibilities together with other pupils. They receive the full range of provision and are well accepted by their peers.
54. The pupils' knowledge of the culture of this country is well developed. Aspects of work in music, geography, science, art, dance and religious education offer sound opportunities to explore other cultures, but in general, the study of other culture receives less emphasis. There has been some improvement in the teaching of other faiths since the last inspection as topic boxes on four different faiths are used. In history pupils study Ancient Greeks and Egyptians. Visits within the local community make sound contributions to pupils' understanding of history, science and geography, and of their own locality. Local sporting and musical events make good contributions to pupils' cultural development. A school journey to the Isle of Wight develops pupils' geographical, historical and scientific knowledge of other areas.

**57. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

55. The school provides a caring and supportive environment in which pupils feel valued. Provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is good and this is a strength of the school. Teachers know their pupils well and provide good role models for pupils to follow. Since the last inspection the school has worked with governors and teachers to agree a mission statement and identified a vision, which is now being consistently used to the benefit of pupils. The school involves external agencies in the support of pupils with special educational needs whenever this is considered to be helpful. In the case of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties counselling is sometimes arranged.
56. A few parents were concerned about a lack of information about the progress of their children. The school is developing procedures to ensure parents are more aware of pupils' progress throughout the year. This is happening through target setting in English, science, and mathematics and parents are given information on curriculum work at the beginning of each term. Procedures for monitoring the pupils' academic progress are satisfactory, but they are not yet used consistently in all subjects. Parents are encouraged to help with homework and are very pleased with the recent initiative of a reading diary

for home. Pupils understand the system used to mark work and appreciate the importance and value of homework: they respond well to the opportunities for homework although there are few for personal study.

57. In all years, pupils are confident and secure in the knowledge of whom to ask for help, and they are very confident help will be given. Circle time and personal and social education provide a coordinated programme to support all pupils. Teachers fulfil their pastoral commitment to the best advantage for all pupils. Registration time is used purposefully and if needed to deal with social and pastoral matters and this encourages good attitudes for learning. The use of this time sets a good atmosphere and provides a calm start to the school day. Induction procedures are well organised and appreciated by parents. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education by the time they are at the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Learning support staff work closely with the class teachers and parents.
58. Procedures for monitoring behaviour and discipline are good. The school behaviour policy is applied consistently and is fully understood by pupils. Parents have been given a copy of the code of conduct and mission statement, making clear the school's approach. Parents indicated that they feel there is no conflict between the values the school teaches and those encouraged at home.
59. There are good procedures to promote attendance. The school has worked hard to ensure it is making every possible effort to encourage good attendance. The school policy is consistently used and the attendance registers are now being marked in line with government policy. Child protection procedures are addressed very well. The special educational needs co-ordinator is the designated person responsible for child protection issues. Members of staff are aware of procedures to follow. Confidential records are kept and, where appropriate, outside agencies are consulted.
60. Pupils' health and safety awareness is promoted effectively through personal and social education. Procedures to ensure safety in subjects are good: pupils are well informed and understand and follow safety rules in all subjects and around the school generally. First aid is well organised in the school; accidents are recorded and the appropriate people informed. All serious accidents and head injuries are reported to parents and other members of staff are also made aware. Young children who bang their head are given a badge to wear as an extra safety precaution.
61. Health and safety provision in the school environment is good. A policy is monitored by the governors' Health/Safety and Buildings /Grounds Committee. Risk assessment of the grounds and the building is regularly carried out. Equipment is well maintained with recorded checks. There is good provision for the consumption of food and the dining hall provides clean comfortable surroundings for lunchtime eating. The whole school is very clean and well cared for by the helpful and caring site manager and his staff.

64. **Partnership with parents and the community**

62. Overall, the partnership with parents and the community is good. Parents are supportive of the school and nearly 95 per cent of those who responded to the questionnaire indicate they are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school. A few parents come into school regularly and this makes a positive contribution to pupils' progress. Other parents help with swimming and on school visits. Many parents are happy with the work their children are expected to do at home and help with reading, spellings and numeracy activities. However, some parents feel that homework in Key Stage 2 is inconsistently set and marked. The school is aware of this and the recently introduced home/school agreement has improved the consistency in provision.
63. Good information is provided about the school through frequent newsletters which cover achievements, news and forthcoming events. Parents of new pupils to the school receive the very useful home/school agreement. This includes the school's mission statement and offers guidance to help parents become



involved with their children's learning. It also identifies appropriate 'we will' statements which are clear expectations of commitments for the school, the parents and pupils. The prospectus is clearly presented, gives good, clear information about school routines and procedures and meets statutory requirements. The governors' annual report to parents provides a good overview of the school's activities over the past year. Improvements since the previous report are the introduction of yearly curriculum meetings to keep parents informed about areas to be covered in forthcoming work and a half-termly curriculum newsletter. Parents have been kept informed about the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and plans are in hand to inform them about the recently introduced National Numeracy Strategy when monitoring evidence is available. Parents of children who are under five are given a welcome pack which contains useful information as to how they can support their children in school. The parent-teacher association works hard and is very effective in supporting the school, both with social events and financially. Significant sums have been raised in the past year to fund the new library, books and computers for the new information technology suite, planned for later this year.

64. Parents are informed about their children's progress through annual reports which comply with requirements and give clear information on progress in all areas of the curriculum. A number of parents indicate that they would like better evaluation of pupils' performances. The school has recently carried out a review of the quality of its report writing and has identified areas to be improved. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are given early notice of the school's concerns and are always invited to participate in the termly reviews of pupils' individual education plans. Visits are made to the homes of pupils for whom English is an additional language, as many of the parents do not visit the school. Information to these families is not translated into mother tongues, so many families who do not read English have limited access to information about the school. A significant number of parents feel that they have insufficient contact with the governing body. Governors have tried to tackle this and have recently introduced the "governor of the month" whose role is to be the contact governor.
65. The school links with the community are good and make good contributions to pupils' learning and personal development. Visitors from the community, such as the nurse and community police officer, contribute to pupils' learning. Services and Masses are led by the local parish priests. The school enriches pupils' personal development with harvest festival celebrations, helping the homeless with the produce and supporting the Bishop's Lenten Collection. Pupils also visit a local residential nursing home to sing carols at Christmas time. Good use is made of places of historical or geographic interest to support pupils' learning, such as visits to Preston Manor and Drusillas. The school participates successfully in musical workshops and concerts with other local schools. There are few links with industry or commerce.
66. There is very good liaison with cluster schools and the secondary school to which most pupils transfer. Pupils are invited to a good range of activities at the secondary school. On their first day of attendance at the school, new pupils are the only ones present. This ensures that they are familiar with their new teachers and their surroundings at an early stage.

## **69. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **69. Leadership and management**

67. The last inspection found that the school lacked a clear direction, that the school development plan was too broad to be a useful management tool, there was no shared sense of purpose about the curriculum and staff were not involved in decision making. There have been significant improvements in all these areas. Most of the key issues have been successfully tackled and the school is well placed through its new management structures to improve further.
68. The leadership of the school is good overall. The headteacher offers very good leadership. He has set a clear agenda for the school to develop and, with his deputy, has established management structures that give a framework for the operation of the school. His leadership is based upon a concern for the welfare

of staff and pupils, and a commitment to high attainment by the pupils. He has tried to involve all staff in taking decisions about the direction that the school should take. Part of this approach has been to extend the senior management team to include more staff. This team, along with all the staff, have agreed targets for their development. It was too early to make judgements about the effectiveness of the senior management team, as it only began its work in April of this year.

69. The governors have an overview of the school from the headteacher's reports and informal contacts. They are involved in making decisions and are prepared to ask for information or for things to be done, for example a review of staffing following the appointment of the headteacher. They have few formal systems for evaluating the effect of policies or for monitoring the work of the school.
70. Co-ordinators have reviewed their subjects and established priorities for development. They are effective in giving guidance to colleagues. Co-ordinators for English and mathematics have monitored their subjects. Other co-ordinators are as yet, not involved in monitoring their subjects, except for looking at the fortnightly planning.

71. Procedures for monitoring the work of the school have been established and are being developed. All teachers had a personal interview with the headteacher on his appointment to establish areas of strength and for development. Co-ordinators reviewed their subjects. The information gained from these initiatives fed into the school improvement plan which gives good guidance to ensure that the priorities that have been established are met. All staff were involved in its production and governors discussed it at a draft stage. Action plans for each priority are clear. The plan was reviewed recently. All teachers have been monitored teaching the literacy hour by the headteacher, a local adviser and the deputy. It is planned to repeat this for monitoring the introduction of the numeracy initiative into the school. It is also planned to involve more staff from the newly formed senior management team.
72. The ethos of the school is sound overall. Relationships are very good and there is a growing emphasis upon high attainment. The school has successfully implemented its aim which is to respect all within the community of God. The behaviour policy is successfully implemented by all staff.
73. The management of the provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. The deputy headteacher works with the external agency to ensure that the provision is used effectively. There is good liaison between class teachers and the external specialist teacher.
74. Equally, the management of the provision for special educational needs is good. A clear structure has been established which ensures that pupils receive appropriate attention. Additional teachers and ancillary staff have been provided. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator. The statutory requirements for assessing and recording need are met. Support provided by external agencies is well managed.
75. The school meets all statutory requirements.

78. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

76. The provision of staff, accommodation and learning resources is good overall. The arrangements for induction, appraisal and professional development are very good. Accommodation is generally satisfactory and the provision of learning resources is adequate.
77. The match of number, qualifications and experience of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is good. This includes staff for pupils with special educational needs, for pupils learning English as an additional language and for children who are under five. There is a good balance of experienced and recently qualified teachers. There is also a good number of well qualified support staff who make a positive contribution to the pupils' learning. Although classes are relatively large in Key Stage 2, the school has recently devised strategies to use additional teaching staff and classroom assistants to reduce class sizes and to raise standards. There are good arrangements for the provision of non-teaching staff.
78. Teachers in the school are aware of the special educational needs that pupils may have and have received some training in the stages of the national Code of Practice. The school has provided a good number of teachers and ancillary classroom support staff to support pupils with special educational needs; but although access to accommodation and external areas is satisfactory, a pupil with physical disabilities would have difficulty coping with some of the staircases. Resources to support their learning are good and include a range of computer programs.
79. Students, parents and other volunteers are effectively used within classrooms. They are well briefed by the staff; this promotes continuity of learning for pupils and gives small group help where required. The school secretaries, site manager, cleaning staff, mid-day supervisors and kitchen staff are all hard-working and committed. They all make a positive contribution to the ethos of the school and to the quality of education provided.

80. A new management structure was put into place in the Spring of 1998, together with review of staffing responsibilities and the introduction of clearly defined roles and job descriptions. As a result, the staff now form an effective team. There is a feeling among staff that their contributions are valued by the management and that individual members all matter equally. There is determination to move the school forward and to continue to raise standards for all pupils at the school.
81. There is a close link between appraisal, the school improvement plan and the in-service training available to teachers. A new policy for appraisal was agreed by all staff in the summer term of 1999 and appraisal is up to date. In this respect, the school has effectively addressed the issue from the first inspection report. Training needs for the individual teachers are carefully identified and matched to the school needs and to national initiatives such as the implementation of literacy and numeracy strategies. These have involved teaching and non-teaching staff. They all attend a large number of training courses which are well documented by the deputy headteacher who is the school's co-ordinator for professional development.
82. The school has established suitable induction procedures for new staff, including newly qualified teachers where necessary. There is an effective mentor to support and guide new members of staff that includes the induction of student teachers when they work in the school. The expertise of staff is carefully used to provide specialist teaching. Collectively, these arrangements make a strong contribution to the effectiveness of the work of the school.
83. The accommodation is satisfactory overall but has limitations, such as steep stairs and classrooms on different floors. The school makes very good use of all available accommodation and there are plans to improve areas such as the library and to establish a computer suite. Several parts of the school have already been improved. Paintwork and other fabric is in good condition. The accommodation is further enhanced through pupils' work which is attractively displayed in all classrooms, corridors and the halls. Hard areas have good, safe surfaces. The playing fields are on site and form a good facility for physical activities. There is a newly established room specifically designated for pupils with special educational needs and for small group teaching. In addition, there is a suitable room for specialist music tuition which is extensively used by the staff. The premises are clean and well maintained. As a result of all these arrangements, the school is an effective learning environment.
84. Learning resources are satisfactory overall. There are adequate resources for the implementation of the literacy hour, but there are some shortages, particularly with regard to dictionaries and thesauruses for some year groups. The school has, nevertheless, spent a considerable amount of the budget on books and funds are presently being set up, in conjunction with parents and the community, to provide library books. Good use is made of the schools' library service. Resources for information technology, physical education and design technology have been significantly improved since the first inspection when they were identified as unsatisfactory or barely adequate. Resources for mathematics and early years have been successfully developed since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. Resources for music are particularly good and very well used by staff and pupils. All learning resources are carefully stored, well labelled and easily accessible. The school makes good use of carefully planned educational visits; there are numerous visitors to the school, including three parish priests, who are regularly involved in the life of the school. All these factors have a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning at Cottesmore School.

87. **The efficiency of the school**

85. Financial planning is satisfactory with some good features. The school improvement plan (SIP) covers a three year period, sets targets and identifies who is responsible for seeing that appropriate action is taken in the various aspects of running the school. The plan includes specific targets in each of the curriculum areas and this helps to focus on raising standards. The school improvement plan does not attach a cost to each of the school's priorities but this information is available in other documentation. The governors are aware of their financial responsibilities and participate in the formulating of the SIP. They receive and consider regular financial reports from the headteacher. They are beginning to evaluate the

effectiveness of spending on the priorities in the SIP, for example on the “booster classes” but this process is in its infancy. Since the last inspection some improvements in financial planning have taken place - for example it is now more fully shared but there is still a need to evaluate more regularly whether value for money has been achieved.

86. Prudent spending in the past has enabled the school to carry forward an appropriate amount of money to meet unforeseen circumstances. Funds received for pupils with special educational needs are spent correctly on sufficient teachers and classroom assistants. Earmarked funds for staff training are used effectively. The money that is provided for pupils for whom English is an additional language is used effectively.
87. The deployment of teaching and support staff is good. Teachers’ expertise is matched well to their subject responsibilities, the different age groups and teaching in ability groups. Classroom assistants are used well to support pupils with special educational needs. Time is used well, with lessons beginning and ending promptly. Teachers make good use of resources and accommodation. All the space in the school is used effectively to enhance attainment, although the library is at present out of use due to its impending refurbishment.
88. Financial controls and school administration are good. The governors’ Finance and General Purpose Committee meets regularly to receive financial reports from the headteacher which are based on good data. The most recent audit by the local education authority praised many aspects of the school’s financial administration but some weaknesses in procedures were identified. These included the need for the school’s unofficial funds to be audited, an up to date inventory check to be carried out, procedures for ordering and invoicing to be tighter and records of governors’ and staff’s pecuniary interests to be kept. The school has addressed these issues satisfactorily. The school’s financial assistant and school secretary are highly efficient and appropriately free the headteacher to work with pupils and teachers. The school raises a good level of additional income from activities organised by the Parent Teacher Association and parents contribute to the governors’ fund for maintaining the building. This fund is regularly audited.
89. Bearing in mind its pattern of income and expenditure, the quality of the intake, educational standards achieved, the good attitudes of the pupils and the improvements made, the school is currently providing good value for money. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

## **92. PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **92. AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

90. Since the last inspection the accommodation has been improved, one classroom has been redecorated and the toilets have been completely refurbished. The outside play area has been improved with several new bikes and scooters being purchased. The number of artefacts on display around the classrooms has increased and they are now changed frequently.
91. Children under five are taught in a specialist reception department. The reception children attend for a morning session, until the term that they are five years old, when they become full-time pupils. They are mainly taught by three teachers and supported by two classroom assistants. Pupils' attainment on entry is slightly above average. The majority of pupils can tell you what colour objects are. They can recognise their names as they put things away in their named trays and on their coat hooks. They know how to use a book and that words and pictures have meaning. There are good procedures for initial assessments, which are well interpreted, inform planning to some extent and aid detection of pupils with special educational needs. An informative record sheet is in use and is passed on to the next class teacher. The types of activities undertaken by the children are soundly monitored and recorded.

#### **Language and literacy**

92. Most reception children make good progress, they attain the desirable learning outcomes and a significant number work in the lower levels of the National Curriculum. Children for whom English is an additional language make good progress. Children have good listening skills and listened attentively to teachers when they were reading stories about the Three Bears. Good links with mathematics are made, as when pupils discussed the small, medium and large bears' heights. They sit quietly, follow instructions carefully, put up their hands and answer questions enthusiastically about objects beginning with the letter "P". They practise writing the letter "p" using pencils, draw pictures of objects beginning with the letter "p" and use a picture dictionary to copy words and spell them correctly. They trace over pictures and form lines by joining dots. They use role-play, for instance when they pretend to be taking orders in Clever Cat's Cafe and give out imitation food. Although role-play is used, it is limited by a lack of support material. Children develop writing skills, when they use emergent writing to produce invitations and write about paintings, describing what they do when physically active. Staff speak to children encouragingly and use praise to good effect. They talk to children about what they are doing and often ask challenging questions, which make pupils think deeply about tasks. Teaching is always at least good and sometimes very good, partly due to very good planning and high expectations of the pupils' ability to cope with demanding language work through literacy lessons.

#### **Mathematics**

93. Children in the reception classes make good progress, and as in English, many work within the lower levels of the national Curriculum for mathematics. They are developing their knowledge of number well. Most can recognise the numbers one to five. They can roll a dice, recognise and say aloud the numbers up to six. They can sing delightful number rhymes with alternative words. The majority can match cards accurately. A small group of children can thread beads, make simple patterns and are aware of more than and less than. They make good progress when they match shapes, cut them out and stick them down, as well as when they roll and cut playdough into a range of shapes. The teaching is very good. A strength of this teaching is very good planning at an appropriate level, incorporating assessment tasks and a variety of activities to stimulate the children. However, there is scope for even more use of extension activities and investigation challenges for the most able pupils. Further in-service training for teachers on how to manage practical group work for pupils with different abilities would enhance mathematical progress. There is sound long-term planning in place.

#### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

94. The children make good progress when they discuss foods and drinks which are bad and good for you; and give their own reasons. The teaching is good and resources are well-chosen, enabling quality conversation to develop around the theme. They discuss the needs of pets with an RSPCA officer. Stories are used well and incorporate the pet care theme creatively. During the inspection pupils carried out an interesting investigation to discover which are the best conditions for washing hands. A nature table invited pupils to touch a good variety of objects collected from the grounds. Children use the computer to type letters of the alphabet satisfactorily. However, there is no concept keyboard available for reception children to use and keys show only the uppercase alphabet. They also used tape recorders and headsets to listen to their favourite stories, such as “The Three Little Pigs”.

### **Physical development**

95. Children in the reception class have good opportunities to play with large or wheeled apparatus in their own walled playground. However, this outside play area is rather dull. They make good progress in developing motor skills when they go into the school hall and move around, finding their own space to carry out tasks which increase body control. The teaching is good in lessons which emphasise the different ways you can make tiny and spiky shapes and move around the room, forming these shapes at certain points. They make sound progress in learning to use scissors when they cut out rectangles of paper.

### **Creative development**

96. Good progress is made in developing creative skills and the majority of children will reach the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five. A sound variety of experiences have been planned for the children. In reception there is a pretend cafe, where children can invite others to have a meal or cup of tea. They develop good observational drawing skills, especially when they draw alligators and also when they paint pictures of themselves doing a variety of physical activities. They create pictures of their faces using pastels, felt and wool. The children develop skills when they create pictures of fireworks using wax crayons and paint on black paper. They create textured pictures of their homes and draw their families inside. They make collages of imaginary cats using a variety of materials including coloured squares, crepe paper and straws. They make good progress in music when they tap the beat on different parts of the body while singing “Hickory Dickory Dock” and also when they use percussion instruments to make appropriate sound effects in a story, such as a person running.

### **Personal and social development**

97. The children make good progress in reception and most will reach the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five. They quickly become accustomed to the school environment and are well prepared for entry into the main school. Children in reception work well together and share the computer fairly. They co-operate and hand pencils to others. They look after each other, for example, helping to bring a toy pram out of the corner for a friend. They have positive attitudes to learning and join in activities happily, particularly enjoying the reading of Big Books together. They now have circle time regularly where they discuss many personal and social topics. They show independence, often choosing from a selection of materials on the making table. The teaching is based on establishing friendly relationships between children and with adults. The children understand the difference between right and wrong.

100.  
**MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

**ENGLISH,**

100. **English**

98. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with levels of attainment in English which are above those expected for five year olds with the exception of writing skills, which are in line. They make good progress in relation to their prior attainment through both key stages and their levels of attainment are above average by the time they are seven and eleven. National Curriculum tests in 1998 indicate that in reading, pupils' levels of attainment are well above average, and in writing, attainment is above average in Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, National Curriculum test results show pupils' performance was close to the national average. When 1998 results are compared with those of pupils in schools with similar backgrounds, pupils' performance in the reading tests was well above average, and in writing, it was close to the average, at Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' performance was close to the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Taking the three years, 1996 to 1998 together, the figures show that the performance of Key Stage 2 pupils in English was above the national average. Statistical evidence suggests that the performance of boys in English was above the national average, but for girls it was close to the national average.
99. Since the first inspection report in 1996, the school's overall standards of attainment in English are above average, sustaining the standards achieved at that time. Pupils' overall progress in the school at that time was deemed to be satisfactory; it is now good. Following a close analysis of 1998 National Curriculum tests results, the school set specific targets for each pupil in English and subsequently implemented the School Improvement Plan. These initiatives were undertaken in conjunction with the introduction of the literacy hour. In addition, the school has successfully tackled the issues regarding standards in writing and differences of attainment between girls and boys in English. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils' levels of attainment exceed the national average.
100. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them, and whilst for some pupils attainment is below average, nevertheless, a significant percentage of them achieve standards nearer the national norm. Direct and appropriate teaching of specific skills helps these pupils to make good progress in English. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and those for whom English is a second language also make good progress; as a result, their levels of attainment are generally above average. There are now no significant variations in rates of progress of boys and girls. Higher attaining pupils generally make sound progress, but as yet they are not often provided with consistently challenging work to meet their specific needs. As a result, the levels of attainment do not reflect their abilities. The school accepts this and has planned to tackle this area.
101. Literacy levels are generally good and support pupils' learning in other subjects. Pupils' work shows growing competence in reading and writing across all subjects of the curriculum. However, opportunities for using these skills are sometimes lost because pupils are required to merely copy from worksheets or the blackboard, as was observed in many subjects. At both key stages, pupils use information technology to practise and extend their literacy skills, but as yet, they do not plan, draft or edit their writing on the screen.
102. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards of speaking and listening are above average. Pupils are confident and fluent speakers. This helps them to cope with their work and enables them to answer questions in class and to participate in discussions. They offer their own observations about their reading, predict what will happen in the stories and take turns to speak. Pupils listen to one another's contributions and observations; they explain meanings of words clearly and distinctly. A very good example was observed at the time of the inspection when Year 2 pupils talked about alliteration and gave a definition of the term as 'words beginning with the same letter'. They compare the verse from 'Billy Button' with other poems, describing word endings, identifying punctuation marks and explaining the need for an apostrophe 'because there is a letter missing in the word'.
103. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards of speaking and listening are above those expected nationally. Pupils use examples from their literature to illustrate their meanings, when discussing texts. They are able to exemplify what is fact and opinion, as observed in Year 4 when pupils substantiated their answers from their reading of texts. Further examples were observed in other classes, notably in year 6, when pupils explained lucidly and concisely the difference between being an evacuee and a refugee.



104. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards of reading are above average. Pupils read fluently and with considerable confidence and accuracy. They read and follow instructions for their work. Most pupils read independently by the age of seven, discuss their favourite books and give reasons for choosing them. They can recall the stories that they have read and define the main points of texts, as observed in their shared and guided reading. They are aware of the contents page and understand how to use the index. They use the correct terminology such as 'long vowel phonemes'. Most pupils can employ a whole range of reading cues to correct their own mistakes.
105. By the end of Key Stage 2, reading standards exceed the national average. Pupils enjoy and understand what they read and talk about the characters in their books. Pupils read for different purposes and can adopt appropriate strategies for the task, including skimming to gain an overall impression and scanning to locate information. They use dictionaries and thesauruses when required to aid their understanding. Pupils use their skills in other subjects, notably in history and in religious education. There are some good examples in all classes where pupils show competence in locating and abstracting relevant information to support their work. Pupils often choose books by authors, and by the end of the key stage they have experienced a wide and varied range of literature, including poetry. For example, they quote Kipling, Anna Sewell and modern children's writers such as J.K. Rowling. A significant percentage of pupils demonstrate a mature understanding of different layers of meaning in their reading. These pupils' attainment is well above average.
106. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in writing are average overall. However, there is a significant proportion of pupils whose writing shows some weaknesses, particularly in the formation and linking of sentences. Nevertheless, pupils work in a range of forms including stories, poems, instructions and factual accounts, for example, following their visits. They transfer these skills to other subjects, as observed in Year 2, where pupils wrote prayers for their assembly. In their writing, pupils demonstrate their knowledge of the sound and spelling systems, which they use well in their work. Pupils' handwriting and presentation are average, but there are a number of them whose writing is even, fluent and joined. Most pupils have successfully laid the foundation of good handwriting by the time they enter Key Stage 2.
107. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards of writing are average, with a significant proportion of pupils achieving standards which are above average. Pupils write in a range of styles and for different purposes including stories, poems, journals, newspaper articles and dialogues. Pupils develop, organise and communicate ideas in their carefully constructed sentences. There are good examples of extended writing in English which show that pupils can arrange their writing in paragraphs. They employ a wide range of punctuation marks correctly, including the apostrophe. Pupils spell and use complex, regular and irregular polysyllabic words and use these confidently in English and across the curriculum. Standards of handwriting and presentation are above average; pupils' handwriting is joined, neat, fluent and in ink.
108. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 in relation to prior attainment. In speaking and listening, pupils acquire and use new vocabulary such as 'alliterative' to show which words begin with the same sound. They show confidence in talking in front of their class in their literacy sessions and speak clearly when asked to explain their work, for example in art when drawing stringed instruments from observation. Another very good example was observed in Year 2 in music, when pupils explained the importance of pauses in their rhythmic work and appraised each other's performance.
109. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in speaking and listening. Some very good examples were seen in all classes during literacy sessions when pupils confidently discussed styles of writing or effective use of vocabulary by authors or poets. In Year 3, pupils explained differences between prose and poetry, and in Year 4, pupils talked about their 'powerful' words and why these were particularly apt. Year 5 expressed clearly the style or the characteristics of the poem, 'Dreamers'. Good examples of discussions were observed in Year 6, when pupils contributed observations about being an evacuee, using an increasingly varied vocabulary with clarity and confidence. Drama is well used in

both key stages to encourage speaking and listening. Information technology is used to consolidate spelling, but at present, it is insufficiently used for reading and writing in English. Teachers take opportunities to increase pupils' vocabulary and understanding in other subjects; a very good example of this was observed in a Year 3 class when the teacher asked for the alternative word of *synonym* in mathematics and pupils offered *inverse*.

110. Pupils make good progress in reading in Key Stage 1. Their reading is well supported through regular reading at home. Pupils' progress is further enhanced by the home-school reading records which are consistently maintained in all classes. They enjoy books and read texts accurately and with understanding. Their reading is fluent, expressive and accurate. Pupils make good use of their knowledge of letter sounds and a growing vocabulary to develop their reading. The strong focus on reading in the literacy hour enables pupils to make good progress in acquiring reading skills.
111. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in reading. They read with confidence, obvious enthusiasm and for pleasure. Pupils show understanding of complex texts and often explain the authors' intentions, showing mature understanding of the text. They show increasing ability to abstract required information from their reading efficiently.
112. In writing, pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, and at Key Stage 2 their progress is good. Throughout the school, there is evidence that pupils' progress has improved significantly with the implementation of the literacy hour. Through their guided writing, pupils acquire writing skills which they are beginning to transfer to other subjects successfully. Their progress is accelerated through good teaching and the efficient support that pupils receive from classroom assistants in all year groups. Very good strategies have been put into effect following a close analysis of National Curriculum tests. As a result, the school has successfully introduced lessons for creative writing, where pupils are given planned opportunities to practise, consolidate and extend the newly learned skills. Precision in the use of terminology and attention to detail are consistently emphasised by teachers in English and in other subjects. As a result, pupils are learning to improve the quality of their writing. Enthusiastic teaching of English is an additional factor for improved progress throughout the school. In one lesson, following a study of blank verse, modelled on the 'Dreamers', one pupil wrote the following:

*My mum would dream of not being a house  
wife. She would be walking in the Himalayas,  
Alps and Canadian Mountains. She'll be walking along  
Irish lakes and up long hills of tall pines  
and she would travel to the jungle too.*

113. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to English are good and this has a positive impact on the progress they make. They sustain concentration and they are developing good study habits. They listen carefully and courteously and take pleasure when reading or re-telling their stories. Pupils are often observed to be absolutely engrossed in their work. Pupils enjoy the effect of words, as observed in Year 5, where there was palpable excitement when they were writing their own poems. They show respect for the ideas and efforts of others. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, respond well to the activities provided for them in reading and writing and contribute to discussions.
114. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages, with very good and occasionally excellent teaching. These lessons were characterised by brisk pace, challenging tasks, high expectations and infectious enthusiasm. As a result, pupils' progress is accelerated in all aspects of the language. Teachers show good subject knowledge and understanding of English to teach and link together the skills of oracy and literacy systematically; they use these skills effectively in teaching the appropriate programmes of study and plan opportunities to reinforce and extend skills in subjects across the curriculum. Support staff, students and teachers' assistants are used effectively throughout the school. Planning, which is done together, is thorough. There is good liaison between staff which promotes continuity of learning and progression. There are good procedures for assessment; information from these is carefully recorded

and used for planning and to set targets. Another strength of these arrangements is the pupils' involvement in target setting. Marking is regular and kept up to date with a few good comments on how pupils may improve their work. However, not all teachers suggest in writing how the work may be developed or improved. The higher attaining pupils are not, as yet, provided with challenging work to meet their specific needs. The school is aware of this and is presently tackling this issue and that of encouraging independent learning. Homework is set regularly; this supports and extends pupils' learning in the subject. Parents are involved in their children's learning and give good support at home.

115. The subject is very well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator for English who leads by example through her high quality teaching skills. She monitors teaching and learning in English and shares her findings with teachers. The findings are systematically documented, targets for improvement are set and the outcomes are subsequently evaluated. This is undertaken in conjunction with the headteacher who keeps an overview of progress throughout the school.
116. Statutory requirements are met. Teachers' plans cover the National Literacy Strategy well, in conjunction with the National Curriculum Programmes of study. There is a portfolio of pupils' work that has been given a level, a date and comments written on each piece. This offers teachers good guidance when they assess the work of the pupils.
117. Resources for the implementation of the literacy hour are adequate for each class. However, the library stock is unsatisfactory both in quantity and quality for the size of the school. Nevertheless, the staff make good use of the library service provided by the local authority. At present, appeals are being made to parents and the local community to provide books for all sections of the library.

120. **Mathematics**

118. Since the last inspection the whole school staff has undertaken further training for the numeracy strategy, which they have established well. Some teachers have been out to observe leading mathematics teachers in other schools. The quality of teaching has improved throughout the school. Assessment has also been developed with greater emphasis being placed on how to carry out long, medium and short-term assessment. Resources have also been improved; many classrooms now have number lines and number cards for pupils to use.
119. At the time of the last inspection standards of achievement were above average for Key Stage 1 and 2. There has been an improvement as attainment is now well above the national average at both key stages. Also when compared to those of similar schools, results are well above average for the two key stages. The school has made a good start with the numeracy strategy and it has begun to enhance standards in mental mathematics.
120. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils understand number very well. A strength of their work is in number activities. They use their number bonds to ten carefully. They can add and subtract amounts of money up to and over a pound, recording it in pounds with a decimal point. They can count in tens to five hundred. They use measurement very well when they record taller and shorter objects. They can measure objects using a tape measure split into ten centimetre sections. They can use subtraction skills to work out the length of teddy bears limbs, then measure, mark and cut them out accurately. Homework is used particularly well.
121. A strength of the work in Key Stage 2 is data handling and attainment is high at the end of the key stage. Pupils draw good bar graphs showing their bed times. They draw very good line graphs to demonstrate the relationship between inches and centimetres. They mark points and join dots for themselves. They create good pie charts of particular cars and answer appropriate questions about the chart. They use tally marks to record favourite sports, with a good key, and create bar graphs using the information. Many use probability scales to predict and record a variety of possibilities. Most use number very well when they carry out addition with three and four digit numbers vertically, they round numbers well to the nearest ten and hundred. Their skills of multiplication are very good. They add money well when totals amount to between fifty and a hundred pounds. They use fractions well when they work out equivalents, subtract simple fractions and convert them to percentages. They use shape thoughtfully when they make games up which give you the properties and ask you to guess the shape. They can measure accurately when given a triangle and asked to find the perimeter and when asked to estimate and measure objects. They investigate symmetry well, for example when pupils are asked to draw as many shapes as they can on a dot matrix with at least one axis of symmetry. They carry out good work on time when they figure out problems. However there should be further use of different tasks for pupils of different attainment, and especially for the higher attaining.
122. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in number when they order the digits from one to twenty, and count on and back between two and five figures. They can use their number bonds to twenty and can double or halve numbers. They make good progress with shape when they guess three-dimensional objects having been given one property and say the name aloud. Also, good progress is made when they classify these shapes using mathematical properties. A strength of their work is in shape activities. They make very good progress with shape when they investigate which shapes will roll and which will not. They understand the difference between a curved and a straight line. They can make a repeat pattern with coloured shapes and name the shape. They make teddy head bands, measuring their heads carefully. They make very good progress when they make shapes using three smaller and different shapes. They make sound progress in investigation overall but greater opportunities should be planned to develop these skills in both key stages.
123. Pupils in Key Stage 2 also make good progress when they can write numbers in figures and words, as well as find the easiest route to work out problems and check their answers. They can explain the value of digits in a six-figure number. They add and take away accurately from numbers with four digits. They know their seven times table in Year 6 and can explore the fourteen times table. They can order

simple fractions and give their equivalents. They can convert simple decimals to fractions and find ten percent of a number. They make good progress with shape when they list objects which are symmetrical and draw symmetrical patterns having been given half. They make good progress with data handling when they use a probability scale and justify their reasons for choice. They can find the range, mode and interpret information from graphs.

124. The pupils respond well to lessons. They show an interest in all topics and behave well in class. However there are some occasions where pupils are not concentrating well in mental warm up activities. They co-operate well together and share resources. This contributes positively to the good progress pupils make in lessons.
125. The teaching is always good and sometimes very good. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was sound or good. It has improved since the successful introduction of the numeracy strategy. All members of staff have completed appropriate training for the strategy and more is planned. The good teaching during the inspection accounts for the progress. Lessons are very well planned with clear learning objectives and a good balance between whole-class teaching and group or individual work. There are sound plenary sessions, which draw together and consolidate what has been learnt, but further training on this aspect would enhance teaching. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations and use praise well. Teachers often share the purpose of the lesson with pupils at the outset and so make clear what they should achieve. Teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. They also use open-ended questioning to deepen pupils' thinking. Good use is made of time and the best lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Learning support assistants support lower attaining pupils well and help them to reach the targets set for them in their individual education plans.
126. The mathematics co-ordinator also leads the development of numeracy, with support from two members of staff. The subject is effectively led by the co-ordinator, but greater opportunities to be familiar with work in Key Stage 2 are needed. The co-ordinator monitors the curriculum well, and has produced a very good portfolio of pupils' work which gives good guidance for assessment. Assessment is used to good effect.
127. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons. Sometimes they are taught in small groups by a specialist teacher and make good progress when they compile tally charts, finding the modal size and range of sizes of shoes.
128. The curriculum is well planned due to the numeracy strategy planning, which gives a good coverage of the National Curriculum each year and builds in progression of work throughout the school.

131.       **Science**

129. In the national tests in 1998 at Key Stage 1, attainment was above the national average and above the average for similar schools. Results at the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that the average levels pupils attained in science were broadly in line both with the national average and in comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Over the three years 1996 to 1998, attainment has been above the national average. The results in tests during the current year have shown some improvement at both key stages and are higher now than when the school was last inspected. Inspection evidence shows that standards achieved by pupils are above the national averages at both key stages.
130. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have an understanding of sources of light, for example the sun, electricity and fire. They know that light can be split up into bands of colour using a prism. They also have an understanding of the different sources of sound and that sound becomes fainter the further you are from the source. They are able to make simple comparisons of sounds and also pinpoint sounds by listening carefully. They respond positively to teachers' suggestions for finding things out and they are able to make their own suggestions. Pupils make predictions and record their observations using drawings and completing tables using a guiding worksheet. They are not yet clear about how you decide

if a test is fair.

131. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have an understanding of a fair test, make predictions and record their observations in a table. A large majority of the pupils are able to draw a line graph to illustrate what they have found out, for example a graph plotting temperature against time in testing heat insulators. They write reports in a scientific manner and use scientific vocabulary well. Pupils have a good knowledge of properties and aspects of materials and can classify them using this information. They have an understanding of separation methods and the more able can give examples of chemical reactions.
132. Pupils' progress is good at both key stages. Their scientific vocabulary is extended and their knowledge is built upon from year to year. For example, in Year 1 pupils sort materials by simple appearance, for example whether they are shiny or hard. In Year 3 they sort materials by their properties and whether they are natural or man made and they investigate how heating can change materials. In Year 6 they separate materials using a variety of techniques including sieving and filtration. The progress is good because activities are well matched to the abilities of the pupils and class discussion is used to clarify and consolidate the learning. In practical tasks pupils work at a good pace and this helps them build upon previous knowledge and extend their learning in new situations.
133. Pupils' attitudes are good and have a positive impact on their attainment and progress. Pupils pay close attention to the teacher and are keen to answer the teacher's questions. They behave well, show interest in their work and enjoy the practical nature of the subject. Pupils relate well to each other and to adults, maximising the benefits of group work. They take pride in presenting their work well.
134. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. When teaching is at its best lessons are well planned, the teacher has secure subject knowledge and sets an appropriate pace and resources are used effectively. Teachers use questions well to probe pupils' knowledge and to bring about greater understanding. Good relationships between the teacher and pupils promote pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Praise and encouragement motivate pupils to do their best. Teachers give pupils helpful advice about how they can improve their work. In the best lessons they reinforce what the pupils have learned by revising the teaching points for a few minutes before the lesson finishes. In less successful lessons, class control is less firm, the teacher is insecure in his/her subject knowledge and opportunities for pupils to carry out their own experiments are missed. Sometimes, teachers over-direct the work of pupils. Teachers work hard to provide attractive classroom displays concerning science topics but few examples of pupils' work are included.
135. Management of science in the school is good. The co-ordinator has monitored teachers' planning and some pupils' work in order to evaluate the effectiveness of provision. The school has adopted the local authority's recommended scheme of work and has a good programme of assessment of pupils' attainment, which provides the school with useful information. The co-ordinator has started to accumulate a portfolio of pupils' work, which will assist teachers in making judgements concerning pupils' attainment. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and is enriched by educational visits. Resources are good, well organised and used effectively. The subject promotes pupils' literacy skills through the introduction of a science vocabulary and through writing reports of scientific investigations. Numeracy skills are consolidated through data collection and the drawing of graphs associated with pupils' work. Information technology is under-used in science lessons.
136. Since the last inspection significant improvements have been made. Standards in the subject are higher, the school now has a scheme of work to assist teachers in planning for pupils' progress, more resources have been provided, and assessment procedures have been introduced. A subject portfolio of assessed work is being introduced to give guidance about assessment. However, pupils need to be given still further opportunities to plan and carry out their own investigations.

## OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

### 139. Information technology

137. Attainment by the majority of pupils in information technology matches national standards at the end of both key stages, with a small minority of pupils exceeding expected levels by the end of Key Stage 2.
138. This shows significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be below expected levels and there were insufficient opportunities provided for pupils in information technology. These improvements are the result of the creation of a new scheme of work, good support from the co-ordinator to increase staff confidence and expertise, and better teaching to provide a wider range of experiences for pupils. The impact of these improvements has been a significant rise in standards.
139. From an early age, pupils learn how to operate computers. They use the keyboard accurately and acquire a range of basic technological skills. Year 1 pupils follow instructions well and a good number of them successfully demonstrate how to reinforce knowledge of numbers and sequencing of patterns. Good use is made of listening stations to develop pupils' enjoyment of literature. Many Year 2 pupils know how to use 'delete', 'capitals' and punctuation keys when creating and editing their poems and stories in literacy work. Early control skills are effectively developed through the use of a Roamer floor model. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils attain expected standards.
140. At Key Stage 2, all pupils use their own personal disks to save a range of completed work and incomplete work for further amendment. This is demonstrated in Year 3 when pupils design their geography folders and in Year 4 when pupils gather information about the Tudors. Older pupils make good links with mathematics, when using data handling programs to present their findings about surveys for example of favourite books and films. Word processing skills are extended when pupils write poems about 'Colonel Fazackerley' and design posters for Harvest Festival. They change the style, size and colour of print to enhance presentation and make good use of punctuation and grammar to support work in literacy. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils attain expected standards with a small minority attaining levels higher than expected when using CD-Rom information sources and accessing the Internet. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make good progress due to the good support provided, and a small number attain expected standards.
141. Throughout Key Stage 1, most pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their early technological skills, including word processing, floor models and tape recorders. They systematically improve their use of the mouse control and the keyboard. Throughout Key Stage 2, most pupils make satisfactory progress, making systematic gains in knowledge, understanding and the use of technology, accessing and closing programs from floppy disk or hard drive, saving and printing their work without assistance. A few pupils make good progress and develop greater interest and extend their skills at home.
142. Pupils enjoy using computers and other technological equipment. They work with enthusiasm and trust. They work quietly and efficiently at computers and think out solutions to problems for themselves. They are confident in the use of computers and sustain their concentration well, over long periods of time. Pupils relate well to each other and to adults. In formal teaching situations they listen carefully to instructions about new techniques, and participate well in question and answer sessions.
143. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. Teachers and support staff have a sound knowledge of computing and are beginning to plan appropriate links with other curriculum subjects, such as literacy, mathematics, science and history. This has been achieved through the good work of the co-ordinator in developing a three-year action plan for the subject. Good use is made of time and

resources with efficient organisation of computers. Teachers provide well-planned activities and a good balance between direct teaching and pupils developing their own interests. Learning objectives are shared with pupils to provide appropriate challenge and to support self-evaluation. Pupils are organised into groups of mixed ability and gender and this successfully promotes their social development.

144. Information technology is supported by a new scheme of work, covering a wide range of skills. There is broad coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study, with clear progression of skills identified. The school has a good number of computers and, in many classes, these are used well to integrate learning across most of the curriculum. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator provides good leadership. Recent development of information technology has improved staff confidence. Through its action plan, the school intends to complete the construction of a new information technology suite and purchase a new network of hardware to provide a better range of experiences and raise standards even further.

147.

147.

### **Art**

145. At both key stages, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress throughout school. Pupils at Key Stage 1 experiment with a variety of sketching pencils to draw their stringed instruments from observation. They use shading techniques with considerable success. They transfer their skills and techniques to design and technology when they make familiar musical instruments, such as drums and maracas. In Key Stage 2, pupils select materials such as fabrics, feathers, straw, felt and sand paper to create imaginary animals or monsters. These skills are developed further in collages which use a variety of materials, including shining objects to encourage recognition of light and its effect on objects. Pupils also use different media such as marbling. The work in the styles of Klimt, Van Gogh and Cezanne is of particularly high standard. Portraits using pastels show that pupils have an understanding of artists' work and can apply it to their own. Observations of the changes to the skyline as the light fades illustrate pupils' ability to experiment with colour to create a mood. When appraising their work, pupils articulate their observations clearly and offer ways of improving their designs to produce the desired effect.

146. At both key stages there are many strengths in art. Skills of drawing, painting and the use of pastels are well developed. Observational drawings are of a high quality. The school has improved on the standards since the first inspection when it was judged that pupils' attainment was in line with national expectations. Sufficient time is given to the teaching of art. At present, pupils in Key Stage 2 use information technology for art. The school is planning to increase this use into Key Stage 1, once the new information technology resources are in place. Pupils' sketch books show progression in skills across all aspects of art.

147. Pupils have good attitudes to learning in art across both key stages. In the lessons seen, pupils concentrated well to produce work to the best of their ability. In Year 2, pupils observed their stringed instruments and were completely absorbed in their drawing. During the plenary session, they offered ideas on how their work might be improved. When appraising the work of others, pupils do so with sensitivity. At Key Stage 2 when drawing bottles from memory, pupils listened carefully to the teacher's instructions, followed them and kept to the allocated time. They compared critically these sketches with those completed from observation. Pupils share resources amicably and replace these in the appropriate containers. Their good behaviour has a positive impact on the progress they make.

148. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. Teachers' planning builds systematically on pupils' previous learning and provides them with varied and imaginative tasks to improve their skills in all aspects of the subject. There are exemplary schemes of work which were developed in conjunction with other local schools; these give good guidance to teachers of the subject, successfully promoting continuity and progression in art.

149. There is a newly appointed art co-ordinator. She has made a very good start since undertaking her role



in May 1999, by producing a portfolio of pupils' work which has been assigned National Curriculum levels. These examples of pupils' work from all classes effectively show progression through the school and act as a guide to the standards expected. Resources for art are satisfactory. Pupils' experience of art is further enriched through visits to galleries and after-school art and craft clubs.

152.

### **Design and technology**

150. Progress in design and technology is satisfactory at both key stages. This shows significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be below expected levels and the range of expertise for pupils was inadequate. There was no monitoring of the subject and a very limited range of materials and tools. The improvements are the result of the creation of a scheme of work, the provision of better resources and good support from the new co-ordinator to increase staff confidence and expertise. The resulting better teaching has had a good impact on pupils' progress and standards.
151. The main strengths are seen in the way that pupils pay proper attention to all strands of the subject. They understand the importance of careful designing, the need to select appropriate resources and the importance of good making and good quality finishing of models. Most pupils also evaluate their work thoughtfully and compare models with initial intentions, often saying how things could be improved.
152. At Key Stage 1, most pupils develop satisfactory standards in their designing and construction skills when making bridges for toy cars. They also generate interesting ideas when designing and making their own musical instruments. They select from a range of materials and components to an appropriate level, giving reasons for choice. Pupils join materials effectively, according to specific needs, using a range of methods such as sticking or stitching.
153. At Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 5 made good quality boxes with hinged lids. Step by step plans are suitably developed and pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work and make judgements on the good aspects and those that could be improved. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop ideas well when designing and making pneumatic toys and when transfer printing. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported and make good progress in relation to set targets.
154. All pupils make at least satisfactory progress throughout both key stages. They enjoy their work and are keen to design and make models. They work independently and as part of a group, supporting each other and sharing ideas. They are very aware of safety factors and use tools carefully. Many pupils talk confidently about their own models and how they have overcome difficulties. They evaluate their own efforts and appreciate the work of others.
155. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. A wide range of activities is planned and an appropriate range of resources provided. In both key stages, the use of systematic planning and the sequencing of the various stages of work are encouraged in the designing process in order to produce finished products of good quality which effectively serve their original purpose. Teachers' assessment is satisfactory and pupils are encouraged to carry out their own self-assessment, which they do thoughtfully. Resources in the subject are of good quantity and quality. They are easily accessible and are used effectively with due regard for safety. Improvements in teaching and provision are due to the good leadership of the co-ordinator who has worked hard to produce a scheme of work, a good range of interesting ideas and a much better range of materials and tools. This has resulted in better progress and higher standards in pupils' work.

158.

### **Geography**

156. Only one geography lesson was seen during the inspection week as history was being taught. However, further evidence was gathered from speaking to pupils, teachers, and the subject co-ordinator. Teachers' plans, the subject portfolio of pupils' work and work previously completed by pupils were scrutinised. Progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. Progress is hampered by the way the subject is organised as some pupils do not carry out any geographical activities for approximately six months.
157. Pupils at Key Stage 1 draw simple maps of imaginary journeys, for example "The Bear Hunt" and plans of their route to school. These maps are drawn using pictures rather than symbols. Pupils are able to use simple two figure co-ordinates. Pupils can describe the locality of the school and give an opinion concerning attractive and unattractive features. They are also able to recognise change and to offer an opinion on whether the change is good or not. Pupils can identify land and sea on a globe and can pick out rivers on a map.
158. Pupils at Key Stage 2 can use an atlas to find countries and know what continents are. They also have a concept of a capital city. They take opportunities to carry out individual research when these are presented. Pupils are aware of a limited range of instruments used to measure aspects of the weather. Pupils in their final year at the school cannot use four-figure co-ordinates and are unsure of the main features of a river, for example the source, meanders and tributaries.
159. Pupils' attitudes to geography are satisfactory. They listen well and many are eager to respond. They enjoy researching particular topics but frequently are too dependent on their teacher when carrying out written work. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are well supported by specific tasks, but higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently catered for.
160. Insufficient observation was made to make a firm judgement of the quality of teaching, however the evidence there is suggests it is satisfactory. Lessons are well planned, correct geographical terminology is used and in the better lessons, activities are well matched to the differing attainment of the pupils. However, some of the written work does not allow pupils to develop their own ideas as it consists of undemanding tasks or copying.
161. Geography is taught through topics linked to other subject areas. The co-ordinator has recently taken on her role; she has monitored teachers' plans and intends putting the nationally recommended scheme of work for geography in place. The co-ordinator has worked hard to produce a portfolio of pupils' work which will assist teachers in making judgements about standards. Resources are adequate. Every class has a globe and sufficient numbers of up-to-date atlases. However, there are insufficient photographs, Ordnance Survey maps and reference material for teachers.
162. Since the last inspection in 1996 the National Curriculum is more consistently covered and resources have been improved. The school still does not have a scheme of work but this is now being tackled. Assessment remains under-developed.

165.

## **History**

163. The last inspection found that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was below average. This is no longer the case as there are strengths in the subject at both key stages. Pupils make sound progress at both key stages. This is because teachers plan effectively to cover knowledge of events in the past and ensure that pupils develop historical skills through the study of artefacts.
164. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have an awareness of differences between the present and the past. Through examination of pictures they understand how features of everyday life have changed over time. Pupils in Year 1 understand differences from their study of toys that belong to them and to their parents and grandparents. Many know about Grace Darling and Florence Nightingale. At the end of Key Stage

2, pupils have a satisfactory recall of topics that they have studied. For example, pupils in Year 5 recall details of the Ancient Greeks and many can say why they would like to live in Ancient Greece. In Year 6, pupils show a detailed knowledge of events leading up to the Second World War and of life in Britain during the 1930s. They use skills of research effectively to seek out information, including from the internet and CD-ROM. A weakness is in pupils' ability to communicate information in a variety of ways. This is because the work is often copied or consists of completing worksheets that demand one-word answers.

165. Pupils make satisfactory progress at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop an understanding of chronology, beginning with looking at different toys belonging to themselves when they were babies and now. Pupils at Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress in the use of sources to come to conclusions about the past. For example, pupils in Year 5 use secondary and primary sources such as paintings to learn about aspects of life of the Ancient Greeks. Pupils in Year 6 have used posters, newspapers and artefacts to investigate aspects of life during World War Two. While pupils are able to glean information from a variety of sources, only a small number of pupils make progress in the ability to evaluate sources, dealing with questions of interpretation and bias. This is because planning does not always take account of the full range of attainment, particularly of the higher attaining pupils.
166. Pupils are generally enthusiastic about their work and confident when responding to questions. The behaviour and attitudes of most pupils are good; they listen attentively, work well in groups and are able to sustain concentration. A few lose concentration quickly, but do not disturb the rest.
167. Teaching is sound overall, with examples of good lessons. The scheme of work is being developed so staff do not yet have sufficient guidance, but they plan effectively to cover all aspects of the National Curriculum. Assessment is not yet used to plan for the different levels of attainment in the classes and the higher attaining pupils are not always challenged as a result. Generally, teachers ask questions effectively to encourage pupils to develop skills of historical inquiry. Resources are used well, including visits. Particularly good examples were in Year 6 classes. In one, the teacher had collected artefacts from the 1930s and asked pupils to draw a pen picture of the person they might belong to. This led to work of a high quality as the pupils applied their historical skills to deduce who it might be. In another, pupils researched the causes of the Second World War using a range of sources including the internet. In this lesson there was a good balance of explanation and of research. In another very good lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to explore different points of view about whether or not the Ancient Greeks travelled. Pupils made very good progress in their understanding of the life of the Ancient Greeks because they applied their historical skills effectively.

170.

### **Music**

168. The school has successfully improved the standards since the last inspection when it was judged that pupils' attainment was generally in line with national expectations. At both key stages, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress, and in instrumental tuition they make very good progress.
169. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils sing tunefully and have learned by heart a number of songs and hymns which they sing with expression and feeling. They have a good sense of rhythm and show good awareness of pitch, tempo and dynamics. They have good knowledge of the names of percussion instruments and the techniques for playing them; they can follow a symbolic score when playing their rhythms or sounding out the beats. Pupils use these developing skills to accompany their singing and for composing and performing.
170. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand that music can evoke an atmosphere; they use appropriate instruments, for example, to create thunder. They know the importance of silence in music and use rests accurately. Pupils read increasingly complex rhythms from the score correctly and with a steady beat. They sing well and have an increasing repertoire of songs. Pupils enunciate words clearly when

singing, start on time and finish crisply. They successfully adopt a performing role, showing a growing awareness of other singers and players. Pupils can sing out without shouting and sing softly without losing their pitch. They understand musical expression such as singing in a 'piano' voice in Year 3, and by Year 6 pupils recognise D.C. which they explain as meaning that they must go back to the beginning. Pupils acquire and use an extensive musical vocabulary such as stave and recognise and adopt expressions from other cultures such as North American, for example, when they perform songs from Bugsy Malone. When playing instruments such as a xylophone or a glockenspiel, pupils learn about scale and recognise chords such as G. When they accompanied the song, 'Where do you come from', pupils were able to keep time accurately and sustain their playing to the end. During their Harvest Festival Mass, pupils sang hymns and accompanied them using a range of instruments, including flutes, clarinets and a variety of pitched and unpitched instruments. Their accompaniment was particularly expressive, creating an atmosphere of prayer and worship.

171. Instrumental music tuition is of a particularly high standard in the school. There are opportunities for pupils to participate in playing a variety of instruments, including, cellos, violins, various recorders, guitars, keyboards, flutes and clarinets. Parents make a contribution towards the cost of this tuition. At the time of the inspection, there were 66 pupils participating in instrumental tuition. The quality of these pupils' performance is of a very high standard, due to the high quality of specialist teaching and the encouragement these pupils receive in the school through extra opportunities to share their work with other pupils in weekly assemblies, and in performances in and out of school.
172. Pupils' response to music is good throughout the school. Younger pupils try hard when working on their rhythms and show obvious enjoyment at the effect they are able to create, when singing or playing. Older pupils are positive about their musical experiences and are keen to discuss their performance and to suggest ways of improving it. Pupils concentrate in lessons well and rise to the challenges set for them. Pupils who undertake instrumental tuition persevere and practise well in order to perform to the best of their ability. They are appreciative of the peripatetic teachers and enjoy their music making.
173. The quality of teaching is good overall and it is very good in instrumental tuition. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is good and expertise is used well to teach the subject. Teachers build on pupils' previous knowledge from year to year and this successfully ensures continuity and progression in the subject. In lessons, teachers give good demonstrations both in singing and in playing; techniques are taught well to improve the quality of pupils' performance. Opportunities are provided by teachers to develop musical vocabulary and to encourage pupils' imaginative development, for example in interpreting musical effects or in composing. Teachers make references to other subjects, such as science for sound, or in mathematics for rhythmic work, in order to improve understanding and to increase pupils' use of English. Teachers use information technology to encourage pupils' composing and performing skills; this was not observed at the time of the inspection, but there is sufficient evidence of pupils using recording and microphone equipment for their work successfully.
174. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. At the time of the inspection, these aspects were observed through the quality of singing and playing. During the Harvest Mass, pupils sang the African version of the Kyrie; they are provided with ample opportunities to develop socially, by playing instruments and singing in a choir. They listen to a variety of music from different traditions, times and cultures. These opportunities successfully encourage pupils to develop their interests and wide appreciation. The school has good quality resources for music; these are accessible to pupils in both key stages, well stored, and used to good effect by both pupils and teachers.
175. The subject is well led by the two co-ordinators, one for each key stage. Monitoring and evaluation of the quality of school's music provision takes place regularly and staff attend in-service courses. These factors contribute to the good progress that pupils make.

176. At Key Stage 1, most pupils make satisfactory progress. At Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils make good progress and attain standards which are above those normally seen in gymnastics, dance, games and swimming. The subject has significant strengths.
177. In gymnastics, pupils in Key Stage 1 learn appropriate travelling and balancing skills. They practise and improve their own sequences individually and in small groups. They demonstrate their performances well to others and all take part in the evaluation of their own and others' performances. In games, many of the youngest pupils develop catching and throwing skills, when working individually and with a partner, using a range of small equipment.
178. At Key Stage 2, pupils build systematically on their games' skills, as demonstrated by pupils in Years 4 and 6 in developing sending and receiving skills in netball and football. These skills are improved by pupils in groups and small team games. Year 4 pupils develop good improvement in a range of passing skills in netball. Year 6 pupils use their passing skills effectively in small football games, as when responding to the restrictions of making three passes before shooting at goal. Pupils practise hard, co-operating and extending each other appropriately. Gymnastics skills are effectively developed by focus on good quality movements. Year 3 pupils experiment in different ways of balancing and moving in floor work and on benches. They extend these skills when co-ordinating their sequences of reflective work with a partner. Good quality dance movements were seen from Year 6 pupils. They worked well in collaborative groups to move expressively, sometimes reflecting and sometimes contrasting with others in their group when developing imaginative sequences to African work music. By the end of the key stage standards of work are above those normally seen.
179. There is a detailed programme of work for the development of athletics, including a sports day, but no lessons were observed. Outdoor and adventurous pursuits are developed through participation in a residential visit to a centre on the Isle of Wight. No swimming could be inspected during the inspection, but all pupils at Key Stage 2 receive regular instruction. Records show that of pupils who left the school last term in Year 6, almost all could swim the required 25 metres and a large majority swam greater distances. Of the current Year 5 pupils who are currently receiving swimming tuition, all but one can swim the required 25 metres. This is above the standards normally seen from pupils of this age.
180. They enjoy physical activities. They listen carefully, follow instructions, are eager to respond and participate well. They use opportunities to work co-operatively in pairs and small groups showing due respect and consideration for the efforts of each other. They thoughtfully evaluate their own performances and those of other pupils.
181. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. In most lessons, teachers identify clear objectives and share them with the pupils in order to promote clear understanding. Lessons generally proceed at a good pace. Good use is made of pupils' demonstration to reinforce teaching points and improve pupils' performances, as shown particularly well in gymnastics and in dance. Teachers focus on skills and techniques effectively to reinforce the need for good quality movement and pupils respond well. This is an improvement since the previous report which identified these as weaknesses. Good use is made of praise to help pupils improve their performances. The management and control of pupils are good. The quality and quantity of resources have been improved and good resources are used effectively in most lessons. The co-ordinator has provided a new scheme of work and developed staff expertise well. This has led to a more consistent approach in teaching – all weaknesses identified in the previous report. Extra-curricular sporting activities are good and many boys and girls take part in a wide range of sports. School teams enjoy participating against other schools, with some success, and these activities contribute effectively to the development of good sporting behaviour and pupils' very good personal and social development. A good number of parents provide help and support for these and their help is much appreciated.

184.  
**INSPECTION DATA**

**PART C:**

184.  
**INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

**SUMMARY OF**

182. The inspection was undertaken by a team of six inspectors. Observations were made of 88 lessons or parts of lessons covering all areas of the curriculum and all classes. The time spent observing lessons was approximately 55 hours. Every teacher working in the school was observed at least once. Inspectors also spent approximately 65 hours observing registration sessions, assemblies, and extra-curricular activities, and in talking to pupils, staff, and governors. The work of 42 pupils was closely scrutinised by the whole team. Discussions were also held with many other pupils during the inspection week. A total of 45 pupils was heard to read formally and other pupils were heard to read informally throughout the week. Planned discussions were held with all members of staff with additional responsibilities and informal discussions took place with all staff. Discussions were held with three members of the governing body and with 42 parents at the parents' meeting. The number of parents who completed the questionnaire was 72. A range of documentation provided by the school was analysed.

185.

185.  
**INDICATORS**

**DATA AND**

186. **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	464	7	84	46

187. **Teachers and classes**

187. **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	24.6 : 1

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

Total number of education support staff:	23
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	243

Average class size:	29.6
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188. **Financial data**

Financial year:	1999/2000
	£
Total Income	685406
Total Expenditure	675305
Expenditure per pupil	1449.15
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	10101

189. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	442
Number of questionnaires returned:	72

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	45	38	14	4	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	34	43	14	8	1
The school handles complaints from parents well	22	41	30	7	1
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	39	41	14	5	1
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	20	35	26	16	3
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	32	49	14	5	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	31	45	22	3	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	23	54	14	8	1
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	45	36	15	1	3
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	41	46	12	0	1
My child(ren) like(s) school	51	39	9	0	0