

# INSPECTION REPORT

**TERLING CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Terling

LEA area: ESSEX

Unique reference number: 115166

Headteacher: Mrs A Newbury

Reporting inspector: Diana M. Songer-Hudgell  
21686

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 24th January 2001

Inspection number: 191101

Full inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Church of England Primary

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: New Road  
Terling  
Chelmsford  
Essex

Postcode: CM3 2PN

Telephone number: 01245 233206

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Duncan Wood

Date of previous inspection: June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21686	Diana Songer-Hudgell	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Mathematics; Information and Communication technology; Music.	The schools results and pupils achievements; How well pupils are taught? What sort of school it is?
1311	Barry Wood	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; The school's care for its pupils; Partnership with parents.
5986	Terri Boohan	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Physical education; Art and Design; Design and Technology; Equality of opportunities.	Leadership and management.
22147	Anne Holland	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; History; Geography; Foundation Stage; Special educational needs.	The curriculum and other opportunities offered to pupils.

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>1</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>6</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>22</b>



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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Terling is a smaller than average sized village primary school for boys and girls aged from 4 to 11. There are 106 pupils on roll who are taught in four classes each with a two-year age range. In three of the year groups there is a significant imbalance in the numbers of boys and girls. Pupils attend the school from a wide catchment area of local and surrounding villages. They have varied socio-economic circumstances and live in owner occupied, rented and tied cottages, which belong to the Lord of the Manor. All pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with a Statement of Special Educational Need, is below the national average. A below average number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Pupils enter the Foundation Stage class at the start of the year in which they become five years old, and their overall attainment on entry is average. There have been a significant number of staff changes since the last inspection.

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

The school has many areas of significant strength and is a very caring place for pupils to develop and learn. The leadership and management are suitably focused on raising standards. Pupils make very good progress in the Foundation Stage and, by the age of 11 they achieve satisfactory standards in English, mathematics and science. The school is very successful in enabling its pupils to develop as mature, caring individuals with very good behaviour and attitudes to learning. The quality of teaching is good overall and supports pupils' individual needs well. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

- Very high quality teaching in the Foundation Stage class enables children to make very good progress.
- Teachers manage pupils well, which promotes very good behaviour and a purposeful working atmosphere.
- The provision for pupils who need support for their learning is good and they make good progress.
- Pupils' personal development and attitudes are promoted very successfully, and their moral and social development is very good.
- The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.
- The good leadership of the headteacher and effectiveness of the governing body ensures the school has a clear direction for its work.
- It fosters effective relationships with parents and the community to successfully support pupils' learning.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- The timetable arrangements and timing of lessons does not always allow pupils the opportunity to extend their learning and achieve higher standards.
- The number of opportunities for pupils to develop creative and extended writing skills and to apply these in all subjects.
- The promotion of pupils' cultural awareness to enable them to appreciate more fully the diversity of the world in which we live.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection in June 1996. Issues identified at that time have been remedied. Pupil's standards of attainment have improved at both key stages, particularly in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher than expected levels. The quality of teaching has improved, with the unsatisfactory teaching identified in the previous inspection eliminated. Systems to regularly assess pupil's progress and schemes of work that build on pupil's earlier experiences are in place. The headteacher and deputy effectively monitor and evaluate the work of the school, and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				<b>Key</b> <i>well above average</i> A <i>above average</i> B <i>average</i> C <i>below average</i> D <i>well below average</i> E
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	A	A	C	E	
Mathematics	B	B	C	E	
Science	A	C	C	E	

N.B. A relatively small number of pupils' take the tests each year and the proportion with special educational needs varies considerably. Additionally, the comparison with similar schools with the same numbers of free school meals may not be accurate as families in some types of village housing are ineligible to apply. These factors mean that test results are not a wholly reliable indicator of trends in attainment and progress over time.

Inspection findings indicate that children in the Foundation Stage are on target to exceed the Early Learning Goals for the age group in all areas of learning. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, information and communication technology, geography, history, art and physical



education. There was insufficient evidence to judge pupils' standards in music. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, information and communication technology, geography, history, music and physical education. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in art. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The school sets challenging targets for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics and has a realistic understanding of what pupils can achieve. There is a strong commitment to helping all pupils to achieve their best.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school.	Very good. Pupils respond very well to the school's very high expectations for good attitudes, behaviour and personal development.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms.	Very good. All pupils show good behaviour in and around the school, which results in a very purposeful working atmosphere.
Personal development and relationships.	Very good. From an early age pupils are independent, self-motivated and very caring of each other.
Attendance.	Good. Pupils are punctual and attend regularly.

These areas are all significant strengths of the school

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

The quality of teaching is good overall and always at least satisfactory. Six per cent of teaching is excellent, eight per cent very good, 43 per cent good, and 43 per cent satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs receive good teaching throughout both key stages. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall.

All of the excellent and very good teaching is in the foundation stage class and this enables all the children to make very good progress. There is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1, in design and technology, information and communication technology, geography and music. Teaching is good in English, mathematics and the one lesson observed in art. Good features of the teaching are very effective management of the pupils and good planning of lessons to meet the needs of the wide range of pupils' ability and the two age groups in the class. An emphasis

on practical activities means pupils have a lot of opportunity to develop well their thinking, speaking and personal and social skills. In Key Stage 2, there is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching in design and technology, geography and art. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science and music. Good features of the teaching are stimulating and well-planned lessons that meet the needs of all pupils and progressively build on past learning, and very good pupil management.

Throughout the school, the timetable arrangements for lessons limits pupils' opportunities to extend their learning to higher levels as some lessons are too short or not at a suitable time in the day. Classroom assistants, give good quality support to groups and individuals, are well trained and add considerably to the learning experiences for pupils.

### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum.	The curriculum is broad but has an unsatisfactory balance. The overall timetable arrangements are not always effective when allocating amounts of time to individual lessons. Some are too short and others are too long.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs.	Good. Pupils receive good support on a regular and sustained basis from well trained and effective learning support staff.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.	Good overall. Pupils' personal, moral and social development are strengths of the school. Cultural development is unsatisfactory because pupils do not have enough opportunities to understand the diversity of the world in which they live.
How well the school cares for its pupils.	Good. The staff take good care of the pupils, who are well supported from the time they start school.

Statutory requirements for teaching the National Curriculum are met at all key stages. Care is taken to ensure the curriculum is presented in an interesting and motivating way for all pupils. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities. A good partnership has been established with parents. Many give the school very positive help which has a good impact on pupils learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The school is well led by the headteacher and deputy who have a strong commitment to raising standards. The staff ably supports them.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is effective, has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and takes effective action in shaping its direction.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school's monitoring and evaluation procedures contribute suitably in the drive to raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Resources are used suitably to support the school's identified priorities.

Learning resources are good. The school applies the principles of best value when purchasing goods and services and by discussing the standards of pupils' work with neighbouring schools.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents are very pleased with the attitudes and values the school promotes;</li> <li>• Teachers give praise, encouragement and confidence to pupils;</li> <li>• Staff are approachable and know the pupils well;</li> <li>• The school really values parents;</li> <li>• There are high levels of satisfaction with the progress pupils' make.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents who attended the parents' meeting felt that pupils end-of-year reports lacked sufficient detail and were impersonal;</li> <li>• Information on how well their children achieve;</li> <li>• the range of activities outside of lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed by parents. The format for the end-of-year reports has changed. It is now satisfactory, and the school continues to seek ways to improve these further. The amount of information provided to parents is satisfactory and of good quality. However, the school does not readily publicise its considerable achievements. The range of extra-curricular activities for a school this size is very good.

## OTHER INFORMATION

The governing body is responsible for drawing up an action plan within 40 days of receiving the inspection report, showing how the school will tackle the improvements needed. This action plan will be circulated to all parents at the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. At both key stages a relatively small number of pupils take the National Curriculum tests each year and the number of pupils with special educational needs varies considerably. Additionally, the comparison with similar schools who have the same numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals may not be accurate, as families in some types of village housing are ineligible to apply. All of these factors mean test results are not a wholly reliable indicator of trends in pupils' attainment and progress over time.
2. Children are assessed when they enter the school and results show that their standards of attainment are in line with those expected for children of this age in all areas of learning. They make very good progress, and the majority are on target to exceed the expectations of the nationally recognised Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage when they start Year 1. There was no report on the Foundation Stage of learning or for pupils under five in the last inspection and it is therefore not possible to make comparative judgements about standards in this key stage.
3. During the inspection there was insufficient evidence in Key Stage 1 to judge pupils standards of attainment in music. Inspection findings are that by the end of Key Stage 1, in all other subjects, pupils standards of attainment are in line with those expected nationally for the age group. The results of the end of Key Stage 1 Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs) for 2000 show pupils achieved standards well above the national average in writing and mathematics and broadly in line with the national average in reading and science. The proportion achieving the higher than expected Level 3 improved, and was well above the national average in writing and mathematics, close to the national average in science and below the national average in reading. When compared to the average of schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, pupils' attainment in reading was below, writing broadly in line and mathematics above the average. Overall, the schools results over the last three years show pupils' performance exceeded the national average in all subjects. Trends over time show at this key stage the school is improving at a faster rate than the national trend. Writing is consistently well above the national average for all of the last four years. Reading performance trends, however, are more variable.
4. During the inspection, there was insufficient evidence in Key Stage 2 to judge pupils' standards of attainment in art. Inspection findings are that in all other subjects, pupils' standards of attainment are in line with those expected nationally for the age group. The results of the end of Key Stage 2 Standard Assessment Tasks for 2000 showed pupils achieved standards broadly in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. The proportion achieving the higher than expected Level 5 improved, and is above the national average in English and mathematics, and close to the average in science. When compared with the average of schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, pupils' attainment in all three subjects is well below the average. Overall, the schools results over the last three years show pupils' performance exceeded national averages in all three subjects. Trends over time at this key stage show the school is improving at a rate slightly below the national trend.

5. National test results and inspection findings indicate there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Inspection results indicate a wide spread of attainment, with both higher and lower attaining pupils achieving appropriately. There is insufficient evidence to judge pupils' rate of learning in geography at both key stages, music and information and communication technology (ICT) at Key Stage 1, and art at Key Stage 2. At both key stages, pupils make satisfactory progress in all other subjects of their learning. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, receive good individual support and are given work well matched to their needs. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good as a result of the help they receive. Standards of literacy and numeracy are satisfactory throughout the school.

6. The school has set challenging targets and analyses data satisfactorily to compare itself with all schools nationally and with similar schools. It is making satisfactory progress to achieve its targets. There is a realistic understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, and the school takes suitable action with groups and individuals to remedy identified areas of weakness. For example, currently, the school is changing the way reading is taught.

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

7. At the time of the last inspection, pupils had responsible attitudes, and both their behaviour and personal development were excellent. As displayed in its aims and Christian ethos, the school has sustained these very high expectations, and the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of all pupils are very good. Parents show an excellent appreciation of the school's determination to make this area a distinctive strength.

8. Children in the early years behave very well and are enthusiastic and confident. They have few anxieties, and form friendships easily with other children. Both inside and outside the classroom they are eager to be involved in the many activities provided. Children are very responsive to their teachers, listen well and participate easily in the daily routines, and learn with a real enjoyment. All pupils are well motivated by the very good teaching and an environment that is well suited to their needs. They receive a very good start to their schooling.

9. All pupils arrive punctually at school in a calm and happy mood, despite some living a considerable distance from the village. They wear an attractive school uniform, look smart and clean, and represent their parents well. They have very good attitudes and are keen to undertake the day's agenda. As pupils progress through the school, they become increasingly self-motivated in their learning and realise that hard work will produce good results. Pupils are consistently responsive to their teachers, and respond to questions with well-reasoned answers, which engage the interest of the class. Their good listening and concentration skills allow the teachers to establish a productive teaching and learning environment for all pupils. Well developed social skills enables pupils to be equally effective in independent and group learning situations, where they share resources and co-operate to produce good practical results.

10. The behaviour of the pupils throughout the school is very good. All pupils have a very good understanding of the school's expectations for self-discipline. This leads to a calm and happy work atmosphere, with a productive buzz. The close interaction of older and younger pupils has a calming and regulating effect. There is neither bullying nor bad language, and there have been no exclusions.

11. The quality of relationships, at all levels, is very good and is a fundamental part of the ethos of the school. Staff are very good role models and pupils totally trust all staff. Older pupils consistently and effectively help younger pupils, for example, when younger children read. In the classroom, pupils listen with respect and value each other's opinions and qualities. This results in well-articulated ideas and leads to a stimulating environment. In an assembly, four pupils of differing age groups collaborated well together to produce a play on the work of the RSPCA. Lunchtimes are amicable and very sociable. A distinctive feature of all pupils is their courteousness and politeness, and they are exceptionally welcoming to visitors, who they engage in interesting conversation.

12. The personal development of the pupils is very good. All pupils, from an early age, are encouraged to participate in the many school activities. In accordance with the Christian ethos of the school, this is a very caring society, where pupils are encouraged to look after each other, and to have an awareness of others less fortunate than themselves, for example through charity work. They are taught to value their village community, and learn to play a role to support the traditions and life of the village. There is a good personal, health and social education curriculum, which develops an awareness of health and safety considerations. Pupils gain a good degree of independence and are allowed to take initiatives for their own learning. Older pupils react diligently to responsibility. The school council has appropriate status and responds to 'real' issues. The school undertakes a residential visit for older pupils, and makes many visits to places of interest to support learning, for example, visiting a local museum for the study of Victorians. All pupils display a well-developed sense of moral and social awareness, which equips them well for their next stage of education as good citizens. Pupils maintain the environment of the site well, as there is no litter, graffiti, or vandalism.

13. The good attendance noted at the last inspection has been sustained. Attendance rates are well above the national average, and many pupils have exemplary attendance throughout their time in school. Unauthorised absence continues to be very low. Family holidays, in term-time, account for a significant proportion of the authorised absences. Registers are completed in a statutory manner. Lessons start punctually.

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

14. The quality of teaching is good overall. Since the last inspection unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and standards maintained despite a significant number of staff changes. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. Six per cent of teaching is excellent, nine per cent very good, 43 per cent good, and 43 per cent satisfactory.

15. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good, with some lessons judged to be excellent. In Key Stage 1, it is overall satisfactory with good features and, in Key Stage 2, it is good overall. Pupils with special educational needs receive good teaching throughout the school. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall. However, the timetable arrangements for lessons do not always give pupils the maximum opportunities to use their satisfactory literacy and numeracy widely across the curriculum. The time allowed for lessons enables pupils to use their oral numeracy and literacy skills but not always their recorded ones.

16. All of the excellent and very good teaching is attributed to the Foundation Stage class. Here the quality of teaching is consistently very high and enables children to make very good progress. The teacher's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and Early Learning Goals for children in this stage of their development is very good. This ensures that lessons are very well planned to meet the needs of all the children in the class, including the small number who are a year older than the Reception age majority. Questions are very well directed to challenge individual children. There are very high expectations that all children will be able to explain in a logical sequence what they are doing and why? For example, when wearing a number, it was expected that children talked to each other to order themselves in a line and explained without help from the teacher why they thought they should be before or after another child.

17. All children are challenged well by the planned activities. They benefit from very good classroom organisation and very interesting and effective teaching methods. For example, snack time requires the children to sign for the type of drink they want, use lists to pour and allocate drinks to others and independently clear away and tidy up, including hovering the carpet! Attention to the needs of individuals is very high, the children respond very well and have a real joy in their learning. They work hard, and quickly become independent and confident. The excellent contribution of the classroom support staff, working as a team with the teacher, ensures that children have the best possible start to their early years of schooling.

18. In Key Stage 1, there was insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching in design and technology, information and communication technology, geography and music. The quality of teaching is good in English, mathematics and the one lesson observed in art. It is satisfactory in science, history and physical education. Good features of the teaching at this key stage are very effective management of the pupils and good planning of lessons. The teacher knows the pupils well, generates good relationships, an enjoyable atmosphere and a sense of fun, which motivates and sustains pupils' interest in their work. For example, the teacher's choice and use of a computer programme that talked enabled the class to share a funny joke and ensured that pupils wanted to investigate the programme further. The wide range of pupils' ability and the two age groups in the class are catered for well by thoughtful lesson planning. This builds on pupils' past learning and enables them to make satisfactory progress.

19. Pupils are given very clear instructions and listen carefully to the teacher at all times. The teacher's use of questions is suitably targeted, and challenges pupils to think and explain what they are doing. This is used to particularly good effect in mathematics, where pupils are encouraged to explain how they arrived at their answer or estimate. The teacher praises pupils well for their efforts, and this promotes confidence and a ready willingness to 'have a try'. The emphasis on practical

activities means pupils have a lot of experience and opportunity to develop well their thinking, speaking, and personal and social skills. However, there are occasions when too much time is allowed for practical activity and not enough time given for pupils to record their findings and extend their learning. This is particularly so in extended and creative writing, and in history and geography. Some afternoon lessons called 'peg activities', whilst well planned, tackle too many curriculum areas with insufficient time given for each to enable pupils to extend their learning and attain higher standards. The use of classroom support staff is effective. They are well trained, efficient and support individuals and groups successfully.

20. In Key Stage 2, there is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching in design and technology, geography and art. The quality of teaching is good in English, mathematics, science and music. It is satisfactory in information and communication technology, history and physical education. Good features of the teaching at this key stage are teachers' secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects. This helps them to plan well to meet the needs of all pupils and progressively build on pupils' past learning. Methods of teaching are stimulating and interesting. Pupils are managed throughout the day very well, and actively involved in a wide variety of groupings. For example, in a literacy lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 the teacher divided the class into five groups and each group given a different but challenging task to plan and write a traditional tale. For the next lesson they were arranged in different groups.

21. The learning objectives for lessons are shared well with all pupils and referred to throughout lessons, particularly in mathematics and music. Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is regularly undertaken, and the results of this are used well to identify and target groups of pupils for specific teaching. Classroom assistants give good quality support to groups and individuals are well trained and add considerably to the quality of the learning experiences for pupils.

22. The organisation of the timetable and allocated timeslots for some lessons is unsatisfactory. This means that some lessons are too long and in others there is not enough time. For example, some music, information and communication technology and art lessons are squeezed into the timetable in short timeslots, or before a natural break in the day. This gives pupils little time to extend their learning before the lesson finishes. The literacy hour becomes lengthy in some sessions when, for example, handwriting exercises are added. Regular quiet reading sessions at the beginning of the afternoon limits the time for the main lessons in the afternoons. This is a significant issue for pupils' learning and a contributory factor to the current standards achieved in lessons as it inhibits opportunities for pupils to extend their learning and achieve higher levels of attainment.

23. Overall, homework is used effectively to practise the work learned in lessons and to research new learning. It is well organised throughout the school.



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

24. The school has remedied the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report. A suitably broad range of opportunities is provided for all pupils to learn and good use is made of the resources provided by nationally recognised schemes of work. All the required elements of a broad curriculum are included and statutory requirements are met. However, the balance of the curriculum is unsatisfactory and, on occasions, there is a lack of cohesion to the pupils' learning. For example, natural connections between some subjects, and extended writing in history and geography are not always exploited. As a result, some opportunities are lost to further raise levels of attainment in these subjects and in writing itself. The current use of time, for example, regular blocks of time for quiet reading and handwriting, particularly in Key Stage 2, limit the opportunities for pupils to extend their work, to improve their knowledge in other subjects and achieve higher standards.

25. The overall weekly school timetable gives sufficient allocation of time to each subject. However, the way the time is allocated for lessons does not always promote the best opportunities for learning. Some lessons are too short, some too long and others squeezed into the timetable at an unsuitable time of the day. For example, the timetableing of a short music lessons following a games lesson means pupils arrived late from changing their clothes and having used their energy for games are not easily able to sing to their best standard. Good use is made of external resources, such as the local environment and educational trips, to provide necessary experiences that the school itself cannot provide.

26. In the core subjects of English mathematics and science, there is an overall satisfactory balance between improving the pupils' knowledge and understanding, and developing their skills. For example, much of the science work is carried out in a practical and investigative way. The school's strategy for teaching both literacy and numeracy is sound. However, there are limited opportunities for numerical work in geography and science and written work in geography and history. Reading is promoted well, and the great majority of pupils enjoy books as a result. The provision for information and communication technology has recently improved to satisfactory levels. The new computer base provides increased opportunities to develop pupils' skills more coherently and consistently, and to support learning in other subjects.

27. The provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is very good. The curriculum offered meets statutory requirements. Care is taken to ensure that the curriculum is presented in a lively and interesting way for young children. There is a good emphasis on the development of early language skills, including reading. Speaking and listening skills and early number skills are developed at every opportunity. As a result, pupils make very good progress.

28. There is good equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They receive effective individual support and guidance from class teachers and additional support staff, both in lessons and in small groups. Teachers are good at planning to meet the varied needs of pupils in their class. There are, however, occasions when too much practical activity is planned with insufficient time allocated for pupils to record their findings and extend their learning. The complexity of

tasks and the degree of support and guidance are varied appropriately to meet the needs of all pupils within each class. The schools schemes of work build on pupils past learning and result in a good consistency in the quality of the learning experiences for all pupils as they progress through the school.

29. There is an extensive range of good quality extra-curricular activities, which make a significant contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. These include several after school clubs and sport with other schools in the area. Educational visits do much to enhance the pupils' experiences. Good use is made of the local environment, particularly the village itself. Visitors are welcomed into the school, including parents and the local vicar, who visits regularly and runs an after school club. Good links also exist with other schools and pre-school groups, and this helps ease transition between them.

30. There is very good provision for pupils' social and moral development and good provision for spiritual and personal development. These areas are all significant strengths of the school. The very good emphasis on social development encourages respect, tolerance for other pupils and increasing independence. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively from an early age, and as they get older this often extends to giving advice and constructive criticism to others about their work. They are actively taught to value ideas and respect views, beliefs and opinions that may be different from their own. A strong moral ethos is evident throughout the life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their actions as they affect others. This aspect is fostered in assemblies and does much to develop a sense of responsibility and caring, both within and beyond the school. A suitable sex education and drugs awareness curriculum is in place, and the school is further developing its personal, social and health education programme in line with recent new requirements.

31. The provision for pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory. Whilst the cultural traditions of the area and British society are well promoted, too few opportunities are planned within the curriculum for pupils to develop a real awareness and understanding of the richness and diversity of the other cultures and countries which share our world.

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

32. As at the time of the last inspection the school has maintained the good provision for the personal support, guidance and welfare of its pupils. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are very good and produce positive outcomes for the school. The high quality welfare agenda positively contributes to the satisfactory progress and development of all pupils.

33. The headteacher and staff have a very good knowledge of all the pupils. They are thoroughly involved with them throughout the day. They know generations of families well and enjoy close relations with parents in school or the village community. The headteacher and her colleagues accept their pastoral role with determination and dedication. They display a diligence and enthusiasm that communicates well to parents and pupils alike. Pupils' feel constantly supported by this integrated community, without any loss of their independence, and in turn reflect in their behaviour the caring culture and ethos of the school. Parents greatly admire the headteacher and staff for their efforts, and value the school as a village asset with a safe, sensitive and caring

environment and a strong Christian ethos.

34. The school consistently implements its welfare policies. It is very welcoming to outside agencies that support pupils on a regular basis. Child protection procedures are good and the school is very vigilant in this aspect. All staff are suitably trained.

35. Historically, the school has given a high priority to the establishment of very good quality procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' behaviour. There is an all-pervasive culture of good behaviour throughout the school, which in conjunction with the Christian ethos, means that staff and pupils together develop a very good teaching and learning environment. The school does not rely on displays of class or school rules to achieve its behaviour goals. Its good relationships foster strong mutual respect, based on praise. Moral provision is assessed and reinforced by pupils and staff during assemblies, or during the personal health and social education lessons.

36. Pupils are involved in developing rules at the start of the year. The focus is on self-discipline, and the mutual trust with staff has an undoubted very positive effect on all pupils. The school has a good array of appropriate awards. Sanctions, although in place, are used little. Individual pupils receive a tailored programme of behaviour management if they exhibit challenging behaviour. The intimate layout of the school assists the staff to have a thorough knowledge of any short-term problems between pupils. They are very effective in detecting and eliminating any oppressive behaviour by discrete and sensitive interventions, when necessary.

37. Attendance procedures and systems are good. They have produced a consistently good performance level over the last four years. A first day response from parents has successfully reduced unauthorised absence to practically zero levels. Parents are very aware of their statutory obligations, and both pupils and parents are determined to attend school punctually. However, the incidence of parents requiring holidays within the term is high, despite the school's determined efforts to the contrary.

38. The school is a safe environment for all pupils and staff. It has a very good complement of first aiders. However, first aid facilities are inadequate due to the lack of an on-site medical room, and the use of a cramped reception hall for this purpose. Health and safety procedures are good under the guidance of an enthusiastic co-ordinator, supported by the headteacher and a governor. Pupils are well acquainted with health and safety principles in the home and at school, through the personal health and social education provision.

39. There is good liaison and relationship between the school, village playgroup, and local secondary school, so that parents receive good support at transfer, and parent and pupil anxieties are minimised. Induction procedures for parents are especially effective, and guarantee that pupils make a confident start to their school lives.

40. Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress was a key issue in the last report, when the school was asked to 'make more use of assessment to help raise standards'. The school has worked hard to remedy this. There is now a well-developed cohesive framework for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress. The teachers planning places emphasis on what the pupils are expected to learn. This enables them to evaluate general progress and individual strengths

and weaknesses. Assessment information is used to help lesson planning and target setting, and is having a positive effect on pupil progress. The school has begun to analyse its data in the core subjects and is developing a satisfactory use of this information to inform curriculum planning. The school has identified further assessment in the foundation subjects, linked to the new schemes of work, as the next stage in development. Pupils are learning to evaluate their own progress, and they contribute to their own annual reports. Satisfactory procedures are in place to identify pupils with special educational needs and to produce good individual education plans.

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

41. The last inspection report judged that the school's links with parents had a positive impact on pupils' standards of attainment. Information for parents was good, but there was parental dissatisfaction with the style of written reports. The school has maintained its relationships with parents and they continue to be good. The style of written reports has changed since the last inspection and these are now satisfactory.

42. The school provides a significant focus for the local community, both in terms of its historical roots and its present participation in village life. Its reputation continues to grow, and at least a third of all pupils now come from outside the catchment area. Overall, parents express a good level of approval of the school. They respect the efforts of the headteacher, in particular, and the staff and governors in developing all its aspects. Parents are pleased to be part of the school, and they are proud of its quality. The latest questionnaire, and interviews with parents, indicates a large increase in parents' satisfaction levels since the last inspection. However, there is a significant level of parental dissatisfaction about the provision of an interesting range of activities outside lessons. Many parents feel that they need to augment the school's sporting activities with external clubs. Parents' perceptions regarding activities outside lessons are not substantiated. There is a very good range of activities and visits, which greatly support the learning of the pupils. However, the school is less effective in communicating the extent of this provision to parents.

43. The aims of the school support effective links with parents. There is an open door policy, whereby, all parents are encouraged to visit at the beginning and end of the day, and to play a role within the school. Staff establish good informal links with parents, even when they live outside the village. The quality of these relationships allows many parents to have a very beneficial impact on the work of the school. A small core of parent volunteers provides additional resource both inside and outside the classroom on a regular basis. The parent/teacher association is an essential element in promoting and developing the distinctive happy family ethos that pervades all aspects of the school. Its involvement in the annual village pantomime reinforces the links with the community. The hardworking committee has a good number of parents, and they encourage all parents to attend the many fund raising events.

44. The quality of information for parents is satisfactory. Both the prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents meet statutory requirements, and indicate that the school values its parents. Other written communications are of good quality, sufficient and respectful to the role of parents, and give them enough time to react. Informal communications are good. The school's annual written pupil report is satisfactory. However, it increasingly dissatisfies some parents. Its

computerised statements do not have sufficient

credibility with many parents. Although some of the subject sections allow teachers to personalise the reports, these still represent sterile reading for some parents. Nevertheless, the accompanying feedback reports, from pupils, are worthwhile reviews of the school year.

45. The contribution of parents to their children's learning is good. The majority have signed the home-school agreement. The school has given instruction in many aspects of the National Curriculum, including literacy and numeracy, and standard assessment tests. These evenings are well supported where they are directly relevant to the parent's child. Homework arrangements are satisfactory. Parents approve of the present homework arrangements at Key Stage 2. Many parents of younger pupils would like to see homework extended beyond the present home reading. Reading diaries are well used by parents and staff. There is a close collaboration with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. This helps to produce meaningful individual educational plans, with suitable targets for good progress. Parents receive much advice from the school at the time of transfer to secondary school, which minimises parental anxieties.

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

46. At the time of the last inspection the leadership and management was judged as effective. Current inspection findings are that there is good leadership and management. The key issues from the last inspection have been satisfactorily remedied. The headteacher gives a clear educational direction to the school and ensures that its daily life and work strongly reflect its stated aims and values. She has established and sustained a calm, positive atmosphere, a unity of purpose and a shared determination, evident throughout the whole school community, to learn and to continue to improve. She is well supported by an able deputy headteacher and a committed staff team. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and each teacher carry several responsibilities. They have well defined roles. They work hard, and collaboratively, to ensure that the curriculum is satisfactorily developed and that advice and support is readily available to all the staff team. A period of staffing difficulty and change has clearly had an impact on the school recently. However, the staff team is now strengthened and more secure.

47. The governors bring a valuable range of knowledge and skills to their roles. There is a good working relationship between the governing body, headteacher and staff. Governors are regularly briefed on key matters and have a satisfactory and increasing range of strategies for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements and is bringing a recently, much sharpened focus to its strategic role. It has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses, well-developed plans for improving its operational methods and a clear vision for the future of the school.

48. There are well-established structures for monitoring, evaluating and developing the school's work. Procedures for appraisal and performance management are securely in place and well linked to these structures. They are firmly grounded in direct observation of the work of staff and of the outcomes for pupils. The information gathered ensures that appropriate priorities for improvement are identified. These priorities inform the school development plan, which is a soundly targeted and useful management tool, centred in school improvement. It clearly identifies objectives, and resource and training implications. There is a strong, shared commitment to these objectives.

49. The school is not complacent. Managers are keenly aware of areas for further improvement and have set challenging targets for the future. The school has very effective procedures in place for setting and reviewing individual targets and progress with pupils. However, while strong in their overall aspirations and commitment, managers are not yet sufficiently proactive in using their existing knowledge of weaknesses to make changes swiftly. For example, by remedying weaknesses in curriculum timetabling and opportunities for extended and creative writing to ensure this impacts on raising pupils' standards.

50. Teaching staff are appropriate in number and experience. There are good arrangements for induction and staff regularly attend appropriate in-school and external training to update and increase their knowledge and skills. Trainee teachers regularly receive good training and experience in the school. The comparatively high number of support staff are very well trained, have explicit roles and make a very effective contribution to pupils' learning, particularly to the development of those pupils with special educational needs.

51. The school's accommodation is adequate and provides a bright, attractive environment for learning. There has been a systematic and well considered programme to enhance both indoor and outdoor facilities, together with a long-term vision and plan for future maintenance and improvement.

52. The quality of learning resources is good overall, and has benefited from a similarly well-planned rolling programme of renewal and improvement in each aspect of the school's curriculum and work.

53. Educational priorities are well supported though the school's wise financial planning. The current eight per cent underspend of the budget is being saved for future spending on major building work. Use of funds is thoroughly considered, carefully matched to priorities and closely monitored. Principles of best value are well understood and increasingly applied in order to judge existing commitments and future spending decisions. The school functions efficiently on a daily basis with friendly and well-organised support provided by administrative staff. There is satisfactory and improving use made of new technology to enhance the schools efficiency and effectiveness.

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

54. In order to improve the quality of education provided and to continue the progress made since the last inspection the school should:

- Review and effect changes to the overall timetable arrangements to ensure that lesson time is used more productively, to give pupils more opportunities and time to extend their learning.
- Review the balance of time allocated to writing in order to:
  - \* place greater emphasis on writing and further raise standards at both key stages;
  - \* ensure that pupils have increased opportunities for creative and extended writing across the curriculum;
  - \* provide more opportunities for pupils to record the outcomes of their practical learning in English and other subjects.
- Ensure that the curriculum actively promotes pupils' cultural awareness and understanding to enable them to appreciate more fully the diversity of the world in which we live.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	9	43	43	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	<b>Nursery</b>	<b>YR – Y6</b>
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	106
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	4

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	<b>Nursery</b>	<b>YR – Y6</b>
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	15

<b>English as an additional language</b>	<b>No of pupils</b>
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	<b>No of pupils</b>
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### *Attendance*

<b>Authorised absence</b>		<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	
	<b>%</b>		<b>%</b>
School data	4.2	School data	0
National comparative data	5.2	National comparative data	0.5

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

**\*Please note:**

**Because of the small numbers of pupils taking the test, some boxes in the following tables are not required to be completed.**

*Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
	2000	12	5	17

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils At NC Level 2 or above	School	82 (92)	100 (92)	100 (92)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils At NC Level 2 or above	School	88 (85)	94 (85)	88 (85)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

*Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
	2000	10	8	18

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils At NC Level 4 or above	School	72 (80)	67 (87)	89 (87)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils At NC Level 4 or above	School	72 (80)	72 (80)	72 (80)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

	<b>No of pupils</b>
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	92
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### *Teachers and classes*

#### **Qualified teachers and classes:**

##### **YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.3
Average class size	26.5

#### **Education support staff:**

##### **YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	99

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

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

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

### *Financial information*

Financial year	<b>1999/2000</b>
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	<b>£</b>
Total income	246630.00
Total expenditure	237637.00
Expenditure per pupil	2201.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	11412.00
Balance carried forward to next year	20405.00

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out  
Number of questionnaires returned

110
59

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Tend to agree</b>	<b>Tend to disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
My child likes school.	58.0	41.0	2.0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47.0	39.0	12.0	0	2.0
Behaviour in the school is good.	46.0	54.0	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31.0	52.0	12.0	0	5.0
The teaching is good.	53.0	41.0	7.0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37.0	46.0	15.0	0	2.0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61.0	32.0	7.0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51.0	46.0	3.0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	41.0	53.0	7.0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	51.0	36.0	7.0	0	7.0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46.0	46.0	7.0	0	2.0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26.0	40.0	28.0	0	7.0

### **Other issues raised by parents**

The limited range of the extra-curricular activities

Written reports are not very helpful. Too many of them are the same when written by a computer.

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

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

55. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. The children are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. Children are admitted to the Reception class in the September of the academic year in which they reach the age of five. Most children have attended local playgroups prior to admission. The school maintains close links with all pre-school providers. Care is taken to ensure that all children make a smooth transition to the school through visits prior to entry. Parents are fully involved in the process and, in this village community, early year's staff know most families well.

56. Assessments made when children start school shows that standards of attainment for the majority are in line with those expected for children of this age. The information from assessment is particularly well used when planning activities. The needs of each child are quickly identified and regularly reviewed. Support staff are used effectively both to support activities and to assist with assessments. As a result, realistic targets are set for the children. The school works hard to develop a good partnership with parents and to keep them informed of the children's progress.

57. At the time of the inspection, there were 16 children in the foundation stage class. Children's standards of attainment already exceeds expectations for their age in all areas of learning, and they are on target to exceed the nationally recognised Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. An examination of the children's books reveals that they make very good progress in all areas of the curriculum.

58. Overall, the school makes very good provision for children in the foundation stage. The significant progress made by this year's intake, reflects the high quality of the teaching and the support offered by other adults in the classroom. The support staff are involved in all aspects of the planning and are fully aware of what is required to enhance the learning that takes place. Children with special educational needs are well supported by all staff. There was no report on the Foundation Stage or pupils under five at the last inspection and therefore it is not possible to draw a comparison with the previous report.

### **Personal and social development**

59. The personal and social development of the children is given a high profile. High, but achievable, expectations are made of their behaviour and independence. Activities are carefully planned to support the development of these attitudes. Staff take very good care to support the children as they grow in confidence and independence. The teaching is very good and the children make very good progress. The children are very aware of school routines. Children form very good relationships with each other and with adults in the classroom. They concentrate for long periods of time and have very good attitudes to learning. Children are interested, enthusiastic and eager to participate. They behave very well in group and class activities, as well as when working or playing independently. Staff provide very good role models, particularly in the way they talk to,

encourage and question the children. Children develop a clear understanding of right and wrong. They are encouraged to treat equipment and the classroom with care and respect, and to help one another to understand the importance of sharing and playing together. Children tidy up after activities, take turns and listen to each other patiently. Their spiritual development is fostered through high quality assemblies, which they often share with older pupils. Children's cultural awareness is less well developed.

## **Language and literacy**

60. Children make very good progress in language and literacy. By the end of the Foundation Stage levels of attainment exceed those expected for children of this age. The literacy hour has been adapted to a suitable level for the age of the children. Two literacy lessons were observed. Teaching in one was very good and excellent in the other. The high quality of teaching is characterised by the teacher's high expectations of achievement and behaviour. Practical activities are clearly linked to literacy lessons, for example the making of Baby Bear's rocket, which reinforced the 'trip to the moon' undertaken in the class story. Lessons are well resourced. Speaking and listening skills are enhanced by teacher questioning and the intervention of support staff in linked activities. All staff work hard, encouraging children to offer opinions, to ask and answer questions, and to talk about what they have done. Sessions at the end of lessons are very well used and further support these developing skills.

61. Every opportunity is taken to support the development of phonic skills. Staff draw attention to phonics in all situations. Children demonstrate an increasing ability to recognise letters in written text. Children recognise their own names and most can write them accurately. Letters are generally correctly written.

62. The children show great enthusiasm for books. They understand how books are organised. Most can talk about and retell their favourite story. There are many opportunities to share books, to use the book corner and to read quietly. They take their reading books home regularly and are very interested in their books. Children demonstrate a developing understanding of the links between pictures and the print. Some children are already reading at National Curriculum Level 1. There is a home school book to record comments of both teacher and parents and this links and supports the home school partnership.

## **MATHEMATICS**

63. The teaching of mathematics is of a very high standard. The excellent relationships established within the class and the strategies used, all support and encourage learning in the subject. Levels of attainment by the end of the key stage exceed those expected for children of this age, and all children make very good progress. For example, at the end of a mathematics lesson, children all wear numbers, order themselves into a line and subsequently into a circle without help from adults.

64. The National Numeracy Strategy has been adapted to a suitable level for children of this age. Lessons are very well paced and activities are structured to hold the children's attention. Learning is

fun. Lesson objectives are shared with the children. They are given good opportunities to undertake oral mental calculations. Children confidently apply what they have learnt in the lessons to the activities that follow. Practical activities support learning. Children are encouraged to learn mathematical language. They understand 'more than', 'less than', 'circle', and how to order numbers in sequence. Children recognise the numbers from 1 to 6, and some recognise higher numbers. They can add and subtract one using ten fingers and some can explain how they count forward from a given number to twenty.

65. Assessments of pupils learning are thorough, and the results of assessments are used well when planning what children need to learn next. Resources are very well used to support activities. Mathematics lessons in the outdoor play area support and extend the learning in the classroom. These practical activities ensure children learn well.

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

66. Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Very good use of the local environment is made to support learning in this area. Children are taken on walks around the village to see the effects of the changing seasons, and are developing an understanding of chronology through these practical activities. For example, good use is made of the ford in the village to demonstrate how weather conditions affect the amount of water there. For example, children see the effects of the recent very heavy rainfall in the area when the level of the river rises. They know that their school is in a very old building, and that it was built in Victorian times. Parents bring birds nests from time to time. Good use is made of these to increase the children's understanding of nature.

67. Children also visit the local pond to observe changes and the wild life there. They describe their experiences well, and are beginning to sort materials and to test out their own ideas. Children confidently use the computers to play number games, and to control a mouse and some directional keys effectively.

### **Creative development**

68. No teaching in this area of learning was observed during the inspection. An examination of children's work indicates that children make good progress in their creative development. Teachers plan a wide range of appropriate activities for the children. Children are encouraged to express their ideas through model making, drawing and collage work. They undertake imaginative role-play, using a range of materials to produce interesting effects. When observed making a rocket as part of their literacy work, they were able to talk about what they were doing and why, and were happy to involve adults in these activities. Tasks are approached with interest and enthusiasm. They enjoy music, sing joyfully and respond well to music in physical education activities.

### **Physical development**

69. Children make good progress in their physical development. Suitable activities are planned which offer challenge to children of this age. Children's fine motor skills are developed through a range of interesting activities. They are encouraged to develop their writing skills in formal lessons. Scissors, glue and paints are used with confidence. In their lesson in the hall, in which they used apparatus, they demonstrated gains from their previous learning. The paired work undertaken at the end of the lesson displayed a level of attainment above the national expectation for children of this age.

70. The outdoor area is used well to support this aspect of the children's learning. There is a good selection of large wheeled toys. Children are given regular opportunities to increase their skills in balance and ball control. They learn how to share, take turns and to treat each other and the equipment with respect.

71. The resources for indoor activities are very good, those for outdoor activities are good. The self-contained accommodation is very good, with easy access to a safe, secure outdoor area. The school takes care to ensure that there is always adult supervision in the outdoor area. Adults are used particularly well to support activities that take place in the classroom.

## **ENGLISH**

72. As at the time of the last inspection, by the end of both key stages, pupils overall standards of attainment in English are in line with national averages. Inspection evidence shows that pupils currently achieve higher standards in speaking and listening and in reading than in writing.

73. The school has a small intake of pupils in each age group. Year-to-year variation is likely and comparisons with national and similar school results must, therefore, be treated with caution. However, National Curriculum test results in 2000 for pupils aged seven at the end of Key Stage 1 indicated that results for reading were in line with the national average. In writing, results have risen since the last inspection and, in 2000 were above the national average for both boys and girls and overall, and above the average results for similar schools. The results for spelling do, however, indicate some weaknesses in this aspect of English, while the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected Level 2 in writing were comparatively high.

74. At Key Stage 2 in 2000, English results were below those achieved in 1999, but still close to the national average. Results overall at the higher than expected Level 5 were above the national average. When the results are considered over the past three years they exceed the national averages. However, results in writing have fluctuated, and the school recognises that, despite some improvements, writing is still an area for further development.

75. Standards of speaking and listening are good overall throughout the school. Pupils entering the school have broadly average levels of attainment. In the Reception year, pupils receive a very stimulating and well-structured range of experiences to develop their speaking and listening skills. By the time they join Key Stage 1, most pupils are confident speakers, good listeners, and able to sustain their concentration and attentiveness well. There are many well-planned and managed opportunities, across the curriculum in Key Stage 1, for pupils to develop their speaking and



listening skills. By Year 2, most pupils talk freely and confidently with each other, are responsive in collaborative and problem-solving discussions, and communicate at a good level for their age. They listen well to each other and to adults.

76. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils speaking and listening skills continue to develop effectively through literacy lessons and during a wide range of practical activities across the curriculum. Relationships in the school are very good, and pupils know that their contributions will be valued. They share ideas, listen to each other and their teachers, and respond appropriately and confidently in a variety of situations. Pupils have regular, more formal opportunities to present information orally to each other, for example in many lessons, assemblies and, for pupils in Years 5 and 6, through regular debating opportunities. These pupils' response is mature and positive, and they achieve good standards.

77. Inspection evidence shows that the majority of children across the school are currently achieving good standards in reading. Reading is given a high profile from the outset, and pupils from the youngest age are thoroughly engaged with the printed word in many forms. They show interest in stories, in books and in reading. Throughout the school, parental support is encouraged and pupils benefit from reading regularly at home and at school. They soon develop preferences for different authors and types of books. Average and above attaining pupils in Year 2 have a good grasp of letter sounds and use these and other cues to help them read at a good standard for their age. By Year 6, most pupils read aloud fluently and with expression. They are, for example, able to predict what might happen next in a story, and give reasons for why a character acts in a particular way. They are encouraged to use the classroom books and the small school library, and consider their choice of reading material. Pupils use reference books efficiently and can retrieve information with increasing confidence. Both boys and girls show interest in reading.

78. The small number of pupils with special educational needs who have greater difficulty with reading are aware of the range of strategies which they need to use to read unfamiliar words and are keen to improve their skills. They value the good support, which they are given and are aware of and pleased with the generally good progress, which they are making.

79. Standards in writing are satisfactory overall. Interest is strongly stimulated in the Foundation Stage. Many pupils at this stage are already forming letters correctly and writing their names, and some are writing simple words and making efforts at writing whole sentences. By Year 2, most pupils can write individual simple words, and construct a simple sentence, sometimes demarcated by a capital letter and full stop. Most spell some common very simple words correctly, but the range of words spelt accurately is limited. Their spelling skills are not regularly supported through the good materials now available. They have a sound grasp of the basics of reading and writing. However, they do not have enough opportunities for seeing the teacher demonstrating to them how to read and write with large text, visible to them all. Pupils carry out a number of short writing tasks largely competently, most often related to handwriting and spelling practice. They have fewer opportunities to write stories and accounts to demonstrate their creativity, although standards are broadly satisfactory when they are given opportunities to undertake these activities.

80. This pattern of development continues in Key Stage 2, with most pupils interested in writing and reaching a satisfactory standard. By Year 6, most pupils have a sound understanding of the conventions of writing and are able to construct securely crafted sentences, appropriately punctuated. They begin to use paragraphs and write in a range of forms. For example, short accounts of a Victorian childhood written by Years 3 and 4 pupils are often well constructed and indicated a clear understanding of writing in character and for an audience. By Years 5 and 6,

pupils show an imaginative use of vocabulary and poetic form in poems about winter, and write well ordered accounts of science experiments. The presentation, depth and quantity of writing, were concerns at the last inspection. Presentation is now at least satisfactory, and often good. The quantity of writing is satisfactory. However, the depth and range of purposes for writing are constrained. There is over attention to handwriting practice and to very short writing tasks in Key Stage 2, and there is under attention to sequences of work, in both English and other subjects of the curriculum, which would lead to sustained writing of length and depth. The constraints of tasks and of timetabling, rather than pupils' skills, lie at the heart of this difficulty.

81. Standards of handwriting are usually at least satisfactory, and often good, in pupils' books and work produced for display. There is scope to increase the work undertaken in Years 1 and 2 to ensure that children master, at an early stage, pencil hold, basic letter shapes and letter joins. An excessive amount of time is devoted to handwriting practice for all pupils throughout Key Stage 2, and particularly in Years 5 and 6. There are some residual weaknesses in spelling for a significant number of pupils in Key Stage 2, which are being helped by additional adult support.

82. Throughout the school the overall quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory, and is good in three-quarters of lessons. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy framework for teaching and the literacy hour is securely in place in both key stages. All lessons are thoroughly planned with clear learning objectives, and characterised by explicit explanations and expectations. Teachers manage well the different needs necessary for the two age groups and range of abilities in each class.

83. There are very good systems and routines in place, well understood by pupils, for the use of teaching and support staff during whole class lessons, and with groups to support learning. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and work closely and effectively with support staff, who are also well trained and effective in their literacy roles. Staff successfully encourage enthusiasm for and enjoyment of speaking and listening, reading and writing.

84. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by staff throughout the school. For example, good use is made of Additional Literacy Support funding in Year 3 to boost the attainment of those pupils who achieved low results in Year 2 and school progress is evident.

85. The significant remaining weakness in the teaching of writing rests with the delivery of the content of the English curriculum and the overall timetabling of subjects across the curriculum in both Key Stages. Considerable time is devoted to English in both key stages, over and above the daily literacy hour. However, this additional time is often used for repetitive tasks, such as quiet reading and handwriting practice, which do not address the key issue of range, length and depth in pupils' writing. Similarly, the valuable, practical approach adopted to a number of other curriculum subjects seldom results in writing of any depth. The literacy hour is principally used for analysing grammatical structures and the conventions of writing, but underused to show children how a writer actually writes a story or account. Similarly, guided reading, for a group of pupils at a time, is under used within or in addition to the literacy hour. The school under uses some of the time efficient and effective strategies recommended in the National Literacy Strategy. The overall result is an inefficient use of time. While pupils are eager to write, there is underdevelopment of quality writing time and of quality writing of good length in which pupils can take pride and pleasure.

86. There are good procedures for tracking, assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress. The information gained from these procedures is well used to plan for lessons and to identify and support learning needs, particularly of pupils experiencing difficulties. Data is carefully analysed and the school is well aware of the issues still to be fully addressed. Co-ordination of the subject across the school is satisfactory and the teaching and learning is also carefully monitored by the headteacher. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development.

87. Resources for English are good overall, with, for example, a wide range of books in good condition, including very good new resources purchased to improve guided reading. However, the multicultural nature of our society as a whole is under-represented in book resources.

88. Information and communication technology is used increasingly to enhance learning in English. Pupils from the youngest age have opportunities to learn keyboard skills and access a range of word games and texts. Tape recorders are also used widely in these classes. Older pupils have some opportunities to draft stories on computer and use literacy games to improve basic skills. There are sensible plans to increase the use of information and communication technology in English and across the curriculum.

89. English regularly forms part of homework. Pupils in Key Stage 1 read at home, and Key Stage 2 pupils undertake a useful range of reading and writing tasks. Most pupils take their homework seriously, and it contributes to their positive attitudes towards English.

## **MATHEMATICS**

90. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with the national average by the end of both key stages, and all pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. The National Curriculum test results in 2000 for pupils aged seven at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that pupils attain standards well above the national average for all schools and above average when compared to similar schools nationally. Trends over the last three years indicate that the performance of pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 has exceeded the national trend. Additionally, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher than expected Level 3 has improved over time, and in 2000 was well above the national average.

91. National Curriculum test results in 2000 for pupils aged 11 at the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that pupils attain standards broadly in line with the national average. When compared with similar schools nationally pupils attain well below the average. Trends over the last three years indicate that pupils' performance by the end of this key stage has slightly exceeded the national average. The number of pupils attaining the higher than expected Level 5 in 2000 was above the national average.

92. There is no significant variation in the attainment of boys or girls at either key stage each year. The school has only a small number of pupils taking the end of key stage tests, which means that there is a considerable year-to-year variation and care is necessary when interpreting the changes in the school's results. Pupils' standards of attainment have been maintained since the last inspection.

93. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils count in doubles, and forwards and backwards from a given number to at least 20. They have a quick mental recall when adding two numbers, and understand mathematical vocabulary, such as ‘minus’, ‘subtract’, ‘add’ and ‘take away’. Higher attaining pupils recognise coin values, give change to the value of £1 and add coins to the value of £4.98. They actively co-operate when buying and selling goods from the classroom hardware shop. Lower attaining pupils undertake similar tasks with coins of a lesser value. All pupils can explain well what they have done and the way they arrive at their answers.

94. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read and write whole numbers in figures and words, and understand place value. They know how to compare two fractions by finding a common denominator and can order these, decimals and whole numbers on a number line. Pupils have a good knowledge of tables and almost all have good strategies for arriving at the answers in their mental maths sessions. Lower attaining pupils work at a slightly slower pace with smaller numbers. Pupils with special educational needs at both key stages receive good support and this enables them to undertake the same number activities as the rest of the class, and they make good progress. Despite the significant imbalance of boys and girls in some classes, during the inspection there was no evidence of either being disadvantaged.

95. As at the time of the last inspection pupils have good attitudes towards their mathematics. They behave and concentrate well, share resources and ideas and listen carefully to instructions. Teachers’ questions are eagerly answered and even the youngest pupils help each other when playing games or working in groups.

96. The overall quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and is good in over half of the lessons observed. Good teaching was evident by teachers’ good knowledge and understanding of the subject, which they use well to plan and deliver interesting and lively lessons. Activities build on pupils’ past learning and are put into a practical context to help pupils to more easily understand what they are doing. For example, in the Year 3 and 4 class pupils cut shapes from squared paper to explore which would fold into boxes. This helped them to draw conclusions about the properties shapes need if they are to make a successful box.

97. Teachers have suitable expectations of all the levels of ability within the class and take good care to ensure that work is well matched to the needs of the pupils. A good variety of teaching methods is used to maintain the pupils’ interest. The three-part lesson of the National Numeracy Strategy is effective. The start of lessons with mental questions to the whole class is brisk and teachers skilfully ask challenging questions of individuals. This was particularly so in a lesson where pupils in Year 3 and 4 were challenged by the quick mental questions about the four times tables. Rather than just chanting this, pupils were asked for sequences of numbers in fours forwards and backwards from any number between 1 and 48.

98. A particular strength of all the teaching is the very good way teachers manage pupils and ensure they use the time allowed for lessons productively. However, the overall timetable arrangements for the subject are unsatisfactory. Some lessons are too long, which takes away time that could be used for other subjects. Other lessons stop when it is too early for lunch but with insufficient time to undertake another lesson effectively.

99. Support staff are well trained and very effectively used to promote pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, the support for a Years 5 and 6 lower attaining group, working with fractions, enabled them to participate in all aspects of the lesson at a slightly lower level of difficulty than the rest of the class. Resources are also well used to support learning. Suitable homework is given throughout the school, which enables pupils to practise and extend their learning. Numeracy skills are given suitable priority, and are satisfactorily used and developed when carrying out work in other subjects.

100. A generous amount of time is allocated to the subject, which enables pupils to have good opportunities to work practically and express and share their ideas verbally. Pupils' recorded work does not always reflect the good levels they achieve in practical maths because less emphasis is placed on this during some lessons.

101. The school has adapted the Numeracy Strategy effectively to ensure that it caters for classes with two age groups and a wide range of abilities. The co-ordinator for the subject is very effective in ensuring mathematics has a high profile in the school and that teachers have sufficient training and resources to be very confident in their teaching. The headteacher effectively monitors the teaching and learning in the subject. Opportunities to use information and communication technology equipment to support learning are satisfactorily included in the lessons. Arrangements to monitor and evaluate pupils' progress and standards are effective.

## **SCIENCE**

102. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national averages by the end of both key stages. Results of the teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 show that pupils are below the national average for all schools, and that of similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 is also below that in similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 is close to the national average. Pupils' attainment in experimental and investigative science is higher than in the other attainment targets.

103. Results in the Key Stage 2 tests in 2000 are close to the national average at both Level 4 and the higher Level 5. When compared with similar schools nationally, the school's results in science are well below the national average. It is important to note that the school enters a small cohort for the tests, and the percentage of pupils with special educational need vary yearly. The performance of girls is slightly higher than that of the boys. Overall results over the last four years show steady improvement since 1997 with the exception of 1999, when there was a slight fall.

104. Only two lessons were timetabled during the inspection, one in each key stage. In Key Stage 1, Year 2 pupils work at higher levels than shown by recent teacher assessments, with most pupils working above the expected level. Pupils understand that power is a source of light and that a radio would require bigger batteries than a pencil torch. They explain confidently what they are doing and how the battery works. An examination of pupil's work indicates that they make satisfactory progress in the subject across the key stage. Teaching

links work and ideas to the pupils' previous experiences. In the lesson observed, the teacher was able to spend time with a small group, checking progress and discussing ideas in depth. Overall, however, an examination of pupil's work indicates that attainment at the end of the Key Stage 1 is in line with national averages.

105. In a Years 5 and 6 lesson observed, pupils work at the expected level for pupils of this age. They show a sound understanding of what constitutes a fair test, and determine conditions that might undermine the fairness of a test. Pupils know that their tests might contradict their prediction of outcome. They apply themselves to the tasks with enthusiasm, and work well together collaboratively, sharing thoughts and ideas. An examination of pupils' work indicates that they make satisfactory progress over time and that the curriculum is designed to build coherently over the key stage. As a result, attainment at the end of the key stage is in line with national averages. The school has sustained its levels of attainment since the last inspection.

106. As in the last inspection, the quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Both lessons seen were well planned, and the teachers clearly told the pupils at the beginning of the lessons what it was they were going to learn. Teachers manage the mixed age classes very well. In the Key Stage 1 class, the younger pupils were gainfully occupied on other science activities with a learning support assistant and a student, allowing the teacher to work successfully with the older children. In the mixed Key Stage 2 class, the teacher uses a range of strategies to involve the class and organised the groups efficiently. Activities are planned that supported the learning in both key stages. Teachers took care to determine what pupils already know and understand. In both key stages, the lessons are too short and pupils had limited opportunities to record their work independently and write in an extended way about their findings.

107. The co-ordinator has recently taken over management of the subject. She has a clear vision of how levels of attainment in science can be raised further. The subject is a focus of the school's development plan this year. The policy is currently under review to take into account a nationally approved scheme of work. Staff analyse the standard assessment tasks at both key stages to identify what the school needs to do to raise standards further. The co-ordinator understands the need for pupils to have more time to record their findings in order to enhance their progress and achievement. The school is well placed to develop the subject further.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

108. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations for their age, both for seven-year-olds at the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time that pupils leave the school at the age of 11. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout their time in the school. There are good features in the art and design work in each age group. Standards have been satisfactorily maintained since the last inspection.

109. From the earliest age, pupils are encouraged to apply care and thought to their art and design work. They work with an appropriate range of materials and their work is often linked very effectively to much loved stories and to other areas of experience. These early skills, and their enthusiasm, are further developed in Key Stage 1 with the result that, by Year 2, drawings are more

detailed and refined, and include work done in pencil, pen, crayon and pastels. Pupils produce both 2- and 3-Dimensional work, such as bird drawings and bird mobiles. They know how to build up a painting in a sensible sequence, to mix colours to obtain a desired effect, and to handle their materials with confidence. They can describe plans for their work and explain how they can improve their efforts.

110. In Key Stage 2, the ranges of media and tools, and the techniques which pupils are taught to use are satisfactorily extended. Pupils have sketchbooks in which to plan their work and to help them to continue to work with precision and care in their drawings, paintings and craftwork. Good links are made with other subjects such as technology and history. Pupils reflect upon and emulate the work of artists and craft workers from different times and cultures. For example, work produced by the Years 3 and 4 class includes a beautiful, collaboratively made rag rug and skilful work in the style of William Morris. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 produce delicate winter paintings, using a combination of techniques, and well executed 'views of a shoe' as part of a study of Cubism.

111. Little art was timetabled during the period of inspection. Consequently, there is insufficient evidence to form a judgement of the overall quality of teaching. In the one lesson observed, in Years 1 and 2, the teaching was good. The teacher demonstrated well the techniques of poster paint use to outline areas before applying colour. The art area was well organised and pupils well trained in managing painting materials and techniques. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and they work well together. They are confident in applying their knowledge and skills to produce pleasing results.

112. Teachers' plan lessons thoroughly following a nationally approved scheme of work, which is supplemented by additional materials. There are sensible visual and written records of pupils' progress over time, which support future planning.

113. The subject co-ordinator provides a satisfactory level of support to colleagues. Resources are adequate, provision for the subject is regularly monitored and reviewed, and there are sensible plans to continue to develop art and design across the school.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

114. Pupils' attainment in design and technology by the end of both key stages is in line with expectations for their ages. Pupils make satisfactory progress.

115. During their time in the school, pupils work with an increasing range of materials and techniques to plan, design, make and evaluate a variety of products. From the youngest age, pupils enjoy their design and technology activities. For example, in a Reception/Year 1 class, pupils worked collaboratively, with much thoughtful discussion and enthusiasm to design a rocket for a character in the class story. Pupils in Key Stage 1 sized, designed and sewed a great variety of amazing technicolour coats for 'Joseph,' and experienced other 'design and make' tasks, such as stick birds and finger puppets. They describe how they planned and carried out their work, the problems they encountered and how they managed to solve them.



116. At Key Stage 2, the range and complexity of work is increased. In Years 3 and 4 it includes a substantial project about the Victorians, where pupils learnt the design techniques of William Morris for fabrics and tiles, and made similar designs of their own, including computer-generated design plans. They also designed in wood and produced durable packaging for their 'pinch' pots. Recent work done by the oldest pupils has included food technology and regular design-and-make sessions across a range of tasks, supported by a parent helper. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and discuss their work in well-considered terms.

117. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about the quality of teaching. However, the comments made by pupils and the quality of products on display in classrooms, and in a photographic record of work, indicate positive outcomes from the teaching provided across the school.

118. The school effectively uses a nationally recognised scheme of work that to give guidance on teaching. Coverage of the design and technology curriculum at Key Stage 2 was a concern at the last inspection. Planning for design and technology is now satisfactory. There is enough time given, on a regular basis, to teaching all the required elements of the National Curriculum.

119. The subject co-ordinator provides well-informed support for colleagues to develop their expertise. Resources are adequate and there is a suitable planned programme for improvement and renewal of resources to sustain development of the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

120. Pupils' standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are in line with national expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Standards in the subject have been maintained since the last inspection. The policy has not been reviewed since the last inspection but it is a focus in this year's school development plan. The school has adopted a nationally recognised scheme of work.

121. No lessons were timetabled during the inspection in either key stage. However a scrutiny of work from both key stages revealed that the school is meeting national requirements for the subject. And pupils are learning at a satisfactory rate. In Key Stage 1, there is evidence of simple mapping, of pupils' growing awareness of the wider world, and of work they have done about the environment. In Key Stage 2, pupils contrast different areas in the United Kingdom and the world. They show a developing understanding of geographical terminology and more sophisticated mapping skills.

122. The school makes very good use of the environment, particularly the immediate environment, to support learning in the subject. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 made good use of the information gathered by the builders when a new development of houses was undertaken in the village. Pupils visited the site and were aware of resistance to the development in the village. Studies are made of locally contrasting areas, for example,

Southend and Malden, and pupils visit both places to see the differences and similarities. The subject is co-ordinated by the headteacher who regularly monitors its teaching and learning throughout the school. There are adequate resources to support the teaching of geography and raise standards further.

123. In both key stages, there is insufficient use of writing to support the subject. Most work is recorded on worksheets and opportunities are lost to develop extended writing in the subject.

## **HISTORY**

124. Pupils' standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are in line with national expectations. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been maintained since the last inspection. Standards have improved at Key Stage 2 since the last inspection, when they were judged to need improvement. Pupils including those with special educational needs in both key stages make satisfactory progress.

125. By the end of Key Stage 1, writing, pictures and time lines indicate that pupils have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the past. For example, they study the Great Fire of London, and know that the fire helped to eradicate the plague, that had beset the city, by destroying the rats that carried the disease. Pupils can distinguish between the accidental fire of London, which was exacerbated by wooden houses, and the deliberate attempt by Guy Fawkes to destroy the Houses of Parliament. Pupils are able to sequence events in a time line.

126. Only one lesson was timetabled in Key Stage 1, and the quality of teaching in this lesson was satisfactory. The lesson was carefully planned with clear learning outcomes. The teacher successfully used part of the text to highlight links with literacy. In Key Stage 2, two lessons were observed, and both were satisfactory. Both lessons were well planned and teachers took care to link lessons with work previously undertaken. A video was used to successfully to show pupils what life was like in Tudor times and pupils encouraged to take note as an aid to helping them remember the important facts. Questions before the video explored effectively what pupils remembered from the previous lesson.

127. An examination of pupil's work indicates, that at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have acquired satisfactory knowledge and understanding of some of the important periods of British history, such as the Victorians, and of how things have changed since 1948. The pupils show satisfactory skills in investigation, and their work indicates that they learn using documents, artefacts and pictures.

128. Good use is made of the local environment to support the subject, particularly the Victorian features of the school and the village. Visits are made to Colchester Castle and to local museums, one of which incorporates a Victorian schoolroom.

129. The subject has two co-ordinators, one in each key stage. The school is adopting a nationally recognised scheme of work and examining any changes required to it as a result of the Curriculum 2000 documentation. The current policy will be updated to incorporate these changes. The school has adequate resources to support the subject and borrows additional artefacts from local museums when relevant.

130. In both key stages, there is insufficient use of writing to support the subject. There are some very good examples of extended writing in the subject, but these are very limited. These examples do, however, indicate that pupils are well able to write extensively on the subject, and to increase levels of attainment in both history and English.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

131. The previous inspection indicated that, although resources were good, pupils used computers infrequently, with only occasional teaching in the subject. Full coverage of the curriculum was not assured, and there was insufficient evidence to judge pupils overall standards.

132. Since the last inspection and, particularly more recently, the provision and use of information and communication technology has significantly improved. The new computer base gives pupils greater access to opportunities for group and individual work on a regular basis. Throughout Key Stage 2, this approach has improved pupils' skills and broadened their experience of the use of information and communication technology.

133. During the period of the inspection there were no lessons timetabled for information and communication technology at Key Stage 1. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to make judgements about the quality of teaching. Pupils standards of attainment for this key stage are based on a scrutiny of pupils' past work, and discussion with and observations of pupils using computers as a reference point for dictionary words, to word process and play number and word games.

134. Pupils' standards of attainment by the end of both key stages are in line with the national expectations for their ages. By the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils enter text into a word processor and know the purpose and use of various keys, such as the shift key and space bar. They handle the mouse quickly and confidently when playing number games. Pupils successfully give direct commands to access stored information from a CD-ROM, and move between the pages competently to search for a suitable word, as part of their dictionary work. Higher attaining pupils recognise that underlined words are not spelt correctly. All pupils make satisfactory progress and talk confidently to describe what they are doing, past experiences, and what they have learnt.

135. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils confidently open data bases and give verbal instructions to each other to find and sort information. They explore what happens when you change a variable, and recognise obvious errors. For example, the height of the highest volcano could not be three metres. They understand and give examples of data base error types, such as incorrect field, implausible data, incorrect spelling, totals and timing. Pupils appreciate the need to be very specific when posing questions to find out and analyse information.

136. Throughout the key stage, pupils are confident and competent users of a range of programs, including word processing, drawing and number packages. Higher attaining pupils tackle additional challenges at a faster pace than the rest of the group and are more proficient in their analyses of information.

137. All pupils thoroughly enjoy working with computers and concentrate for a very long time, engrossed in their tasks. They are keen to share ideas and are genuinely interested in each other's work.

138. There was insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure the staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the new technology and are confident to apply this in their teaching. Lesson plans consistently build on pupils' past learning and follow a well thought out scheme of work. Teachers have suitable expectations for pupils' learning, and use a variety of effective strategies to support both individuals and groups. Pupils are managed well to ensure they get the best possible opportunities to learn in their lessons. However, the timetabling arrangements for the use of the information and communication technology base are not always effective. When, for example, pupils have a short lesson before lunch, this does not give them the time to extend their learning and achieve higher standards. Pupils in these lessons are disappointed that they have to interrupt their work, sometimes at a critical point.

139. There is some use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects. For example, Year 6 links to science when measuring temperatures and Year 3 links to mathematics. In Year 4, pupil's word-processed events from a day visit to a place where they pretended to be Victorians. Whilst this is satisfactory, opportunities to use information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is underdeveloped.

140. The leadership and management of the subject is sound. Significant progress has been made more recently to improve the resources, curriculum, teachers' knowledge and confidence, and pupils, standards. The school is now well placed to develop the subject at a faster pace in the future. There are clear, suitable plans for the next steps, which include a more systematic way to monitor and evaluate pupils' progress and attainment. This involves the further development of existing work with other schools from a local 'cluster' group. There is pride from the staff and governing body in what has been achieved, and a commitment to further improvement.

## **MUSIC**

141. Music was not timetabled for Key Stage 1 during the period of inspection. There is insufficient evidence therefore to make judgements about pupils' standards or the quality of teaching at this key stage.

142. Pupils' standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with those nationally expected for the age group. This judgement is the same as that made at the time of the last inspection. In the two lessons observed, and in the recorder club, pupils make satisfactory progress. By the end of the key stage, pupils work co-operatively in groups to build three layers of

textured musical sound based on the theme of floating. They perform this confidently to the class, give very good critiques of others' work and efforts, and make good suggestions for how to improve the sound, for example the use of more defined loud and soft parts, for which they use the correct musical terms of 'crescendo' and 'diminuendo'.

143. All pupils sing satisfactorily in assemblies. They listen very well to the music when coming in and out of the hall, and some recognise the composer and the name of the piece.

144. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 sing a tune and play a tune in three parts in time to a pulse or a rhythm. The seven pupils in the recorder club attain standards above those expected for their age. They play sweetly in time and tune a song for the Chinese New Year, and use the fingers of both hands accurately. These pupils read music and have a good understanding of note and rest values. They are keen to evaluate their own work, and improve quickly as a result.

145. Overall, all pupils have good attitudes to music. They are keen and interested to do their best, and enjoy new learning.

146. One of the two music co-ordinators taught all of the observed lessons. The quality of teaching is good and enables all pupils to make satisfactory progress. Lesson plans are clear. They provide activities that build on pupils' prior learning and suitably challenge them to improve. The pace of lessons is brisk and the method well structured to make lessons interesting. Pupils listen well and are given good praise for their efforts throughout the lessons. The teacher manages pupils' well and supports individuals and groups effectively. In a lesson, the mood and atmosphere of a storm was built up when the teacher quickly retold the story from the previous week. This enabled pupils to start in groups from where they left off and add further to the progress of the musical storm. The teacher effectively worked with the groups in turn and encouraged them to present their ideas to the rest of the class. At the end of the lesson the scene was set for the next week and pupils encouraged to think about the ideas they would need to bring to the next lesson. Pupils' progress in lessons is suitably evaluated, the teacher keeps records to ensure that pupils cover a satisfactory curriculum.

147. As with some other subjects, the slots in the timetable allocated to music are not always appropriate. For example, prior to a music lesson, a class had a physical education lesson, but were late changing their clothes. This meant that the already short music lesson began only 25 minutes before home time. Pupils did not have enough time in the lesson to develop their ideas fully and reach the higher standards of which they are capable. Additionally, the constant interruptions towards the end of the day, with people using the hall whilst the lesson is in progress, is very distracting.

148. The two co-ordinators for the subject are newly in post and are keen and enthusiastic. They have introduced an appropriate scheme of work to give structure and progression throughout the school in pupils' learning. This scheme is at an early stage of development and its impact on pupils' standards has yet to be evaluated.

149. The recorder clubs are worthwhile and these and all classes are given the opportunity to perform to others. Productions and class assemblies help to enrich the musical life of the school.

150. Resources overall are satisfactory. However, the curriculum does not yet sufficiently promote the music and culture of the diverse of the world in which we live. The co-ordinators are aware of this and believes the situation will be rectified when pupils have had more opportunity to work through the newly introduced scheme of work.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

151. Pupils' standards of attainment at the end of both key stages in physical education are in line with national expectations. This picture broadly matches standards achieved at the time of the last inspection. There is no significant difference between boys and girls in the standards they achieve.

152. By the end of Key Stage 1 in gymnastics, pupils participate with enthusiasm and sound skills. They are able to interpret curling, twisting and stretching on the floor and on apparatus in a variety of ways. They improve their performance during the course of the lesson, and most Year 2 pupils begin to incorporate their skills into a linked sequence of movements. Pupils generally show satisfactory awareness of the space around them. Most behave very well and have good attitudes to the subject. They are aware of safety rules, and put apparatus away at the close of the session co-operatively and sensibly.

153. Pupils in the Key Stage 2 classes were timetabled for and observed in outdoor games only. Inclement weather over several months had restricted opportunities for outdoor activity, therefore lessons observed were among the first outdoors for some time. Nevertheless, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are developing a satisfactory range of ball skills and an understanding of the rules and tactics needed in team games. By Years 5 and 6, there is evident improvement in both skills and understanding. They work successfully with more complex rules and demands, and are developing their skills of attack and defence. Most pupils make satisfactory efforts to engage in the games and improve their skills. However, a few groups expend rather more energy on debating rules than in playing the ball game itself.

154. The quality of teaching observed was satisfactory. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly, in line with the agreed schemes of work. They have a clear understanding of the elements of physical education lessons. Most lessons incorporate satisfactory warm-up and close-down activities, specific teaching of skills and attention to an active pace. Behaviour is sensibly managed, and there is good attention to issues of safety. However, teaching did not always secure team discussion or a sustained work rate for all pupils, while evaluation of achievement with pupils did not always receive sufficient attention.

155. Overall, the provision made for pupils' physical education satisfactorily covers all National Curriculum requirements, and is enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. The range is impressive for a comparatively small school and is actively supported by staff and parent helpers.

156. Provision for the subject is well co-ordinated. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and proactive. She ensures that the school is actively involved in national initiatives, such as 'Top Play'

and 'Top Sport,' that staff receive training, and that equipment, facilities and opportunities for physical education are maintained and improved.

157. The previous inspection report noted that the field 'was damaged by rabbits'. Molehills now add to these hazards. However, judicious and complementary efforts are made to ensure that the field is levelled and safe when in use. Overall, the school is developing its provision for physical education effectively.