

INSPECTION REPORT

BURNSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Houghton-le-Spring

LEA area: Sunderland

Unique reference number: 108823

Head teacher: Mr T E Walker

Reporting inspector: Mr D Hardman
17794

Dates of inspection: 26th February – 1st March 2001

Inspection number: 191159

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brinkburn Crescent Houghton-le-Spring County Durham
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor L A Farthing
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

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17794	Mr D Hardman	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
			Geography	The schools results and achievements.
			Art and design	How well are the pupils taught?
			English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed?
				What should the school do to improve further?
9511	Mrs E A Longfield	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23375	Mr J Hicks	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Design and technology	
			The foundation stage	
15474	Mr J Fairclough	Team inspector	Religious education	
			Music	
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8070	Mr J Haves	Team inspector	English	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Burnside Primary School is a medium sized school situated in Houghton-le-Spring to the west of the City of Sunderland. There is a high turnover of pupils entering and leaving the school other than at the normal time, for example, in the last 18 months 51 pupils have either registered at the school or left. Many of these pupils entering the school have special educational needs. In addition, the school has recently undergone extensive building work. There has been a great deal of disruption to pupils' education during the move to new classrooms and the demolition of old ones. Many pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below the national average although the full ability range is represented. There are 121 boys and 111 girls currently on roll. There are no pupils who have English as an additional language and none from ethnic minorities. Approximately 29 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. Twenty six per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, this is above the national average and 5 per cent have statements of special educational need, which is well above the national average. The majority of pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties or speech and communication difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Burnside Primary School is a good school. The leadership and management by the head teacher and deputy head teacher are good. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in music, and art and design are above the level expected for their age. It is in line with the level expected for all other subjects except English, mathematics and design and technology where it is below the level expected. These results reflect the good quality teaching and learning in the school and the attainment of pupils is lower in English and mathematics mainly because of the high turnover of pupils in the recent past. Pupils achieve as well as could be expected in relation to their previous attainment and standards are rising again after a fall last year. Relationships are good and pupils' attitudes are good. As a result, the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve well when compared with their previous attainment.
- The leadership and management of the school by the head teacher and deputy head teacher are good, promoting good quality teamwork by all staff and a shared commitment to improve.
- Children in the reception class are provided with a good start to their education because of good quality teaching and the effective teamwork of staff.
- The school welcomes pupils of all abilities, including those with physical disabilities, and ensures they all participate in as many activities as possible.
- The procedures and provision for pupils with special educational needs are very good. As a result, pupils make good progress.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and design and technology.
- The provision to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum for design and technology, swimming and water safety.
- The outside accommodation and the health and safety issues discussed with the school resulting from the unfinished building work.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress towards resolving most of the issues raised in the last inspection in January 1997. The organisation, management and teacher expectations in Year 2 have been improved. As a result these pupils receive good teaching and their learning is much better. The effective introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, which the school has taken on board enthusiastically, has contributed to the raising of teachers' expectations. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning has improved throughout the school since the last inspection.

The school has made very good progress in providing sufficient equipment and resources to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum for information and communication technology (ICT) and the establishment of the computer suite is having a significant impact on standards. There is a need to use the expertise of the co-ordinator to provide further training for all staff to make sure pupils receive the maximum benefit when they are using computers in the suite. Progress towards improving pupils' attainment and learning in design and technology has been unsatisfactory. Staff are discussing the implementation of a new programme of study for the subject and this needs to be completed as a matter of urgency. In addition, the school does not have sufficient resources to effectively teach all the required elements of the subject.

In common with many other schools, the school has found it difficult to recruit and retain school governors. At the time of the inspection there were still some vacancies and several governors were new to post. However, during the last four years the governors have made good progress in addressing the issues raised at the last inspection. For example, there are now suitable job descriptions for all staff, the annual report to parents contains all the required elements, governors are more regular visitors to the school and, through the well established committee structure, they monitor the work of the school. The school has undergone significant changes in the last few years and the falling roll has reduced the amount of money coming in to the budget but this has been well managed, mainly because future planning anticipated the difficulties and closely matched the school development plan to the financial plan. Routines for health and welfare were improved following the last inspection: however, following recent major building work and associated problems with the site, problems of pupil supervision and welfare are again an issue. The school has identified the problems and is actively seeking a solution as a matter of urgency. The good progress made in most aspects since the previous inspection shows that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	C	B	E	D
mathematics	A	B	E	E
Science	C	C	E	D

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

The results of the inspection show that, by the age of 11, standards in art and design, and music are above the level expected for 11 year olds. In all other subjects, except English, mathematics and design and technology, pupils' standards are in line with that expected. Religious education is taught well with a structure that follows the Agreed Syllabus and all pupils gain much factual knowledge about a variety of

faiths and reach standards that match the expectations for their ages. These results are an improvement on pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests in 2000 which show that standards were well below the expected level in English, mathematics and science. The results in 2000 were significantly below the previous year, however, the school analysed the results of tests well and this shows that pupils who were in the school for the past four years made good progress during Key Stage 2. A high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and a significant number of pupils joining the school at times other than the beginning of the academic year account in part for the lower levels attained. In addition, significant levels of support staff and resources were utilised for these transient pupils. This in turn drew resources away from other pupils, who would normally have received additional support, and this impacted considerably upon their learning. The school's implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the setting of pupils in groups according to ability for English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 have had a significant impact on pupils' attainment. The trend of pupils' attainment over time has been broadly in line with the improving national trend. From below average attainment on entry, pupils make good progress because of effective teaching. Children in the reception class get off to a good start and their development is built on effectively in both key stages. The school has set realistic targets for future improvement and is well set to achieve them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to the school and their work. The majority enjoy coming to school and this improves their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils show satisfactory levels of self-discipline and most know what is expected of them. The recently introduced behaviour management system is beginning to have a positive effect and improve pupils' behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and relationships are good. Many take on extra responsibility and those on the school council are proud of their contribution.
Attendance	Attendance is in line with the national average. Most pupils arrive at school promptly, settle into class quickly and lessons start on time. There have been five exclusions from the school in the last year.

Pupils' good attitudes result from the school's positive ethos and their response to the school's behaviour policy. They understand the need for school rules and demonstrate this in their behaviour towards others. Pupils have good relationships with each other and with staff. The majority are considerate of others when they move around the building, use the dining hall and play at break times.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good often very good	Good sometimes very good	Good occasionally very 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.

Fifty six lessons or part lessons were seen. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons, it was good in 52 per cent and very good or better in a further 21 per cent of lessons. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teaching was good and often very good for children in the Foundation Stage of their education in the reception class. Staff develop children's language and number skills in a wide range of activities and by encouraging them to talk about what they are doing. Teaching was good in both key stages. The quality of teaching throughout the school makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The school focus to include all pupils in as many activities as possible is successful and teachers and support staff do their best to meet the needs of all pupils. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good in both key stages. Teachers manage pupils well and use a good range of methods to keep pupils interested. However, the setting of homework to extend pupils' learning is inconsistent and, although teachers mark pupils' work, there

are rarely any specific targets set to enable pupils to make greater improvements in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by good teaching that provides challenging activities. Teachers make good use of support staff and other adults to work with pupils. The satisfactory teaching of basic skills and teachers' high expectations lead to good concentration by most pupils and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. However, the curriculum does not meet statutory requirements because the school is not providing pupils with the opportunity to swim and learn water safety or to experience the full range of activities in design and technology. In all other aspects the school pays very good attention to equal opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The procedures and provision for pupils with special educational needs are very good. Teachers and support assistants know their pupils well and provide challenging activities that make a positive contribution to their attainment and learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development are promoted strongly through lessons and assemblies. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils develop in self-confidence and are willing to accept responsibility when the opportunity is given, quietly carrying out duties in class and around the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. However, the results of assessments are not always used effectively to set specific targets for individuals and small groups of pupils.

A strength of the curriculum is the good provision that is made for pupils with special educational needs and physical disabilities. The school has a limited partnership with parents, a few work in school and provide a good contribution to pupils' learning. However, the amount of homework set is inconsistent across the school, there is insufficient information for parents on the work pupils are doing at school and the annual reports for parents do not contain enough information on pupils' attainment and progress. The school has good procedures in place to monitor and promote pupils' attendance and behaviour. These are effective and pupils' behaviour is improving.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The head teacher and deputy head teacher provide good leadership and management and there is a clear educational direction for the school. Other key staff are taking a more active role in the development of their subjects but do not yet work regularly alongside colleagues sharing expertise and observing the quality of pupils' learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors make a satisfactory contribution to the effective running of the school and are committed to maintaining and raising standards further.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has good procedures for monitoring and evaluating the success of new initiatives. It makes good use of the information generated by National Curriculum tests to identify strengths and weaknesses and target areas for development.
The strategic use of resources	The school has sufficient staff to meet the needs of the National Curriculum and they are well deployed throughout the school. Support staff play an important role in the life of the school and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The accommodation is very well maintained. With the exception of design and technology, a suitable outdoor play area and large outdoor equipment for children in the reception class, resources to support pupils' learning are satisfactory and used effectively. The school's finances and administration procedures are good.

The good leadership and management provided by the head teacher and deputy head teacher are major factors in the quality of teamwork and positive ethos in the school. They regularly evaluate developments and monitor teaching and learning; as a result, they are well placed to improve and prioritise initiatives for raising standards. Governors and the head teacher keep a close eye on spending to ensure that they get the best possible value for money and that pupils have good quality resources to help them learn. However, there are considerable problems with the outside accommodation and a number of health and safety issues were discussed with the school. The school is aware of these and making great efforts to resolve them.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school • Their children are making good progress • Teaching is good • They feel they can go to the school with any questions or problems • The school expects children to work hard • The school helps children to become more mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils' behaviour in the school • The information on pupils' progress • The way the school works with parents • The way the school is led and managed • The amount of homework given • The range of activities outside lessons

Inspectors agree with the positive comments and views of the parents but do not agree with the concerns over the leadership and management of the school. The inspection team agrees with some of the concerns identified above, particularly for information on pupils' progress. There are limited open evenings when parents discuss with teachers how their children are getting on and the teachers' reports on pupils' attainment and progress provide information about the topics covered and not sufficient information on pupils' learning. Although the school has an established homework policy, teachers do not always consistently implement it and, as a result, the amount of homework varies from class to class and is therefore not consistently used to reinforce pupils' learning. There are few extra-curricular activities, this is partly due to the disruption caused by the building work and the state of the field makes it unusable at the moment. Pupils'

behaviour is sound and often good and early indications are that the recently introduced Behaviour Management policy is already having a positive effect.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 The Foundation Stage is made up of one reception class. There are currently 25 children in the class. Children enter the reception class in the September of the school year in which they are five. The curriculum continues to be good and is similar to that reported in the last inspection. All children enter the class with previous experience at local nursery schools. Although many children have average attainment on entry, a third of the class have been assessed as having special educational needs, some of which are severe. Consequently, the overall attainment on entry is below average. The school deals with this well and provides a rich curriculum which successfully builds on their previous experience. The curriculum and associated teaching and learning activities are clearly based on the needs of children of this age. Numeracy and literacy have a suitably high profile and the teacher is skilful at providing a wide range of experiences so that this learning takes place in different contexts. Teaching is usually good or very good and at times is excellent. This ensures that during their time in the reception class, children make good progress in all areas of learning and, by the time they transfer to Year 1, standards are broadly typical of the age group.

2 The school builds on the good start made in the reception class and pupils make at least satisfactory progress in all subjects in Key Stage 1. For pupils in the present Year 2, attainment in reading, writing and speaking and listening is at the level expected. This is better than the last inspection when standards were sometimes unsatisfactory in Year 2. In the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in 2000, standards in reading were well above the national average. Standards in writing were broadly in line with the national average. In both of these areas, standards were well above average in comparison with similar schools. The pupils in the current Year 2 are achieving standards in line with the level expected for their age. This represents good progress when evaluated against their previous attainment because there is a higher proportion of pupils on the special needs register for learning difficulties than in the previous year group.

3 In the 2000 National Curriculum tests in English for 11 year olds, pupils' attainment was well below the national average and below average when compared with similar schools. This represents a sharp decline against standards in 1999. However, this group of pupils changed significantly in composition during the period 1996-2000. It suffered considerable instability as pupils moved in and out of the school. Significant levels of support staff and resources were utilised for these transient pupils. This in turn drew resources away from other pupils, who would normally have received additional support, and this had a considerable impact on their learning. There was also a higher proportion of pupils on the special needs register for learning difficulties, in comparison with previous years. There has been positive progress in raising attainment in English for the present Year 6 pupils because of the successful introduction of the Literacy Strategy, the setting of pupils by ability in Key Stage 2 and the detailed analysis of pupils' previous results. This analysis of data also means the school has evidence of the good progress made by these pupils over the last four years. The trend over time has been broadly in line with the improving national trend. The school is setting realistic targets for improvement in English.

4 By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' speaking and listening skills are broadly similar to those expected for their age. Pupils develop in confidence and by the end of the key stage they are eager to contribute verbally in discussions using books during the introduction of the Literacy Hour. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are at the level expected for their age. Higher attaining pupils have a wide vocabulary and secure command of grammar. Teachers try to involve all pupils, including the reluctant ones, in answering questions and taking part in discussions. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 5/6, pupils explained how to use simple formulae to calculate areas and perimeters of different shapes and listened carefully to answers given by their teacher and their classmates.

5 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a high interest in books and stories generated by effective teaching of literacy and this is having a positive impact on their reading standards. They regularly read to their teachers in groups and are given opportunities to read silently for their own pleasure. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are eager, competent, fluent readers with well developed library and information retrieval skills. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' standards in writing are satisfactory. Pupils undertake regular handwriting practice and so they make satisfactory progress and move from a basic print to a neat, joined style. Most pupils use punctuation correctly and their spelling is satisfactory. Pupils use language imaginatively in their stories and poems. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have developed a regular, fluent, joined and legible style of writing. The majority of pupils use punctuation correctly and consistently. Grammar is taught throughout the key stage and pupils' ability to use it effectively in their free writing is improving because of the focus the school has placed on the importance of this. Teachers use pupils' literacy skills in other subjects effectively, for example, in the recording of experiments in science and in written descriptions of different faiths in religious education.

6 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in mathematics is at the level expected for their age. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for mathematics for seven year olds, attainment was above the national average and well above the average for similar schools. Although Key Stage 1 test results after the last inspection dropped to below average for two years the latest results are higher than at the time of the last report. The 2000 National Curriculum tests show attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was well below national standards and those of similar schools. Since results immediately after the last inspection were high, this represents a decline in the most recent test results. This is mainly because there was a great deal of movement in and out of the school for the Year 6 classes in the previous four years. As a result, a high number of pupils with special educational needs entered the group and this brought the overall levels of attainment down by a significant amount. National test results, for those pupils who remained in the school for the full period between 1996 and 2000, show that they made at least satisfactory progress and achieved satisfactory standards. However, pupils' attainment is now improving and the positive effect of the National Numeracy Strategy and the setting arrangements in Key Stage 2 are raising standards. Pupils use their numeracy skills well in other subjects such as science. For example, they work out the strength of forces and accurately record results of scientific experiments.

7 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in science is in line with what is expected for their age. In the teacher assessments in science in 2000 for seven year olds, pupils' attainment was well above the national average, although the number reaching the higher levels was in line with the national average. It was also well above the average when compared with similar schools. The current lower standards are mainly explained by the different make up of the groups of pupils in classes and a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the present Year 2. In the National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in 2000, pupils' attainment was well below the national average. When compared with similar schools, the school's results were also well below the average. Pupils' attainment in the present Year 6 matches the levels expected for their age. This is the same level of attainment found in the previous inspection and an improvement on the test results last year because of the school's focus on experimental science and the difference in the number of pupils in the year group with special educational needs. This focus on experimental science is having a positive effect and raising pupils' standards because they are now explaining how they achieved their results and using a good range of scientific vocabulary when writing accounts of their experiments. The careful analysis of results from National Curriculum tests means that there is a good capacity for further improvement.

8 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. As a result, the quality of learning by pupils with special educational needs is good in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, these pupils develop a range of appropriate skills at a good rate. They learn the basics of spelling and punctuation and apply these effectively to their written work. In Key Stage 2, pupils improve their basic skills in literacy and numeracy well. The good support they receive helps their overall achievement throughout the curriculum. The use of support staff for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Staff work very effectively

alongside classroom teachers. They withdraw groups of pupils for intensive support, for example, in developing pupils' phonic skills in English. At other times they provide good in-class support; for example in helping modify the behaviour of pupils with emotional difficulties.

9 Standards in information and communication technology have improved significantly since the last inspection. By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment matches the level expected for their ages. The school has made considerable improvements to its curriculum over the past three years. Information and communication technology is valued as an essential part of the curriculum. For example, the establishment of the well equipped computer suite has made a significant improvement and the teaching of skills to the whole class has raised pupils' attainment considerably. However, class based computers are not used sufficiently often to further improve pupils' skills and support work in other subjects.

10 Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in developing their skills and knowledge. They use their keyboard skills to produce short pieces of text on the screen, use the mouse and understand the use of the cursor and of several of the screen icons when amending their work. In discussion, pupils in Year 2 identified ways in which they use technology to make objects, like the screen turtle, move and draw shapes. Pupils in Key Stage 2 build effectively on their information and communication technology skills and knowledge. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson pupils confidently loaded the program and identified on the screen a small part of a picture they wished to use to create repeating patterns in a stained glass window. Pupils sometimes use computers in the suite to support their work in other subjects such as mathematics, for example, when entering information into a spreadsheet to calculate the cost of different items in the supermarket.

11 By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in art and design is above the levels expected for their age. In Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is also above the levels expected in music. In art and design, pupils in Key Stage 1 make very good links with other subjects, for example, to support English their pictures illustrate adventure stories and poems. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their skills well when creating pictures using pastels in the style of Van Gogh, drawing houses showing good perspective and using "mod roc" to make stunningly effective model figures. The school makes good provision for music and pupils show good control of voice and maintain their own part in a round whilst others sing descant. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection for religious education. It is taught well with a structure that follows the agreed syllabus and all pupils improve their knowledge about a variety of faiths, this includes good opportunities for reflection on their learning. In all other subjects, except design and technology in Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is in line with the levels expected for their age. Although pupils enjoy their lessons in design and technology they have a very limited experience of using different tools, equipment, materials, components and techniques. This is because the subject has had a low profile in the school during the period when the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies were being introduced. Resources for design and technology are in short supply so that a restricted curriculum is in place. The school has decided not to take pupils swimming because of the cost involved, this means that they are not meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum for physical education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12 The pupils continue to have the same positive attitudes towards their school as in the last report. Their attitudes to learning are good in all subjects. Children in the Foundation Stage in the reception class are eager to come to school, enthusiastic and listen well to their teachers' instructions. They work and play well together. The older pupils have a good attitude towards their work and to school generally. When motivated by good teaching they are capable of sustained concentration. This was seen in a Year 5/6 geography lesson when pupils learned about the source of rivers. Occasionally their attitudes are not so positive when they lose interest, become bored and distract the other members of the class.

13 The behaviour in the school is satisfactory. Pupils generally move around the school in a sensible manner. When there is an instance of unsatisfactory behaviour it is dealt with quickly by staff. The pupils are reminded during the daily assemblies to reflect on the importance of caring and helping others, to which they respond well. Pupils look after equipment, such as the computers, well and there is no graffiti or litter around the site.

14 Relationships are good, cordial and constructive throughout the school. Boys and girls get on well together and with all the school staff. They show respect for each other's feelings, beliefs and values and are confident to join in discussions. They are appreciative of each other's good work both in class and at the weekly "Special Mention" assemblies. The large number of exclusions was caused by a small number of pupils.

15 Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils develop in self-confidence and are willing to accept responsibility when the opportunity is given, quietly carrying out duties in class and around the school. They are proud of the responsibility given to them when they are chosen to be "Special Monitors". The recently formed School Council provides the pupils with the opportunity to discuss issues relating to the life of the school. A group of pupils have initiated and organised the production of the school magazine "Kids' World". Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are very diligent in their roles as "Playtime Buddies" helping the younger pupils at lunchtime and making sure that no one is lonely at playtime. Levels of attendance are satisfactory and in line with the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is below the national average. The majority of pupils are punctual and lessons start promptly; as a result little time is wasted at the start of school sessions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16 Teaching is never less than satisfactory, it is good in 40 per cent and very good or excellent in a further 40 percent of lessons in the reception class. This is the new Foundation Stage, which was introduced in September 2000. The teacher and classroom assistant are very confident and have a very good understanding of the curriculum for this age group. They also have very good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn. As a result, they plan stimulating activities, which appeal to the children, generating a very productive working atmosphere. There is a good balance between direct teaching and well planned, structured, investigative activities. A particular strength is the very good teamwork by staff who work together very effectively. This has a positive impact on the good progress children make and is raising the standard of all their work.

17 Teaching is good and sometimes very good in Key Stage 1. It is good and occasionally very good in Key Stage 2. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when nine per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. The head teacher and deputy head teacher regularly observe colleagues teaching and check to ensure that all pupils are learning effectively. The quality of teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' learning but has not yet had time to raise their attainment further by the end of Key Stage 2; the school has placed great emphasis on raising the attainment of all pupils. The results of assessments are used effectively to guide teachers' planning and to set groups in classes according to their ability, this is having a positive impact on pupils' achievements and learning. However, the system now needs refining so that individual pupils and small groups are set specific targets for improvement and so raise pupils' attainment further. There is evidence of some good, thoughtful marking to guide pupils, however, this is not consistent throughout the school and, in some classes, there are too few comments that pinpoint areas for development.

18 The teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics is good in both key stages. Teachers' planning is clearly linked to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and tasks are often organised to challenge different ability groups in classes. The pace of most lessons is good and teachers use the techniques of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to best effect. For example, in a Year 1/2 English lesson pupils joined in enthusiastically looking for rhyming words as the teacher read a poem. Pupils were

given work in different groups and support staff worked very effectively with a small group of pupils. The conclusion of the lesson was used very effectively to highlight pupils' progress in writing their own rhyming sentences. Pupils have good relationships with teachers and adults in the classroom and this helps to improve the quality of their learning. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour and effort are high and pupils are expected to do their best. This was seen in a Year 5/6 science lesson, when pupils listened attentively and answered questions sensibly to explain how gases can change into liquids and back again. They improved their knowledge of experimental science and the importance of fair tests when finding out how the steam from warm water condenses against the cling film stretched over a bowl. They were very attentive to the teacher's introduction when previous work was discussed and very keen to explain how they arrived at their conclusions.

19 Teachers, in both key stages, have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects of the National Curriculum. They use the correct language to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of each particular subject. This was particularly evident in English, mathematics and science where specific technical language was used well. For example, in a Year 3/4 science lesson pupils experimented with magnets and correctly identified "repel" and "attract" as two properties they investigated. Teachers know and manage their pupils very well, particularly in Key Stage 1, and provide good support for different activities. The very good relationships between staff and pupils create a secure climate in which to learn. Teachers make daily informal assessments during lesson times on which to base their future planning. Most teachers include positive comments when marking but do not consistently provide precise comments on what pupils need to do in order to improve. This makes it more difficult for some teachers to assess how well pupils are learning from their mistakes. Although the school has an established homework policy, teachers do not always consistently implement it and, as a result, the amount of homework varies from class to class and is therefore not being used effectively enough to reinforce pupils' learning.

20 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. As a result, the quality of learning by pupils with special educational needs is good in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop a range of appropriate skills at a good rate. They learn the basics of spelling and punctuation and apply these effectively to their written work. In Key Stage 2, pupils improve their skills in literacy and numeracy well. All staff have a very positive attitude towards these pupils and know the pupils' strengths and areas for development well. The use of special educational needs support staff is very good. Staff work effectively alongside classroom teachers. They withdraw groups of pupils for intensive support; for example, in phonics. At other times they provide good in-class support; for example in helping modify the behaviour of pupils with emotional difficulties. Teachers plan according to the needs identified in the pupils' statements and work towards the targets identified in their individual education plans. All adults working with pupils with special educational needs are enthusiastic in their approach and liberal with praise. This effectively encourages pupils and helps them develop confidence. Clear records are kept on each pupil's attainment and this information is used effectively to inform future planning and teaching. When withdrawn for specialist help, pupils with special educational needs are well taught.

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

21 The school's curriculum is broad but it is not balanced and so does not promote pupils' intellectual, physical and moral development satisfactorily. There are important differences in that the curriculum for children in the reception class is good, that for Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and the unsatisfactory elements are at Key Stage 2. For example, the curriculum for physical education does not meet statutory requirements because swimming is not taught. The design and technology curriculum does not meet statutory requirements because it lacks the basic resources to enable all elements to be taught. The curriculum for design and technology was also unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection and little progress has been made to improve it. The curriculum for information and communication technology has improved considerably and is no longer unsatisfactory. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is based

firmly on the national requirements for children of this age and enables them to make good progress so that they are properly prepared for their work on the National Curriculum at the beginning of Key Stage 1.

22 The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully adopted in both key stages. This has had a positive effect on the progress pupils make and demonstrates that the curriculum enables the school to “add value” to their previous attainment. This is not readily apparent from recent results in the National Curriculum tests because of the hidden effects of pupil movement and the low levels of attainment of many incoming pupils. Basic skills are taught satisfactorily but pupils do not have swift recall of number facts and tables and this slows their progress in related aspects of mathematics.

23 Policies are still in place for all subjects and the school is integrating the most recent national guidelines with its own schemes but this will take time to have a positive effect. Teachers’ planning is sufficient and is used satisfactorily to enable teachers to amend their future teaching plans to take account of assessed strengths and weaknesses. There have been several changes in the governing body but all new governors attend subject training and help at parent evenings when discussing the curriculum. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

24 Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory although reduced from the good range and high quality sport provision reported at the time of the last inspection. This is explained by the extensive building work which makes the field unusable at the moment and a need for teaching staff to work hard at implementing major strategies in the core subjects. After school booster classes to improve attainment for targeted pupils proved to be unpopular. The school plans to re-introduce them during normal lesson time.

25 The policy for sex education is being reviewed and there is no specific policy for education about substance abuse. However, the science curriculum includes work to warn pupils about the dangers of drugs and emphasises healthy life styles. There is a policy for personal, social and health education but this also needs updating to include and integrate new resources that are used well in practice. Sex education is taught as part of health education in Year 6. Although the school has an established homework policy, teachers do not always consistently implement it and, as a result, the amount of homework varies from class to class and is therefore not consistently used to reinforce pupils’ learning.

26 The school continues to have satisfactory links with the local community. Pupils continue to “adopt a street” and distribute the harvest produce to the residents. They also visit them at Christmas to sing carols. The school maintains its good relationships with the local neighbours and is grateful for their efforts in ensuring that there is very little vandalism. There are limited links with local industry. The school has satisfactory relationships with the local nursery and secondary school.

27 The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. A wide range of strategies and resources are in place to support pupils. Through a careful analysis of need, specific targets are identified and pursued. They are updated on a regular basis and progress is carefully monitored. The school makes very good provision for the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. Every opportunity is taken to provide pupils with difficulties such as Autism or Downs Syndrome with curriculum experiences that provide the most appropriate involvement in all curriculum activities. Although the school has noted a difference in attainment between boys and girls, inspection evidence found that all pupils were given equal status in teaching and in learning experiences as well as positions of responsibility. However there is a high turnover of pupils in Key Stage 2 and this brings a higher proportion of pupils with special learning needs and they have less time to benefit from the very good provision.

28 The school has improved provision for the pupils’ personal development and it is now good at both key stages. The whole ethos of teaching, the implementation of the behaviour policy and the focus that assemblies, cultural experiences and school routines give to the support of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good in every respect. The good provision for the pupils’ spiritual development is centred on

school assemblies and the teaching of religious education. School assemblies use prayer that is relevant to daily life and offer moments for personal reflection on situations such as the major rail disaster that took place during inspection. They also provide opportunities to reflect upon the major ideas of a Supreme Being. Religious education teaching sometimes goes beyond factual knowledge in encouraging pupils to develop questions of faith and belief.

29 Provision for moral development is good. The consistent use of the school's behaviour policy and a clear role model from all staff is having a good effect on the pupils' development of a sense of right and wrong. Moral issues are dealt with in the curriculum. For example, lessons about Moses and the Pharaoh encouraged pupils to consider the question of right and wrong in that situation. A poem about bullying was used in assembly to help pupils to think about kindness, caring for and helping others. However, there are a number of pupils with challenging behaviour who have not fully responded to the provision but the Behaviour Management scheme, recently introduced, is beginning to have a positive effect on the behaviour of all pupils.

30 Good provision for pupils' social development runs throughout school life. There are class monitors, a School Council, recognition of achievement, support by individual pupils for other pupils such as those with special educational needs and challenge for the whole class in most lessons. For example, in mental arithmetic, when time limits are set for the completion of a number of questions by the whole class as a team building challenge. Individual pupils wear "Buddy Hats" to offer a point of contact for anyone that is feeling lonely or distressed during morning and lunchtime break. The pupils on the School Council report back about suggestions and responses to the whole school during assembly and a large majority of parents feel that the school helps their children to be mature and responsible.

31 Religious education makes a strong contribution to the good provision for the pupils' cultural development. They learn about a range of other religions and the traditions associated with faiths such as Sikhism, Islam and Judaism as well as regular links with local churches. Numerous opportunities are taken in curriculum areas such as literacy and geography to learn about life in an Indian village or about legends, myths and fables from around the world. A number of visits are organised for the pupils to develop their awareness of art and culture in their own and other settings. For example, the school recently took part in a Multicultural Music Festival that celebrated music from around the world.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32 The school's procedures for child protection and for promoting well being, health and safety of all pupils are good and have improved since the last report. The head teacher takes the lead in setting an ethos of care, order and structure. The standard of care provided by the teaching staff and non-teaching staff is good. Child protection procedures are in place and meet statutory requirements. There is a designated person who has received training and all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are kept up to date with child protection issues. There are two trained first aiders and pupils know who to go to if they are sick or injured. There are regular fire drills and fire notices are displayed around the school. Required health and safety measures are in place and regular risk assessment inspections undertaken. However, there are a considerable number of problems with the outside accommodation and a number of health and safety issues were discussed with the school. The school is aware of these and making great efforts to resolve them.

33 Teachers are conscientious in their supervision of the pupils in their class. There are good relationships between the pupils, teachers and other adults in the school. The class teachers use their knowledge of the pupils to monitor their personal development. The teachers have learnt the "Makaton" sign language as part of the school's inclusion programme. Effective use is made of visits from fire officers and the yearly visits to the Water Safety show. Pupils in Year 6 attend the local "Zone Ranger" days.

34 The school has a positive approach to discipline through the newly adopted Behaviour Management plan and standards of behaviour are good in the classrooms, dining hall and in other parts of the school. Any bullying is dealt with quickly and sympathetically. All members of staff monitor the behaviour of individuals and present a united approach in dealing with discipline problems when they arise. Pupils and parents know the rules, what is expected of the pupils and the sanctions that are applied when necessary. Procedures to monitor pupils' attendance are good. Registers are carefully checked and the school works closely with the education welfare officer to contact families when any pupil's attendance or punctuality gives cause for concern. A class trophy is presented monthly to the class with the highest attendance.

35 The school has satisfactory procedures overall for assessing the attainment and progress of the pupils. Extensive and detailed records are kept of the performance of all pupils in formal tests such as National Curriculum tests and pupils' responses to the questions at the end of Key Stage 2 are analysed in order to identify areas of the curriculum that need further development. Detailed assessments of children in the reception class are used in order to evaluate their progress and projections are made about the pupils' likely attainment at the end of each key stage. This analysis has been successful in identifying excessive movement of pupils on and off the school roll as having a significant effect on performance at the end of Key Stage 2. However, the marking of pupils' work does not acknowledge progress in specific skills and is not often used to set targets for future learning. A number of teachers record evaluations of their lessons in their planning but there is no structured and systematic record kept of the progress of individual pupils against a set of targets that would mark the progress of their learning.

36 Satisfactory use is made of the assessment information that is gathered in core subjects. Overall curriculum targets are set for the end of Key Stage 2 and some teachers are beginning to use a system of individual targets for pupils, for example in English. However, the setting of targets is not consistent for all year groups and the setting of targets for individual pupils is not well developed. There are particular inconsistencies in the Year 3/4 classes. For example, although the teachers present work at different levels of challenge to different groups of pupils, the grading of difficulty does not always reflect a well-developed use of this practice and there are occasions when the work is inappropriate for the pupil.

37 The pupils' academic progress is satisfactorily checked through the use of records that note attainment on an annual basis and project pupils' performance to the end of Key Stage 2. Reports to parents are written annually. They are informative in a general way in that they acknowledge pupils' attitudes and effort but they do not give specific detail about the learning that has taken place or about the skills gained or needing development. Teacher records lack detail about skill development. For example, reading records in Key Stage 1 give detail about letter sounds but those at Key Stage 2 lack detail of the skills acquired by the pupils or the ones needing development. There are no comments about ability to understand the story line, to discuss character or to develop understanding through inference and deduction and so predict the possible development of the plot.

38 Good procedures for monitoring the personal development of pupils are used by the school. The school has a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs and their development is carefully followed. There is a good structure of reward and the celebration of achievement in assemblies where a "Special Mentions" book rewards good work and behaviour and "Special People" receive certificates for attendance, good work and behaviour. The school has a good behaviour policy that rewards the positive and avoids negative reactions by the teachers but does have a clear system of control. All teachers are consistent in their use of this policy. A number of pupils in the school need support and understanding as a result of difficulties in their home life. Procedures to support these pupils and help them to gain more from their time in school are well developed. Good relationships are sought with families and the teachers know their pupils well. The arrangements for the assessment and monitoring of pupils with special educational needs are good. Specialised testing provides early information and further tests, for example in reading, help maintain individual pupil records. These inform the individual education plans effectively, which in turn clearly identify targets for pupils' future learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39 The relationship between many parents and the school has deteriorated since the time of the previous inspection. A significant number are concerned about the information they receive on their children's progress, poor behaviour and the lack of homework. The inspection team agrees with some of the concerns, particularly for information on pupils' progress. There are limited open evenings when parents discuss with teachers how their children are getting on and the teachers' annual reports on pupils' attainment and progress provide information about the topics covered and not sufficient information on pupils' learning. Only the parents of the younger children are informed about any topic work. Although the school has an established homework policy, teachers do not always consistently implement it and, as a result, the amount of homework varies from class to class and is therefore not consistently used to reinforce pupils' learning. There are few extra-curricular activities, this is partly due to the disruption caused by the building work and the state of the field makes it unusable at the moment. Pupils' behaviour is sound and often good and early indications are that the recently introduced Behaviour Management policy is already having a positive effect.

40 There is a very small group of parents who organise fund raising events and accompany pupils on educational visits. The computer and Internet courses organised for parents were poorly attended and have now ceased. The parking of parents' cars at the school entrance and their continuing habit of walking, with their children, across the car park are safety issues that the school is very concerned about. The quality of the information about the school provided for parents is satisfactory. The school brochure contains all the necessary information and regular newsletters go home giving an account of the varied activities of the school. The school has introduced the "Home-School Agreement" but not all the parents have signed it. The majority of parents of the younger children support them by listening to them read at home. There is little support for the older pupils with their homework.

41 The quality of the links established by the school for parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. The school works hard to ensure parents are kept well informed regarding the progress of their children. Parents have opportunities to attend review meetings and meet with staff on a regular basis. All legal requirements are met.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42 The head teacher and deputy head teacher provide good leadership and give a clear educational direction for the school which has a positive impact on pupils' improving standards. The quality of teamwork by all staff is good and fosters a positive ethos in the school where all pupils are valued and their efforts well supported. The governing body takes its responsibilities seriously, governors make a sound contribution to the effective running of the school and are committed to maintaining and raising standards further. The roles and responsibilities of all staff have been reviewed and the senior management team provide good role models for all staff. The observation of teaching and learning by the head teacher, deputy head teacher and representatives from the local education authority is regularly discussed with staff who are well aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. Subject co-ordinators are taking much more responsibility for their subjects. For example, when finances are available they control their own budgets, review schemes of work, undertake a regular audit, recommend training needs and regularly scrutinise teachers' planning and pupils' work. The school has worked effectively to address most of the key issues from the previous inspection and is well placed to maintain the strengths of the school and build effectively upon them.

43 The head teacher, key staff and governors work together closely and manage the school well. There is a clear agenda for the work of the school, ensuring that strategic decisions determine the financial and educational development. The school works very closely with the local education authority to ensure that all decisions relating to the budget are closely linked to the development plan, are manageable and the principles of "best value for money" are applied rigorously. The staff meet regularly, both formally and

informally, to discuss curriculum matters. Subject co-ordinators undertake their roles conscientiously. For example, there has been a thorough audit of teachers' skills in information and communication technology and a good action plan drawn up to identify a training programme that will develop their skills further, especially when using the computer suite. However, design and technology has not been managed successfully since the adverse comments made in the last inspection report. Although the school responded to the issues originally these changes and improvements were soon overtaken by higher priorities. It is essential that the subject be supported by up to date guidance and sufficient resources to ensure that it complies with National Curriculum requirements.

44 The head teacher and deputy head teacher pull together all the strands of the school development plan for future years. This working document is then fully discussed with staff and governors before becoming the action plan for the following year. It is an effective document which clearly identifies the priorities and targets to be tackled and guides the work of the school. It provides a baseline against which future development can be measured and is having a positive effect on the future direction of the school. Educational and financial planning are clearly cross-referenced. Priorities include the development of classroom observations by subject co-ordinators to check on the quality of teaching and learning across the school, this is intended to improve further pupils' attainment and learning. The school knows its strengths and areas for development and has a good grasp on how to improve. All staff work hard to improve their own performance and the educational opportunities presented to pupils. The school has clear targets for improvements. For example, the school is aware of the health and safety problems created by the building work and is doing its best to remedy them.

45 All staff have a shared commitment to raising standards. They have succeeded in creating a learning environment where relationships are good and pupils feel secure and valued. For example, the School Council representatives take their responsibilities seriously and listen to the views of their classmates prior to their meetings with staff. Teachers ensure that the work is planned in such a way as to ensure that pupils of all abilities are fully included. However, the staff are only just starting to use the results of assessments to set specific targets for pupils as a means of improving attainment and learning further. The governors keep themselves well informed, although a few governors are newly appointed and are just becoming aware of their roles and responsibilities. However, the good committee structure enables them to support the head teacher and meet their statutory responsibilities, except for the requirements for design and technology and swimming and water safety. The governor for special educational needs visits the school regularly and provides effective support for teachers as well as observing pupils' learning. The governors have a clear picture of the work of the school and are pleased with the improving attainment of pupils. For example, the deputy head teacher presented the information to governors on the analysis of pupils' attainment last year, showing that the high mobility of pupils adversely affected the National Curriculum test results.

46 There are sufficient experienced and appropriately qualified teaching staff to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. There are appropriate job descriptions for staff. The special educational needs co-ordinator is very well qualified for the role and provides very good support for all staff. There are appropriately qualified learning support assistants, a number of whom have specific roles relating to individual pupils on the special needs register. They combine this with general class support, or working on particular grant aided schemes. This provides good support to teachers and pupils; it is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.

47 All staff receive appropriate in-service training, which is carefully matched to the school's development plan. At present the teaching staff are undertaking information and communication technology training and this is having a positive effect on their teaching of the subject. The mid-day assistants have received training in child protection and health and safety issues. They have clear guidelines for behaviour management. A newly qualified teacher is given appropriate support through class colleagues and a separate mentor. This school is well placed to provide a training facility for student teachers, especially as the overall

standard of teaching is good. The quality of leadership for special educational needs is very good. There is a clear division of responsibility, with the co-ordinator being primarily involved with pupils' academic achievement and the head teacher dealing with social and behavioural issues. The designated governor provides good support to staff and keeps the governing body well informed about these issues.

48 The external accommodation is unsatisfactory as it significantly inhibits teaching and learning. The poor state of the grassed areas, due to recent building work, restricts the curriculum. It cannot be used for physical education, denies pupils further opportunities in science, geography, and art and design and severely restricts pupils' opportunities for play during breaks. The outside play area for the Foundation Stage is too small and has an uneven surface. Inside, there is a good size hall which provides sufficient space for physical education and assemblies. The new computer suite provides a good venue for teaching this subject. However there is no school library, only areas in corridors, this inhibits opportunities to teach library skills and reduces opportunities for independent study and learning. Classrooms provide sufficient space for lessons. The caretaker and cleaning staff work hard to maintain the buildings to a high standard and this makes a valuable contribution to the appearance of the school. Classrooms, together with corridors and public areas, contain good quality, attractively mounted displays of pupils' work.

49 The resources for learning are satisfactory in most areas of the curriculum. Resources are good in English, where funding for literacy has enabled important purchases to be made. They are good in information and communication technology where the suite is well equipped with new computers and a range of software. Resources are also good in science, with new equipment having recently been purchased. However, they are unsatisfactory for design and technology and for children in the reception class. This is because there is no large, soft play equipment and this restricts the opportunities for more adventurous structured play in which children have opportunities to set their own challenges.

50 The quality of leadership and management has been maintained since the last inspection. Educational priorities are well supported through the school's financial planning. There have been good improvements since the last inspection. The cost of educating each pupil is about the national average. There is good leadership by the head teacher and deputy head teacher, which is well supported by governors. There is good financial management and good relationships in school. Pupils' attainment is improving and their learning is good when compared with their previous attainment. As a result, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

51 In order to further improve the quality of education, standards and progress in the school, the head teacher, staff and governors should:

- A. Improve pupils' progress and raise standards further in English, mathematics and design and technology by:
- using the school's procedures for assessment to set realistic, achievable targets for individuals and small groups of pupils, especially in English and mathematics; (the school has already made a start by setting targets in English but these are often too general);
 - developing the pupils' speaking and listening skills through the use of drama in the curriculum;
 - using the classroom based computers more consistently to support pupils' work, particularly in English and mathematics;
 - providing homework more consistently to develop parents' support for raising standards;
 - improving the status of design and technology by agreeing what is to be taught and providing sufficient resources to enable teachers to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum. (Paragraphs 3, 6, 11, 17, 19, 35, 36, 39, 43, 49, 69, 70, 73, 76, 77, 82, 87, 89, 90, 95, 101, 108.)
- B. Comply with the requirements of the National Curriculum to provide pupils with the opportunity to swim and learn water safety. (Paragraphs 21, 105.)
- C. Work, in liaison with the local education authority, to improve the outside accommodation and deal with the health and safety issues raised with the school resulting from the unfinished building work. (Paragraphs 32, 44, 48, 108.)

In addition to the key issues above, governors should include the following minor issues as part of the action plan:

- develop further the links with parents and improve the quality of teachers' annual reports to parents by providing more information on pupils' learning and progress in all subjects; (Paragraphs 25, 37, 39, 40, 68.)
- give children in the reception class more opportunities for adventurous, structured play by improving the outdoor facilities and providing a range of large apparatus, particularly for outdoor play. (Paragraphs 48, 49, 59.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	20	52	26	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

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	232
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	45

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	60

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	28
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	23

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	18	22	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	15	17
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	39	36	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98% (86%)	90% (91%)	95% (86%)
	National	84% (82%)	85% (83%)	90% (87%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	18	18
	Girls	21	21	22
	Total	37	39	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93% (94%)	98% (89%)	100% (97%)
	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	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	17	23	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	8	9
	Girls	14	15	18
	Total	23	23	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58% (79%)	58% (77%)	68% (82%)
	National	75% (70%)	72% (69%)	85% (78%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	11	9
	Girls	17	17	18
	Total	26	28	27
Percentage of pupils	School	65% (82%)	70% (79%)	68% (90%)

at NC level 4 or above	National	70% (68%)	72% (69%)	80% (75%)
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Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – Afro heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	207
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	4	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.1
Average class size	23.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	162

Financial information

Financial year	1999 - 2000
	£
Total income	448,728
Total expenditure	444,948
Expenditure per pupil	1,773
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,562
Balance carried forward to next year	16,342

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

232

Number of questionnaires returned

104

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	38	55	6	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	34	53	6	2	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	21	51	12	8	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	58	17	5	1
The teaching is good.	35	56	4	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	38	22	12	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	40	9	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	46	51	1	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	23	40	26	10	1
The school is well led and managed.	28	44	16	8	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	25	57	13	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	9	31	29	19	12

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

52 The curriculum for the Foundation Stage continues to be good and is similar to that reported in the last inspection. All the children enter the reception class with previous experience at local nursery schools. Although the majority of children have average attainment on entry, a third of the class have been assessed as having special educational needs, some of which are severe. Therefore overall, attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is below average. The school deals with this well and provides a rich curriculum which successfully builds on their previous experience. The curriculum and associated teaching and learning activities are clearly based on the needs of children of this age. As a result, children experience a broad and balanced curriculum that is well suited to their age and stage of development. Numeracy and literacy have a suitably high profile and the teacher is skilful at providing a wide range of experiences so that this learning takes place in different contexts. Teaching is good in 40 per cent of lessons and very good or excellent in a further 40 per cent. As a result, most children attain the levels expected by the time they enter Key Stage 1.

Personal, social and emotional development.

53 There are good procedures for introducing the children to the school and they make the transition very successfully. The assessment procedures are partially completed at the nursery schools and this provides a very useful initial picture of their personal, social and emotional development for the class teacher. Because all the children enter school at the same time they settle quickly and the teacher is able to form groups and start the teaching programme with a good regard for pupils' different strengths and weaknesses. The teacher knows the families well and takes great care to hold a workshop meeting after two weeks to talk about the curriculum and exchange helpful information. A further meeting to discuss the progress of individual pupils is held after the first half term. Learning targets are formulated at this meeting and progress against them is reviewed in February.

54 Children enter the school with below average skills in personal, social and emotional development. The teacher gives this area a suitably high priority and some excellent teaching ensures that they reach at least satisfactory standards by the end of the Foundation Stage. By skilful teaching, children learn to understand and accept classroom rules and procedures and develop their ability to work in pairs and groups as well as individuals. Although they sometimes forget when very excited, children know they have to put up their hand if they want to contribute and that they need to listen carefully to others. The teacher uses the rules and procedures well without stifling children's enthusiasm for learning. Children learn to understand and empathise with others in a number of ways. For example, all children learn and use some sign language so that they include pupils with particular special educational needs in their social and educational activities. Children show self-confidence and gain self-esteem when helping with tasks which include going to different parts of the school. They show feelings and awareness of others when they talk about how hard it is for some children in small villages to get to school when the snow is so bad. The teacher carefully ensures that all pupils make a contribution, for example, when a pupil with special educational needs names parts of a child's drawing of a house and, with help, counts the windows.

Communication, language and literature.

55 Children enter the Foundation Stage with below average skills in language. This area of learning is therefore emphasised throughout the day in all activities and there is also a strong focus on developing specific skills such as using letter sounds, reading, writing and speaking and listening. Vocabulary

development is strong and occurs in all lessons. For example, in personal, social and emotional development sessions pupils learn vocabulary like “binoculars” and “journey” and are given good opportunities to use them in relevant situations. One child excitedly said, “You could use binoculars to look for your friends at the bottom of the yard”. Children successfully learn many of the basic skills of reading. They take books home and read to their teacher and parents regularly. There is too little opportunity for parents to comment on these listening sessions on a regular basis. Children enjoy reading and those with higher ability read early reading books with reasonable accuracy and understanding. Most children know the sounds of most letters and use this knowledge to build up unknown words. They read a range of familiar words and sentences and know what constitutes a story. Children with special educational needs know how to handle books properly, turn the pages in sequence and make up relevant sentences to describe what is shown in the pictures. The teaching of letter sounds also takes place when, for example, children read a pancake rhyme before making their pancakes. The teacher showed good technical competence when helping a child build up the words “fry” and “toss” so that the whole class saw how important the skill was. There is a need for better resources for using letter sounds to further improve the teaching and learning of this essential skill.

56 Most children sit properly, hold their pencil correctly and form letters accurately. This is carefully checked and recorded by the teacher who gives them many opportunities to use this skill to write words and, sometimes, whole sentences like, “We put milk in”. Children write their own names carefully when, for example, they present delightful drawings to special visitors. Children use a bank of common words when writing their sentences. They generally listen carefully to their teacher and follow instructions quickly and carefully. They also contribute to discussions and listen to the comments and opinions of their classmates. Good listening skills are developed during class story sessions and children join in the reading of familiar poems with enjoyment and enthusiasm.

Mathematical development.

57 The teaching of mathematics is good and opportunities for learning are planned to take place frequently and regularly. Children count up to ten and count back from ten when singing rhymes like “Ten Green Bottles” and “Five Little Monkeys”. Support staff are used very effectively to help children with special educational needs and to reduce group sizes so that all children get more individual attention. Most children do simple addition and subtraction sums to five using “Mrs Mopple’s Washing Line” when sharing materials and working well in pairs. Tasks are challenging and children work hard and concentrate well to get correct answers. Mathematical development also takes place in activities such as making pancakes. Children use vocabulary such as “heavier” and “lighter” and know that things have to be weighed and counted carefully. They create repeating patterns in their number work and understand the language of position such as “behind” and “inside”. By the time they are ready to transfer to Year 1 most children, except those with special educational needs, reach the levels in mathematics expected for their age.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

58 Children learn their address and know that is where they live. They go for class walks and, with help, produce simple maps to show where they saw particular views and objects. Children use the computer to draw a map of the village with three corners. They draw and label six things in the home run by electricity and produce delightful “zig zag” booklets on geography and science. Children make toast and pancakes and are excited at how materials change when they are mixed or heated. They learn how washing was done in the olden days and describe what tools and artefacts were used for. There is particular enjoyment in learning about special occasions and festivals. They are interested to learn how Pancake Day originated and one asked, “Was that in the olden days?” showing a sense of time and history. The class has “adopted” a nearby street and children take parcels out at Harvest Festival time and sing carols to the residents at Christmas.

Physical development.

59 Children use the well equipped school hall for most of their physical education activities. They get changed into appropriate clothing with very little assistance and understand that this helps them prepare for the lesson. Children move into space at the beginning of lessons and perform warm-up exercises whilst the teacher beats out different rhythms to provide added challenge. This successfully develops their ability to move at different speeds for differing purposes such as dance activities. They say, "I'm really panting now" and, "Is my face red?" showing that they are beginning to understand the effect of exercise on their bodies. Children move and perform different exercises and games with increasing control and a clear awareness of themselves and others. They are creative and show imagination when rolling a ball using hands, head, feet and knees. Children learn new vocabulary such as "quoit" as they are carefully introduced to a widening range of equipment with different control requirements. Children use the fixed and movable apparatus with care, concentration and a good regard for safety. They move with agility around the floor, benches and platforms using different parts of their bodies. They show growing confidence when climbing, balancing, walking on beams and jumping up and down from different heights. Teaching is good and the teacher uses children of all abilities well to demonstrate and develop good practice so that they make good progress. Two issues have not been successfully addressed since the last inspection. There is an outside play area but it remains unsatisfactory because of the size and uneven base and there is no large, soft play equipment. These shortcomings continue to restrict children's physical experiences.

Creative development.

60 Children learn the basic skills of colour mixing and use their own imagination when experimenting with different colours and types of paper to make bright collages. They sing songs with enthusiasm and good control of rhythm and pitch. Children enjoy rhymes and this fact is used to good effect by the teacher in lessons on number and language. They use their senses to observe and explore in a wide range of contexts and describe what they see using interesting language. For example, children watching flour being sifted said, "Flour is like snow" and "It's like Christmas Eve". They learn about simple mechanisms like sliders and use this knowledge to design and make individual paper puppets based on characters from their reading books.

ENGLISH

61 In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds, standards in reading were well above the national average. Standards in writing were broadly in line with the national average. In both of these areas standards were well above average in comparison with similar schools. The evidence from inspection broadly reflects these results, with pupils in the current Year 2 achieving overall standards in line with the national average in writing and some above the average in reading. However, the present class contains a higher proportion of pupils on the special needs register for learning difficulties, than the previous year group. All pupils make good progress as they move through the key stage.

62 In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds, standards in English were well below the national average and below average when compared with similar schools. This represents a sharp decline against standards in 1999. However, this group of pupils changed significantly in composition during the period 1996-2000. It suffered considerable instability as pupils moved in and out of the school. Significant levels of support staff and resources were utilised for these transient pupils. This in turn drew resources away from other pupils, who would normally have received additional support, and this impacted considerably upon their learning. The 2000 group also contained a significantly higher proportion of pupils on the special needs register for learning difficulties, in comparison with the previous year group.

63 Those pupils who took the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests in 1996 and then the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 2000, achieved results near to the national average and were average in comparison with similar schools. The results from inspection indicate that the current standards for the

oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 are just below the levels expected for their age. Younger pupils in this key stage are achieving expected standards for their age. Overall, all pupils make good progress as they move through the key stage.

64 The oldest pupils in Key Stage 1 listen attentively and this enables them to hear rhyming words in poetry; for example, “bump-thump” and “roar-door”. They articulate these clearly and more able pupils make good use of adjectives to enrich their work: “he had a magic frying pan”. All groups of pupils benefit from the very good standard of teaching, which encourages them to explore the use of poetic language. Within the key stage, there is a careful emphasis on language. Pupils are encouraged to select appropriate terminology. This promotes learning well and leads to some pupils using such words as “skeleton” accurately when discussing birds. Standards in speaking and listening are good amongst more able pupils and overall match those expected for pupils’ ages.

65 Standards of reading in Key Stage 1 broadly meet expectations, with some pupils achieving better than this. Most pupils in Year 2 read accurately and the more able are fluent; for example, one pupil easily pronounced “dependable, reliable and concerned”. The less confident readers occasionally struggle to recognise words and the least able have difficulty with quite simple words, such as “by”. Pupils are aware of strategies which help, some use letter sounds effectively to work through each syllable, whilst others rely on picture clues. Most pupils discuss plot and character appropriately and offer valid opinions. Only the more able readers are familiar with non-fiction and read it independently. Within the key stage, many younger pupils enjoy discussing and reading stories. A minority read clearly, they recognise errors and correct them. Others identify phrases and explain them, however a number of pupils have yet to develop any significant word recognition. Most pupils enjoy reading to their parents when given the opportunity.

66 Handwriting standards in Key Stage 1 are in line with the levels expected for their age. The majority of pupils use a joined script, with accurate letter formation. Basic punctuation is secure and spelling reasonably so. This is a reflection of careful teaching of basic skills. In creative writing, there are good examples of extended work; for example, writing about “Mr Grumpy”. The more able pupils make good use of language and employ speech marks correctly; “I am a black witch with pointy ears”. Many pupils develop their skills in writing poetry effectively, building on the good oral work in a lesson, to explore rhyming couplets in verse. Amongst less able pupils, writing skills are under developed and handwriting mixes joined and printed styles with little use of punctuation. Younger pupils in the key stage, practise handwriting skills and the more able pupils have an understanding of basic punctuation. There is some extended writing and pupils’ work does convey meaning, for example, “I got new shoes”. Pupils make good progress as they move through the key stage.

67 In Key Stage 2, English classes for pupils in Years 5 and 6 are organised into three ability sets. Standards in speaking and listening are in line with the levels expected for pupils’ age. The oldest pupils in each set listen attentively and all contribute clearly when speaking. The more able pupils, about a third of the year group, use vocabulary well, they employ such adjectives as “curious” and “petrified” to describe feelings of suspense. In response to good questioning, they develop ideas and language well, having read “The Ghost of Thomas Kempe”. In the average ability set, pupils correctly name characters from the myth “Pandora’s Box”. The good teaching of the lower ability set, promotes speaking well and pupils discuss the meaning of words accurately in a group activity. In these sets, pupils in Year 5 also demonstrate appropriate speaking and listening skills. In Years 3 and 4, there are three parallel mixed age classes. Good teaching helps promote speaking and listening well. For example, pupils express themselves clearly to describe the Minotaur as “evil” and “dangerous”. They use new words such as “labyrinth” correctly in context. A number of pupils are withdrawn for additional language support. They make good progress and reinforce various skills, such as phonics and spelling.

68 The standards in reading are below the levels expected in Years 5 and 6, but meet expectations in Years 3 and 4. This is principally due to the differing numbers of pupils with special educational needs in

Key Stage 2. In Year 6, the more able readers are fluent and accurate. They recognise a wide range of words, discuss plot and character with confidence and predict outcomes with perception. These pupils read widely from a range of fiction, including adult fiction, for example by Catherine Cookson. They make comparisons between different authors and discuss their differing styles. A number of these pupils have reading levels above expectations. However, the majority of pupils do not achieve high enough standards. Many of these read accurately, but do not offer sufficiently detailed explanations of their reading. For example, they describe a plot but have difficulty in discussing characterisation. A significant minority of pupils are hesitant readers, they struggle to recognise individual words and have difficulty in interpreting a story. Overall, most pupils do not read sufficiently outside of school. Within the key stage, only the more able readers achieve a good level in Year 5. However, in Year 4 reading standards are good and in Year 3 they meet expectations.

69 The standard of handwriting in Year 6 is in line with the expected level. The more able pupils use punctuation effectively, though not always consistently. They have a sound command of language in most comprehension exercises and understand the use of adjective, verb and conjunction. Their writing is often expressive; for example, to create suspense, “a tingling sensation came over me”. In the middle and lower sets, pupils’ use of punctuation is often inconsistent. Some written work lacks depth and detail. However, there is good work, for example, in a story entitled “Trapped”. Whilst pupils are encouraged to write for specific purposes, there are too many pieces of work that lack detail and contain errors of punctuation and spelling. The development of dialogue through writing needs improvement. Within the key stage, standards broadly meet expectations in Years 3 and 4 but remain below in Year 5. However, there are pupils in Year 5 who achieve good standards; for example, an analysis of “The Midnight Fox”. There is a good range of writing in Years 3 and 4. This includes, “shape poetry”, the interpretation of myth and some good descriptive work; for example, “Making Clay Pots”. Overall, there is clear evidence of rising standards and good progress. This is promoted by good teaching and an important feature of this is careful marking and the introduction of target setting for older pupils. However, these targets are still too general and do not often set specific challenges to improve pupils’ English skills.

70 Teaching is good and sometimes very good. This is partly due to the introduction and development of the Literacy Strategy. The impact is that learning is good in most lessons and all groups of pupils achieve good progress over time. For example, in Key Stage 1, the very good teaching is through expressive presentation of information, effective reinforcement of learning and setting challenging tasks. In Key Stage 2, lessons are effectively planned with clear objectives, relationships are good and skilful questioning often promotes language well. However, there is not enough variety in oral work and insufficient use of information and communication technology using the classroom based computers to reinforce the use of language. There are good links between teaching and support staff. These ensure that all pupils are fully involved in their learning. The work of all staff with the additional language support and special educational needs pupils is particularly successful in developing language skills.

71 The English curriculum makes good use of the Literacy Strategy and promotes it effectively throughout the school. The curriculum has sufficient breadth and balance to provide good learning opportunities for all groups of pupils. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Assessment procedures are sound, with a careful analysis of National Curriculum test results helping to guide teachers’ planning. This is pursued through the emerging process of target setting in Years 5 and 6. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership and is clear about standards and priorities. Resources are good overall and carefully chosen. However, the accommodation is just adequate. The lack of a school library restricts opportunities to develop the pupils’ library skills and to encourage learning based on research. Overall, good progress has been made since the last inspection in developing teaching strategies for literacy and improving resources. Progress in the mixed age classes is now good.

MATHEMATICS

72 In the 2000 National Curriculum tests in mathematics for Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment was above the national average. Pupils were also doing very well in comparison with similar schools. Although Key Stage 1 test results after the last inspection dropped to below average for two years the latest results are higher than at the time of the last report. The 2000 National Curriculum tests show attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was well below the national average and the average for similar schools. Since results after the last inspection were high this represents a decline in the most recent test results. This is mainly because there was a great deal of movement in and out of the school and this adversely affected Year 6 pupils last year. There was also a high number of pupils with special educational needs who entered the group and this brought the overall levels of attainment down by a significant amount. The analysis of National Curriculum test results, for those pupils who remained in the school for the full period between 1996 and 2000, show that they made at least satisfactory progress and achieved satisfactory standards.

73 Standards in mathematics are lower than at the time of the previous inspection when attainment was reported to be satisfactory at the end of both key stages. Standards are now similar for seven year olds but are below average for 11 year olds. During the inspection, standards seen during lessons and samples of work show that the current pupils in Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with the levels expected for their age. The current pupils in Year 6 are working below levels expected for their age.

74 The school is aware of the need to raise standards at Key Stage 2 and has introduced a number of strategies that indicate a clear desire to bring about improvement. The National Numeracy Strategy is used throughout both key stages and this is providing a good structure for teaching and learning. In addition, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are placed in teaching groups based on their performance in non statutory tests. This enables teaching to be more focused on pupils' learning needs because the groups do not contain the full range of ability. In Years 3 and 4 classes, teaching is directed at the full age and ability range during the first part of lessons but individual and group work is based on ability groups. The school analyses pupils' performance in National Curriculum tests thoroughly to find out what pupils can and cannot do. This information is then shared and special effort is made to target groups of pupils or areas of mathematics that need more emphasis. Unfortunately, the after school booster classes intended to improve the performance of the middle band of pupils were not popular. The school intends to reintroduce them during normal school hours to overcome this problem.

75 The quality of teaching and learning is good in both key stages and is often very good in Key Stage 1. Teachers throughout the school get lessons off to a good start with a relevant mental mathematics session. This ensures that pupils learn and practise basic skills such as multiplication tables and number facts on a regular basis. Teachers are good at using pupils' contributions and responses to review earlier work and develop important teaching points. Pupils enjoy mathematics in most classes and this is because most lessons are interesting, stimulating and relevant to their needs. Pupils take care with their presentation and set work out neatly. Lessons are generally challenging and well planned and pupils of all abilities respond positively to this. Teachers develop good relationships with their pupils and, as a result, they manage their pupils well. This ensures that there is a good working atmosphere in most lessons and pupils concentrate on their tasks. As a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Occasionally, in lessons where teachers have to correct some pupils' unsatisfactory behaviour, the flow is disrupted and learning is not as good.

76 Teachers plan their mathematics lessons carefully against the National Curriculum framework and the skills pupils need to acquire as they move through the school. There is a clear school focus on raising the attainment of average ability pupils to national standards by the end of Key Stage 2. Teachers review their lessons regularly and make notes on key features to help them meet the needs of their pupils better. Regular assessment of pupils' progress and attainment is satisfactory but there is too much variation between classes in Years 3 and 4. The best records, for example, in one Year 3/4 class, contain National Curriculum test results from earlier years, scores in mental mathematics and a chart showing individual attainment of key objectives. Because of the variation in approach, pupils' attainment of basic skills is not always recorded.

This means that teaching is not as well targeted in this important area of mathematics as it should be. There is no agreed marking policy for mathematics and, although work is regularly marked, there is little to show pupils what they need to do next to improve their skills and knowledge.

77 Information and communication technology is sometimes used to support mathematics. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 use spreadsheets to enter data about pupils' heights and perform calculations leading to the production of a variety of graphs. However, information and communication technology is not usually planned for and opportunities in classrooms are sometimes missed. Where computers are used well, as in a Year 5/6 lower ability set, pupils gain valuable extra insight and practice in sequencing numbers.

78 Management of the subject is good and the co-ordinator is fully aware of the areas that need further development to improve standards. The co-ordinator has watched teaching and learning in every year group, sometimes with an adviser from the local education authority, with a view to supporting and developing good practice. The results of these monitoring visits are fed back to the teachers to improve teaching. The National Numeracy Strategy has been carefully introduced throughout the school and has been well received by teachers who appreciate its structure and organisation. The school is setting realistic targets for improvement, the teaching staff are adaptable and there is a clear desire to bring about improvement. Resources for the subject have been improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory although some books need updating.

SCIENCE

79 The school's most recent Key Stage 1 National Curriculum teacher assessments show that pupils' attainment in Year 2 last year, was well above average. The present Year 2 achieve well when compared to their previous attainment and are at least in line with expectations for their age, with a number of pupils above the level expected. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in science matches the level expected for their age. The school has maintained standards since the previous inspection. In the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 2000 pupils' attainment in science was well below the average nationally and below the average when compared to similar schools. The results represented a significant fall from previous years, however, the school has done well to maintain standards since the last inspection because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the different year groups and a significant number of pupils joining the school at times other than at the beginning of the academic year. Pupils' attainment is improving in the present Year 6 because of the focus the school has placed on improving the investigative and experimental aspects of science and the good teaching of the subject. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and they make good progress in both key stages. As a result, there is a good capacity for further improvement.

80 In Key Stage 1, pupils experiment with different materials and have a good knowledge of physical forces. For example, in a Year 1 lesson a range of toys helped pupils to understand how pulling and pushing created movements of different sorts. The lesson was particularly effective because of the choice of resources offered to the pupils and these stimulated pupils' interest and contributed very well to the discussion on the use of forces. Pupils understand that plants need sun and water to grow and a few pupils explain how seeds grow into a new plant. Pupils' work shows that they have a good understanding of the requirements for life. In Year 1/2, pupils recognise that a balanced diet is important for healthy growth. In a lesson in a Year 1/2 class the teacher encouraged debate and pupils successfully identified foods that they enjoyed and were good for them. They also knew which ones to only eat small amounts of, for example, chocolate. Pupils' work shows a variety of good ways to record the results of their experiments. For example, they draw accurate diagrams, to show how far a model car travels, simple electrical circuits and how a switch can break the connection. They record their simple experiments, make predictions and indicate why the test is fair.

81 In response to good teaching, in both key stages, learning and progress in science are good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupils in Year 3/4 study the effects of exercise and healthy eating on the body and how it affects themselves. Pupils build effectively on this work and suggest their own ideas for “Healthy Living”. They make lists of foods that are good for their bodies and those that are not. In a Year 3/4 lesson, pupils experimented with magnets and the good use of scientific terms, such as “repel” and “attract”, helped them to understand the forces involved. Pupils in Year 5/6 developed their scientific knowledge when they conducted an experiment to show evaporation and condensation. This well planned lesson captivated pupils and they gained a great deal from the careful scientific methods insisted upon by the teacher. Pupils in Year 5/6 understand the concept of a fair test and explain that only one element in an experiment is changed to make the test fair. For example, they conducted an experiment into rates of evaporation in different liquids and knew that conditions had to be the same for each liquid to make the comparison fair. These results were carefully recorded as a graph which provided a good link with mathematics.

82 The good science teaching, in both key stages, and the range of stimulating scientific activities contribute significantly to the improving quality of pupils’ learning. Pupils’ attitudes and their behaviour during lessons are prime reasons why their learning is improving. Teachers’ knowledge and understanding of the subject contribute to the well planned provision for pupils, such as the improving use of investigations to encourage pupils to use scientific skills in a practical way. Good use is made of the basic skills of writing and measuring in experiments on reversible and irreversible changes. A good element of teachers’ planning is the emphasis placed on the correct use of scientific vocabulary, such as “artery” and “vein” when describing the circulatory system. Lively and enthusiastic teaching styles encourage pupils to carry out their experiments carefully and record their results accurately. For example, in Year 5/6 work, there are good examples of how to separate substances dissolved in water and how liquids are changed into gas by boiling and then back again by condensation. Teachers’ management and control of individual or paired activities are good and pupils become involved in their work, for example, identifying the importance of the healthy eating in our daily lives. In good lessons the quality of teaching and learning are closely matched. For example, Year 3/4 pupils study the human body and discuss how teeth are designed for different jobs. Pupils’ understanding of life styles was enhanced in their work comparing habitats for animals with comments on how they live. Most teachers include positive comments when marking but do not consistently provide precise guidance on what pupils need to do in order to improve. This makes it more difficult for some teachers to assess how well pupils learn from their mistakes.

83 The school has responded to the latest changes in the National Curriculum and introduced new guidance for teachers. The science co-ordinator undertakes a regular audit of the subject and checks teachers’ planning and pupils’ work to ensure that all aspects of the subject are covered. This is done in a supportive atmosphere because of the good subject management by an enthusiastic and committed co-ordinator, who has established good liaison with staff. Resources for the subject are good and are used well to improve pupils’ learning, for example, when testing circuits, magnetic fields or how forces affect objects. The curriculum for science covers all the required aspects. The breadth of the curriculum ensures that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in learning as they move through the school. The good attention to the use of appropriate scientific language and the use of charts and graphs ensures that the work makes a positive contribution to the development of basic literacy and numeracy skills.

ART AND DESIGN

84 By the end of both key stages, pupils’ attainment in art and design is above that expected for their ages. Pupils’ progress and learning are good and the quality of some art work on display is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils in Key Stage 1 demonstrate a good knowledge of colour and understand the difference between primary and secondary colours. They work well using families of colours, building up samples of new colours which they use effectively in their displays of Celtic Crosses.

Pupils work happily in both two and three-dimensional media to create pictures, murals and models. Their paper weaving pictures are well constructed and provide an interesting example of the link between their scientific studies on materials to the art and design curriculum. They paint self portraits and use their good drawing skills to illustrate stories. All classes contribute to the attractive displays of work in classrooms and corridors.

85 Pupils continue to develop their skills and understanding of art and design in Key Stage 2 as they explore an ever increasing range of media. Drawing skills are developed as they explore the effects that can be obtained when using different pencils and crayons. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson pupils were creating stunning effects for the background of their pictures to show journeys. They used cut out templates and rubbed colours with their fingers to blend into each other. The effect was very good when their black silhouette was placed on the pattern. Pupils' studies include looking at the work of famous artists. For example, Year 3/4 pupils study Paul Klee and create their own interesting patterns, this work is well linked to their use of computers and the display of their repeating patterns using a "cut and paste" technique is very effective. By Year 5/6, pupils' drawings are detailed, well executed and extremely varied in content. Very good models are designed and made using papier-mâché and mod roc. Pupils produce very good observational drawings of flowers and link this to the study of artists by drawing in the style of Van Gogh. A good link was made to mathematics in a display of drawings showing three-dimensional shapes. This work is developed well in the work on perspective and many pupils tackle this difficult aspect well in the drawings of houses showing depth as well as accuracy.

86 Pupils thoroughly enjoy their art and design and take great pride in their work. They work with care and are willing to try new ideas in order to achieve the best results. Pupils in Year 5/6 were very keen to explain how they made their model figures and the problems of working with papier-mâché and mod roc. This subject makes a very positive contribution to pupils' cultural and spiritual development, as they learn about art in different societies and appreciate the range of feelings they experience in creating their own art works. The quality of teaching in art and design is good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and understand how to help pupils develop the wide range of skills needed to master a wide range of media. Teachers base their planning on a scheme of work and the progress of both knowledge and skills is informally monitored by the subject co-ordinator. Lessons are well organised and resources used effectively to encourage pupils to experiment and enjoy finding new ways of creating works of art. Display is linked to art and design and teachers create a colourful and stimulating environment that celebrates pupils' work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

87 At the time of the last inspection attainment in design and technology was below national expectations by the end of both key stages. During this inspection very little design and technology was taught but scrutiny of work shows that pupils in Key Stage 1 now attain standards expected for seven year olds by the end of the key stage. In Key Stage 2, pupils do not reach the levels expected for 11 year olds because the subject is under-resourced and so they cannot get the necessary range and depth of experience. Evidence during this inspection was gained from one lesson observation, examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers. It was not possible to make secure judgements for teaching in Key Stage 2 because no lessons were observed.

88 In Key Stage 1, pupils make a satisfactory start to learning about design and technology. The youngest pupils are introduced to the idea of design and understand the need to take care and work accurately. They learn about simple mechanisms like sliders and incorporate them when they produce paper puppets of characters from their reading scheme. Year 1 pupils refine the process when they include planning and materials in their simple design for a moving picture. They also use construction kits involving manipulation of nuts and spanners when making a giraffe and they modify their work to improve the end result. Pupils enjoy their lessons in design and technology and are well supported by their teachers so that they make good progress. By the end of the key stage, pupils design and make a range of puppets which

include some good examples, showing individuality and the use of a range of materials. They use planning sheets to list the materials they will require and show that they understand the need to be practical. Pupils evaluate their work, for example, one Year 2 pupil wrote, "I don't like my puppet because he looks silly for a wolf with all those whiskers". There are good links with literacy when pupils produce stories about their individual puppets and use reference books. This clearly shows how design and technology can enrich and enliven other subjects.

89 By the end of Key Stage 2, discussions with pupils showed they enjoy their lessons in design and technology but have a very limited experience of different tools, equipment, materials, components and techniques. This is because the subject had a low profile in the school during the period when the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies were being introduced. Resources of all kinds are in short supply so that a restricted curriculum is in place. The exception is food technology which is adequately resourced so that pupils acquire the required knowledge and skills. For example, Year 5/6 pupils showed good observational and organisational skills when examining and tasting different kinds of biscuits and charting their findings. Pupils used and modified basic recipes to achieve individual results and designed biscuits to be used as a Christmas gift. There is some good construction apparatus in Year 5/6 classes which includes levers, pulleys, wheels, axles and air power but this was not being used during the inspection. These examples demonstrate that pupils can reach the required standards if resources are improved to satisfactory standards and the subject is planned and taught systematically.

90 The subject has not been managed successfully since the adverse comments made in the last report. Although the school responded to the issues, the changes and improvements made were soon overtaken by higher priorities. The school now needs to address the issues raised in the last report and reaffirmed in this one. It is essential that the subject is supported by up-to-date guidance to ensure that teaching complies with National Curriculum requirements and that the subject is taught systematically throughout the school.

GEOGRAPHY

91 By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in geography is at the levels expected for their age. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are aware of their own locality, they follow a route accurately on a simple map. They name and locate familiar features in their own locality and recognise different types of housing in their immediate vicinity. Pupils in Year 1 keep a "weather" diary and accurately record how the changes occur on a daily basis. In these studies they recognise conventional weather symbols and know the effect that weather has on their lives, for example, they know that they need different clothes in summer and winter. In Year 1/2 they develop an awareness of other countries outside Britain, make their own passports and write descriptions of their holiday destinations. In a good link to mathematics, pupils use simple co-ordinates to identify places on maps.

92 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have an increasing awareness of the world around them. In Years 3/4, pupils study a contrasting locality in India. They draw comparisons and contrasts between their own life and the life of children in a village in Chembakolli. They know that the climate is hot there and that living conditions and customs are very different. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson the teacher used a set of photographs well to highlight the differences in the way pupils travel to school and the dangers faced in India compared with their own journeys. By Year 5/6, pupils use some geographical enquiry skills by using given facts to draw conclusions. For example, pupils were given a map of the local area and identified the position of various buildings including their school. They develop these skills well using Ordnance Survey maps using the correct symbols as well as explaining scale and grid references. Pupils use given data such as temperature and rainfall to accurately describe a particular climate and link their studies of the water cycle in science to the study of rivers.

93 Teaching is good. In discussions, it is clear that teachers have a good rapport with pupils and develop a good, positive atmosphere in the classrooms. Teachers' planning is good and there is clear reference to the requirements of the National Curriculum. A good lesson in Year 3/4 compared a village in India with Houghton-le-Spring by using a good collection of photographs and worksheets to highlight the differences. In a very good lesson in Year 5/6 the teacher made the subject of river erosion interesting by demonstrating how water quality changes as a river runs from its source to the sea, this practical approach made a significant contribution to pupils' learning and improving knowledge. The geography co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning to ensure a balanced curriculum in mixed age classes. Teachers regularly mark pupils' work, however there is little evidence of comments that guide pupils in their next stage of learning. The school has maintained the standards found in the last inspection and has adopted the new guidance for the subject effectively which means they are well placed to continue the development of geography.

HISTORY

94 History has not been taught to Year 5/6 during this academic year because the school uses a two-year cycle of teaching for history and geography to meet the needs of mixed age classes. This is organised into blocks of two terms for geography and one term of history in the current year. The following year reverses the balance so that there is equal provision overall. As a result, there is no evidence on which to make a judgement about attainment and progress by the age of 11. Seven year old pupils have studied history and are achieving expected levels of attainment for their age. It was not possible to observe any lessons, but analysis of pupils' work shows that they have studied people in history such as Guy Fawkes and Florence Nightingale and have made comparisons over time about kitchens. This work shows satisfactory factual knowledge and the development of narrative skills as they retell the story of Guy Fawkes. Their documentary skills are improved as they record facts about Florence Nightingale in the order in which they occurred during her life. The skill of noting change over time was linked to the use of kitchen equipment when comparing cool slabs and refrigerators, or sink and mangle with washing machines and this work showed appropriate development of the skills of interpretation.

95 No lessons were timetabled during the inspection week and so judgements cannot be made about teaching at either key stage. However, analysis of teachers' effective planning shows satisfactory expectations for the classes that have studied history during the current academic year. Analysis of pupils' work shows that Years 3/4 have studied the Aztecs and that teaching presented facts and opportunities for pupils to research information about Aztec gods and their beliefs about supreme powers. There were also opportunities for pupils to put events in order concerning the expedition by Cortez that overcame the Aztec civilisation and to write about the reaction of the Aztecs when they first encountered the Spanish force. However, although the pupils responded with interest to these opportunities, marking at both key stages was minimal and did not offer pupils any constructive comments about improving their work or developing the skills of historical interpretation. The higher attaining pupils present their work with pride and other pupils follow a common style for the presentation of their work.

96 Standards are broadly in line with expectations. Good use is made of new technology and the school has a number of computer programs to support learning about the Romans, the Victorians and the Vikings. There is no monitoring of teaching and learning or assessment of attainment at this early stage of introduction of the new curriculum guidelines. Neither has there been any training for the teachers in the development of the skills of historical research or the use of assessment in evaluating learning and influencing the future teaching of the curriculum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

97 By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology broadly meets the levels expected for their age. Progress is good throughout the school. This is a significant

improvement since the last inspection and reflects the hard work of all staff and the clear priority given to this subject by the school.

98 The oldest pupils in Key Stage 1 competently use basic skills to enter, save and retrieve work. They use these skills to word process information. They know the functions of the keyboard and mouse and use them to edit text effectively. Pupils know how to collate data. They organise it to produce a bar chart showing their favourite foods and display the information accurately. In control technology, pupils know how to program a floor robot and predict its movements. These pupils are gaining real benefit from class teaching in the new computer suite. They explore the wider use of information and communication technology and discuss it. They make more use of computers to support their work. For example, in religious education, pupils explore Buddhism through using a compact disc. In Year 1, pupils develop their skills in using the mouse by selecting items of clothing to dress a teddy bear. Other pupils use arrow keys well to direct a pony along a country lane. Pupils are beginning to explore differing simulated situations. This is an area for further development, as is the use of the Internet, both are planned for later in the school year.

99 The oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 develop an appropriate range of skills. They gain a good range of experiences in school and this enables them to offer valid opinions on the uses of information and communication technology in the wider world. For example, they know computers are important to the media, the health service and industry. Pupils use computers to write in varying forms, for example, they produce a newspaper front page displaying leading stories. They have experience of combining text and pictures, using art programs. This work supports the development of literacy well. Pupils make good use of spreadsheets to enter data and display it graphically. This includes recording the heights of pupils in a class and their favourite pop groups. During the inspection, pupils completed a spreadsheet to record shopping habits and calculate discounts on multiple purchases. This work supports the development of numeracy effectively. Pupils are aware of search routines using compact discs and the Internet, they recognise the importance of audience when presenting information. In control technology, they use “logo” to create shapes on screen. Through science lessons they gain some experience of using an external sensor to record data. There is good progress throughout the key stage. In Years 3 and 4, pupils quickly learn how to use a publishing program. They open this program and select colours to “flood fill” a stained glass window. They know how to alter their first efforts, to change the colours. The more able pupils clearly describe the steps in this process.

100 Teachers are currently undertaking training to develop their information and communication technology skills. Standards of teaching are satisfactory overall, with examples of good teaching being seen during the inspection. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson a number of good teaching points were made through careful questioning. However, best use is not always made of the resources available. This can lead to pupils waiting too long for guidance or being poorly placed to observe a demonstration. In Years 5/6 there is effective teaching and the technology is fully utilised to teach the whole class together. Here, the teacher works through the networked system, providing all pupils with instant access to instructions and information. This promotes a good understanding of the uses and potential of the subject. The effectiveness of support staff is variable and linked to their differing levels of expertise. Where a trained assistant is used, pupils benefit from additional support and they make good progress in the lesson. The teachers observed brought a number of different skill levels to their work. Each provided good learning opportunities through careful planning and clear instructions. Most pupils respond positively to this subject. They enjoy working in the computer suite and some develop good skills in independent learning; they support one another well in their pairings. The subject plays an important role in developing good social skills.

101 The curriculum for information and communication technology meets statutory requirements and offers all pupils good learning opportunities. The subject provides good support for pupils with special educational needs; for example, in helping overcome physical handicap and by using such programs as “Write-away”. It promotes learning across the curriculum effectively. In a literacy lesson, the class teacher “modelled” a myth on screen and pupils developed their word processing and English skills by continuing the

story. The co-ordinator possesses good skills and is developing very good teaching strategies in the computer suite. Currently there are few opportunities to support colleagues as they teach their classes. Assessment procedures are at an early stage and do not sufficiently track individual progress. In Key Stage 2 and for older pupils in Key Stage 1, there is good access to the computer suite, however there is not always sufficient use made of computers in the classroom. Improvement since the last inspection is good. The school is moving ahead well in this subject. Standards are rising steadily.

MUSIC

102 The school makes good provision for music as a result of the good teaching. Pupils attain standards that are above the expected level by the age of 11 and at the expected level by the age of seven. Seven year old pupils play percussion instruments in time to the rhythm of a song and develop rhythmic pattern in response to the syllables in words and phrases such as “crackling knuckles” and “whispering sounds”. They also play in response to a form of notation that marks out a pattern of sounds to be made with the percussion instruments. The oldest pupils in the school show good control of voice and maintain their own part in a round whilst others sing descant. They evaluate their singing and identify parts that can be improved. Co-operation is good and pupils identify strongly with the beauty of a Hebridean folk song. They repeat the melody accurately and accompany the singing with a special rhythm that plays two notes alternately.

103 Teaching and learning is good at both key stages with some that is very good. The teachers in Key Stage 1 prepare resources well and show secure subject knowledge in moving the lessons along in a bright style that encourages all pupils in their learning. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic in matching sounds to a pattern and are fully involved in their work. Younger pupils concentrate well as they listen to a tape and identify long and short sounds as well as the instruments that are playing. This is a good response to teaching that uses praise well and carefully develops the understanding of the pupils. However, there are occasions when teaching in Key Stage 1 does not seek to improve the performance of the pupils with questions that would encourage them to try different ways of sounding out rhythm or to match volume and stress in the syllables of words to be accompanied. At Key Stage 2 very good confident teaching and good practice in the management of music lessons improves the quality of voice and performance as the pupils respond to the discipline of the subject. They stand erect and show an awareness of breathing, diction and posture. The lesson moves along at a good pace with frequent change of focus. As a result, the pupils are very involved and all pupils take an enthusiastic part as they sing tunefully and the hall “rings out” as they sing clearly in two groups that maintain their own part against the singing of the other part. Very good learning takes place as the pupils comment on their performance and suggest improvements. Teachers use accurate vocabulary and so pupils know and use words such as “legato” and “staccato” when they discuss differences in the pitch of sounds.

104 Although financial limits mean that there is no longer any instrumental tuition by specialists, the school has improved resources considerably and purchased a set of “Bell Plates” that are used very well by the pupils. A performance for an assembly of “Spirit of God” had the whole school listening in rapt attention. Six pupils played with acute concentration and kept good time whilst playing clear notes that produced a performance of quality. The co-ordinator has developed the subject well, has introduced the national guidelines for music and this has improved the confidence of all teachers. Resources have been improved with the purchase of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and this means that teachers are trying different ideas in their music teaching. Music is celebrated in assemblies and the school choir gives performances of quality both in school and in the community. Pupils recently took part in a multicultural music festival that was recorded by the BBC. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105 Pupils' attainment in physical education is broadly in line with the levels expected for their age in both key stages in those areas of the curriculum covered. However, swimming and water safety are not taught and are therefore excluded from this judgement. The oldest pupils in Key Stage 1 move well, stretching and marching energetically. They move and turn, performing a range of balances and holding these in a controlled manner. Pupils are aware of space and some combine more complex movements effectively; for example, realistically replicating a "tight-rope" walk. Younger pupils in the key stage form differing shapes when following the "blue balloon" programme. These include being tightly curled and fully stretched. Pupils made good progress in the two lessons observed because of the good teaching.

106 In Key Stage 2, the oldest pupils develop an imaginative dance routine to the "Locomotion". They warm up energetically and work hard to consolidate prior learning. Through good teaching they develop the routine, adding additional steps and working with a partner. They combine a range of movements, including high steps, jumps, balances and turns. Whilst dance standards vary between individuals, a number of boys and girls demonstrate considerable skill and rhythm. Pupils observe and evaluate one another's performance well, offering valid comments. They make good progress in this activity. Younger pupils in the key stage demonstrate appropriate skills in hockey. They strike and control the ball well. They combine effectively in teams to play a relay game. In gymnastics, very good teaching raises pupils' attainment above expectations. Pupils demonstrate a good range of jumps and landings. There was an example of excellent gymnastic skill from one pupil who performed back somersaults. Most pupils demonstrate a good ability to approach a mat, or piece of apparatus, jump and roll clear with control. Pupils are aware of the effects of exercise upon their heart rate and know this is important to good health.

107 In both key stages teaching is good and sometimes very good. This has a direct impact upon learning opportunities and helps promote good achievement in the performance of many pupils. Lessons are well organised and pace is good. Class teachers provide useful demonstrations and instructions which enable pupils to develop their skills effectively. Good use is made of pupils' own efforts to demonstrate activities and help evaluate performance. In lessons observed, physically disabled pupils had full access to the tasks set and performed well to the limit of their capabilities. This good teaching promotes positive attitudes amongst most pupils who are keen to work hard and improve their skills. In one lesson, a pupil worked effectively alongside a disabled pupil to support his performance.

108 The absence of swimming and water safety from the curriculum means that it does not meet statutory requirements. The physical education curriculum has insufficient balance and breadth and is therefore unsatisfactory. Progress for all pupils is satisfactory in those activities covered, the school provides some good opportunities to develop skills. However, there is no specific scheme to assess pupils' attainment and progress in physical education and therefore individual progress is not systematically recorded. Resources are satisfactory, the school has made good use of the "Top-sport" initiative. Extra curricular sport includes indoor cricket and athletics but there are no regular teams in football or netball. However, teams are entered for local competitions on occasion. The accommodation inside the school is satisfactory, the hall is of sufficient size and the equipment is stored within it. However, the accommodation outside is unsatisfactory. Because of recent building work there are no grassed areas available and only a small hard surface area. This severely restricts opportunities for outside sports and so limits pupils' attainment and progress. The co-ordinator and other staff have attended relevant training courses recently, however the management role of the co-ordinator is limited. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social development. Outdoor facilities have worsened since the last inspection and the position of swimming remains unsatisfactory. In other respects satisfactory progress has been maintained since the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

109 The school has made good improvements since the last inspection. Religious education is taught well with a structure that follows the Agreed Syllabus and all pupils gain much factual knowledge about a variety of faiths together with some opportunities to use their knowledge in reflecting about the ideas that

they have learnt. At the age of seven, pupils readily recall details about the life of Jesus and of St Cuthbert which is in line with the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus. During the lesson they frequently make comments that link their previous knowledge with the new facts that they are learning as they listen to a story about the life of Buddha. The 11 year old pupils also perform at the expected level. They make use of their factual knowledge about Dr Barnardo and use this to examine the idea of commitment as they learn about the life of Guru Nana and the foundation of the Sikh religion. They show good factual knowledge as they write an account of the Sikh religion and its strength of community. Analysis of pupils' work shows pupils comparing gospel accounts about the birth of Jesus, they interpret the ideas from the parable about "love thy neighbour" and link them with present times and they write detailed factual accounts about the life of Dr Barnardo. There is less evidence of pupils' reflective thinking about the powerful ideas of religion. However, when questioned, Year 6 pupils developed the idea of "giving ones life" using the crucifixion of Jesus as an example and described the commitment of people such as Dr Barnardo.

110 Teaching is good overall with no teaching less than satisfactory. Lessons are planned well with clear objectives and teachers use their voices well when reading stories or explaining facts with the result that pupils are interested and keen to show their knowledge. In Year 1, the teacher knows the pupils well and uses a pleasant and encouraging manner to draw pupils onwards from previous learning and to link this with new ideas about the founders of religions such as Islam. There are good links with geography and information and communication technology as the globe is used to identify the places where the story takes place and computer programs are used to find out more about Buddha. There are a few disruptive pupils in some classes at Key Stage 2 but these are generally managed well. However, there are occasional lessons where pupils talk across the lesson and chatter when they should be working. Good teaching in Year 3/4 made good use of humour and anecdotes to give life to a lesson about Moses. This helped pupils to retain the information and develop the idea of God assisting Moses with the plagues during the struggle with Pharaoh to secure freedom for the people of Israel. The use of worksheets, at different levels, allowed some pupils to put the sequence of plagues in order whilst other pupils were prepared well for their task of writing news bulletins about the disasters that befell the Egyptians. Imaginative accounts were written to headlines such as "The 10th Plague! Will it be the last?" and the pupils created these themselves. There is good use of literacy across the key stage in particular by Year 5/6 pupils when writing extensive accounts as part of their work on Dr Barnardo. However, in some lessons, opportunities are missed for discussion of ideas such as using power for good or evil.

111 The subject is led well by the head teacher who sets a good example for the whole school in the conduct of assemblies. These establish clear links with the good religious education curriculum but the school still maintains the separate provision through the timetabled lessons. This leadership makes a clear contribution to the good provision for religious education by the teachers. Teachers' planning is examined periodically but teaching and learning are not observed and the teaching of interpretive skills is therefore not fully developed.