

INSPECTION REPORT

PEARTREE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117172

Headteacher: Mr R Dean

Reporting inspector: C D Loizou
18645

Dates of inspection: 5 – 9 June 2000

Inspection number: 191214

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Peartree Lane Welwyn Garden City Hertfordshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Giles
Date of previous inspection:	13 January, 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
C D Loizou	Registered inspector	English Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
R Last	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Attendance How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
C Glenis	Team inspector	The foundation curriculum for reception pupils Science History Religious education	
J Haslam	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?
B Walker	Team inspector	Art Geography	
P Thrussell	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Information technology Music	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	24
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated near Welwyn Garden City town centre in Hertfordshire. It is in an area of mainly Local Authority owned housing and is near to a large industrial estate approximately one mile south of the town centre. The school is an infant and junior school and there are 237 pupils on roll between the ages of four years and 11 years. The reception children who enter the school during the term in which they become five years of age are taught in two classes, one of these classes also has Year 1 pupils. Most of the pupils live in the immediate area and there is a high turnover of pupils during the time they are in school with a proportion of approximately one in ten pupils leaving or joining the school at varying times in each key stage. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is 33 per cent, which is above average. There are 120 pupils on the special educational needs register (50 per cent) which is extremely high and well above average for schools of this type. A small number of pupils (two per cent) speak English as an additional language and they receive regular support from a specialist teacher. At the time of the inspection the majority of the reception children were five years of age. Their attainment on entry to the school covers a wide range of ability and is below average overall.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education. The headteacher and staff have improved the way that standards are monitored. The teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features. Teachers manage the pupils well and they provide a good range of homework. The teaching in Key Stage 1 is good overall and is having a positive effect on the standards achieved by the pupils by the time they are seven years of age. The children in the reception class make satisfactory progress. The school now needs to raise its expectations further so that more pupils achieve the standards expected for their age by the time they are 11 years. Reading and writing standards are too low, especially in Key Stage 2, and this affects the overall level of attainment across the curriculum. There are very good relationships between the pupils and staff and the parents believe this to be a good school. The school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and so the pupils make good progress and standards are improving significantly. Throughout the school the teaching was good or very good in 44 per cent of lessons observed.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed, enabling them to make good progress.
- There are very good relationships and, together with the way the pupils are managed, there is good behaviour.
- There are good links with other schools and institutions and these have a positive effect on the pupils' learning. There is also a good range of extra-curricular activities provided after school and during school break-times.
- The headteacher provides good and effective leadership. He is ably supported by the staff and governors. The school is now clearly focused on improving standards further.
- Teaching and learning are monitored well and this has improved the effectiveness of the teaching since the last inspection.
- The school uses a good range of resources including information technology resources. The accommodation and school grounds provide a stimulating learning environment.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science. More pupils could do better and reach the standards expected for their age.
- Curriculum planning and the way that it is monitored so that work is not repeated and the pupils build on their previous knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers' expectations so that the pupils are set more challenging work which they are required to present neatly and clearly. Teachers need to improve the range of writing that pupils undertake in all subjects across the curriculum.
- The planning for children under five, especially in relation to their physical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
- The links the school has with its parents so that they play a more active part in their children's learning.

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 satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The planning has improved for English and mathematics but there are still improvements to be made in other subjects to ensure breadth, balance and progression for all the pupils. The teaching has improved because in the last inspection one in four lessons was judged to be unsatisfactory. This inspection found only a few unsatisfactory lessons (four per cent) and there is a larger proportion of good or very good teaching. Assessment procedures have improved and the headteacher monitors standards more closely. The school now sets more accurate attainment targets for the pupils.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	E	D	E	E	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E very low E*
Mathematics	E	E	E	D	
Science	E	E*	E*	E*	

The results of the end-of-key stage national tests for 11-year-olds show that the pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science was well below the national average. Compared with similar schools it is also well below average in all three subjects. In mathematics and science it was in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally, and in mathematics it was also in the lowest five per cent compared with similar schools. The results were close to the school's own targets in all three subjects. Results are similar for both boys and girls although the girls have tended to do better than the boys in English tests but their results are still well below average. The number of pupils taking the tests each year is approximately 40 and a high proportion of these pupils have been on the school's special educational register. During the inspection, 50 per cent of the pupils were on the register and most of these have moderate learning difficulties. One in ten pupils joins or leaves the school during Key Stage 2 and, combined with the high number of pupils with special educational needs, this has the effect of lowering the school's overall average in national tests.

Inspection evidence confirms the national tests results in attainment as being below average standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 has improved significantly and this is largely

related to the good quality of the teaching and the focused support that pupils are receiving to raise their attainment. In Key Stage 2 the pupils are not reading widely enough to improve their language skills. The standard of writing is poor across the key stage although it is better in Year 5. In science, the pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to organise their investigations or to choose the most appropriate methods or resources. In all other subjects, including information technology, the pupils make satisfactory progress, except in music and geography in Key Stage 2 where standards are below those expected for pupils' ages. In religious education, the pupils make satisfactory progress but the pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are not achieving the standards set by the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory overall. These vary across the school and range between very good to unsatisfactory. The pupils try hard when they are challenged and the teaching is at least good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The pupils are polite and courteous. They respect the feelings of others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good between pupils and with teachers and support staff. Pupils are not always provided with opportunities to show initiative and to take on responsibilities.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Unauthorised absence is lower than it was at the last inspection.

The pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance levels are broadly in line with the national average. There are very good relationships. Older pupils care for younger children and they often play together happily. The pupils respect the feelings of others. Behaviour is usually good, especially when the teaching is good or better and the work provided is challenging and varied. Some pupils arrive at school late and this sometimes disrupts the start of lessons. There are good procedures to monitor attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is satisfactory overall with some good and very good features. It was satisfactory or better in ninety-six per cent of the lessons observed. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. Forty-four per cent were found to be good or better and thirteen per cent were very good. The teaching is good in Key Stage 1 with one in five lessons judged to be very good. The planning, monitoring and tracking of the pupils' performance are much sharper. The pupils are managed well and this is having a positive effect on their learning, behaviour and attitudes to their work. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good except where more attention needs to be given to standards in writing. Teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of the pupils' written work and the way that it is presented in their workbooks. The most effective teaching sets high expectations to which the pupils respond well which improves their learning. The least effective teaching is slow and too deliberate with teachers going over the same points too much. This has a negative effect on the pupils' attitudes and their learning. Some of the work provided, especially in Key Stage 2, is repetitive and undemanding.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory overall. There is no clear oversight of the curriculum as a whole, resulting in a lack of breadth and balance. Some of the work provided is not matched to the age or abilities of the pupils. Literacy and numeracy planning is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The pupils are monitored closely and provided with good support that enables them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The school uses the Local Authority's support services.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Moral and social development is good and there is satisfactory provision for the pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The strong relationships that exist in the school help the pupils to reflect on their experiences and to share their feelings with others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A good level of care with very good procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour. The pupils receive good guidance and support. Assessment information is not being sufficiently used to help teachers plan future work for their pupils.

The curriculum provided for the children under five is satisfactory but activities are not always planned specifically for under fives in the mixed reception and Year 1 class. Also the children are not provided with regular physical play, especially with large apparatus. In the rest of the school the quality and range of activities in the planned curriculum are unsatisfactory because there is no clear oversight of what is being covered, especially in the foundation subjects and religious education. Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection but the information is not being used sufficiently to help the teachers with their planning. Numeracy is well taught and literacy lessons are well planned but there is not enough emphasis placed on writing and this affects the quality and presentation of pupils' writing, especially across Key Stage 2. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities which include sport, music and dance.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good and effective leadership. He is well supported by a very capable deputy headteacher and senior staff who lead by example in the classroom. The monitoring of teaching and learning has improved significantly since the last inspection.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are willing and supportive and they fulfil their management responsibilities. There are improving links so that governors are better able to monitor the curriculum and standards across the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are good monitoring procedures in place. These are well established and they enable the headteacher, senior staff and governors to measure the effectiveness of the teaching and the performance of the pupils.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of the school's budget. The staff are well deployed to support the pupils across the school. Resources are well managed and accessible. Classrooms and other areas provide a good learning environment for the pupils.

The management of the school has focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Monitoring visits are planned and accepted as part of the school's improvement process. This is helping the school to focus attention on the core weaknesses that prevent the pupils from achieving the standards expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. The governors have become more involved and linked to the curriculum so that they are more aware of what is happening in lessons and what to expect having set attainment targets for improvement. There are good levels of staffing and resources throughout the school. The aims and values of the school are reflected in its work. The school now needs to raise expectations further so that more pupils achieve higher standards.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The behaviour of the pupils. • The teaching. • The information provided by the school. • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. • The leadership and management of the school. • The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The homework provided by the school.

The inspection findings support all of the parents' positive views of the school. Homework was judged to be good overall, although variable across the school. Very few parents attended the pre-inspection meeting to express their views. Some parents believe that the school does a lot to encourage parents to participate in their children's learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The results of the end-of-key stage national tests for 11-year-olds show that the pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science was well below the national average. Compared with similar schools it is also well below average in all three subjects. In mathematics and science it was in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally, and in mathematics it was also in the lowest five per cent compared with similar schools. The results were close to the school's own targets in all three subjects. Results are similar for both boys and girls although the girls have tended to do better than the boys in English tests but their results are still well below average. The number of pupils taking the tests each year is approximately 40 and a high proportion of these pupils have been on the school's special educational register. During the inspection fifty per cent of the pupils were on the register and most of these have moderate learning difficulties. One in five pupils joins or leaves the school during Key Stage 2 and combined with the high number of pupils with special educational needs this has the effect of lowering the school's overall average in national tests.
2. The results of the 1999 end-of-key stage tests by age seven show that the pupils' attainment in reading and writing was well below the national average. Compared with similar schools, reading and writing standards are well below average. The teachers' assessments in science also indicate that attainment is in the lowest five per cent nationally and also when compared with similar schools. This very low level of attainment in national tests has existed for the last three years. Inspection evidence shows that there has been a marked improvement in standards, especially in reading and writing and the early indications are that Year 2 pupils have raised the overall level of attainment considerably as borne out by the recent moderated but unverified national tests (2000).
3. The attainment of the children who enter the school in the reception classes is below average. They make satisfactory progress but are unlikely to achieve the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five in all the areas of learning except in their creative development where they make good progress and achieve the standards expected of five-year-olds.
4. The pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in speaking, listening, reading and writing. They tackle new or unfamiliar words using their good knowledge of letter sounds. The teaching is particularly effective in helping the pupils to use a range of strategies, for example, to sound out letters as well as recognising words by sight when reading. The pupils' writing is clearly formed and older pupils have learned to spell and to punctuate their work accurately. In mathematics they make good progress in their knowledge of number facts. They have been taught well so that they have a good grasp of numeracy. The pupils can identify two-dimensional shapes with confidence, they can count and sort in multiples of two, five and ten and older pupils recognise odd and even numbers accurately. Standards in science have also improved considerably by the end of Key Stage 1. The good teaching and better planning since the last inspection have improved standards significantly. The introduction of the national literacy and numeracy strategies has also had a positive impact on the pupils' attainment and progress. Inspection findings indicate that

standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are in line with those expected for seven-year-olds. This is also reflected in the most recent national tests (2000) which show standards to be much improved over previous years.

5. In Key Stage 2 standards are below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. The pupils make satisfactory progress overall, but in writing they make unsatisfactory progress. Reading standards are below average because too few pupils across the key stage read widely and experience a range of literature that would improve their vocabulary and language skills. They make unsatisfactory progress in writing because it is inconsistently taught across the key stage and insufficient emphasis is placed on writing in most literacy lessons. The pupils write using a range of styles but these are often poorly presented with a mixture of cursive and printed texts. Writing in workbooks is sometimes untidy and the presentation of written work across a range of subjects is unsatisfactory. Information technology is used well to improve the pupils' word-processing skills and, in this respect, there are better examples of writing represented as printed work done by pupils on the computer. The school has begun to track the attainment of pupils across the school and has identified writing as a weakness with plans to implement a programme of staff development to raise standards further.
6. In mathematics attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is average. At the end of Key Stage 2 it is below average. The pupils in both key stages make good progress and across each key stage in some year groups standards are improving so that the school is steadily raising the level of attainment. The introduction of the national numeracy strategy has helped to improve attainment in number work. The most significant improvement in attainment is evident in Years 1, 2 and 5 where standards are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages. The school has begun to identify which pupils are likely to reach the average and above average standards in national tests. However, it is not clear how the school intends to use the information about the pupils' potential level of attainment. The inspection findings are that the school is not using this information sufficiently to help teachers to plan future work to be better matched to the pupils' capabilities. Usually there is a good range of practical mathematics provided for pupils but this tends to be over-directed by the teachers, leaving little scope for the pupils to plan their own investigations or to choose the most appropriate methods and resources.
7. In science, attainment is average at the end of Key Stage 1 and below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards have not improved since the last inspection and this is reflected in the national test results over the last three years. The pupils in both key stages have a better understanding of living things, materials and physical processes than of investigations and practical science work. In some lessons teachers tend to model the experiments and investigations for the pupils too much so that there is little involvement by pupils in planning their own work or choosing the most appropriate methods.
8. Standards in information technology are in line with those expected for pupils' ages and they have made satisfactory progress. The school has made considerable improvements to the resources so that all pupils use computers in the new information technology room. The pupils in both key stages can use computers to organise writing and produce simple graphics or pictures with reasonable competence. Older pupils are able to use desktop publishing skills to re-organise their writing and improve its presentation by combining it with pictures and illustrations. The planning for information technology is not being sufficiently monitored to ensure good progression

and continuity of learning for all pupils. In religious education, the pupils are just achieving the standards set out in the Locally Agreed Syllabus but there is an inconsistent level of attainment across the school in terms of the pupils' knowledge and understanding of faiths other than Christianity. This is largely related to the planning which is not being sufficiently monitored to ensure adequate coverage and continuity. In other subjects, the pupils at the end of both key stages are achieving the standards expected for their age, except in geography and music at the end of Key Stage 2 where standards are below average. In both subjects the planning does not ensure that the pupils are provided with a balanced programme of geography or music and this is affecting the attainment of the pupils in Key Stage 2 as well as the progress they make.

9. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported, particularly in literacy and numeracy. They make good progress in relation to their prior level of attainment. Individual education plans set out the pupils' specific learning needs and these are reviewed every term to ensure that the pupils make good progress. The pupils learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. They are provided every week with additional support which is well matched to their needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The behaviour and personal development of the pupils is good and their attitudes satisfactory. The parents appreciate the values and standards the school promotes and many pupils are eager to come to school. At the start of the school day, teachers of the older pupils meet their classes outside and accompany them into the building. The younger pupils are greeted at their classroom door by their teachers. This helps to create a welcoming atmosphere and gives the message that every child is valued, establishing a positive climate for learning throughout the school.
11. Standards of behaviour remain good although there are still a number of pupils whose behaviour can be challenging. The careful management of their behaviour enables them to take part meaningfully in lessons without disturbing others. Pupils are courteous to staff, visitors and generally to each other. Very little anti-social behaviour was seen during the inspection week. Most pupils take care of their resources and the local environment.
12. Relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves are essentially very good. As in the previous report, relationships at every level are warm and harmonious. At break times mixed age groups play happily together and older pupils have a caring attitude to younger ones. These positive relationships help to create an environment where bullying does not flourish. There is a growing respect for the feelings of others.
13. The personal development of the children is good. Pupils are involved in their learning. For example, the pupils are involved in maintaining the sensory garden and the school grounds. They participate with enthusiasm and this helps them to develop their own personal skills and to become responsible in improving the school environment. When given the opportunity, pupils undertake specific jobs and enjoy the responsibility, as in the day-to-day running of the library. However, opportunities to take responsibility and use their own initiative are limited as most of the activities are often adult-led. Educational visits provide occasions for pupils to develop personally and socially. Almost all parents believe the school is helping their children to become more mature and responsible.

14. Attendance levels remain satisfactory. Whilst the authorised absence is lower than the national average, unauthorised absences have fallen and are now average. There have been four fixed-term exclusions in the last year. Punctuality has improved slightly over the last year, but late arrivals can still have a disruptive effect on some classes, although the school is making great efforts to combat this.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The teaching is satisfactory overall with some good and very good features. It has improved significantly since the last inspection. It was satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons observed. It was good or very good in 44 per cent of lessons and very good in 13 per cent of the lessons seen during the inspection. The teaching is having a positive effect on the pupils' learning because the planning, monitoring and tracking of their performance ensures that most of them build on their previous learning experiences. This is particularly true in English and mathematics lessons where the implementation of the national literacy and numeracy frameworks has helped to improve standards in reading and numeracy.
16. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has strengthened the teaching by appointing staff or moving teachers in parts of the school where standards need to be improved rapidly. This has been particularly successful in Key Stage 1 where the teaching was found to be good overall. In a few lessons, the teaching labours a point for too long and the pace varies so that pupils become distracted or lose interest. The teaching of writing is inconsistent across the school. It is better in Key Stage 1 where the pupils are taught to form letters correctly and there is a higher expectation of the pupils' presentation. In parts of Key Stage 2 expectations are high for both behaviour and standards. This is reflected in the pupils' attitudes to learning and the presentation of their written work. The teaching varies in Key Stage 2 from unsatisfactory to very good. This variation reflects the difference in expectations set by the teachers. Throughout the school the most effective lessons set a brisk pace, with clear and crisp introductions. Teachers' questioning is aimed at all abilities and no time is wasted going over work that has already been covered. In the satisfactory lessons the pace varies with introductions that are sometimes too long or laboured. The questions are aimed at one level. As a result the more able waste time because the work is not matched to their abilities. In mathematics and science lessons the investigations, practical activities or experiments are too adult-led so that the pupils become observers rather than active participants. In this respect the teaching does not allow sufficient opportunities for the pupils to investigate or plan their own work or to make choices about the most appropriate methods or resources to be used.
17. The teaching of children under five in the reception class is satisfactory overall with some good features. The children are managed well and classroom support staff are well used to support groups and individuals including those pupils identified with special educational needs. The balance of adult-led and independent activities is inappropriate as there are too few opportunities for the children to work and play independently. Very little information technology was observed in the reception classes and there is variation between the quality of teaching across the year which ranges from very good to satisfactory. As coverage of the curriculum is not being monitored adequately it is inconsistent between the two classes. Where there are mixed reception and Year 1 pupils the work is not always matched appropriately for each year group. Some of the work for under-fives is targeted but this is not regular enough. There is a small enclosed area for outdoor activities but the resources are

inappropriate for this age group and they are not provided with regular access to outdoor play.

18. In Key Stage 1, the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are provided with good teaching which has some very good features. This quality of teaching has had a positive effect on standards which has culminated in Year 2 pupils achieving a higher level of attainment than in previous years. The teachers plan their lessons well, especially in literacy and numeracy. Basic skills are well taught so that the pupils learn to read, write and count using a good range of strategies. The teaching methods used are effective in improving the pupils' attitudes and behaviour. For example, both teachers set clear parameters for the pupils and they apply rewards and sanctions consistently so that the pupils understand what is expected of them. The teachers set high standards for behaviour, insisting that the pupils do not call out and they wait their turn or listen to other pupils during class discussions. Each part of a lesson has clear development so that pupils build on their previous knowledge and understanding with plenty of time to practise or rehearse what they have learned.
19. In Key Stage 2 the teaching ranges from unsatisfactory to very good and is satisfactory overall. Literacy and numeracy lessons are well planned and structured. However, there is inconsistency across the key stage in what is expected of the pupils. The most effective teaching, for example in Year 5, sets very high expectations for both behaviour and the presentation of the pupils' recorded work. The pace and development of lessons are good because the teacher expects the pupils to complete their tasks on time. In these lessons there is better attention paid to pupils' writing and, as a result, the quality is much better than in other parts of the key stage. Unsatisfactory teaching results in the pupils losing interest. This can be disruptive for other pupils as the behaviour of some pupils is affected by the lack of pace and low expectations set by the teaching. In the satisfactory lessons the planning is structured and activities are clearly aimed at all the pupils but too little is expected from the pupils, especially in their writing. The teaching does not always place a high priority on it. For example, when class discussions over-run or the teacher has laboured a point for too long, there is little time for pupils to practise their note-taking, drafting or extended writing. Work sheets are sometimes undemanding and require only a few words to be filled in or pictures to be coloured with very little writing expected from the pupils.
20. Support staff are used well, especially for those pupils with special educational needs. Some pupils are withdrawn for intensive reading and writing support with the special educational needs co-ordinator. The teaching is effective in developing the pupils' confidence in reading and writing.

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

21. The school provides a broad curriculum for all subjects but the balance of work covered is inconsistent because there are weaknesses in the planning, particularly for information technology and the foundation subjects. Monitoring of attainment and progress in these areas is not used to inform teaching and planning. Most teachers have suitably high expectations but this is not consistent across the school. Good behaviour ensures that lessons maintain the pupils' attention and involvement. The programmes of study for the foundation subjects are covered throughout the school using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines where they are available.

There are few opportunities to develop skills in speaking and listening and particularly writing as part of topic work in each class.

22. The school successfully promotes equality of opportunity. There is a strong ethos of respect and care for each pupil. The pupils have full access to the whole curriculum. Boys and girls work together equally in all subjects and sit together at lunchtimes. Teachers usually plan different activities for pupils of different abilities, although in some lessons the extended activities intended for these pupils are additional activities for those who finish quickly rather than activities which hold more challenge. There are carefully devised individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. These are formulated by the class teacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and is well managed.
23. The teachers' careful and detailed planning of literacy and numeracy is a strength of the school. There are no schemes of work for other subjects. Teachers plan in detail what is to be covered each term in each year group together with the learning objectives, related to the guidance set out in the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) documents for each subject where this is available. Each teacher uses the framework for literacy and numeracy to plan work for English and mathematics. Each lesson is planned with details of the learning objectives for that lesson and the different activities for pupils of different abilities. Each lesson is evaluated but the evaluation is not used to inform the planning and teaching of subsequent lessons. The results of regular testing of the pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics are used to set overall school targets for improvement. There is a formal monitoring role by the senior management team and subject co-ordinators to see teachers' plans and review samples of pupils' work. There are no effective strategies to ensure that there is continuity and progression in the foundation subjects. Assessment is not used sufficiently to inform planning and teaching. Religious education meets statutory requirements but the pupils do not record their religious education work sufficiently and coverage across the school is inconsistent. Sex education and drugs misuse are taught as part of health education topics and in science topics. The school provides a satisfactory standard of education for the under-fives with the curriculum planned towards the desirable learning outcomes for the children in this age group. However, activities to enhance or promote the children's physical development are unsatisfactory. More emphasis and planning is also required to improve their knowledge and understanding of the world.
24. There is a good range of after-school clubs and extra-curricular activities. There are good links with the local museum, art gallery and places of interest to enrich pupils' experiences and support their learning across the curriculum.
25. The school meets its aims to provide an environment committed to mutual care very successfully and there is an effective learning environment in and around the school. Pupils develop their capacity for thoughtful reflection, self-discipline and a respect for others. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is a good feature of the school.

26. Pupils' spiritual awareness is developed across the curriculum, for instance in the good use made of the study of how special each individual is, to develop the pupils' insight and self-knowledge. Opportunities for quiet reflection are provided in school assemblies. Teachers listen attentively to pupils' contributions to discussion and always give them time to express themselves thoughtfully and this promotes their respect for each other's ideas and values. The pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory.
27. Moral teaching is good and is emphasised throughout the school day. The school stresses to individual pupils how their actions affect others and emphasises the need for fairness. The teaching is well supported by the school's positive behaviour policy.
28. The school has high expectations for the pupils' social development and provision is good. Pupils are given lots of opportunities to show respect for their teachers and to show consideration for others. Pupils are encouraged to be kind and supportive of each other and they are polite. The school is effective in fostering good relationships. Where appropriate, the pupils are given good opportunities to work together in groups and in pairs in lessons. Overall the school is particularly successful in promoting a clear sense of community in which all are valued and respected.
29. The development of the pupils' cultural awareness is satisfactory. There are opportunities for pupils to take part in local activities and to study local sights of historical and environmental interest. There is insufficient evidence in displays around the school to raise pupils' awareness and appreciation of other cultures fully. Pupils have knowledge of their own culture through the links with the church and community and through visits to places of local and national interest.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The school continues to give a high priority to promoting the all round care of its pupils. Locally agreed procedures for child protection are known and implemented successfully by members of staff. Health and safety measures are also clearly understood and put into effect. The governing body reviews safety and security on a regular basis and considers ways of providing a safer environment. The pupils are competently supervised at work and play.
31. The school provides valuable support and guidance which help the pupils to make responsible choices. Teachers know their pupils well. The class teachers and the headteacher give those pupils experiencing personal problems a high level of pastoral care. Although the pupils' social and personal skills are greatly valued and shared during achievement assemblies, there are no consistent procedures for tracking and recording this information for all pupils.
32. Pupils, parents and carers are frequently reminded of the importance of regular attendance and the majority responds to this positively. Attendance is monitored regularly and effective measures are taken where necessary. This has resulted in a slight rise in attendance since the last inspection, so that it is broadly in line with the national average. Non-attendance and lateness is noted on each pupil's report and discussed with the parents when necessary. Valuable support is given by the Education Welfare Officer in matters relating to non-attendance.

33. The procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics are good overall. In addition to national testing in Years 2 and 6, a range of standardised tests is used effectively and consistently throughout the school. Procedures are being developed in science and information technology, where the degree of pupils' competence within the different topics studied is being recorded. There are no systematic procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment in other subjects. The pupils' work is usually marked consistently, but, despite a clear marking policy, the addition of comments on attainment and aspects for pupils to work on is variable.
34. Assessment data for English and mathematics is analysed very carefully, and is used to monitor pupils' academic progress and to set both individual and school targets. Where these targets are not being met, further support is provided through groupings within lessons, extra classroom support and the booster classes for some Year 6 pupils. An analysis is also made of the progress made by each class as a possible indication of strengths and weaknesses in teaching, which is having a positive effect on progress.
35. The use of assessment information to guide curriculum planning is unsatisfactory. Where topics are revisited in different years, any prior assessment of the pupils' knowledge and understanding is not clearly evident in the planning, with tasks being set that are at times repetitive and not always suited to pupils' abilities or offering sufficient challenge to the more able.
36. Procedures for monitoring behaviour are very good with teachers, support staff and lunchtime supervisors working together. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are quickly and effectively tackled and systematically recorded. There is a consistent approach to dealing with inappropriate behaviour. The management of pupils' behaviour continues to be effective and anti-bullying strategies work very well. Exclusion is only used as a very last resort
37. Outside agencies are used appropriately to support pupils with English as an additional language and families are invited to be involved in their children's learning. There are effective links with the local nursery school to help pupils settle quickly and with secondary schools to enable pupils to make a smooth transition into Year 7. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed. Their progress is carefully monitored, with individual education plans that are well matched to their specific learning needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. The school welcomes parents and encourages their involvement. However, there are still too few parents making a significant contribution to the quality of their children's learning and the standards achieved.
39. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress. At least two formal consultations are held each year. In addition there are informative annual reports giving a clear picture to parents of their children's achievements, together with targets for the future. Parents are invited to consult with teachers at any time through the school year and they generally find teachers approachable. The school's prospectus is helpful and contains the home-school agreement. However, the prospectus does not fully comply with regulations, for example, sporting aims and provisions and national test results are not

included. The governing body's annual report to parents is clearly written but again does not include all the required information. The lively monthly newsletter is valued by many parents as a way of finding out more about school. A home-school contact book is used to help parents know exactly what homework has been set, but only some parents make use of the facility to add their comments in this book. Others feel that children are not given sufficient homework, but inspectors consider that the school is adhering to current guidelines and provides a satisfactory range of homework.

40. There is a very small dedicated core of parent helpers assisting both in and out of the classroom, for example in helping pupils gain computer skills and accompanying classes on trips. Their help is greatly appreciated by all staff and their involvement is having a positive impact on learning and standards.
41. The school has worked hard to improve the link with parents in order to develop an effective partnership. Attempts to give them a deeper understanding of the curriculum by having open mornings during the last two years have met with little success. However, consultations and social events are well attended. The governing body and staff wish to increase parental involvement to enhance the children's learning and are discussing further means of achieving this.
42. Overall the parents are very satisfied with what the school offers and with their children's progress. However, inspectors judge that some pupils should be making greater progress. Parents believe that the school offers a caring and safe environment in which their children can develop and the inspectors' findings support this view.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The headteacher provides good and effective leadership. Since the last inspection he has appointed a very capable deputy headteacher who leads by her very good example in the classroom. The senior staff have now re-focused the work of the school on raising standards by measuring the pupils' progress in tests and then monitoring how best to improve their level of attainment. There are now more effective monitoring systems in place so that the school is better placed to set clear learning targets for all pupils. The headteacher and key staff have given careful consideration to the deployment of staff across the school. This has improved standards in Key Stage 1 but there is still some way to go to raise standards further in parts of Key Stage 2 where there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. The school has consistently improved the level of resources across the school and this is particularly the case in information technology where the school has added a special computer room which caters for large groups of pupils.
44. The governing body provides satisfactory support and is effective in carrying out its responsibilities. The school's development plan and the governors' action plan set out the school's key objectives clearly. Governors are now linked to curriculum areas and they are becoming increasingly involved in monitoring the work of the school and the standards being achieved. For example, there are link governors for each subject and the headteacher arranges for the governors to visit the school to see particular subjects or work being carried out by teachers and pupils.

45. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has improved the way that standards are monitored and has dealt with the issues raised at the time about the organisation of groups in Key Stage 2. Overall, the improvements are satisfactory. However, the school needs to raise attainment in the core subjects with particular attention given to improving writing. These were also issues raised in the last inspection. Curriculum planning has improved for English and mathematics but in other subjects it is not being sufficiently monitored to ensure a balanced coverage with clear progression for the pupils as they move up the school. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, key stage and curriculum co-ordinators have monitored the teaching to improve the quality of curriculum provision for all subjects. The co-ordinators have put schemes of work in place which are mainly the frameworks produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. However, there is no clear long-term oversight of the curriculum to ensure that all programmes of study are covered adequately and that the pupils experience work which is better matched to their age and abilities.
46. The school is adequately staffed with appropriately qualified teachers. The employment of a large number of classroom assistants has been a main priority of the governing body. There is, in addition, a part-time teacher and assistant for the few pupils who speak English as an additional language. Overall staffing is good and matches the demands of the curriculum. Five new teachers have been appointed during the last two years to key positions in the school. The senior management team is awaiting the Teacher Training Agency guidance before implementing a comprehensive appraisal system but they implement a good professional interview system as part of the monitoring process to help staff develop their skills. The headteacher encourages staff to develop their careers. There are good induction procedures for newly-qualified teachers and teachers new to the school led by the deputy headteacher which are also part of the monitoring procedures. A key issue arising from the last inspection was that the school needed to use carefully chosen in-service training to increase the expertise of teachers. There is a more focused programme of good collective and individual training of teaching and non-teaching staff and a helpful monitoring of the staff's access to training. This is a satisfactory improvement on the findings of the last report. There are sufficient administrative and clerical staff who support the senior management team and staff well.
47. The indoor accommodation is attractive, spacious and used well. The outdoor environment has been improved greatly and includes interesting and varied features including an adventure play area to which pupils have supervised regular access, enclosed pond area, sensory garden and wildlife garden. The caretaker was working on a woodland walk during the inspection that will further enhance the outdoor area. The premises staff work hard to keep the accommodation clean and well maintained. A large range of displays enhances the accommodation and stimulates the pupils' learning.
48. Educational priorities are appropriately supported through the school's financial planning and careful financial management. Control, information and monitoring of budgets by the headteacher and bursar are good. Individual budget holders are well monitored. The school has implemented the recommendations of the last audit report and is due for another audit later this term. Central billing by the Local Education Authority follows "best value" procedures and provides monthly printouts, for example, for designated funds. Financial decisions are made by the Finance and Administration governors' sub-committee and presented to the full governing body for approval. The day-to-day administration of the budget is carried out effectively and such information is readily available. Subject co-ordinators make bids for resources

which sometimes results in very low budgets for resources for some foundation subjects. It also means that co-ordinators do not have the opportunity to manage a budget or make an effective contribution to this aspect of subject management.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve the quality of education further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

Raise the attainment of pupils in English, mathematics and science by:

- providing more pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, with broader and more challenging reading books, texts and materials;
- improving the quality of writing, especially the pupils' independent and extended writing;
- providing more investigative tasks in mathematics and science lessons, ensuring that the pupils are given more opportunities to organise and plan their work choosing the most appropriate methods and resources.

(Paragraphs 4–7, 16, 59, 61, 63, 64, 71, 75, 78 and 80)

Improve curriculum planning further by:

- ensuring that there is clear oversight and monitoring of the planning across all the foundation subjects and religious education;
- using the assessment information collated by the headteacher and senior staff more effectively to inform the teachers' planning so that the work is more challenging for all pupils;
- providing clear progression in every subject so that the pupils build on their learning experiences as they move up the school.

(Paragraphs 8, 23, 33, 35, 45, 76, 79, 95–98, 102, 105 and 123)

Raise teachers' expectations so that:

- pupils of all abilities are set more challenging work in all subjects;
- writing features more prominently across the whole curriculum;
- the pupils' recorded work is of a higher standard and is always well presented in every class across the school.

(Paragraphs 16, 18, 21, 70 and 101)

Improve the planning for the children under five:

- so that the under-fives in mixed age classes are provided with an appropriate curriculum which specifically meets their needs;
- so that the children improve their knowledge and understanding of the world by having more opportunities to experiment with the properties of materials;
- so that there are regular opportunities for them to use large toys and outdoor climbing equipment to improve their physical development.

(Paragraphs 17, 50–52, 55–57)

Other less serious areas for development which should be considered by the school:

- Improve further the links the school has with its parents to encourage them to play a more active part in their children's learning at home and in school.
- Ensure that the school prospectus and the annual report to parents presented by the governors fully comply with the recommended guidelines so that parents are fully informed.

(Paragraphs 38, 39 and 41)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	71
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	13	31	52	3	1	

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)		237
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		79

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs		YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		120

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	per cent
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	per cent
School data	0.7
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
	1999	19	16	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	6	15
	Girls	10	4	11
	Total	21	10	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	60 (64)	29 (72)	74 (62)
	National	82 (81)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	15	17
	Girls	10	11	11
	Total	21	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	60 (56)	74 (62)	80 (77)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	23	8	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	16	10
	Girls	5	3	3
	Total	15	19	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	48 (53)	61 (36)	42 (43)
	National	70 (65)	69 (58)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	13
	Girls	7	5	7
	Total	16	14	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	52 (65)	44 (46)	63 (50)
	National	68 (65)	69 (58)	75 (69)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	0
White	226
Any other minority ethnic group	4

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	5	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	26.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	137.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	474,332
Total expenditure	474,861
Expenditure per pupil	2,021
Balance brought forward from previous year	-5,540
Balance carried forward to next year	-6,069

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	237
Number of questionnaires returned	28

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	29	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	46	4	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	64	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	57	11	4	4
The teaching is good.	64	36	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	30	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	21	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	44	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	61	32	7	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	61	39	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	57	7	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	71	4	0	0

Other issues raised by parents

Only four parents attended the formal parents' meeting with the registered inspector. They say that the school tries very hard to involve parents but many of them do not attend meetings or functions organised by the school.

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

49. Children enter the reception classes at the beginning of the term in which they become five years old. They attend part-time for two weeks and full-time after that. At the time of the inspection there were 34 full-time children in two reception classes. The children are in classes with reception-aged children in one class and with reception and Year 1 pupils in the other class. The reception classes are housed in adjacent rooms with an adjoining entry area and a small enclosed outdoor play area close to the rooms.
50. The children's attainment on entry to the school is below average generally as judged by assessments completed during the first 2 months in school. The present under-fives have not yet been assessed as they entered the school after Easter 2000. The children make satisfactory progress in the reception classes. By the time they reach the end of the Reception Year their attainment matches the expected standards set out in the desirable learning outcomes for creative development. Attainment in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development is below the expected standards although, in some of the lessons observed, the children's attainment is likely to meet the desirable learning outcomes. The curriculum for the under-fives is planned to the Desirable Learning Outcomes and the National Curriculum. A weakness of the planning in the mixed age classes is that the plans and activities are the same for all children including Year 1 pupils. There is some targeted planning for small group work for the under-fives which works successfully but this is not regular enough.
51. The teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features. Where the teaching is good staff manage the children well, classroom assistants are used well to support and interact with the children, resources are used well and teachers hold the children's attention in whole class sessions. Planning provides a satisfactory range of activities. The curriculum for the under-fives is satisfactory overall but at present the planning in relation to knowledge and understanding of the world and outdoor physical development is unsatisfactory. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs who join in with all activities. Support staff work effectively with these children and others. The balance of adult-led and independent activities is inappropriate as children are allowed too few opportunities to work and play independently. There was very little evidence of the use of information technology in lessons or in the scrutiny of work. Coverage of the curriculum is not consistent between the two classes and this is not being monitored effectively. The amount of written work also varies between the classes.

Personal and social development

52. The children make satisfactory progress. Their attitudes to the activities and to adults are not always satisfactory; a significant number are restless, they fidget and interrupt peers and staff frequently. They sit well during circle times but do not always sit well during other whole class activities. Their behaviour and attitudes were good during a book reading activity and a painting session where they joined in the activities co-operatively, moved quickly to form different groupings and paid good attention to the work. The children are learning to form constructive relationships with peers and

adults but these are not well developed. They are not always respectful of each other and adults and are not given enough encouragement to act independently. Behaviour is frequently satisfactory and the children are learning to distinguish right from wrong. In one activity in the home corner café, four children were sharing resources and taking turns well.

Language and literacy

53. The children's attainment is below average on entry to the reception classes. Satisfactory progress is made in the reception classes. Many children enter school with an undeveloped ability to express their thoughts and feelings clearly. They are given regular opportunities to listen and express themselves and extend their vocabulary; for example, during literacy sessions, story time and other whole class or small group activities. The staff encourage good listening and speaking skills. Frequently children listen appropriately to their peers and adults. They can listen to instructions and are able to follow them appropriately but they do not always do so. Most children can express their wants and needs. The children are developing their knowledge of stories and books. They can find pictures on a page, know the terms "title", "cover", can turn pages competently and find articles in pictures. They can follow print as the teacher reads but are not yet able to point to individual words as she reads. Some children listen well to stories. They do not choose books independently and few choose to sit and read without adult support nor do they get opportunities to do so regularly. Pupils learn to recognise their names and practise handwriting patterns as well as the patterns of letters in their names. A minority can write their names unaided although some write capitals for all letters. They are developing pencil control satisfactorily. Children take books home regularly and many parents contribute helpfully to the children's reading development.

Mathematics

54. The children make satisfactory progress in acquiring mathematical knowledge. Provision is made for children to sort, match, count, sequence and form numbers to ten. They can count to ten with help, add numbers to five using visual aids such as counting bears. The scrutiny of their work showed that the children are able to trace numbers to ten and write numbers to eight, colour patterns of two with help and are learning the concepts of "tall" and "short". They do not recognise the number of articles or objects without counting. They can name colours and have limited experience of the properties of shape and space through jigsaws and games. The children also learn about the number system through a small selection of games. One boy was able to add two numbers correctly, record these accurately and, if he made a mistake, was able to self-correct without adult help. The curriculum concentrates appropriately on numeracy but there is a limited range of activities involving, shape, balance, weight and measures. Very little use of mathematical computer programs was observed although a few children were using a sequencing program with some confidence.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

55. Children do not have sufficient opportunities to experiment with the properties of different materials such as water and sand. They are learning about places in and beyond their environment through the use of stories and role-play in the "travel agency" and "café". In one class, most children know the names of limbs and other body parts such as "waist", "knee", "wrist". They can name "leaves" and "flowers"

generically and enjoyed a nature walk. Most children know the names of common farm and zoo animals from their work on "Noah's Ark". In the other class the children have opportunities to observe staff planting seeds and watch beans grow. They have been naming parts of plants and foods which have roots. In some science work the children are just observers and this reduces the value of the learning for the children as they take no active part in an investigation. No construction play was observed; this is unsatisfactory provision. Very little use was made of the computer even when older pupils in the classes had designated computer sessions. In a good story-listening activity, the children used headphones. The children have few opportunities to learn simple scientific facts through topics such as "floating and sinking". They have some opportunities to develop role-play in the home corner or role-play corner, which they do well, and to play with toy farm animals and a "Noah's Ark" game. However, these activities are also planned for older pupils (Year 1), which limits their progress.

Physical development

56. There are opportunities for the children to develop and make satisfactory progress in manipulative skills using equipment such as pencils, crayons, scissors, paint, brushes and glue spreaders. The children join in physical education lessons and join the rest of the school at playtimes to practise skills such as running and jumping. They make unsatisfactory progress in developing the outdoor physical skills. There is only one planned opportunity for outdoor physical development which is insufficient. Lessons in the hall are used for games, gymnastics and dance which, in themselves are good, but do not always allow for the development of early physical skills. There is a small enclosed area for outdoor activities but there is an unsatisfactory quantity of resources for this area of learning. The outdoor sand area is very good but underused. The staff supplied and ensured that the children were wearing sun hats while in the outdoor area to protect them from the sunlight and heat.

Creative development

57. The children make satisfactory progress overall and they are in line to reach the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five years old. They have opportunities to draw, colour, paint, and glue. They are developing increasing control in using techniques but some of the work is very teacher-directed and limits the children's creativity and exploration of colour, texture and materials. They are developing the ability to represent the world around them and are learning to apply colours with care to produce recognisable drawings and paintings. They are encouraged to observe colours and shapes closely. The children's singing shows inexperience, they do not sing well and do not always keep in tune. There are insufficient opportunities planned for singing as part of regular learning opportunities. One of the part-time teachers uses singing well to support learning in religious education, nature study and numeracy. Children are learning to combine actions with words. There was no use of simple instruments observed. There is a limited range of opportunities for structured and unstructured role-play to develop and stimulate the children's imaginations and creative language but the children enjoy playing in role. They usually play well in the home and role-play corners. The staff teach the children how to use materials and tools in a safe way although a few of them do not always respond to this guidance in a satisfactory manner.

ENGLISH

58. The results of the end-of-key-stage tests for 11-year-olds show attainment in English that is well below the national average. Inspection evidence shows that the pupils' attainment in the current Year 6 class is well below average. The high proportion of pupils with clearly identified special educational needs and the number of lower attaining pupils who came into the school after the reception year, bring down the overall average. Standards have improved in reading but this is not reflected in the test results which show that the school has had very low standards for the last three years. In relation to similar schools, the 1999 test results were also well below average. At the end of Key Stage 1, test results show similar low standards in reading and writing over the last three years. However, inspection findings indicate that the current Year 2 pupils are achieving the standards expected for their age. This is also borne out by the recent moderated but unverified test results (2000) which show that the large majority of the pupils reached the expected standards and a significant proportion exceeded this level (Level 3).
59. From below average on entry to the school, the pupils make good progress in speaking and listening so that by the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are able to explain what they mean clearly and confidently. The pupils of all abilities willingly answer questions during class discussions throughout Key Stage 1. The teachers encourage the pupils to focus their listening and to wait their turn during discussions so that they listen to other pupils. By the time the pupils are aged 7 years their speaking and listening skills are well developed so that they reach the standards expected for their age. In Key Stage 2, the pupils' speaking and listening skills vary considerably. Most of the pupils use a limited range of vocabulary so that they speak in punctuated phrases and many lack confidence when speaking to a group. Most of the pupils have experienced a very narrow range of language, including literature in fiction books, so that they have not enjoyed the rich and broad range of vocabulary that is expected for their age range. This has limited their level of speaking which is below average overall. Listening skills are more developed and this is largely as a result of the good teaching which sets high expectations for behaviour and attentiveness in lessons. In most English lessons throughout Key Stage 2 the pupils are attentive and listen to others in their class as well as their teachers.
60. The pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in reading so that they reach the standards expected for their age at the end of the Key Stage. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection which found that the school had a lack of structure to the way that pupils were taught to read. Since the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy the teachers are now teaching the pupils a good range of reading strategies so that letter sounds are taught well to help the pupils sound out words that are new to them. Most of the pupils throughout Key Stage 1 read widely and their reading experiences are closely monitored so that they build up a good sight vocabulary and recognise a broad range of frequently used words. The majority practise their reading at home although the evidence indicates that many pupils receive very little parental support and this limits their reading development. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a very good knowledge of the main features of fiction and non-fiction books. In a very good Year 1 lesson the pupils were taught to focus on the "captions" which show the sequence of growth in a book about "Seeds Growing". In a very good reading session in Year 2 the pupils were shown a non-fiction book about "Castries" in St. Lucia. The pupils were expected to pose questions so that other pupils could answer. Most of the pupils could read the important features of the text to be able to search for the key features of the information.

61. By the age of 11 the pupils have made satisfactory progress in their reading but too few are reaching or exceeding the standards expected for their age. Pupils with special educational needs throughout the school make good progress in reading. They are taught systematically and are provided with additional support in class or when withdrawn for additional literacy support. The school also uses a reading and writing scheme for special educational needs pupils called "Tracks" which is particularly successful in helping the pupils to tackle unfamiliar words and also improves their spelling skills. Over half of the pupils throughout Key Stage 2 are on the special educational needs register and the large majority have moderate learning difficulties which are related to language and reading in particular. For this reason the majority of the pupils are not likely to exceed the expected standards in reading by the time they finish the key stage and this has the effect of bringing down the school's overall average in the national tests. Too few pupils are reading widely, especially literature and poetry. This is having a negative effect on their overall level of language. This is also reflected in their speaking and writing. In Year 5 the teacher sets very high expectations for all the pupils and this has accelerated the progress that this year group has made in reading in a very short space of time. All of the English teaching in Year 5 is at least good and more often very good. The teacher uses a broad range of texts to encourage the pupils to use different reading and writing skills, for example, skimming, note-taking and scanning to search for the key features or arguments in a piece of text about fox-hunting. There is a direct link between the expectation that pupils read widely and the progress they make.
62. In Key Stage 1 the pupils make good progress in writing. Most of the pupils in Year 1 are beginning to form their letters correctly and can write their own name, the date and the title of their work. In Year 2 most of the pupils write high frequency words confidently and the level of spelling and punctuation is good. Throughout the key stage the pupils take a pride in their written work and the standard of presentation is good. Handwriting is well taught and there is now a consistency in the style of writing across the key stage. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Standards in writing are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages. A significant proportion of pupils in Year 2 can write independently with confidence choosing their words carefully and forming accurate and well-punctuated sentences.
63. Progress in writing in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. This is largely related to the inconsistency across the key stage, both in terms of the style of writing and the extent to which the pupils write independently. The pupils in Year 5 have made good progress in their writing as they have been taught to use effective connectives to present and develop persuasive arguments. In Year 6 the pupils have made unsatisfactory progress in their style of handwriting and the standard of independent writing is well below average. This is also reflected in the work seen in Years 3 and 4, which includes writing in other subjects, for example, in history, geography and religious education lessons. In Year 3 the pupils' writing is immature and shows very little development. They struggle to find the correct prefixes in words and their writing is often untidy and poorly presented. In Year 4 the pupils' level of independent writing is well below average for their age. It is clear that they use a limited range of words and phrases, some of the sentences are punctuated correctly but the style of writing varies considerable across the year group. Across the key stage as a whole writing is not being taught consistently and in most of the literacy lessons observed it did not feature prominently as the key focus for each lesson.
64. The quality of teaching in English ranges from satisfactory to very good. It is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The teaching throughout the school is

successful in improving the pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning but there is variation in the expectations set for standards across the school. The most effective lessons, which were mainly evident in Years 1, 2 and 5, provided a range of reading experiences and clearly focused discussion. Pupils were involved very highly. This has the effect of improving their speaking and listening skills as well as improving reading standards. In these lessons high expectations are set for the way the pupils present their writing. For example, the writing is well punctuated and has clear structure, reflecting the very good quality of the teaching. There is also the expectation that pupils will spell correctly and that they experience a broad range of vocabulary. In other lessons the teaching varies in pace so that in some parts of the literacy lessons the pupils repeat work or the teacher emphasises a point for too long. Writing does not feature prominently in most of these lessons and some teachers provide activities that have very little writing content. This has the effect of demoting the importance of writing so that pupils do not form positive attitudes to writing in general. This is also reflected in the writing seen in other subjects where it is inconsistent and often poorly presented. Computers are well used to develop the pupils' word-processing skills and in some English lessons this is planned into the overall development of information technology skills.

65. The co-ordinator has overseen the implementation of the literacy strategy. She has a good understanding of the areas that the school needs to focus on. The school recognises that more pupils need to improve their writing skills through a consistent and systematic approach across the school. The school development plan shows that the school has identified writing as a weakness and there are plans to provide staff development across the school to improve writing standards further. There are good monitoring procedures in place to track the performance of the pupils throughout each key stage. Tests are provided at the end of the year for all year groups in Key Stage 2 so that the co-ordinator and headteacher can target specific groups of pupils to raise standards. These monitoring procedures are effective in helping the school to build up a picture of the level of attainment, but it is not clear how the information is used to help teachers plan their English work. The planning follows the recommended framework for teaching literacy but there is little evidence that the school has a systematic approach towards using assessment information about the pupils' progress to inform their planning further.

MATHEMATICS

66. The results of the national tests at Key Stage 1 in 1999 show that pupils were achieving standards that were very low when compared with standards nationally and with similar schools. At Key Stage 2, the results of the national tests show that pupils achieved standards well below average, when compared with similar schools. Standards were also below the national average. Over the last four years standards have remained very low in both key stages. At the time of the last inspection results were below national averages.

67. The inspection findings show that the 11 year-olds attain standards that are below average. At the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils attain average standards. Standards have improved overall due to improvements in the quality of teaching, the advice and support provided by the subject co-ordinator, together with the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the staff development that has accompanied it. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy supports improvement in attainment and progress but there has not been enough time for the full impact of these improvements to be reflected in National Curriculum tests.
68. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of number facts. They can count in odd and even numbers to twenty and can count on and back in twos and fives to 100. They can quickly identify missing numbers on a number grid. The pupils in Year 1 can use a number line with confidence working with numbers up to 30. In Year 2, the seven year-olds were engaged in adding tens and units and identifying odd and even numbers. They can calculate accurately in twos, fives and tens, counting on and counting back. In Year 1 they are familiar with two-dimensional shapes and can calculate the numbers of sides and corners. They have good opportunities to use the computer to draw geometric shapes. In Year 2 pupils are familiar with halving and doubling numbers to 60, progressing to 100. They can identify three-dimensional shapes and describe the characteristics of each shape. Pupils have an understanding of position, shape and movement. They are able to solve problems using this knowledge together with sets of instructions to negotiate a maze.
69. In Key Stage 2, the pupils are taught in specific ability groups and make good progress in their learning. They have opportunities to solve number problems in mental and oral mathematics sessions and are quick to grasp the strategies needed to find a solution. In mental and oral sessions pupils carry out calculations with speed, accuracy and confidence. The majority of 11 year-olds are able to add and subtract numbers up to 1000. They can derive number facts from word problems and use appropriate arithmetical operations to calculate the answers. In Year 6 they can calculate the area of geometric shapes and calculate the perimeter of regular shapes. They are confident when explaining how they have solved number problems, for example, multiplying and dividing decimals by 10 or 100 and can also explain how to order a mixed set of numbers with up to 3 decimal places. They can calculate the number of degrees in an angle and know the difference between acute and obtuse angles. In Year 5 pupils can create graphs and charts using a scale and interpret the information from line graphs to calculate distance over time. They can also add and subtract fractions using $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$ to make a whole or part of a whole. In years 3 and 4, the pupils make good progress. They add and subtract numbers in thousands, and multiply and divide by tens and units accurately and reach the expected standards. They can calculate parts of a circle in degrees and know that there are 180 degrees in a semicircle. They are able to calculate angles using addition and subtraction together with known facts. They are confident when using mental strategies to double and halve numbers up to 100 and when adding or subtracting two-digit numbers.
70. The teaching of mathematics is good overall. However, in some lessons the teaching sets low expectations. Lessons are usually taught well in both key stages and it is evident that teachers have the necessary subject knowledge and expertise. Teachers are familiar with the Numeracy Strategy framework and use it to plan their lessons. A particular strength is the teachers' planning, which is linked carefully to the framework for teaching. There are clear learning objectives for each lesson. The pupils are taught mathematics in groups, according to their prior level of attainment. The lower attaining

pupils are in smaller groups and are often supported by classroom assistants. The effectiveness of this support is consistent between classes and year groups. The other groups are larger in number, with the average attaining pupils being in the largest groups. The pupils' work is well matched to what they have learnt before. The work planned for the higher attaining pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, provides sufficient challenge. Lessons throughout the school start with mental work associated with number facts and quick calculations enabling the pupils to practise their number facts every day. This is having a positive effect on raising standards. Teachers plan problem solving tasks which are clearly matched to the abilities of all the pupils in the lessons. There is a good range of investigative tasks set for all pupils which are challenging and varied, but these tend to be over-directed by the teachers, leaving little scope for the pupils to plan and organise their own investigations. The planning is good across the school and teachers are using a common format to plan lessons half-termly and to plan a sequence of lessons on a weekly basis. Regular assessments are made of the pupils' progress using standard tests in each year to measure the level of attainment and the progress made. The results are analysed but as yet have had limited impact on influencing planning and teaching. Teachers have yet to establish a system for tracking the attainment of pupils and setting individual targets for them.

71. The progress of all pupils is good overall, both over a longer period of time and in lessons. However, progress over a longer period is slower for the more able pupils at the end of both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress through each key stage. They are fully integrated into mainstream lessons and receive effective support from classroom support assistants
72. The pupils show satisfactory attitudes to mathematics and they respond well to the questions posed by the teachers, who often ask pupils to explain their thinking. The pupils answer confidently, as they know their answers will be received well, and if they are incorrect they will be asked to think again.
73. The mathematics curriculum is well planned, broad and balanced. Resources are used very well to support the pupils' learning. There is a good range of resources for teaching numeracy in every class. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the subject and supports other staff very well. The co-ordinator has organised training sessions for staff to develop their skills of teaching numeracy. At present there is regular testing of the pupils' progress and attainment but the information from the tests is not used effectively to inform the teaching and planning. Workbooks are marked regularly and there are on-going teacher assessments but these are not recorded consistently across the school. At present teachers are not setting targets for improvement either for groups or individuals. A significant amount of the pupils' work across the whole school is marked but there are few constructive comments Homework is set and used effectively to support the pupils' class work.

SCIENCE

74. Last year's (1999) teacher assessments of pupils reaching Level 2 or above at the age of seven years were well below the national average. Standards were also well below average when compared with similar schools. During the inspection, standards in the small number of lessons seen in Key Stage 1 and in a scrutiny of the pupils' work, are average overall. The unverified but moderated results of this year's (2000) teacher assessments support the inspection findings that standards have improved in science at the end of Key Stage 1. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were found to be slightly below average. In last year's national tests

(1999) for the pupils aged 11 years, standards were very low in comparison with the national average and when compared with similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 5 or above was well below the national average. During the inspection standards matched the national average in half of the lessons observed but were below average in the other half. The unverified results of this year's tests support the inspection findings. Boys' performance in last year's tests at the age of 11 years was very low in comparison with the national average and the girls' performance was well below the national average. The pupils' results showed a sharp fall in 1998 but improved in 1999 and the present year, as yet unverified, although still below average. Standards at the end Key Stage 2 have remained similar to those found in the last inspection.

75. The pupils' attainment is better in their knowledge of living things, materials and physical processes. It is unsatisfactory in experimental and investigative science, mainly because teachers, throughout the school, frequently model experiments or investigations for the pupils too much. This leaves little scope for the pupils to take an active part in investigations, or to choose the most appropriate methods. The pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress generally and good progress when supported by classroom assistants or teachers.
76. Since the last inspection the school has raised standards overall in science, most notably in Key Stage 1. Provision for the pupils' learning has improved, for example, there is a new scheme of work which includes specific learning objectives, this helps the staff to plan appropriately. The co-ordinator has introduced an assessment record to help monitor the pupils' attainment and progress. This is also used to inform planning but is not yet well established. Teaching methods need further development, particularly in relation to allowing the pupils greater independence. The staff also need to review the coverage of some aspects of the science curriculum, for example, the study of materials and their properties and electricity circuits occurs in several years with very little progression. The attention the school has paid to improving English and mathematics does not yet apply to science.
77. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils observe well and can draw and label diagrams. They have experience of work about electricity and circuits, food, seeds, investigating forces involving the movement of toy vehicles on a ramp. Year 1 and reception pupils help the teacher plant seeds and observe their growth over time. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know how to carry out the principles of a "fair test" and they can predict outcomes. The scrutiny of the pupils' science work shows that they have learnt about gravity, germs, the solar system among other topics. Attainment in books generally matches the national average apart from the presentation which is frequently untidy, unsatisfactory and shows a lack of care. During the inspection, the Year 3 pupils investigated the use and properties of materials. This work involved pupils noting their ideas on paper during a "brainstorm" activity which worked well. Year 4 pupils were identifying electricity conductors and insulators from diagrams but the pupils' attainment was below average because, although they could draw a simple circuit, they were not fully aware of the properties required for conducting electricity and insulation. Year 5 pupils had observed an experiment carried out by the teacher on evaporation using perfume and water to produce gas. The pupils' work shows that they have covered work on the "water cycle", the "food chain" and "skin" among other topics.

78. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and it was good in one lesson observed where the range of fruit for the pupils to observe was very good and the activity was interesting. In both lessons, the pupils were mainly observers of teachers doing the investigations which limited their learning and independence. Teachers' expectations were low in relation to the recording of work; for example Year 1 pupils were expected only to colour while Year 2 pupils were copying words for labels.
79. Teachers' planning is satisfactory throughout the school although it is not sufficiently monitored to prevent unnecessary repetition in some topics. Teachers in mixed age classes tend to plan the same activities for all the pupils which is not always effective. The monitoring of this needs to be secure so that younger pupils in mixed age classes do not repeat activities when they are the older group in the next year. Classroom assistants, throughout the school, are used well. They reinforce the teachers' discipline in whole class sessions and support pupils in small groups through good questioning and interactions.
80. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. The planning builds well on previous work or the last lesson. Most teachers circulate well to support the pupils' learning. They usually provide a good range of consumable resources for example, food on which to grow mould. However, the involvement of the pupils is limited and, on occasions, the organisation of discussion groups is unsatisfactory; for example, pupils record discussion ideas in several books rather than in one, therefore discussion does not take place as they are too busy writing down their ideas. The supervision of the pupils when out of the classroom as part of the work is not always effective. The teaching of science has improved since the last inspection where only two lessons were observed and in one of these the teaching was unsatisfactory. There were some weaknesses in the teaching during this inspection but there was no overall unsatisfactory teaching. More needs to be done to develop the pupils' thinking so that they are actively involved in practical investigations. This is currently lacking in many lessons where the scientific experiments are teacher-led with the pupils acting as observers.
81. The pupils' attitudes are satisfactory in both key stages. Their attitudes in one lesson in Key Stage 1 were good where pupils were interested, enthusiastic and responded well to the activity. The pupils show less involvement during colouring activities and in some whole class sessions where the teacher spends too much time leading the experiments or going over previous work. The Year 6 pupils do not discuss well as a group, a minority dominate discussions and a significant number, when asked at the end of a discussion, are not aware of the decisions their group have made or are unable to talk about them. In other classes, some pupils dominate group-writing activities which means that others take little part in these activities. Throughout the school, pupils show little independence, they are not given the opportunity to self-select materials or resources for their work.
82. There was very little science work in homework books and staff do not make full use of this aspect of school life to support learning in science. The school has made some good analyses of the pupils' results in the national tests and assessments and is reviewing its support for the pupils to improve standards. The co-ordinator feels that the profile of science has been raised within the school recently and one focus has been the use of specialist terminology. However, there has not been the thorough and effective improvements to science as there has to English and mathematics. The school needs to focus more strongly on improving science across the school. Health, sex and drugs education are covered appropriately through the science and personal,

social and health curriculum. At present, the link governor for science has been unable to make subject-specific visits to the school but plans to do this later this term. This should help to increase the involvement of governors in monitoring the subject. The co-ordinator has several other important roles in the school but is in a good position to implement the action plan if enough priority is given to the development of science.

ART

83. Standards and quality in art were judged through observation of class teaching, analysis of displays of work, scrutiny of the school portfolios and policies, and discussion with the co-ordinator. Standards have improved in art since the last inspection.
84. Standards in art meet expectations for the age group at the end of each key stage. Pupils in Year 2 can use appropriate tools and create pictures using a range of media such as paint and fabric. They have good understanding of colours and can develop some of their painting work to higher than average standards. Pupils in Year 6 can create pictures using charcoal and apply techniques such as batik and wax resist. Pupils throughout the school can recognise the work of some famous artists. Progress in art is satisfactory throughout both key stages.
85. No lessons were available for observation in Key Stage 2, but all other evidence suggests satisfactory teaching. Two lessons were seen in Key Stage 1. These lessons were well planned and carried out effectively. Pupils were able to work in a clean and well prepared area, where they embarked upon a longer term project which would lead them through stages of observing, sketching, painting and eventually, producing a collage. The sketching work was introduced well, while painting work was supported through reference to the work of Cézanne. The teaching was supportive and encouraging. The pupils responded well and maintained their interest in the work, producing well-organised results which reflected their use of the media, their early understanding of colours and good efforts in representing what they could see.
86. The curriculum for art is satisfactory. Pupils have many opportunities to explore a wide range of media and techniques. Good examples were seen in the school of work with textiles and fabrics, paints, dyes and drawing materials. Techniques included colour blending, stitching, collage, batik, wax resist and modelling. Three-dimensional work included modelling with clay, dough and boxes. Art is often linked to themes in the curriculum, so learning is frequently enhanced through this subject as pupils extend or use information from other areas of learning to complete their art projects. An annual arts week offers extended opportunities to develop work in depth or work with a local artist. Pupils have the chance to work on large or small scale, individually or in groups. Some have completed wall paintings in the school courtyards under the guidance and tuition of visiting artists. The school has a satisfactory scheme of work, which supports teachers well. In addition, the school is currently exploring the potential of the new recommendations for art from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, which may lead to some changes to the internal policy, scheme and guidance.
87. At the time of the last inspection, art provision was not co-ordinated well and there was no guidance for the teachers. Since that time there has been satisfactory progress in the provision. The current co-ordinator has maintained consistent and effective effort to the development of this subject since taking over the role three years ago. Curriculum guidance is readily available for staff. The resource base has

been developed and it is now particularly helpful in supporting knowledge and understanding in art. Class teachers frequently purchase materials from their classroom budgets which enables them to implement the scheme of work for their year group effectively. The library contains some useful reference books about artists.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

88. All the pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology and, by the time they are 11, their standards of work are typical of that of most pupils of their age. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
89. When the pupils are 11, they are accustomed to working from designs, which specify the tools and materials that will be needed for their models and work safely. Most pupils have a good knowledge of a variety of methods to fasten materials together, which includes staples, clips, glue and string. Pupils work confidently with tools and are fully aware of the need to work safely.
90. By the end of Key Stage 1, the seven year-olds understand the properties of common materials and make choices when constructing models. For example, they make sensible decisions when selecting materials to make models of houses or the materials to make puppets and face masks they have designed. Pupils understand the importance of planning, which includes deciding the tools they are going to use. The pupils measure, cut and join a variety of materials accurately when constructing models. They assemble simple mechanical models carefully, introducing movement by using axles for wheels, or split pins for joints in card cut-out figures. All appreciate the importance of evaluating the quality of their work when it is finished. In Year 2 they have designed and made models to illustrate a story using a winding mechanism.
91. In Key Stage 2 they investigate the use of pneumatics to make things move and incorporate these ideas well in their models. Pupils design and make photo frames selecting materials and deciding on methods of joining to construct the frame. They develop their knowledge of cams and linkages well when constructing mechanical toys. In Year 6 the designs for a radio make good use of colour and rendering, developing their graphic design skills. When making vehicles in Year 6 they design and make a frame for the chassis from strip wood and attach wheels and axles to the frame confidently. They consider the need to design a lightweight structure to allow the vehicle to travel as far as possible using a power source such as an elastic band or electric motor. In Year 3 pupils have designed and made very good life size robot figures using a variety of materials and techniques, card, fabrics and plastic. Pupils have taken particular care and skill when applying decoration and detail to the models. They have also painted designs and pictures on fabric using dye and resist. The finished designs show attention to detail and are well presented.
92. The development of literacy encourages pupils to use the appropriate vocabulary when naming tools and components and describing what they are doing. For example, disassembling models they can describe the components and write out step-by-step instructions.
93. The pupils' attitudes are good. All take a pride in their work, and enjoy taking part in design and technology lessons. Pupils with special needs are equally as successful in making things as other pupils and this raises their self-esteem. Pupils share tools sensibly and help one another willingly.

94. The overall curriculum for the subject is not well planned. Planning is based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) guidance but within a limited range of activities. There are adequate resources to teach the planned projects in each year. There is limited assessment of progress and attainment.

GEOGRAPHY

95. Geography was inspected through analysis of the pupils' work, discussions and a review of the school's documents and planning.
96. Standards in geography meet expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and progress in geography is satisfactory through the key stage. Pupils in Year 2 can explain features of their local area and use some appropriate geographical terms. They are familiar with traffic surveys and can use grids and a key when referring to a simple plan. Standards in Key Stage 2 are below expectations and progress through this key stage is unsatisfactory. Work in pupils' exercise books shows a lack of progression through the key stage and only very limited work in geography in some classes. Year 5 pupils have worked at some useful concepts and applied some skills to interpreting a map, but this work has not been extended into Year 6. In the few examples found of pupils' writing in geography, the quality of writing was weak and under-developed.
97. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. Teachers' planning for geography in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Planned work leads to some increasing depth and range in learning as pupils move through the key stage, so pupils develop concepts such as the local area, journeys and routes, the seaside. There is clear attention to the features of places, especially aspects of the area around the school. Towards the end of the key stage this growing understanding leads to comparisons with other, more distant areas such as towns in the Caribbean. Teachers plan to use appropriate resources such as picture packs and video films of the more distant places. Planning for Key Stage 2 is not well co-ordinated and lacks these progressive elements. Some better provision at this key stage is made for practical activities, such as visits and orienteering, which lead to the development of some geographical skills, but these elements are not developed effectively within overall expectations for the subject.
98. The curriculum for geography is unsatisfactory, especially in Key Stage 2. The school's scheme of work, which was developed after the last inspection, is currently being superseded by new guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. This changeover has created the loss of curriculum clarity at Key Stage 2, so there are now some repetitions and some omissions. Resources for geography are satisfactory and are accessible to staff. Staff have undertaken skills development work together and the co-ordinator has attended training for the role, but the current management of the subject, especially the curriculum provision, is unclear. As a result, the school still does not provide full coverage of the National Curriculum for this subject and progression in geography has still not been achieved throughout the school. Developments since the last inspection are unsatisfactory. Action needed includes a clearly specified curriculum to ensure that pupils in each year group extend their knowledge and understanding in keeping with the requirements of the National Curriculum specifications; guidance for teachers to ensure that they are clear in their interpretation of this; and clear, co-ordinated time allocations for this subject on all class timetables.

HISTORY

99. There was no teaching of this subject observed; therefore, no judgement could be made on the quality of teaching, learning or the pupils' attitudes.
100. Based on a scrutiny of the pupils' history work and discussions with staff, progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and the pupils attain the standard expected at the end of Year 2. The school has slightly improved on the standards found during the last inspection when they were judged to be below national expectations. Reception and Year 1 pupils have completed work about "then and now" in their own lives and in different generations, for example, grandparents and people such as Guy Fawkes. By the end of Year 2, the pupils have looked at aspects of the Victorian era, changes to clothes over time and to everyday life, for example, washing implements used during the period. Coverage of the curriculum is inconsistent as pupils from the same year group in different classes do not cover the same work or record it in similar ways.
101. Progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 2 with pupils reaching expected standards by the age of 11 years. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Among other work, the Year 6 pupils have studied the "Ancient Greeks" in some detail and made interesting use of a limited range of timelines or time spirals. There is very little evidence of the pupils selecting and combining information from different sources or exploring how the past has been represented and interpreted. Years 3 and 4 pupils have studied the Tudor period and some have looked at the Roman period, the work in the mixed age class is sometimes too similar to encourage good progress for both age groups. Year 5 have covered some detailed work about the 1940s. There is some repetition of topics and eras across the year groups. The school can make these choices but the overall programme is fragmented because the planning is not secure or sufficiently co-ordinated.
102. The co-ordinator has no non-contact time for the role. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines are used as a scheme of work, this is an improvement on the situation found during the last inspection where there was no scheme of work. The school has not yet adapted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines to match the school or the needs of its pupils. The co-ordinator monitors medium term plans but there is no monitoring of teaching and learning in classrooms to ensure adequate coverage and to avoid repetition for some pupils. The co-ordinator has begun to collect the pupils' work across the school in order to develop a portfolio which aims to help teachers assess work accurately but this is not yet in place and therefore not very helpful at present. Assessment systems are undeveloped.
103. Resources are satisfactory including the use of loan resources from the Local Authority but there are insufficient resources to allow pupils to use different sources or for independent work. The use of visits to support the subject is satisfactory.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

104. Standards in information technology have been maintained since the last inspection when they were judged to be satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1, and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. However, with the focus now on all elements of information technology and overall higher national expectations, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are now average. The recent opening of the networked information technology suite, ongoing training of staff and the introduction of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work are factors that are contributing to better progress and rising standards.

105. A technician supervises the information technology suite and, in the afternoons, works well with groups of pupils on units from the scheme of work. She gives clear instructions to pupils and gives support when required. These units are firstly introduced by the class teacher to the whole class, and are then followed up in subsequent group sessions, allowing pupils to work independently at a computer. This works well when pupils can consolidate their learning through using other computers based in classrooms and around the school, but this is inconsistent. The use of the additional computers to support the curriculum is variable and was not greatly in evidence during the inspection. The information technology suite is used during the mornings to support numeracy and literacy, for example some pupils used the "Starspell" program and others worked on data handling. Year 6 pupils were observed preparing letters of complaint, following up the theme of a literacy lesson which required them to produce a persuasive argument in their writing. This morning use and the overall planning are not sufficiently monitored to ensure that all classes make adequate use of the facility to ensure equality of access to all pupils.
106. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are making satisfactory progress. They can use simple word and number games appropriately, have basic keyboard skills and can type in simple texts. By the end of the key stage they can edit their work and save it. Pupils can use the mouse effectively to select, create patterns and delete. They can also end one activity and start another. In data handling they can use the "Picture Point" program to classify information and present their findings in a pictogram.
107. In Key Stage 2, the pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. Most are able to assemble pictures and patterns by repeating elements, changing size and copying and pasting. They can work independently, for example, using "Microsoft Publisher" to prepare leaflets on chosen topics, changing layout, fonts and size and inserting illustrations. Pupils learn how to create images by combining and manipulating geometric shapes. They make satisfactory use of CD-ROMS to retrieve information, can access the Internet and can control devices by programming instructions.
108. Pupils are enthusiastic about information technology, and enjoy their sessions in the information technology suite. They are becoming increasingly confident in their use of information technology and are quick to help each other when problems arise. For example, a pupil in Year 1, when he had finished his pictogram on favourite fruits, was able to create another database and pictogram for himself based on the throws of a dice.
109. Information technology is well led by a team of three staff who are very keen to move the subject further forward, as evidenced in the action plan for information technology where the specific targeting of information technology work within all curriculum areas, assessment procedures and further staff training are highlighted. A system of assessment is now being developed, recording the degree of competence that pupils have shown in the unit being studied. Teachers' planning, based largely on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority study units, shows that all elements of information technology are now being covered systematically.

MUSIC

110. Although it was only possible to see a limited amount of music during the inspection, judgements are supported by a review of the current scheme of work, teachers'

planning and discussions with the subject co-ordinator. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards are in line with those expected of pupils of this age and the pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards are below those expected at the end of Key Stage 2 and the pupils make unsatisfactory progress.

111. Within Key Stage 1 pupils sing with lively animation and style. They know many of the words, enjoy repeating phrases, and many sing in tune. The pupils take a very active part in their singing and identify the rhythms in their songs, often following them with percussion instruments such as claves, or by clapping in time.
112. Within Key Stage 2 pupils develop their singing further by incorporating a wider variety of rhythms, songs from different traditions, and by singing in rounds. Songs are often accompanied by tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Their performance in lessons and assemblies is not always enthusiastic, and often lacks discipline. Opportunities are provided to listen to and appraise the music of famous composers, and to identify the instruments being played. In a Year 6 lesson, the pupils listened to and compared pieces of music by Mussorgsky, and were able to say clearly what the music reminded them of. Each week a composer is introduced, whose music is played at the start and end of assemblies.
113. The school does not offer instrumental tuition as part of the curriculum although opportunities are made available to learn to play the recorder, keyboard or guitar. At times throughout the year a choir is formed to practice songs and to take part in performances.
114. The teaching seen was generally satisfactory although pupils' attitudes to music are not always positive and can detract from their learning. A published scheme of work is followed which encourages the use of lessons planned for a 'model' class, without any evaluation taking place. The co-ordinator is aware of this and this scheme is now being supplemented with other materials and ideas. Resources for music are good and are centrally stored, with some set aside for use in Key Stage 1. Professional musicians are invited to play in school, and their performances add to the learning opportunities provided.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. During the inspection four lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 and four in Key Stage 2. The pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school in physical education. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated in all lessons and they also make satisfactory progress. The curriculum includes gymnastics, dance, games, swimming and outdoor education activities. Standards in swimming are low as too few Year 6 pupils can swim at least 25 metres unaided.
116. The pupils in Key Stage 1 can move safely around the school hall, stopping and changing direction when instructed. In a very good lesson Year 1 pupils made good progress developing their minor games skills. They could throw a beanbag or ball accurately, work as a team to score how well they do by running after the ball or beanbag and return to a point where they pass on to the next "thrower" in the team. These young pupils are learning about simple rules in games and how to work together effectively by co-operating as a team. Reception children learn to respond to prompts by the teacher as they adapt their body movements and change direction with increasing control and accuracy in gymnastics and dance lessons. Year 2 pupils

are taught to strike a small ball with a racket and are improving their co-ordination and timing to strike the ball with reasonable accuracy and control.

117. In Key Stage 2, Year 3 and Year 4 pupils learn to throw and catch a ball and many are developing good throwing techniques. Some pupils can throw a ball to a partner very accurately and many can catch using the correct techniques. Some of the activities provided are not sufficiently demanding for all pupils and this sometimes leads to groups or individuals straying off task and losing interest in the activity. Year 4 and 5 pupils responded well to athletics activities in the school field which has a running track marked out for the school's sports day. Some of these pupils displayed quite challenging behaviour at times and the teacher had to work very hard to keep them all on task. In a good Year 6 lesson the activities were more varied and there was a very good link with other subjects. For example, the pupils were required to read a simple map and then orienteer the way round a specific route towards coloured markers. The pupils responded well, co-operating in teams or with a partner and they followed instructions well. The activities were suitable as an introduction to basic orienteering and teamwork, but could have been more challenging for some pupils.
118. The teaching is satisfactory overall with some good and very good lessons. It ranges between unsatisfactory to very good across the school. The most effective lessons are more challenging and varied with clear instructions and time for the pupils to practise movements. Some lessons were hurried as there was little time left on the timetable or the previous lesson was allowed to over-run into the introduction of the physical education lesson. For example, two gymnastics lessons were only 20 minutes long leaving little time for the pupils to practise or consolidate what they have learned. Swimming is well organised but too few pupils experience swimming outside school hours which contributes to the generally low numbers who can swim the expected standards by the age of 11 years.
119. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities planned outside school hours. These include football, cross country running and athletics, rounders, netball, orienteering and country dancing. There is also an "infant activities club" which focuses on ball skills, co-ordination and minor games. The co-ordinator also organises special events which includes specialist visitors who teach the pupils a range of sporting and gymnastics activities. These include, the "Gosling Sports Association" which provides coaching in gymnastics and tennis; Buxton Cricket Club promoted cricket skills for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. The school has also been involved in "All Stars Football Organisation" who worked with every class in the school coaching basic football skills.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

120. During the inspection only two lessons were observed, one in Key Stage 1 and one in Key Stage 2. Evidence is also drawn from a scrutiny of the pupils' work, discussions with some pupils and staff and observations of school assemblies.

121. By the end of both key stages, attainment is broadly in line with that expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. This is a slight improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Pupils learn about Christian beliefs through Old and New Testament stories. Work in books shows that pupils have learnt about feelings such as happiness, sadness and belonging to families and the school community. The pupils have some experience of writing their own prayers. In some classes they have learnt about people who cared for others such as Mary Seacole in the Crimean War. Attainment in the observed lesson was below expected standards because the pupils' attitudes and behaviour were unsatisfactory even for young pupils. They did not listen well to the story of Noah's Ark, they were restless and uninvolved.
122. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is just satisfactory in relation to knowledge of Christianity but their knowledge of faiths other than Christianity is unsatisfactory. They have not been able to develop understanding of these faiths because they lack knowledge of them. Coverage of this aspect of the curriculum is unsatisfactory even though it is part of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and whole school planning. One lesson at Key Stage 2 was observed where pupils learnt about Islam. This was a good lesson because the teaching was well planned and allowed opportunities for the pupils to write down their understanding of Islam having been provided with the information and the vocabulary to describe objects and artefacts that symbolise the faith and the beliefs of its followers.
123. A scrutiny of work shows a small amount of written work about different faiths by Year 6 pupils and in Years 3 and 4 the pupils have completed one piece of work about the Jewish celebration of Passover. There are some good links made with history, for example, Year 6 pupils work on Christmas celebrations using a timeline from 1182 to 1942. There are a few interesting activities recorded in books such as "decision-making" in Year 5. There is very little difference in the work of different age groups in Years 3 and 4 although the amount of work is appropriate.
124. Throughout the school the pupils have learnt about the major Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter. The school provides an opportunity for reflection and a strong focus on moral and social issues in assemblies. Circle time also contributes satisfactorily to learning in the subject.
125. The vicar of the local church contributed to provision for the subject during the inspection to answer questions devised by Year 3 and 4 pupils about Jesus Christ. Some of the pupils talked appropriately about the visit to an inspector. However, they could not talk in any depth about their other knowledge of Jesus Christ and they have limited experience of other faiths.
126. Teaching in the one lesson at Key Stage 1 was satisfactory. The teacher circulated well to support each group of pupils. She had made attractive ark-shaped books for the pupils' work and used singing well. However she did not reinforce her discipline strategies effectively and the pupils' learning was limited by their unsatisfactory behaviour and attitudes. Teaching in the lesson observed at Key Stage 2 was good. The teacher set high expectations for both behaviour and the quality of written work.
127. The co-ordinator has several other important responsibilities within the school. She feels she has raised the status of the subject but this is still to be developed further. Medium term plans are monitored but short term plans are not and there has been no formal assessment of pupils' work or monitoring of teaching. The school policy is quite dated. The school is keeping the Locally Agreed Syllabus as its scheme of work

but this needs to be implemented fully to raise standards. Governors and the senior management team need to implement the subject's action plan to improve provision and raise attainment further.