

INSPECTION REPORT

FIVE ACRES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ambrosden, Bicester

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123006

Headteacher: Mr M Lester

Reporting inspector: Mr C Parker
11897

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th January 2000

Inspection number: [191537]

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: County

Age range of pupils: 5 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Blackthorn Road
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A Tallants

Date of previous inspection: 7th – 10th October 1996

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Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr C Parker	Registered inspector	Mathematics	How high are standards? The school's results and achievements
		Information technology	How well are pupils taught?
		Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
			What should the school do to improve further?
Mrs M Hackney	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr A Taylor	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		History	
		Geography	
		Music	
Mrs J Edwards	Team inspector	Science	
		Design technology	
		Art	
		Religious education	
		Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Five Acres is an average size primary school with 202 pupils between the ages of five and eleven. It serves five local villages and a military base, sharing its site with a nursery unit, which has a separate governing body but the same headteacher. About half of the pupils are from service families and consequently there is considerable movement of pupils in and out of the school. Attainment on entry fluctuates from year to year. Over the last two years it has risen, but taken overall it is average.

The vast majority of the pupils come from modest backgrounds where most parents are in work. Consequently, the number of pupils receiving free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register is average. Currently, there are no pupils with statements of special educational need. There are no pupils from other ethnic backgrounds and all of the pupils speak English as their first language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school that provides a sound education for its pupils. Overall, standards are average. The teaching in Key Stage 1 is consistently good, and in Key Stage 2 it is satisfactory.

The headteacher provides strong leadership and clear direction that is sharply focussed on raising standards. The school uses its available funds effectively and provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The results of national curriculum tests in English and mathematics have improved over recent years and are now above the national average.
- The teaching in Key Stage 1 is consistently good and as a result the pupils are making clear gains in their learning.
- The school's implementation and teaching of both the literacy and numeracy strategies has been effective in raising standards in both key stages.
- The learning-support assistants consistently and effectively aid the teaching and learning.
- The school takes great care to integrate the children of service families when they arrive at different points in the school year.
- The school provides comprehensive and helpful information for the parents and is actively encouraging increased parental involvement.
- The school is very well led by the headteacher who has successfully raised standards, improved provision and established a secure financial position for the future of the school.

What could be improved

- The teaching in Key Stage 2, whilst satisfactory overall, is not always effective.
- The curriculum for information technology does not meet the requirements and standards are much lower than they should be.
- The positive developments in literacy are not yet being utilised across the curriculum.
- The boys in Key Stage 2 are not given sufficient opportunities to take responsibility, and as a result their personal development is restricted.
- The school's homework policy is not consistently implemented.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since it was last inspected in October 1996. Standards have risen and the school is well placed to make further improvements. The new headteacher provides very good leadership and has put into place very effective systems to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of teaching. As a result, the teaching has improved significantly. The assessment procedures are now particularly effective in helping the teachers to match tasks to the needs of all groups of pupils. Although the school development plan is now an effective mechanism for managing improvement, little improvement has been made in the provision for and standards in information technology. However, recent substantial improvements to resources put the school in a strong

position to make rapid progress on this issue.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	D	B	B
mathematics	D	C	B	C
science	D	C	C	D

Key

well above average A
 above average B
 average C
 below average D
 well below average E

The table shows the general upward trend in national test results. This pattern is also reflected in the results of tests taken by seven-year-olds where, for example, results in mathematics were well below average in 1997 but are now above average. The school raised its targets for 1999 and exceeded them in the tests for eleven-year-olds. The improvements in English and mathematics reflect the considerable emphasis placed on raising standards in these subjects.

The standards of the pupils' work are similar to the average in most subjects, but in information technology they are below average. In Key Stage 1, the pupils' performance is very good in music and good in gymnastics. Whilst the school has taken considerable steps forward in raising standards, there is potential for further improvement.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils in both key stages have a good attitude towards their learning, and they are keen and eager to come to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The school is orderly and behaviour is satisfactory overall.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils have a strong sense of responsibility, but the boys are not provided with sufficient opportunities for their personal development. Relationships are good.
Attendance	Good

Whilst behaviour is satisfactory overall it is better in Key Stage 1 than Key Stage 2 where the pupils become unsettled in some lessons, particularly when the teaching is unsatisfactory. The personal development of some of the older boys is hampered by the limited number of opportunities they have to take responsibility. Overall, attendance has improved in recent years and the incidence of unauthorised absence has decreased.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall 50	n/a	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 has improved considerably since the last inspection. Of the lessons seen throughout the school, 92 per cent were satisfactory or better, 18 per cent were very good or better and 8 per cent were unsatisfactory. Closer analysis shows that the teaching is most effective in Key Stage 1, where it is consistently good. In just over a quarter of the lessons seen, the teaching was very good and in some instances it was excellent. In Key Stage 2, the teaching is less consistent. Slightly more than a third of the lessons seen were good and a few were very good, but one in seven was unsatisfactory.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is effective throughout the school. These lessons are always at least satisfactory, and frequently good in both key stages. This is as a result of the considerable development work undertaken by the teachers. They plan their lessons well to meet the needs of all of the pupils, identifying how tasks will be modified for different groups. However, they are not making sufficient use of information technology.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum offers a broad range of opportunities with a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, but it does not fully meet statutory requirements because the provision for information technology is currently unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The individual education plans have clear targets. The learning-support assistants work effectively with the pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. The school promotes well the pupils' awareness of right and wrong behaviour, but their spiritual development is not fostered through a sufficiently wide range of activities.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school pays good attention to the pupils' welfare and ensures they are cared for very well.

The school places considerable emphasis on literacy and numeracy and this is central to the determined plan to raise standards. The provision for music in Key Stage 1 is strong but the use of information technology throughout the school is weak.

The school has good links with parents and is working to further extend their involvement. The quality of information that the school provides for parents is good.

The school gives particularly good support to the pupils from service families to help them to settle in quickly.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led and effectively managed. The headteacher provides strong leadership and clear direction. He is well supported by the key stage co-ordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are well informed and alongside the headteacher are fulfilling their key responsibilities by steering the school through a period of considerable improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Comprehensive analysis of the pupils' performance and rigorous monitoring of the teaching is used effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good. A significant budget deficit has been eradicated and the school placed on a secure financial footing.

There are sufficient teachers for the number of pupils attending the school. The accommodation is spacious, but there have been no funds in recent years to make improvements to the decoration of the building. The absence of investment in the building is becoming very apparent. The recent acquisition of eight new computers adds to the satisfactory level of resources.

The school development plan provides a very clear framework for the improvement of the school. The school has clear aims that underpin its work, but the policy document for equal opportunities is rather vague and does not give strong enough guidance. The procedures for the induction and support of the newly qualified teacher are very good. The governors have adopted the principles of best value both in terms of competition and quality of service in order to ensure the school makes the most of the funds it has available. The day-to-day financial management and administration are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improvements in standards; • the support for children from service families; • the encouragement given to the pupils; • the good information they receive; • the leadership of the headteacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistent setting of homework; • better links with the school; • more activities outside lessons.

The inspectors agree with the many positive comments made by parents. They confirm the need for a more consistent approach to homework, but do not agree with those who feel that the school does not work closely with parents. The information given to parents is good and the school makes them welcome. The school is committed to improving links with parents, but some initiatives, such as curriculum evenings have not been well attended. The school's programme of extra curricular activities is not as extensive as in many schools, but it is complemented by the various community activities in which the pupils take part.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The school is currently achieving results in national tests that generally match the national average and in some cases exceed it. This represents a considerable improvement that is reflected in standards across the curriculum. When the school was last inspected, standards in a number of subjects were below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Improvements in both the teaching and curriculum management have raised standards across the curriculum and now attainment remains below average only in information technology.
2. The results of the national tests and assessments in English in 1999 show that the pupils at seven years of age achieved average standards in reading. The number reaching the higher levels was substantial, but less than the national average. A similar picture of average overall standards occurred in writing, but here the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was above the national average. The results of the national tests for eleven-year-olds in English were above the national average. The proportion of pupils scoring at the higher levels matched the national average. This is a considerable improvement on the results in 1998, and the trend over time is for significantly increased standards.
3. Standards in English, when compared to schools of a similar type are below average at the end of Key Stage 1, but above the average by the end of Key Stage 2. For the most part, the pupils are achieving well and making good progress in Key Stage 1 and in the latter part of Key Stage 2. Progress in the early part of Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. The inspection findings confirm that standards overall are average, but improving. Most of the pupils in Key Stage 1 read competently at the expected levels for their age. Almost all pupils are effective communicators and listen well. They write imaginatively and sensitively, with a good appreciation of the readership, but the presentation of their work is not as good as it should be. Nevertheless, the pupils' are making good learning gains in the development of their literacy skills, which meet the expected standard.
4. The results of the national tests for seven-year-olds in mathematics, in 1999, were above the national average and above the average for schools of a similar type. This marked a significant improvement on the previous two years when the results were well below the national average. A notable feature of this improvement was the above average proportion of pupils who achieved beyond the expected level. The results of the national mathematics tests for eleven-year-olds, in 1999, were above the average for all schools and inline with the results of similar schools. However, the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels was below average. The results of recent years form a clear upward trend from a position below the national average in 1996 to one that now exceeds it.
5. The results in mathematics are unlikely to be as high this year, but the standards are now securely in line with the average. This is because the cohorts in Years 2 and 6 have more pupils with special educational needs than those of last year. However, the overall picture represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be below average in Key Stage 2. The implementation and teaching of the numeracy strategy ensures that the pupils are achieving well and making good gains in their learning.
6. The results of the 1999 assessments in science showed the proportion of seven-year-olds attaining the expected and higher levels was above the national average. The proportion of eleven-year-olds achieving the expected levels was also above average but fewer than usual achieved the higher levels. The results of tests and assessments for seven-year-olds match the average for similar schools but by the age of eleven the results are below average. Over the last three years, national test results show that there has been a steady rise in the pupils' attainment at both key stages. The inspection findings confirm that at the end of Key Stage 1 standards are above average. In Key Stage 2, standards are average with the majority of pupils on course to attain the expected level by the age of eleven.

7. Test results show that over the last three years, the girls have performed better than the boys in Key Stage 1. However, in English the position is reversed by the end of Key Stage 2 and the differences are small in mathematics. Taken overall there are considerable fluctuations from year to year and no clear pattern of major mismatch in the attainment of girls and boys is evident by the time they leave the school.
8. A major factor that has a significant impact on the performance of the school is the very large number of pupils who enter and leave at different points during the year. Only about half of the pupil population is stable. The mobility of pupils from service families has an impact on continuity in learning, and makes the setting of accurate performance targets difficult. Nevertheless, the school has set appropriate targets. These were adjusted upwards and exceeded in 1999.
9. The pupils with special educational needs are making good progress throughout the school. Their individual education plans have targets in English and mathematics that are specific and achievable.
10. The standard of the pupils' work in art, design and technology, history, geography and religious education is in line with that expected of pupils of this age. In all of these subjects, they are achieving satisfactorily. The quality of the pupils' music making is very good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The pupils in Key Stage 1 also perform well in gymnastics.
11. Whilst the school has taken considerable steps forward in raising standards, there is still potential for further improvement. The school development plan sets out a clear strategy to realise this potential.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The pupils in both key stages have a good attitude towards their learning, and they are keen and eager to come to school. They show interest and are enthusiastically involved in a range of activities. The school is an orderly environment and behaviour is satisfactory overall. In Key Stage 1, behaviour is good with pupils listening attentively to their teachers. During some lessons in Key Stage 2, where the teaching is insufficiently interesting and challenging, behaviour deteriorates and this has a negative effect on learning and the pupils' progress. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, concentrate well on their work both independently and when working together in small groups. The pupils are friendly, courteous and show a respect for property. There have been no exclusions during the last academic year.
13. The pupils' relationships between themselves and with their teachers are good. The pupils are tolerant of each other, respect the different views of other people, and through the implementation of the behaviour policy there is very little bullying in the school. The school's aims for the development of moral and social education are well met. The pupils know the difference between right and wrong, and they show a clear understanding of the effects of their actions on others.
14. Many pupils have a strong sense of responsibility and are keen to use their initiative to undertake tasks around the school. However, it was mostly girls who were observed acting as monitors in the classrooms and the library.
15. Attendance throughout the school is good, and has improved steadily since the last inspection. Unauthorised absence is below the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The pupils are consistently well taught in Key Stage 1. In just over a quarter of the lessons seen the teaching was very good, and in some it was excellent. As a result, the pupils in Key Stage 1 are making good gains in their learning right across the curriculum in lessons that are often stimulating and always well matched to their needs.
17. In Key Stage 2, the teaching is less consistent. Slightly more than a third of the lessons seen were good and a few were very good, but one in seven was unsatisfactory. The quality of

teaching varies from class to class and lesson to lesson. It is strongest in one of the Year 5/6 classes where, for example, a Victorian classroom role-play enabled very good learning in history. The teaching is weakest in one of the Year 3/4 classes where a part-time teacher does not establish sufficiently high expectations of the pupils' behaviour. During the history and religious education lessons observed, the teacher's control of the class was not good enough and the children were noisy and inattentive.

18. Whilst there remain some weaknesses in the teaching in Key Stage 2, there have been significant improvements since the school was last inspected, when a third of the teaching was unsatisfactory. **Although the teaching in Key Stage 2 is now satisfactory overall, it is an area where further improvement is needed.**
19. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is effective throughout the school. These lessons are invariably at least satisfactory, and frequently good in both key stages. This reflects the teachers' good knowledge of both the national literacy and numeracy strategies and the considerable development work they have undertaken to establish common approaches. Consequently, the pupils are provided with activities that build on their previous learning and opportunities to acquire new knowledge and skills at a good pace. In most other areas of the curriculum, the teachers have secure subject knowledge. However, at present, they are not making sufficient use of information technology and it is evident from the pupils' work that it has not played an adequate role in both teaching and learning in the past. This is due to weaknesses in some of the teachers' knowledge and expertise in the use of information technology. The school is beginning to address this weakness through in service training, but more is needed if the teachers are to make the best use of the new computer facilities.
20. The teachers plan their lessons well to meet the needs of all of the pupils, identifying how tasks will be modified for different groups. They set out clearly what they want the children to learn and often display the objectives at the start of a lesson and use them at the end to check how much the children have understood. The teachers in Key Stage 1 are adept at motivating and inspiring their pupils. They take every opportunity to extend the learning and make links with other subjects and every day activities. This was evident for example, during two excellent music lessons. In Key Stage 2, this happens in some lessons, but often the teachers do not take opportunities to extend learning and enhance the spiritual development of the pupils.
21. In both key stages, the vast majority of lessons are thoroughly prepared, well managed and purposeful. The group work is well organised and the tasks are carefully matched to the needs of pupils of all abilities, resulting frequently in good learning. For example, the mathematics investigations in Year 2 are very effective. In contrast, in one lesson in a Year 5/6 class, poor management of a science investigation led to insufficient new learning taking place.
22. The effective deployment of the learning support assistants aids both the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy skills. They are well briefed by the teachers, work well with the pupils and encourage good learning. They add considerably to the progress made by the pupils, not only in the classroom, but also when they withdraw them for additional literacy support. In all cases, learning support assistants discuss the pupils' performances with the teacher after each session in order to establish the next stage of learning. This contributes well to the thorough assessments of the pupils learning that the teachers make at the end of most of the lessons. In many of the good lessons seen the teachers questioned their pupils to ensure they had understood what they had been taught. The pupils' work is generally very carefully marked with many good evaluative assessment annotations made in their exercise books. In many lessons, the pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own learning and identify misunderstandings. This is a strong feature that is adding considerably to the improvements in the quality of the teaching and learning.
23. All pupils with special educational needs receive good support to enable them to take full advantage of all the educational opportunities provided for them. All pupils have equal access to the available learning resources. In most lessons, girls and boys are treated equally. However, in some instances in Key Stage 2, particularly where the teaching was unsatisfactory, there was

evidence of a marked difference in the way in which boys and girls were disciplined. Moreover, on occasions the boys were overlooked when pupils were invited to contribute by answering questions. Furthermore, the teachers often give responsibilities to girls rather than boys. Some of the girls feel this is because, 'the boys can't be trusted' and some boys commented that jobs are 'always given to the girls'. This has a negative effect on the personal development of a significant number of boys. The school should take steps to improve the opportunities provided for boys to take responsibility by heightening the teachers' awareness of the need for the consistent and balanced treatment of all pupils in Key Stage 2. **This is an area where improvement is needed.**

24. The school has a clear homework policy that reflects the recent guidance given to schools. A third of the parents are not happy with the current homework arrangements. This is because the homework policy is inconsistently applied by the teachers. **The inspectors agree that this is an area where improvement is needed.**
25. The considerable improvements made since the school was last inspected have resulted in a much higher proportion of effective teaching and consequently the breadth and depth of the pupils' learning has also improved. The pupils' in both key stages are building on their knowledge, skills and understanding with a good degree of consistency notably in English and mathematics. In many lessons, they complete a good volume of work because it is made clear to them what they are expected to learn.

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

26. The curriculum offers an appropriately broad range of opportunities for the pupils but does not fully fulfil the statutory requirements. This is because the provision for information technology is currently unsatisfactory and does not meet the needs of the pupils. The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is good. They benefit from the well-planned and clearly targeted support of the learning support assistants in their work on literacy and numeracy.
27. The school places great emphasis on the development of the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. In these aspects, good whole-school developmental initiatives and well-planned teaching result in pupils' at all stages acquiring sound basic skills. These are constantly being extended and improved. The current emphasis on literacy and numeracy is central to the school's determined plan to raise standards. While it is increasingly effective, limitations are placed on the fullest development of other subjects of the curriculum. However, apart from information technology, the remainder of the subject curriculum is satisfactorily provided, and meets the requirements. There are particular strengths in music at Key Stage 1.
28. The curriculum provides equality of access for all pupils at Key Stage 1, but at Key Stage 2, there are limited opportunities to take on responsibilities within the school community. The school promotes well the pupils' awareness of right and wrong behaviour, and effectively encourages positive attitudes towards others. The pupils' opportunities to develop an awareness of their own cultural traditions and those of other peoples of the world are satisfactory. They occur, for example, in studies in history, where the values of Victorian society are compared with those of today. Other instances can be found in lessons in geography, art and music. On the other hand, opportunities for reflection are limited, particularly at Key Stage 2. While the overall curriculum is sound, insufficient attention is paid to the planning and encouraging of the pupils' spiritual development, particularly through creative experiences. **This is an additional area for further improvement.**
29. The school provides satisfactorily for the pupils' health education including drugs and sex education. It has firm and beneficial links with the community it serves, and constructive relationships with other local schools. Recently, for instance, the school has played host to staff from other schools during training for the current literacy initiative. The opportunities for the pupils to be involved in extra-curricular activities are satisfactory. These include guitar and recorder classes, and mixed girls' and boys' football. The school works in partnership with community groups to provide a range of activities throughout the year, such as an after-school

club and swimming.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The school pays good attention to the pupils' welfare and provides a safe environment for learning. The teachers know individual pupils well, including those who have recently joined the school and those with special educational needs. The response that the pupils receive from teachers is generally positive and supportive. The pupils are constantly made aware of safe practices during lessons, for example in physical education, and whilst moving around the school. They are well supervised in the playground at breaks and lunchtime. The parents of the pupils from service families speak highly of the support that their children receive. It helps them to settle in quickly and to cope with the mobility of service life. Some spoke very highly of the positive and caring way in which the school handled the many emotional difficulties experienced by the pupils whose parents were posted to Kosovo last year.
31. The arrangements for child protection are good. There are regular discussions at staff meetings and good liaison with outside agencies. The school's health and safety policy is closely followed and a regular risk assessment of the site is carried out. However, during the inspection the uneven surface of part of the playground and the broken flagstones adjacent to it caused a number of children to trip and fall.
32. The monitoring and promotion of good attendance has been well implemented during the last two years resulting in a gradual improvement in attendance and a decrease in unauthorised absence. Although behaviour is promoted well and there are good procedures in place to monitor and eliminate any bullying or harassment, the behavior policy is inconsistently applied in some classes in Key Stage 2. The procedures for the assessment and monitoring of the pupils' academic performance are good. Assessment is used effectively to record the pupils' attainment and progress, to guide the teachers' planning and to set targets for further improvement. Good attention is paid to the Code of Practice for special educational needs, and the pupils receive good additional support from class teachers and learning support assistants. The pupils' personal development is promoted well in Key Stage 1. However in Key Stage 2, there are too few opportunities for older pupils, especially boys, to make decisions and to take on responsibilities to effectively support and promote their personal development and experience.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

33. The school has good links with parents, and most are very satisfied with the standard of education that their children receive. Parents are welcomed and most feel that the school works closely with them. Through their assistance with homework and listening to their children read, the parents make an effective and valuable contribution to learning both at school and at home. Parents whose children have special educational needs are fully involved and are invited to attend all review meetings about their children's progress.
34. The quality of information that the school provides for parents is good, and most feel well informed. Regular, helpful, weekly newsletters are sent by the headteacher, and the class teachers apprise parents about topics to be covered each term. Although some parents feel insufficiently informed about homework, the school has provided all with a copy of the homework policy. The prospectus is comprehensive and informative, and the annual report of the governing body provides parents with a clear picture of the work of the school. The home/school agreement signed by parents is clear and concise. The headteacher and class teachers are readily available to speak with parents informally, and formal consultation evenings are held twice a year. The school organised meetings for parents to tell them all about the literacy and numeracy strategies but these were not well attended. Only one parent attended the presentation about numeracy.

35. The annual reports to parents meet the statutory requirements and provide good information about attainment, but there are some inconsistencies in the clarity of information about progress. The annual written reports set individual targets that are to be addressed by pupils both at school and at home. They make a strong contribution to pupils' achievements and progress and are valued by the parents.
36. At present very few parents provide regular help in classrooms, but many are very supportive of school activities and fund-raising events. At the time of the inspection, a number of parents attended a special Victorian assembly. Although there is a high proportion of service families who are in the school for a short time, a small group of parents have re-established the parents' association and organise social events on the school's behalf.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

37. The school is very well led and effectively managed.
38. There have been considerable steps forward since it was last inspected. The unsuccessful attempts to provide curriculum leadership and raise standards made by the previous leadership meant that the school was at a low ebb when the current headteacher was appointed two years ago. Since his appointment, the headteacher has provided the school with clear direction, motivated and influenced the teachers and set out a programme to bring about improvements in standards and the quality of teaching, particularly in English and mathematics. Whilst there remain many areas where further improvements are needed, much has been achieved in a short time and there is now a clear upward trend in the results of the national tests.
39. Another significant difficulty faced by the school two years ago was a budget deficit of £50,000. In order to secure the financial future of the school the governing body successfully negotiated the redundancy of two teachers. As a result of this measure and the careful control of expenditure, the school is now on a secure financial footing. There was also a restructuring of the management in which the post of deputy headteacher was replaced by key stage co-ordinators. The new management structure has enabled the staff team to successfully tackle many of the weaknesses outlined in the last inspection report.
40. The school has clear aims and values that underpin its drive for improvement. The view that everyone must work together to achieve success for all is clear within the vision of the headteacher. The motto "CARE, SHARE AND BE FAIR" is prominent within the school and the teachers often remind the pupils of the need to adhere to this simple but clear code of behaviour. Nevertheless, although the school's aims are explicit in relation to equal opportunities for all its pupils, there are inconsistencies in its implementation. The policy document on equal opportunities is rather vague and does not give strong enough guidance to the teachers on how they should be ensured.
41. The school development plan provides a very clear framework for the improvement of the school. The headteacher and governors are very well informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses particularly in regard to the quality of the teaching and the standards achieved by the pupils. The governors are well briefed by the headteacher and co-ordinators and they are increasingly involved in evaluating the school's performance. The headteacher's rigorous monitoring of teaching enables him to tackle specific issues with individual teachers, address general issues with the whole staff and keep the governing body well informed about the performance of the teachers. Whilst this has not yet totally eradicated the unsatisfactory teaching, it has reduced it significantly. The headteacher and key stage co-ordinators make very good use of the results of national and other tests to monitor the performance of individual pupils and the school as a whole. They also carefully analyse the impact of the considerable mobility of pupils on these results and are able to project future patterns of results and explain fluctuations. All of the teachers have additional responsibilities and are effective in managing the curriculum. During the first phase of improvement, considerable emphasis was placed on literacy and numeracy but the school is

now broadening its improvement strategy to encompass science and information technology. As this strategy unfolds, each subject co-ordinator will play a key role in managing improvement.

42. The governing body is an effective and critical friend of the school. It now receives much better information and is well placed to carry out this role. Whilst the school now has a full complement of governors, in the past it has been difficult to maintain this position, in part because of the mobility of the services community, which makes up a large part of the parent body. The chair of governors and headteacher work well together. The governing body is aware of and shares the challenges faced by the school. In almost all respects, the governing body fulfils its statutory requirements, but at the present time it is not able to ensure that the National Curriculum requirements for information technology are being met. However, the school has received a grant for new technology; a new computer suite has very recently been decorated and eight new computers installed. The information technology co-ordinator is now working enthusiastically to bring about rapid improvements in the use of information technology within the curriculum.

43. The procedures for the induction and support of the newly qualified teacher are very good. The process of mentoring and observation has led to a sharing of new ideas and some questioning of established routines. The introduction of a newly qualified teacher into the Key Stage 1 team has been both effective and productive. In response to issues identified in the last inspection report, the school now has an effective appraisal system. The members of the senior management team are very aware of the strengths and weaknesses of individual teachers and the differences in performance of the teaching teams in the two key stages. As well as supporting the teachers, they are actively exploring alternative groupings of both pupils and teachers to bring about further improvements.

44. The day-to-day financial management and administration are good, and the school has made the best use of its available resources. Whilst tackling the considerable budget deficit, all available funds for resources were allocated to supporting literacy and numeracy in order to aid the drive to raise standards. Consequently, there have been no funds in recent years to make improvements to the decoration of the building. The absence of investment in the building is becoming apparent in the classrooms, corridors and on the playground which has a very worn and uneven surface. The school has very spacious accommodation and with the recent increase in computers has sufficient resources to support the curriculum.

45. In order to ensure that the school makes the most of the funds it has available, the governors have adopted the principles of best value both in terms of competition and quality of service. For example, it has secured a much higher quality service for maintenance of the grounds at the same price, fixed for three years, that it was paying to the previous contractor.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46. The school should now:
 - Build on the successful strategies used to improve the teaching of English and mathematics to establish consistently good teaching across the curriculum in Key Stage 2. **[paragraph 18]**

 - Raise standards in information technology by:
 - providing a broad range of opportunities for the pupils to develop their skills and knowledge and to apply them across all subjects of the curriculum;
 - giving further training opportunities to the teachers so that they can make full use of the school's new information technology facilities in their teaching. **[paragraph 90]**

 - Broaden the range of opportunities provided for the pupils to utilise and enhance their literacy skills across the curriculum; **[paragraph 54]**

- Improve the opportunities provided for boys to take responsibility by heightening the teachers' awareness of the need for the consistent and balanced treatment of boys and girls in Key Stage 2. **[paragraph 23]**
- Implement the school's homework policy in full so that all pupils are set an appropriate quantity of homework. **[paragraph 24]**

47. In addition the teachers should:

- Establish consistently high expectations of the presentation of the pupils' work throughout the school. **[paragraph 53]**
- Provide the pupils with a broader range of planned opportunities for their spiritual development. **[paragraph 28]**

The current school development plan outlines activities to further improve the quality of teaching, extend developments in literacy and raise standards in information technology.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	12	46	28	8	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	202
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	44

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	49
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	58

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.7

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.03
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	13	19	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	7	11
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	27	25	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (73)	78 (73)	91 (68)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	10	12
	Girls	18	18	19
	Total	27	18	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (76)	88 (78)	97 (86)
	National	82 (81)	86 (84)	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	14	14	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	11	12
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	24	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (64)	82 (59)	89 (69)
	National	70 (65)	69 (71)	78 (75)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	11	12
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	26	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (58)	82 (67)	89 (73)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	202
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y – Y

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.2
Average class size	28.8

Education support staff: Y – Y

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	102.25

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a

Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a

Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	353 323
Total expenditure	361 360
Expenditure per pupil	1 697
Balance brought forward from previous year	14 721
Balance carried forward to next year	6 684

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	202
Number of questionnaires returned	109

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	36	8	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	40	51	6	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	48	7	2	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	39	26	9	4
The teaching is good.	44	51	1	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	46	13	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	34	1	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	39	0	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	36	40	17	2	6
The school is well led and managed.	42	42	6	2	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	47	5	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	35	25	7	8

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

ENGLISH

48. Standards in English have improved since the school was last inspected and are now securely in line with the national average. By placing considerable emphasis on the development of the pupils' literacy skills, the school has raised standards significantly at all stages. Through very good planning, much committed and skilled teaching and hard work, the teachers have increased the pupils' basic skills in reading and writing. Standards have improved year-by-year since 1996 in both key stages, and they continue to improve. This is a very creditable performance.
49. The results of the 1999 national tests and assessments show that the pupils at seven years of age achieved average standards in reading. The number of pupils that reached higher levels was substantial, but less than the national average. A similar picture of average overall standards occurred in writing, but here the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was above the national average.
50. The results of the 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds show that a significantly larger proportion of pupils achieved the required standard in English than the national average. The proportion of pupils scoring at the higher levels matched the national average. This is a considerable improvement on the results in 1998, and the trend over time is significantly upwards. It is a very positive picture.
51. However, when compared to schools of a similar type, standards are below the average at the end of Key Stage 1, but above the average by the end of Key Stage 2. The pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and in the latter part of Key Stage 2. Progress in the early part of Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. When the impact on continuity in learning caused by the fluctuating pupil population is taken into account, the achievements are considerable. There are no major differences between the achievement of girls and boys at either key stage although girls perform slightly better than boys at the end of Key Stage 1. This is reversed at the end of Key Stage 2.
52. The inspection findings confirm that standards overall, are average but improving. Most of the pupils in Key Stage 1 read competently at the expected levels for their age. They show interest in books and many can recall ones they have read and enjoyed. They listen well to their teachers, and speak to adults confidently and with an extending vocabulary. Most contribute eagerly in literacy lessons and show good comprehension skills when reading together from the 'big books'. They write interestingly on a range of subjects and, by seven, many have a fluent, cursive handwriting style. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 can write sentences that rhyme. Their spellings sometimes follow a phonetic form, but standards in spelling are average and are constantly being improved by the careful teaching. By the age of seven, the pupils have a good grasp of simple punctuation.
53. The reading standards of the pupils approaching eleven years of age are average overall. Almost all read competently, and do so for enjoyment and to gain information. Their summarising skills are strong. They recognise the contents and index pages of books, and their purpose, and they have good library reference skills. The pupils are articulate and confident when answering questions and expressing their views, and almost all are effective communicators. Spelling had been noted as a weakness in the pupils' work and the school has taken steps to improve this with regular practice sessions. As a result, standards are now average. The pupils write imaginatively and sensitively, with a good appreciation of the readership, and many of their stories and accounts have a lively quality. They can draft and redraft their work in order to improve it. Most achieve a fluent handwriting style, although overall standards of presentation of work could be improved. **This is an additional area for further improvement.**

54. A weakness in English is in the use of information technology. The pupils have few opportunities to use word-processing techniques to draft, re-draft and create texts. This is unsatisfactory. A further less satisfactory aspect is that the pupils' literacy skills are not being utilised sufficiently in other subjects of the curriculum, such as science, geography and history. The pupils do not have a sufficiently broad range of opportunities to utilise and enhance their literacy skills across the curriculum. **This is an area for further improvement.**
55. While the libraries contain a satisfactory range of books to support learning across the curriculum, they are not inviting areas in which to study or work and are generally under-used. An exception to this is the literacy resources libraries, one at Key Stage 1 and one at Key Stage 2. These are very well stocked with essential and very well ordered resources that are effectively used to promote learning.
56. A positive aspect of the provision is the additional 'booster sessions' which provide extra tuition for small groups of pupils. They are planned by the teachers to ensure that all the pupils achieve a reasonable standard of literacy, by systematically practising and increasing their understanding and skills. These "booster sessions" are carried out by the learning support assistants and are proving very beneficial.
57. The teaching of English is good in Key Stage 1 and the upper part of Key Stage 2, and is satisfactory elsewhere. The activities are planned carefully, taking very good account of the elements of the programmes of work in the National Literacy Strategy. The teachers have good subject knowledge. Most lessons are well managed and proceed at a brisk pace, with clear learning objectives that are carefully carried through. These good features ensure that the pupils achieve sound standards in the basic skills. In a few lessons, the teacher-led explorations of a set text are overlong. Where this occurs, it shortens the time for the pupils' individual work, and for the final plenary session when the work of the lesson is reviewed. Nevertheless, the generally good teaching and positive relationships promote the pupils' interest well. They concentrate, work hard and try to do their best. The pupils' positive attitudes towards school and the work that they do help to ensure successful learning. The teachers' marking of their pupils' work in English is usually perceptive. It is supportive but appropriately critical, and there is firm evidence that the marking promotes better effort and improved standards.
58. The co-ordinator for English is experienced and knowledgeable. Her commitment and effort, and that of the headteacher and other staff, has ensured that the pupils gain a very firm foundation in their knowledge and skills in the use of language. These factors have been significant in ensuring the school's improving standards.

MATHEMATICS

59. The results of the 1999 national tests for seven-year-olds in mathematics were above the national average and the average for schools of a similar type. This marked a significant improvement on the previous two years when the results were well below the national average. A significant feature of this improvement was the above average proportion of pupils who achieved beyond the expected level.
60. The results of the 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds were above average for all schools and in line with the results of similar schools. However, the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels was below average. The results of recent years form a clear upward trend from a position below the national average in 1996 to one that now exceeds it.
61. Over the last three years the girls have performed better than the boys in the tests at the end of Key Stage 1. However, there are considerable fluctuations from year to year and no clear pattern of major mismatch in the attainment of girls and boys is evident by the end of Key Stage 2.
62. The improvement in standards in both key stages is confirmed by the scrutiny of the pupils' work that was carried out during the inspection. Whilst the results are unlikely to be as high this year, the standards are now securely in line with the average. This is because the

cohorts in Years 2 and 6 have more pupils with special educational needs than in the respective cohorts last year. It is clear from their work that the proportion of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 that are on course to reach the expected level is similar to the national average. At the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion on course to reach the expected level or above is in line with the national average. In Key Stage 2, this is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be below average.

63. The headteacher has placed considerable emphasis on raising standards in mathematics and the improvements in the national test results show this has been successful. The teachers throughout the school have established the teaching of the basic skills of numeracy effectively and have raised standards significantly. The development activities led by the co-ordinator have successfully focussed on improving the teaching with increased importance placed on mental calculations. This has been done with rigour and determination and these lessons in nearly every class are carried out at a good pace, promoting good learning. For example, in Year 2, the good pace of the lesson helped the pupils to practice and improve their knowledge of multiples of two, five and ten.
64. The teachers plan their lessons thoroughly, set out clearly what they want children to learn and devise appropriate tasks which help the pupils to sustain concentration. The introductory sessions of mental activity are a strong feature of most mathematics lessons and the good development of the teachers' skills has raised the pupils' enthusiasm and sharpened their understanding. The pupils steadily build upon their previous learning and the amount of work completed so far this year is quite adequate. The quality of the teaching, throughout Key Stage 1 is good, and almost all of the pupils make good progress. Most of them have a good understanding of place value to hundreds, tens and units by the time they are seven years old. They can estimate and round up and down to the nearest 10.
65. The pupils throughout Key Stage 2 make steady progress although this accelerates in Years 5 and 6 where the teaching is stronger. Most of the pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 can make appropriate calculations in their heads and the more able enjoy the challenge of working with large numbers. Most of the pupils can explain the strategies they use and see the importance of different approaches. For example, when Year 5 and 6 pupils were being introduced to multiplication using arrays, one pupil commented 'This is a way of making it easier for yourself.' The teachers give all pupils good encouragement and this brings an enthusiasm for mathematics and the confidence to 'have a go'. For example, the pupils in Years 3 and 4 were set a challenge to establish the properties of a prism, which they set about eagerly.
66. Throughout the school, numeracy activities are well taught. The level of consistency is directly attributable to the training and development undertaken by the teachers. The tasks are appropriate and well matched to the needs of the pupils ensuring they develop positive attitudes to mathematics. The co-ordinator monitors the teachers' planning and the pupils' work, and the headteacher monitors the quality of the teaching. The co-ordinator and headteacher together evaluate the school's performance and plan further developments. This strategy has had a significant impact upon the teaching of mathematics throughout the school. The learning objectives set by the teachers follow the numeracy strategy and the activities are well structured. This ensures that the work becomes more demanding and builds upon previous learning effectively to bring about a sound understanding of mathematics at each age group. The learning support assistants work effectively with groups of pupils and provide clearly focussed help and guidance. The provision made for the pupils with special educational needs is good with many pupils receiving additional support in small groups both from their class teacher and the learning support assistants.

SCIENCE

67. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum assessments of seven-year-olds in science showed the proportion of pupils attaining the expected levels and higher levels was above the national average. The proportion of eleven-year-olds achieving the expected levels was also above average but fewer than usual achieved higher levels. The results of tests and assessments for seven-year-olds match the average for similar schools. By the age of

eleven, the results at the expected levels were broadly in line with similar schools while results at the higher levels were below.

68. Over the last three years, the national test results show that there has been a steady rise in the pupils' attainment at both key stages. This is because the school has this year placed considerable emphasis on the preparation for national tests to make sure that the pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the whole of the science curriculum. There has also been an improvement in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection in 1996, when standards were judged to be barely in line with national expectations for the majority of pupils. There was little difference in the performance of boys and girls in the 1999 national tests.
69. The inspection findings indicate that at the end of Key Stage 1 standards are above average. A high proportion of the pupils are working at the expected level and a good proportion are attaining beyond that level. In Key Stage 2, standards are average with the majority of pupils on course to attain the expected level by the age of eleven. In the current Year 6 group, there is a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the results are unlikely to exceed those achieved last year.
70. The pupils in Key Stage 1, including those with special educational needs, make good moves forward in their learning. They acquire an appropriate body of knowledge that covers the key areas of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. Much of their work is taught through investigations and the pupils have a good understanding of how these are carried out. They record their work in an appropriate variety of ways. For example, in Year 1 the pupils investigate how to plug a hole in a bucket while in Year 2 they test the suitability of materials for making builder's gloves. They make good progress through the key stage in the development of their skills to carry out a fair test and record their findings in an organised way.
71. The pupils make steady gains in their learning as they move through Key Stage 2, and the majority display a secure knowledge across all aspects of science. For example, the pupils in Year 4 know which materials make good insulators and which make good conductors. They use their knowledge to predict how different materials will slow down the rate at which an ice cube will melt. They know which surfaces will create friction and slow down the rate at which a vehicle will travel. By the end of Key Stage 2, they know how the heart functions and its importance in ensuring that blood circulates round the body. In their work on forces, they learn how gravity pulls objects towards the earth while air resistance can be used to slow down or increase the rate of fall. They can classify materials into solids, liquids and gasses. Most pupils are able to state the factors of a fair test and know the importance of identifying the variable that is to be changed. The majority of pupils can organise an investigation appropriately and record their findings in a structured way. However, their work too often lacks the quality of presentation expected of pupils of this age. The quality of writing is not as good as it should be and this restricts opportunities for extending the work to higher levels. The presentation of some pupils' work in Years 5 and 6 is untidy and the pupils do not have sufficient pride in their work. Equally they do not always utilise or enhance their literacy skills in recording their work in science.
72. The pupils generally show a positive attitude to science. They are interested in the subject and keen to learn. They listen well and are eager to take part in discussions, offering ideas to help solve problems. The pupils co-operate well in group investigations and concentrate for appropriate lengths of time. Their behaviour is mostly good, but when the lesson is inappropriately organised and the tasks lack purpose and challenge a significant number of pupils become noisy and do not respond positively to their teacher.
73. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good. The teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and their lessons are well planned with appropriate learning objectives clearly identified. The work is lively and challenging throughout the key stage and the pupils are encouraged to develop a suitable scientific vocabulary. Tasks and discussions are used effectively to challenge the pupils to observe closely in their investigations.
74. The pupils' relationships with their peers and with their teachers are good and often very

good. In Key Stage 2, the teaching is satisfactory overall. Although there is some good teaching it is variable in Years 5 and 6 where it is occasionally unsatisfactory. The teachers' knowledge is less secure at this key stage. Where the teaching is good, the lessons are thoroughly planned, the activities are well organised and the pupils are appropriately challenged. The teachers' expectations of behaviour and attitude are clear and the pace of the lesson is good. In the unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher was not clear about what the pupils were expected to learn and the management and organisation both of the pupils and the tasks was weak. This impacted negatively on the challenges being presented to pupils. As a result, the pupils saw little purpose in what they are doing, their behaviour deteriorated and they learned little in the lesson.

75. The leadership in science is sound. The school has analysed the national test results and used the information well to ensure a broad and appropriate provision that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school makes sure that the programmes of study for science are fully covered with all pupils having equal access. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard to ensure that investigative and experimental science is effectively taught throughout the school. It has adopted the national guidelines for science and this is having a positive impact on the quality of provision and standards being achieved. The school makes good use of the local environment and visits outside school effectively support the curriculum. The pupils' work is regularly assessed and the results are used in the planning of subsequent work. In both key stages, it has helped teachers to identify where there are gaps in provision and has been successful in improving the pupils' learning.

ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

76. The quality of the pupils' work in art and design and technology is in line with that expected for their age. The pupils make satisfactory progress throughout both key stages. Those with special educational needs are fully involved in all of the activities and make sound progress.
77. In design and technology in Year 1, the pupils use pivots and sliders effectively to make moving pictures of pop up suns moving from behind clouds. In Year 2, they successfully produce a range of vehicles that have axles and wheels that can move. The pupils identify the purpose of the vehicle then successfully produce a lorry or car that meets the stated needs. All are individual and appropriately constructed and decorated in card and wood. In discussing moving mechanisms found in toys, they talk knowledgeably about how axles work, identifying the link between wheels and axles. In Years 3/4 the pupils understand how to make models balance when using construction kits. They design and make photograph frames and effectively evaluate their work afterwards. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils demonstrate appropriate skills in the designing, making and evaluation of their products. For example, they successfully designed and made shelters after looking at the shelters on site. These included models of bus shelters and a shelter for Pokemon, all brightly painted and well finished.
78. In art, the pupils learn from an early age to appreciate the work of well-known artists and the styles of art associated with different countries. In Year 1, they explore Japanese art through books, pictures and artefacts such as fans. These provide a good basis for their observational drawings of flowers on card, which later will be made into fans. They make large pictures combining painting, printing and collage. Throughout the key stage, the pupils effectively create collages using textiles and other materials. In Year 2, they successfully recreate masks in the style of African art. They explore Chinese art and make good 3D sculptures and decorate plates with paintings of dragons. The pupils also reproduce good quality paintings in the style of David Hockney, William Morris and Jackson Pollock. In Years 3 and 4, they closely observe the work of Van Gogh then use the knowledge gained to produce paintings in his style. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils use a range of media, including paint, pastels and pencil. These are used well in their paintings of buildings and close observational drawings. Pupils use their skills well in their work on the Ancient Egyptians when they produce death masks and images depicting life in ancient Egypt.
79. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In art lessons, in Key Stage 1, the pupils apply themselves diligently to their tasks for long

periods of time. They show a real enthusiasm for the subject. In Key Stage 2, most pupils listen carefully to adults and show satisfactory levels of independence. They support each other with positive and encouraging comments. However, on occasion there is a lack of motivation and the pupils do not appear to be fully involved in the activities.

80. Art and design and technology are taught in alternate half terms. During the inspection no design and technology was taught. Therefore no judgements on the teaching of the subject were possible. The quality of teaching in Art in Key Stage 1 is good. The lessons are introduced with a clear exposition that reviews the pupils' previous learning and extends their thinking. The lessons move at a brisk pace with the pupils well on task. The teacher has very good relationships with the pupils and high expectations of their attainment. The follow-up sessions with the whole class are focussed effectively on what has been learned. Good use is made of a range of resources. In Key Stage 2, the teachers focus well on the tasks to be undertaken and the teaching is sound overall. However, in two out of the three lessons seen the teachers' expectations regarding behaviour were not sufficiently explicit and the pupils were noisy while working. The pupils' work indicates that the teachers have a clear knowledge and understanding of the designing and making process. The lesson plans indicate that teachers have secure knowledge in both subjects and set clear learning objectives. There is equal opportunity and access in all aspects of the design and technology, and art curricula.
81. The provision for both art and design and technology has improved since the last inspection. The school has implemented the national guidelines for both subjects and this is having a positive effect upon practice and is ensuring that pupils make progress in their learning. The co-ordinator for art and the co-ordinator for design and technology, who is also the headteacher, monitors the teachers' planning to ensure that the agreed curriculum is delivered.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

82. No geography lessons were taught during the inspection. The school's programme for humanities work is based on a cycle whereby geographical and historical studies are provided in half-termly or termly sequence. This is efficient.
83. Evidence for geography was taken from the scrutiny of teachers' planning and of pupils' work. The quality of the work is satisfactory. The pupils in Key Stage 1 learn about their own environment and the effect of change, and they make comparisons with other environments found in the wider world. Studies of Kenya, for example, help the pupils to learn about the people, homes, customs, climate, and animal life in another country. The pupils gain a good grounding in geographical skills, such as the use of maps. In Key Stage 2, the pupils extend the range of their learning satisfactorily. Through fieldwork and studies of people, places, and environments, they develop sound skills in geographical enquiry. They learn the location of key places in the United Kingdom, Europe and the wider world, and increase their knowledge and understanding of how humans influence change.
84. History lessons provide the pupils at each stage with a satisfactory understanding of the lives of people in different eras, and knowledge of important events of the past. In Key Stage 1, this often takes the form of studies that are of particular interest to them. For example, during the inspection, visiting governors spoke to the pupils about their lives as children, and showed examples of the toys that they played with. The pupils were allowed to handle these artefacts, and the very good first-hand experiences did much to extend their knowledge and understanding of the past. The reasons for change were discussed, and opportunities were provided for the pupils to relate their own experiences and ideas. The experience was very positive and fruitful and the pupils made good progress in their learning.
85. In Key Stage 2, a similar pattern occurs. The pupils are given good opportunities to study the lives of famous people of the past, and to reflect on how ordinary people lived. For example, role-play activities, where the pupils dress in Victorian style clothes and enact scenes from a Victorian schoolroom, help them well to understand the evident rigours and to make

comparisons with their own lives in school. Through the use of first-hand experiences and the use of secondary sources of information, they gain a good understanding about the past, its influence on the present day and a sound knowledge of historical terms. The quality of their work is satisfactory and their progress, overall, is good.

86. The teachers have good subject knowledge. At both key stages the teaching is often lively and engages the interest of the pupils. The lessons are often exciting and inspiring. They are thoroughly planned, have clear historical objectives, and artefacts and resources are used well to support the learning. The support staff are fully involved and make positive contributions to the work in hand, helping to ensure the pupils' overall progress.
87. The pupils' attitudes to their history studies are positive. The quality of their work is satisfactory overall, and there are numerous good features, one of which is their ready involvement and interest. In some lessons, the pupils use their literacy skills effectively when writing and talking about historical subjects, but at other times they do not utilise and enhance these important skills sufficiently. The pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use technology either to obtain information, or to carry out research. History has taken a lower profile in the school's recent programme for improvement. Nevertheless, it beneficially maintains a strong position in the pupils' overall learning experiences.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

88. The standard of the pupils' work in information technology is below average. This is because the pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their skills and competencies, and the teachers do not make effective use of the available technology to enhance learning across the curriculum. It is clear from the pupils' work that this has been the case for some time and that the standards of work have not improved sufficiently since the last inspection. Until very recently, the school's information technology resources were old and unreliable, but a recent grant has provided funds to purchase eight new computers. A room has just been decorated to house the computers that will allow classes to take weekly lessons to develop their skills. These resources will provide good opportunities to apply across the whole curriculum the skills that the pupils acquire.
89. During the inspection, classes were being introduced to the new computers, the conventions of logging on and selecting software. In all of the lessons seen, the teachers had prepared well and knew the functions of the software that they were introducing to the children. The teachers managed these introductory sessions well. The Year 1 pupils were quickly mastering the use of the mouse to drag and drop images. The Year 6 pupils were being successfully introduced to handling information using a datafile about monarchs. The most effective strategy was when Year 2 pupils worked in two groups undertaking parallel activities. They were asked to produce a front cover for a fairy story. Whilst half of the class used a word processor to create a title by changing fonts, making the letters bold and centring the text, the other group used pencil and paper. This provided the opportunity for the teacher to discuss with the children the advantages and disadvantages of each method. Whilst the pupils in all classes clearly made gains in their learning it was evident that they did not have a broad range of information technology skills to build upon.
90. The school has an action plan for information technology that will guide future developments. The co-ordinator has enthusiastically overseen the setting up of the information technology suite and is eager to make rapid progress in establishing broad and exciting uses of information technology across the curriculum. She is very aware of the need to update the scheme of work and provide further training for the teachers. The school must take this opportunity to provide the pupils with opportunities to develop their information technology skills and to apply them across all subjects of the curriculum in order to raise standards. **This is an area for improvement.**

MUSIC

91. The quality of the pupils' music making is very good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The younger pupils are actively engaged in listening to music, and in interpreting its mood and style. They do this well. They perform enthusiastically, and by the end of the key stage have added the dimension of sensitivity to their efforts. The pupils sing well. Most can retain the rhythm and underlying pulse of a piece throughout a performance. They can handle percussion instruments effectively to produce chosen sounds.
92. There is excellent teaching in Key Stage 1, which promotes the pupils' learning and progress very well. The lessons are well planned to ensure a balance between the gaining of knowledge and the development of the pupils' creativity. The pupils are given choices of what instruments to play, and asked to consider the differences between and the appropriateness of various sounds in a performance. Good examples of very high quality teaching were observed. In Year 1, the newly qualified teacher purposefully and patiently engaged the class, which was very unsettled at the beginning of the session. The pupils were provided with challenging and exciting musical activities that, in a short space of time, had them totally engaged and working and thinking hard. By the close of the session, they could perform the sound effects to a poem on weather skilfully and enthusiastically. The pupils in Year 2 extend their previously learned skills as the result of similarly excellent teaching. They can recognise and use non-standard notation, follow the instructions of a conductor, sing in parts and play percussion instruments with sensitivity and verve. They make rapid gains in their understanding and skills at this stage.
93. The pace of learning slows at Key Stage 2. The quality of work is satisfactory, and the pupils retain much of their interest and enthusiasm in music and music making. Singing standards are good and the pupils can combine oral work with instrumental work effectively. The teaching is generally sound. However, not enough use is made of the plentiful space available for such activities. There are also limitations in the management of some activities and occasionally the pupils' behaviour detracts from the quality of their musical experiences. This lessens their rate of progress.
94. The resources for music are very good. The school has ample space for work in music and plentiful storage space. The teachers are confident in their approach and there is a good scheme of work to support them. At least two members of the teaching staff have specific musical skills and experience to share. However, the leadership of the subject is not purposeful enough, and there are no planned opportunities to strengthen this in view of the school's major curriculum priorities. While much of the making and appreciation of music in the school is positive, and the social context is good, the subject is not used sufficiently to promote the spiritual and cultural dimension of the older pupils' development.
95. Extra-curricular activities in music include recorder and guitar lessons.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

96. The pupils in Key Stage 1 are achieving a good standard of performance in gymnastics. No other aspects of physical education were taught during the inspection. In Key Stage 2 the pupils are taking swimming lessons this term. The school reports that almost all of the pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres by the age of eleven and most can confidently swim much further. During an extra curricular activity, the older pupils displayed good ball skills but no gymnastics or games lessons were taught in Key Stage 2 to allow a judgement to be made about standards or to evaluate the extent of improvement since the last inspection.
97. In the lessons seen in Key Stage 1, the teaching was good and the pupils progressed well because the teachers generated enthusiasm and moved the activities along at a good pace. The children were encouraged to participate fully and to improve their performance. The teachers introduced a good variety of movements that the pupils developed on both the floor and apparatus. They managed the lessons well, making good use of individual performances to both exemplify and evaluate the pupils' work. In both of the lessons seen, the importance of safety was properly emphasised.
98. The school has excellent accommodation for physical education and one of the two large halls is very well equipped with wall bars and frames. There is also a large playing field.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

100. The pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning in both key stages and achieve standards that are in line with those required by the locally agreed syllabus. They are developing knowledge of religious beliefs and practices, and how these influence peoples' lives. The pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in lessons and make sound progress in their learning.
100. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils learn about special places. They are beginning to understand that churches and other places of worship are important to the people whose religions they represent. The pupils share their feelings about places that are special to them. They also learn about Christian festivals and are able to compare them with festivals in other religions. For example, they compare the Christian Harvest Festival with the Jewish Sukkat. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils deepen their understanding of Christianity and its links with Judaism by exploring the story of Joseph and in Years 5 and 6 they study the story of Moses. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils effectively debate stories told by Jesus such as The Good Samaritan – reflecting on the messages given in the light of their own lives.
101. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, the pupils listen quietly, concentrate well and focus on the topic under consideration. They are happy to share in the discussions about class rules and their special places. In Key Stage 2 most pupils listen with respect to the views of others. However on occasion, when there is a lack of challenge in the lesson, they become noisy, lose concentration and do not respond appropriately to the teacher.
102. The teaching is good in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 it is satisfactory overall. The teachers' knowledge of the subject is improving. Their lessons are well planned, identifying clearly what the pupils are to learn. In the best lessons, the teachers successfully help their pupils to recall and build on previous learning, manage the class well and make their expectations of the pupils' attitudes and behaviour explicit. They use questioning effectively to guide the discussions. In Year 1 where the teaching observed was good, the teacher motivated the pupils very well in their work about special places. However, in one Key Stage 2 class, where there was a lack of appropriate challenge in the tasks and the teacher's expectations of the pupils' behaviour were not sufficiently explicit, the lesson was adversely affected and the pupils did not achieve what could be expected of them.
103. Since the last inspection, the standards attained by the pupils have been maintained. The teachers assess the pupils' understanding and knowledge through their effective questioning. The lesson planning takes good account of the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus including the teaching about the other major world faiths. There is a newly implemented guidance document, based on the agreed syllabus that effectively supports the teachers in their planning and provision. It gives opportunities for the pupils to build on their prior knowledge and understanding. The co-ordinator effectively manages the subject. She is able to monitor the provision through the teachers' planning and evaluation sheets.