

# INSPECTION REPORT

**LITTLEBOROUGH COMMUNITY PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

LITTLEBOROUGH

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105785

Headteacher: Martine E Moores

Reporting inspector: Mr D Roberts  
1743

Dates of inspection: 14-18 February 2000

Inspection number: 191593

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant/Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Calderbrook Road Littleborough Lancashire
Postcode:	OL15 9HW
Telephone number:	01706 378556
Fax number:	01706 376961
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Haywood
Date of previous inspection:	21 January 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
D Roberts	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
		Information technology	Results and achievements
			How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
			What should the school do to improve further?
F Kennedy	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
B Frost	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Physical education	
A Waters	Team inspector	English	Under fives
		Design and technology	
S Power	Team inspector	English as an additional language	
		Art	
		Geography	
		History	
A Watson	Team inspector	Special educational needs	
		Equal opportunities	
		Music	
		Religious education	

The inspection contractor was:

Chapel House Inspection Unit Ltd

The Old Chapel House  
Pound Hill  
Alresford  
Hampshire  
SO24 9BW

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## REPORT CONTENTS

### Paragraph

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

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? 1-22**

The school's results and achievements  
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

##### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT? 23-35**

##### **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS? 36-48**

##### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS? 49-54**

##### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS? 55-60**

##### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED? 61-75**

##### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER? 76**

#### **PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

#### **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES 77-164**

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This school is a large community primary school for boys and girls from three to eleven years old. It provides full-time education for 388 pupils, and part-time education for a further 60 children in the nursery. Taken together, the pupils' attainment on entry is typical of that found nationally. Currently 39 pupils are on the register of special educational needs, which is lower than the national average. Twelve pupils are at stages 3 to 5, most of whom have moderate learning difficulties, and there are individual needs for speech and hearing problems and for autism. Ten pupils are from ethnic minority families and nine are from homes where English is an additional language, which is lower than the national average.

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

This is an effective school, which makes good provision for supporting and caring for its pupils. Nearly all of the teaching is at least satisfactory and much of it is good, but there are shortcomings in the teaching of literacy and numeracy in a very small minority of lessons. The large majority of pupils achieve appropriate standards for their age, but a minority of older Key Stage 2 pupils are capable of achieving higher standards in English and mathematics. The headteacher, governors and staff work together successfully to maintain a broad curriculum. The school is managed efficiently and provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Children are given an excellent start to their school education in the nursery, where the quality of provision is outstanding.
- The majority of teaching is of good quality, and it is of high quality in the nursery and at Key Stage 1.
- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, who make good progress.
- Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate good attitudes towards their work, and their behaviour is of a good standard.
- The headteacher and governing body combine effectively to provide clear direction for the work of the school.
- The school provides a good broad curriculum, and pupils enjoy coming to school.

#### **What could be improved**

- The standards achieved by a significant proportion of high ability pupils in English and mathematics towards the end of Key Stage 2.
- The teaching of literacy and numeracy towards the end of Key Stage 2.
- The information provided in the annual written reports to parents on pupils' progress.

*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 steady progress since the last inspection. During the three years up to 1999, the school's rate of improvement in standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 2 was in line with that found nationally. The quality of teaching has continued to improve. The proportion of lessons judged to be good or better has increased from 40 per cent, in the last inspection, to 60 per cent in this inspection, and lessons in the high quality category from 4 per cent to 34 per cent. The school has been generally successful in addressing the key issues identified in the last inspection report. The amount of teaching time has been increased to the recommended level and the school has improved its procedures for monitoring punctuality. Despite much attention given to the variation in pupils' performance in terms of gender, the issue remains a priority for careful monitoring. Although the school has generally been successful in implementing the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, the approach is not entirely effective in all classes. The need to have a mixed aged class for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is one of the contributory factors resulting in a lack of clarity in the approach. The continuing growth in the number of pupils attending the school has now reached a stage where it will be possible to organise pupils into single aged classes throughout the school from the beginning of the next academic year. This factor together with the good procedures introduced for curricular planning and assessment indicate that the school is well placed to continue improving by building on existing strengths and addressing weaknesses.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	C	B	C	C	well above average    A above average        B average                    C below average         D well below average    E
mathematics	E	B	D	D	
science	D	D	C	C	

The table shows that in 1999 the school's test results for English and science were in line with those of all schools and schools with similar characteristics. Results in mathematics were below those of all and similar schools.

Inspection findings indicate that pupils make a good start in the nursery and achieve what is normally expected for their age in all areas of learning by the time they reach the age of five. By the age of seven, they achieve good standards in reading and science, and appropriate standards for their age in mathematics.

By the age of eleven standards in English, mathematics and science are in line with those found nationally, but some high ability pupils are capable of achieving higher standards in English and mathematics.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Throughout the school, pupils show good attitudes towards their work. They show interest and enthusiasm and are keen to take part in all school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in all lessons and about the school.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good overall. Relationships are good, pupils respect each other's feelings, values and beliefs.
Attendance	Good; slightly better than the national average.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall – 72	Good	Very 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 quality of teaching is generally good. During the inspection, 61 per cent of lessons were at least good, 34 per cent were very good or better, and 6 per cent were excellent. Four per cent were judged to be unsatisfactory.

The teaching of language and literacy and mathematical skills to the children under five is generally good, and very good in the nursery. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is very good in all aspects of English and science, and good in mathematics. At Key Stage 2, teaching of English and mathematics is generally satisfactory and often good, particularly at the beginning of the key stage, but there are shortcomings in some of the teaching of older pupils. Science teaching is generally good at Key Stage 2. Good co-operation between teachers and support staff and consistently effective class management are strong features throughout the school.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good curriculum which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Rochdale Agreed Syllabus. The curriculum in the nursery is of high quality. There are effective strategies in place for developing literacy and numeracy skills at Key Stage 1 and early Key Stage 2. However, insufficient attention is given to the guidance provided by the national literacy and numeracy strategies in Years 5 and 6. The statutory curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of relevant and interesting extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision throughout the school. Work is pitched at an appropriate level to help pupils work towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Good support is provided by classroom assistants and other support staff. Extra-curricular writing club helps gifted pupils to extend their skills.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school makes good provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Class teachers provide work which is appropriately challenging. External support is available when necessary.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good opportunities provided in religious education for pupils to reflect on own values and thoughts. Social development promoted effectively through formal and extra-curricular activities. Strong emphasis on moral development helps to promote good behaviour and concern for others. Awareness of pupils' own and other cultures consistently promoted.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures in place for monitoring pupils' welfare and safety and for child protection. Arrangements for promoting attendance are good. Procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development and for assessing pupils' progress are also good. Current arrangements for reporting to parents on pupils' progress need some improvement.

A good partnership has been developed with parents, most of whom would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. A minority of parents would like the school to work more closely with them.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Headteacher provides purposeful leadership, and is well supported by coordinators for subjects and aspects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governing body works effectively with the head to provide clear direction for the work of the school and ensure that statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good use is made of National Curriculum test results and comparative information to evaluate performance and set targets for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Very good quality school development plan enables money to be spent wisely on educational priorities. All resources are managed effectively.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The children like school.</li> <li>• The children make good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• They would feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions or problems.</li> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A significant minority of parents would like more information on how their children are getting on and would like the school to work more closely with them.</li> </ul>

The inspectors endorse parents' positive views. They find the current arrangements for reporting to parents on pupils' progress to be in need of improvement. The arrangements for working together with parents are similar to those in most schools and are judged to be appropriate. However, the headteacher and governing body are anxious to continue strengthening the partnership with parents and will take the views expressed by parents into account when reviewing current arrangements.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The attainment levels of children on entry to the nursery are broadly in line with those found nationally. They make very good progress in the nursery and satisfactory progress in reception classes. By the time they enter Key Stage 1, the majority of children meet and a significant number exceed the standards set out in the nationally agreed desirable outcomes for their learning in all areas of the curriculum.

2. Comparative information, based on the 1999 National Curriculum test results, indicates that the performance of pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 1 in reading and mathematics is broadly in line with the average for all schools and those with similar characteristics. In writing, the pupils' performance is in line with that of all schools, but below that of similar schools. The same test results show that the proportion of pupils exceeding the level set by the National Curriculum is above the national average in reading and in line with the average in writing. National test results for the three years up to 1999 indicate no significant variation in the performance of pupils at Key Stage 1 in terms of gender.

3. Comparative information for pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 2 indicates that the school's overall performance is broadly in line with all and similar schools. In English and science the pupils' performance is consistent with that of pupils in both categories, but mathematics is below the average for all and similar schools. The national test results for 1999 show that the proportion of pupils exceeding the level set by the National Curriculum and reaching level 5 is above the national average in English, close to the average in science and below the average in mathematics.

4. Key Stage 2 national test results for the three years up to 1999 indicate a rate of improvement in the core subjects which is in line with that found nationally. During the same period, the girls outperformed the boys in all three subjects. The school has recognised this as an issue, which needs to be monitored carefully in order to ensure that boys are not disadvantaged in any way.

5. Inspection findings indicate that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above the national average in reading and science, and in line with the average in speaking and listening, writing and mathematics. Pupils' achievements in relation to prior attainment are good in reading and science, and satisfactory in writing and mathematics.

6. Inspection findings for the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that standards are broadly in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. Although pupils' achievements in relation to prior attainment is broadly satisfactory in all three subjects, a significant proportion of higher ability pupils are capable of reaching higher standards in English and mathematics. This applies particularly to pupils in classes towards the end of the key stage.

7. In English, standards in speaking and listening have improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1. In reading, the great majority of pupils at all levels of attainment make good progress in the core reading programme and benefit greatly from the valuable support of parents in reading with their children at home. At Key Stage 2, a concentration on the basic skills ensures that pupils make generally satisfactory progress in their reading, but towards the end of the key stage insufficient attention is given to developing higher order skills such as skimming and scanning, which prevents some

of the higher ability pupils from building effectively on their early skills.

8. In writing, pupils at all levels of attainment make good progress at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, there are many good features and the great majority of pupils make satisfactory progress. Most pupils develop a fluent and legible style of handwriting, and reach an acceptable standard in the presentation of their work. Their writing skills are considerably enhanced through extended writing across other areas of the curriculum, for example, in history and religious education. Towards the end of the key stage, over-emphasis placed on completing grammar exercises from textbooks is restricting progress, particularly of higher ability pupils. Insufficient attention is given to the implementation of the literacy hour. This means that pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their ability to organise and structure their writing by drawing on their experience in reading and studying texts drawn from a wide range of fiction, poetry and reference materials.

9. In mathematics, pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 1 show good skills when working with numbers up to 20 and beyond, and demonstrate a secure grasp of place value. At Key Stage 2, pupils build effectively on this and show a growing ability to solve a range of problems, using appropriate strategies. By the end of the key stage, the great majority of pupils reach appropriate standards for their age, but a significant number of high ability pupils are not challenged sufficiently and make insufficient progress in relation to their prior attainment.

10. In science, the great majority of pupils are on course to reach, and a significant minority to exceed, the levels set by the National Curriculum at the end of both key stages. Clear lesson planning and tasks that are well matched to pupils' capabilities are important factors in promoting good progress by pupils at all levels of attainment. At Key Stage 1, in particular, the good use made of an interesting range of materials and variety of objects helps to capture pupils' interest and contributes towards good progress. Throughout the school, good class management results in high levels of concentration and productivity which in turn contribute towards improving standards.

11. Standards in information technology are broadly in line with the levels set by the National Curriculum at both key stages, and a significant number of pupils exceed the expected level at Key Stage 1. The excellent use of large screen projections in order to provide clear explanation and illustration during whole-class or group teaching, and the availability of good resources, contribute greatly towards the good rate of progress and improving standards now evident.

12. In religious education, standards at the end of both key stages meet those set by the Rochdale Agreed Syllabus.

13. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. In literacy and numeracy lessons for older Key Stage 2 pupils, however, higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently and this restricts their progress. Some of the arrangements initiated by the headteacher, to create additional opportunities for higher attaining and gifted pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, are contributing effectively. For example, extra-curricular opportunities for older pupils to engage in extended writing and information technology activities have a positive effect on standards they achieve.

14. Pupils at both key stages work at appropriate levels in all other subjects. The quality of work produced in art at both key stages and design and technology at Key Stage 2 is particularly good. In swimming, the great majority of pupils are able to swim 25 metres or more unaided before leaving the school at the end of Year 6.

15. Pupils' literacy skills are good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2; their numeracy skills are satisfactory at both key stages. The successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy at Key Stage 1 and the first half of Key Stage 2 is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement in those classes. However, the strategies have yet to be implemented effectively in Years 5 and 6.

16. The governors have set appropriately challenging targets for improvement in English and mathematics for future years, which take account of the varying ability levels of different cohorts of pupils. The school is well on course to achieve the targets set for the end of the current academic year.

17. The overall improvement in standards since the last inspection is satisfactory. Considerable improvements in resources for information technology and continuing improvements in teaching are contributing towards better standards in the subject. The quality of work in art at Key Stage 2, which was judged to be unsatisfactory at the last inspection, has improved significantly. In addition, the proportion of pupils exceeding national standards at the end of Key Stage 2 has increased in mathematics and science. The variation in performance of boys and girls at the end of Key Stage 2 remains an area for attention, although the school draws some encouragement from the more even picture at the end of Key Stage 1.

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

18. Behaviour throughout the school is good. The pupils like school. Their enthusiasm for school life is reflected in their good attendance, their sustained interest and concentration during lessons and their enjoyment of play times. In their movement around the school, in the dining room and in the playground the pupils show consideration for one another and respect for school property. They are courteous to their teachers and to the other adults who work with them. Visitors are greeted with a smile and made to feel welcome.

19. Pupils behave well in lessons in all subjects. They settle down quickly and quietly at the beginning of the lesson and listen attentively to their teachers and to one another. During class discussion they contribute confidently and value others' contributions, mindful of other people's feelings for example when the wrong answer is given in a mental mathematics session. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good throughout the school and particularly good in the early years, at Key Stage 1 and at lower Key Stage 2. Pupils are very eager to learn and maintain a high level of enthusiasm for the tasks they undertake. Throughout the school the pupils take care with the presentation of their written work. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are contributing positively to their learning and to the educational standards which they achieve.

20. Relationships at all levels are good. The pupils have a clear understanding of how their words and actions can affect other people. A school council was set up in September 1999 and the pupils involved have already helped to rewrite the school rules in child-friendly language. These are displayed in all areas of the school, giving pupils a useful reminder of the standards of behaviour that are expected of them. The school consistently implements a comprehensive and effective positive behaviour policy which makes provision for rewarding hard work and good attitudes, and for preventing and eliminating bullying and other forms of oppressive behaviour. This enhances the caring ethos of the school by developing a calm and friendly atmosphere in which both children and teachers can work together in a positive way. Exclusions are only imposed after all other means of improving

an individual's behaviour have been tried. There was only one fixed term exclusion during the school year prior to the inspection.

21. Pupils generally respond very well to the many opportunities they are given to show initiative and take responsibility. For example, the children in the nursery and the reception classes enjoy helping to tidy away toys and equipment at the end of the lesson. Pupils at Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 gladly help to give out books and work sheets and collect them in at the end of the session. In Year 6, the prefect system works well and helps pupils to develop reliability and a sense of responsibility. The prefects carry out a wide range of duties including dealing with lost property, assisting in the dining room and helping to supervise younger pupils in the playground.

22. The pupils' record of attendance is consistently good. Attendance for the last reporting year was above 93 per cent for all year groups and 95.2 per cent for the school as a whole. This is slightly above the national average. Unauthorised absence for the same period was low and broadly in line with the national average of 0.5 per cent. The pupils arrive punctually in the mornings and lessons start promptly.

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

23. The quality of teaching is generally good. During the inspection, 61 per cent of lessons were at least good, 34 per cent were very good or better and 6 per cent were excellent. Four per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory.

24. Teaching in the nursery is consistently of high quality; all of the lessons observed were in this category. This enables children to make an excellent start to their education. All of the areas of learning are taught very effectively and children make significant progress. Teaching in reception classes is never less than satisfactory; it is often good and much of the teaching of language and literacy and mathematics is of very good quality.

25. Throughout the early years, the teaching of the under fives is successful in promoting good progress by most children. The majority of them make significant progress in extending their early literacy and numeracy skills and in their creative and physical development. They make steady progress in extending their knowledge and understanding of the world, showing interest and an increasing capacity to sustain concentration. Many show growing independence when working at computer work-stations. Teaching is particularly successful in promoting the children's personal and social development, preparing them well for the next stage of learning. Very effective team-work between teaching and support staff is a strong feature at this stage. Planning and assessment of work are generally completed efficiently in all classes and are excellent features in the nursery. The teaching of children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is of good quality throughout the early years.

26. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is very good, with 60 per cent of lessons observed being in the high quality category. The teaching of English, mathematics, science and information technology is consistently of a high standard, and good quality teaching is also apparent in art and physical education. Highly effective planning and outstanding use of assessment to inform future teaching are important factors in promoting consistently good progress by the pupils. The great majority make significant progress in extending their skills, knowledge and understanding in most subjects, and most show a good understanding of their own learning and areas which need to be improved. Class management is also a very good feature at this stage, promoting high levels of concentration and very good attitudes and behaviour by the pupils.

27. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is generally satisfactory. Forty two per cent of lessons observed were good or better. Eight per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory; they were all in Years 5 and 6. Teaching of science, information technology, and design and technology is often good and sometimes of high quality, and literacy and numeracy lessons are taught well in Years 3 and 4. Good class management is a consistent feature throughout Key Stage 2. This promotes good levels of concentration and productivity, and consistently good behaviour by pupils. However, literacy and numeracy lessons are not taught so effectively in Years 5 and 6, where teachers are having greater difficulty in implementing the national strategies for literacy and numeracy.

28. The teaching of English during literacy lessons is very good at Key Stage 1. Texts for the introductory activities are carefully selected and presented. At Key Stage 2, literacy lessons are generally conducted successfully in Years 3 and 4, with particularly good use being made of overhead projectors to display the shared texts in some lessons. Planning at this stage is clear and precise and work is appropriately pitched to present a good level of challenge to pupils at different levels of ability, promoting good progress by most of them. Towards the end of the key stage, however, literacy lessons are less effective and insufficient emphasis is placed on challenging and extending higher attaining pupils. This is restricting their progress in extending their literacy skills, knowledge and understanding.

29. A similar picture exists in mathematics. Teaching of numeracy lessons at Key Stage 1 is of a very good standard. All elements of the National Numeracy Strategy are being implemented successfully. This is also the case in the early stages of Key Stage 2, where teaching of numeracy lessons is good. Clear, detailed planning, good lesson organisation and class management are supporting good progress by pupils at all levels of attainment, particularly in extending their skills in the quick recall of numbers and solving mental problems. However, in Years 5 and 6, numeracy lessons fail to extend higher attaining pupils sufficiently. Although pupils are grouped in separate classes according to ability, insufficient attention is given to challenging high attainers within the top set.

30. The teaching of science is very good at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Planning is clear, and tasks are well matched to pupils' capabilities, serving to extend consistently their scientific knowledge and understanding as well as their skills in experimental and investigative work. Good class management and organisation contribute towards a brisk pace in most lessons, leading to good levels of productivity by the pupils.

31. Since the last inspection, there has been a considerable improvement in the teaching of information technology. Timetabled lessons for all classes in the computer suite, and growing confidence of teachers and support staff, have a very positive impact on the achievement of pupils at both key stages. The great majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress, particularly in extending their skills in communicating and handling information. Teaching also fosters a capacity to work independently and to overcome difficulties through perseverance. Although there are some good examples of teachers creating opportunities for pupils to extend their information technology skills through work in other subjects, this is not yet a consistent feature in the teaching.

32. At both key stages, the teaching of religious education is at least satisfactory and sometimes very effective. It promotes generally satisfactory progress by pupils towards the standards set by the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education.

33. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. The work in classrooms is matched appropriately to the needs of pupils and guided by the targets set in individual education plans. The very effective co-operation between teachers and

support staff is a strong feature, which helps to promote good progress by pupils in this category.

34. In other subjects, tasks are pitched at an appropriate level to challenge pupils, and opportunities are regularly taken to extend literacy and numeracy skills. This is particularly apparent in science where investigations often require accurate measurements, and graphs are used effectively to record findings. In history and geography, teachers show perception in creating opportunities for pupils to engage in extended writing activities arising from their studies, and for incorporating some of the new skills acquired during the literacy lessons. Through work in art, music, design and technology and physical education, the teaching successfully promotes pupils' creative and physical development.

35. Since the last inspection, the proportion of lessons judged to be good has increased from 40 per cent to 60 per cent, and lessons in the very good to excellent category from 4 per cent to 34 per cent. Continuing in-service training and the implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have contributed greatly towards this improvement. However, there remains scope for further improvements in the teaching in Years 5 and 6.

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

36. The school provides its pupils with a good curriculum, which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the expectations set out in the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Recently, the school has concentrated appropriately on the implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies but has not neglected the wider curriculum, which continues to offer the pupils a range of interesting and appropriate learning opportunities that are well matched to their needs. It provides a good curriculum for children under five, where provision in the nursery is of high quality.

37. The school has effective strategies in place for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, particularly at Key Stage 1 and the younger classes at Key Stage 2, providing for high achievements and offering most of the pupils relevant and purposeful learning opportunities. However, towards the end of Key Stage 2, in literacy and numeracy lessons insufficient attention is given to some of the guidance provided in the national literacy and numeracy strategies for structuring lessons. As a result, the provision for potentially higher attaining pupils is not always meeting their needs.

38. The statutory curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of relevant and interesting extra-curricular activities, which are open to boys and girls. The programme is appropriately balanced and offers a variety of sporting, creative, aesthetic and intellectual activities, which are well attended. In addition, the local community association organises a variety of activities that some of the pupils attend after school. The school makes good provision for the pupils to experience relevant visits locally and further afield. For example, the older



pupils take part in residential visits in England and in Scotland. They recently visited Blair Castle, and also combined with two other schools on a field trip to Whitby as part of their geographical and historical studies.

39. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Effective use is made of baseline assessment of children, begun in the nursery and implemented throughout the school, to support early identification procedures. Individual education plans are completed for the pupils who are at Stage 2 and above on the Code of Practice.

40. The plans are very well written and contain precise and measurable targets, which are reviewed at regular intervals. They contain an appropriate time scale and focus effectively on aspects of English and mathematics. In addition, group activities in literacy and numeracy, and the close involvement of classroom support assistants, make an important contribution towards the provision for the pupils with special educational needs.

41. The school curriculum is socially inclusive and is successful in offering equality of access and opportunity for all of the pupils. During daily acts of collective worship the themes chosen reflect the achievements of men and women from pupils' own and other cultures. For example, in the assembly on the early years of Moses' life, the pupils were introduced to aspects of Judaism. In the classrooms a good gender balance is achieved during group work and this is also apparent in the range of the questioning, where all pupils are treated fairly.

42. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Opportunities are provided for pupils' spiritual development in religious education. For example, Year 3 pupils were given opportunity to reflect on their own values and thoughts before writing personal prayers. The school places great value on the daily act of collective worship. In meeting statutory requirements, in this respect, such occasions are well planned, mainly of a Christian character and provide a very important platform for the pupils to explore questions about meaning and purpose, values and beliefs.

43. Pupils make steady progress in their moral development. For example, the school rules uphold good standards and are based on a home school agreement involving parents, teachers and pupils. The school council is making an important contribution to the pupils' moral development. The pupils are provided with many opportunities that enable them to understand and value each other's point of view and to respect opinions which are different from their own. They are helped in many ways, particularly through school assemblies, the telling of stories and by the manner in which all the adults in the school provide good role models, to understand the principles that distinguish right from wrong.

44. The pupils' social development is good. Pupils mix and collaborate together. For example, a large number of junior pupils are involved in the annual Christmas show. In lessons, they work effectively as a class as well as in small groups and individually. They relate well to the adults working in the school. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility as monitors, and the prefect system gives opportunity for pupils to have responsibility in the wider school community. Social development is encouraged beyond the school confines. For example, many pupils are involved in a police liaison scheme.

45. The curriculum makes an important contribution to the pupils' own cultural traditions and to the diversity and richness of other cultures, especially in religious education and music. For example, in the Year 6 music lesson on the twelve bar blues, the pupils were able to appreciate the significant influence of American music in the 1940's. In religious

education the pupils are effectively introduced to Jewish, Islamic and Hindu cultures. Visits to museums, zoos, synagogues and Jodrell Bank have made an important contribution to their cultural development.

46. The school provides a coherent and relevant curriculum, which emphasises appropriately the development of the pupils' personal and social education. Health education is taught mainly through science, and includes appropriate attention to drug misuse and sex education where the school nurse makes a significant contribution to Year 6. Pupils are given essential facts about healthy lifestyles which enable them to make informed choices now and in the future.

47. The school is helped to develop good links with the local community by the fact that it shares a site with the local authority's Recreation and Community Services department and the Adult Education and Community Council. Since the last inspection, the school and its pupils have benefited considerably from local business sponsorship, government grants and shared costs with the local authority, the Recreation and Community Services department and the Community Council. This has resulted in a number of additional features, which benefit the pupils and the local community. They include a new science laboratory, a children's centre, after school and breakfast clubs and a new suite for information technology.

48. The school has satisfactory links with the local secondary school to which almost all of the pupils transfer. Appropriate arrangements are in place for the transfer of relevant records and attainment data. In addition, Year 6 pupils spend a day at the high school towards the end of the summer term and sample a range of lessons throughout a well-structured day. Parents are encouraged to attend a specially organised evening when they can ask relevant questions and gain information that eases the transfer from the primary school.

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

49. The school takes good care of its pupils and makes good provision for child protection by following the procedures adopted by the local Area Child Protection Committee. The designated teacher has a thorough knowledge of local procedures and is responsible for ensuring that school policy is updated regularly to keep abreast of changes in statutory requirements. This enables the headteacher and governing body to make good provision for ensuring the health, safety and protection of the pupils. Good support for the work of the school is provided by the educational welfare officer, who is closely involved in monitoring the pupils' attendance and advising on matters concerning their general welfare.

50. Arrangements for monitoring attendance are good. Registration periods are well organised and teachers take time to greet each pupil individually. This helps to promote good relationships and ensures that each morning and afternoon session gets off to a good start. Class registers are marked neatly and accurately and make a clear distinction between authorised and unauthorised absence. Illness and holidays account for almost all absence and the incidence of unauthorised absence is low. Any unexplained absence is followed up promptly.

51. Through the curriculum and the daily life of the school, the pupils are taught the basic principles of good relationships and a healthy lifestyle. Representatives from Years 5 and 6 are involved with the Police Association Liaison Unit. They receive regular communications from the police about keeping safe and pass this on to the rest of the school. The work in geography covers a wide range of conservation issues. The excellent

display of life in the rain forest produced by pupils in Years 5 and 6 helps pupils to develop good understanding of the importance of caring for the natural world.

52. Procedures for monitoring the pupils' personal development and behaviour are good. Individual Record of Achievement files follow the pupils through the school and contain copies of their annual reports, certificates awarded to them for good work and behaviour and samples of work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are of a high order. Staff are skilled in behaviour management in the classroom and consistent in their implementation of the whole school positive behaviour policy; as a result most pupils are well behaved in lessons and around the school. Minor misdemeanours in class are dealt with effectively and with a minimum of fuss. Incidents of serious misconduct are rare. The pupils know that anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and fighting, will not be tolerated by the school. Staged procedures are used for dealing with and recording serious or persistent misbehaviour, and parents are involved at an early stage whenever an individual's conduct is giving cause for concern.

53. The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. The marking policy emphasises the importance of sharing strengths and weaknesses with the pupils. This helps to support the pupils by making them aware of their own progress and achievements. Some teachers set targets in the pupils' annual reports, but target setting for individuals, both formally and informally, is not yet used consistently as a means of making the pupils aware of how they are progressing, and what they can do to improve their work. Good procedures are in place for monitoring and supporting the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Targets in individual education plans are clearly expressed allowing progress to be measured accurately.

54. Procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress are good. A month by month guide to assessment throughout the year specifies clearly the tests that are to be carried out, and records and samples of work that should be kept. Formative assessment is used very effectively in some day-to-day planning, especially at Key Stage 1. The headteacher monitors medium term plans against set criteria and adjustments are made to future planning where necessary.

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

55. The school has established good links with parents. The consultation exercise, prior to the inspection, revealed that almost all parents are in agreement that their children like school. The great majority of parents consider that teaching is good and that the school is well led and managed. They feel comfortable in approaching the school with problems or questions concerning their children, and are of the opinion that their children are making good progress and are helped to become mature and responsible. Almost all are of the opinion that the school expects its pupils to work hard and achieve of their best. The majority are happy with standards of behaviour achieved by the school. The inspection findings support all these positive views.

56. A relatively small minority of the parents are dissatisfied with the amount of work their children are expected to do at home and with the range of activities provided by the school. The inspection findings do not uphold these views. Teachers make good use of homework, particularly reading, spelling and mathematics, and this is helping pupils in all year groups to make good progress in all areas of the curriculum. The school is currently trialling a more formal homework diary in Year 4, aimed at improving communications with parents and encouraging greater involvement in their children's learning. The format of this diary is good and it is proving a useful channel for home-school communication. The school

provides a broad and balanced curriculum and a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which includes an animal club, a writing club, music tuition and various sports clubs.

57. A significant minority of parents would like the school to work more closely with them, and would like more information about their children's progress. Inspection evidence indicates that the school has developed a good partnership with parents, but that arrangements for reporting on pupils' progress need to be improved. Current arrangements do not meet reporting requirements. They do not include separate reports on each subject at Key Stage 1. Reports for Key Stage 2 do not include written statements that identify strengths and areas for improvement in each subject.

58. The school prospectus, the governing body's annual report and monthly newsletters help to keep parents and carers fully informed in relation to school procedures and events. The school has not yet finalised the home-school agreement, which is being drawn up in close consultation with parents. The governors take an active interest in promoting links with parents, and hold regular sessions where parents can come into school to discuss any concerns they may have about their children's education.

59. A significant number of parents and friends of the school give good and reliable support in lessons, both in the nursery and in the main school. The teachers include this additional support in their lesson planning. Parents are enthusiastic in their support for most school events. One thousand parents and relatives of past and present pupils attended the pageants which were presented in celebration of the Millennium.

60. Arrangements for the induction of children into the nursery and the reception classes are very good, and flexible enough to suit the needs of all the children. Parents are given lots of helpful information on how to support their children's learning at home and how to prepare their children for starting school. A notable feature of the school's very good provision for children under five is that the children are invited to take lunch in the school dining room, with their parents, for one day in the term prior to admission to reception.

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

61. The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher and governing body work together effectively to provide clear direction for the work of the school. Curriculum co-ordinators provide effective leadership in promoting and developing their subjects. These factors have contributed towards the generally good quality of teaching that now exists. In addition, new initiatives to bring about further improvements are addressed conscientiously in most parts of the school, although there are inconsistencies in the implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy towards the end of Key Stage 2.

62. The school has achieved a steady rate of improvement since the last inspection. Recent appointments have strengthened the teaching and support staff. Arrangements are in hand to introduce a two form entry throughout the school from the beginning of the next academic year. This means that the school will be able to avoid having a mixed aged class for pupils in Years 5 and 6, which has contributed towards some lack of clarity in the implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. These factors, together with the good procedures in place for curricular planning and assessment, indicate that the school is well placed to continue to improve by building on existing strengths and addressing weaknesses.

63. Clear educational aims are communicated effectively to parents through the prospectus. The school is committed to providing equality of opportunity and to fostering good relationships between pupils, staff, and parents; these aims are reflected consistently in all of its work. The

variation in performance of boys and girls at the end of Key Stage 2 is a matter of concern to the school. Senior management, governors and staff are well aware of this issue, and the school draws some encouragement from recent Key Stage 1 national test results, which show no significant variation in the performance of boys and girls at the end of this key stage.

64. Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They work hard to ensure that statutory requirements are met, and are generally successful. However, some aspects of the annual reports to parents on pupils' progress fall short of reporting requirements and need attention. In general, however, governors successfully ensure that the school meets the need of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Appropriate governing body committees have been established, and some members are particularly generous with their time, and they work hard in the interest of the pupils. Governors are committed to maintaining good relationships with parents. An example of this commitment is the initiative to provide regular governor surgeries, in order to offer opportunities for parents to express any concerns or ideas for improvements.

65. Good procedures have been introduced to monitor teaching and the curriculum. Although their implementation has been effective in most respects, and highly effective at Key Stage 1, insufficient attention has been given to monitoring the implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy at the end of Key Stage 2, and this has contributed towards a loss of momentum in the progress of high ability pupils at this stage.

66. Responsibilities for co-ordinating subjects and aspects of the curriculum are appropriately shared and defined. Teachers' weekly planning is checked by the key stage co-ordinators and headteacher. These plans are then passed to subject co-ordinators in order to help them monitor curricular balance and provision in their subjects.

67. Strong emphasis is placed on helping teachers to improve their performance by attending in-service training. All of the requirements for staff appraisal are met, and the headteacher also conducts personal interviews twice a year with each member of staff. These meetings examine the individual's progress in carrying out their responsibilities, identify training needs, and agree personal targets. There are appropriate procedures for supporting the induction of newly qualified teachers and those who are new to the school.

68. The school development planning process is well conceived and ensures that the views of all relevant groups are considered when identifying priorities. The plan itself is of high quality. Targets for improvements are listed clearly and detailed information is provided about action to be taken to support their implementation. Appropriate information is also provided about deadlines for meeting targets, individual responsibilities, and criteria for evaluating the success of initiatives. The quality of the plan and planning process ensures that money is spent appropriately on relevant educational priorities.

69. The school makes good use of its income. Grants for specific purposes are used appropriately, and good use is made of the element within the school's budget for making provision for pupils with special educational needs. The governors' finance committee

combines effectively with the headteacher and efficient school administration to monitor spending and ensure efficient financial control. Relevant staff are appropriately trained and the school makes good use of information technology to support financial management.

70. The strategic management of all resources is good. The school has sufficient suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum for pupils at all stages of their education; they are deployed effectively.

71. Good use is made of the range of facilities provided by the accommodation. In addition to the school's own accommodation, the pupils have access to a science room, an additional gymnasium and a large sports hall, which are part of an extensive community campus. However, the large size of the school accommodation does make heavy demands on staff in terms of supervision of pupils.

72. The quality of the internal learning environment is considerably enhanced by displays of pupils' work, which are of a high standard. Displays are often used to advantage in lessons to create interest and reinforce learning.

73. Resource levels are generally satisfactory, and particularly good in information technology. However there are some deficiencies. The range of resources to support the implementation of some aspects of the National Literacy Strategy is limited, and the absence of large outdoor play equipment restricts learning opportunities for children in reception classes.

74. The governing body has established effective procedures for securing best value and quality when purchasing resources and equipment, and arranging for work to be completed. Appropriate attention is also given to evaluating the effect of new resources and equipment on the quality of education provided and the standards achieved by pupils. In addition, the headteacher provides regular information about the school's performance in comparison with similar schools to enable governors to assess the school's progress.

75. Since the last inspection, the school has increased the amount of teaching time to bring it in line with national recommendations, and it now meets all requirements for providing daily collective worship. In addition, resources in the nursery have been improved significantly.

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

76. In order to raise standards and quality of work further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) improve the standards achieved in English and mathematics by higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 by:
  - raising teachers' expectations, and
  - providing more challenging work;(see paragraphs 7, 8, 9, 88, 89, 96)

- (2) improve the teaching of literacy and numeracy in classes for older Key Stage 2 pupils by:
- implementing consistently the national strategies for literacy and numeracy,
  - monitoring the teaching regularly,
  - providing appropriate resources and in-service training;
- (see paragraphs 27, 28, 29, 93, 103)
- (3) improve the quality of annual reports to parents on pupils' progress, so that they meet reporting requirements, by:
- reporting on each subject in separate sections, and
  - ensuring that the text identifies strengths and areas for improvement.
- (See paragraph 57)

In addition to the key issues listed above, the following aspect should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- provide appropriate large outdoor play equipment for children in the reception classes.
- (See paragraph 83)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	28	27	35	4	-	-

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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30	388
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		63

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	35

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	26

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
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	29	33	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	19	26
	Girls	30	30	27
	Total	53	49	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85	79	85
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	25	23
	Girls	28	28	29
	Total	49	53	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79	85	84
	National	82	86	87

### 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	29	25	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	18	23
	Girls	25	19	24
	Total	41	37	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76	69	87
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	18	23
	Girls	25	19	24
	Total	41	37	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76	69	87
	National	68	69	75

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	5
White	409
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

*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)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.86:1
Average class size	30

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	90

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30:1

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	22

Number of pupils per FTE adult	15:1
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1998-1999
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	£
Total income	595368
Total expenditure	582684
Expenditure per pupil	1418
Balance brought forward from previous year	-3843
Balance carried forward to next year	8841

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	418
Number of questionnaires returned	156

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62.2	32.7	3.2	1.3	0.6
My child is making good progress in school.	51.3	40.4	5.1	1.3	1.9
Behaviour in the school is good.	38.5	52.6	4.5	1.9	2.5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31.4	44.9	10.9	3.8	9.0
The teaching is good.	53.8	41.7	2.6	0.6	1.3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28.8	46.8	18.6	5.8	0.0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59.6	29.5	7.7	2.6	0.6
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50.0	42.3	2.6	0.0	5.1
The school works closely with parents.	26.3	50.6	14.7	7.7	0.6
The school is well led and managed.	45.5	42.9	5.1	2.6	3.8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45.5	48.1	3.2	0.0	3.2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25.0	42.3	9.6	3.8	19.2

## **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**

77. Children are admitted to the nursery on a part-time basis at the start of the school year when they become four and transfer to the reception class in the September of the academic year in which they are five. At the time of the inspection, there were 54 children in the reception classes, 24 of whom were still under five years old. There were 60 children attending the nursery part-time, either morning or afternoon. On admission to the nursery class the children show a wide range of attainment, but overall they demonstrate standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their children of this age.

78. The quality of the provision made for children in the nursery is outstanding and ensures that children settle quickly into the routines enabling them to make a very good start to school life. This is a strength of the school. The curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes is based securely on the six areas of learning recommended for this age group. A good range of stimulating tasks is presented and priority is given to the development of language and literacy skills and also to mathematical skills and personal and social education. During their time in the nursery and reception classes children make generally good progress, so that by the time they are five almost all achieve the desirable learning outcomes in all areas of the curriculum.

#### **Personal and social development**

79. From the time they enter school children make good progress in the development of personal and social skills and by the age of five, children's development in this area is good. In the nursery the teacher develops consistent procedures and systems to ensure that the children become happy and secure and settle quickly into school. The children have a very clear understanding of the routines and know what is expected of them. They are able to select their own activity from the wide range provided and sustain their concentration to complete their tasks. They move around the activities in an orderly way, take turns and share happily. Most of the children play together well and co-operate successfully in informal role play. Children's independence is promoted in a caring way and they are encouraged to work and play with each other. Their behaviour is very good. Control is friendly but firm, and any inappropriate behaviour is gently corrected. In the reception classes the children show an increasing awareness of class routines. They wait their turn in group activities and are helpful to each other. They share materials and equipment sensibly. However, on occasions, children show limited concentration when taking part in self-selected activities, or when engaged in working independently in groups without direct adult supervision. In both nursery and reception, the teaching in this area is very good. All of the staff have secure knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children. The teachers and support staff work closely together to provide a welcoming environment and a calm atmosphere, where personal and social development is fostered through appropriate praise and encouragement. High priority is put on raising children's self esteem and valuing their efforts. All of the staff provide good role models and promote a framework of positive attitudes and values which is a firm foundation for school life.

#### **Language and literacy**

80. In the nursery and reception classes, children make good progress in developing the skills of language and literacy and this is an important focus of the work with children under five. In the nursery, the quality of teaching is outstanding and in reception it is good

overall. In the nursery, the staff make excellent use of all the opportunities to extend pupils' language skills. Small group work and play activities are well organised to provide a high level of adult input and very good opportunities for the children to extend their vocabulary and increase their understanding. Children listen to stories with enjoyment and know a good range of songs and rhymes from memory. They talk about their experiences, and discuss their feelings and likes and dislikes openly. Skilful staff intervention and direct teaching, which continue in the reception classes, have a very positive effect and children use their listening and speaking skills effectively in all areas of the curriculum. In the nursery, children handle books carefully, turn the pages appropriately and know that print carries meaning. They tell stories by looking at the pictures and begin to recognise letter shapes and sounds. In the reception classes, many children begin to read simple texts and know a good number of commonly used words. Many children have good pencil control. They write from left to right, form letters correctly and trace or copy the teachers' writing with increasing skill. In reception classes, teachers' planning fully reflects the guidance of the National Literacy Strategy. Tasks are well planned, provide suitable challenge and promote learning effectively. The shared reading sessions promote effectively pupils' understanding of the language of books. The language area provides a word rich environment ensuring that children quickly become familiar with the printed word.

## **Mathematics**

81. Children make good progress in mathematics. In the nursery, most children count confidently to ten and understand the value of numbers to five. They have a wide range of sorting and matching experiences and develop an appropriate vocabulary to express size, shape and colour. Children play purposefully with sand and water and systematically develop mathematical language, such as full and empty. They develop a greater understanding of sequence and order as they play with well chosen games and puzzles. They can put things in order of size and know when something is bigger or smaller. The quality of teaching in the nursery is of high calibre. Much of the work is part of ongoing activities and excellent use is made of situations to encourage the children to count, to see patterns and learn the properties of shapes. In the reception class, children develop an awareness of simple number operations and understand the concept of needing more or less to make a given number of objects. By the age of five most of the pupils have attained the desirable learning outcomes in mathematics. The majority of pupils can recognise and name numbers to ten and beyond, and place them in order. Almost all can count confidently to 20 and backwards from it. Higher attaining pupils have a good knowledge of numbers and can recognise figures and order numbers beyond 20. Some are confident in calculating numbers to 10 and recording the answers. Most are able to distinguish and name simple two dimensional shapes such a triangle, square and circle. The reception class teachers are introducing the National Numeracy Strategy and they make good use of songs and rhymes. Children's learning is helped by the good quality planning, good use of time and an interesting variety of resources. Group work is carefully planned and tasks are graded in difficulty according to the children's level of attainment.

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

82. In the nursery, children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world at a good rate of progress through very well chosen activities. They learn about their environment and develop an awareness of the world around them. For example, during the week of inspection, as part of the topic of Nursery Rhymes, the children were involved in a wide range of learning experiences such as designing a home for Incy Wincy Spider, or making containers to catch the rainfall. As part of the daily activities, children develop skills in cutting, pasting, sticking and building. Many are neat in colouring and careful when

using scissors. They develop a sense of time passing through the routines of the day and the celebration of birthdays and key events. They use computers to learn the shape of letters and become familiar with the keyboard and arrow keys. The quality of teaching and provision in the nursery is excellent and children have many opportunities to look closely at things, to try them and to talk about them. In reception classes, the children make steady progress in this area of their learning. The majority of them attain the desirable learning outcomes in this area by the time they are five years old, and are prepared to work with confidence on the National Curriculum programmes of study. They develop a satisfactory understanding of elements of science, geography, history, design and technology and information technology. When planting seeds they were able to predict that they would grow like "Jack's beanstalk". They use road and rail floor mats and construction kits to build and create suitable settlements for families. When using the computer they learn how to load a programme, to know what the symbols and icons mean and to use the function keys. Appropriate skills in cutting, folding and joining are fostered and children learn to use a variety of tools safely. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and there is appropriate provision of tasks and activities for the older children to stimulate children's interest in the world around them.

### **Physical development**

83. The children's progress in physical development is satisfactory. The nursery children make good progress in developing their fine motor control when they write, draw, paint and cut with scissors, use construction toys and play with dough. There is suitable provision for outdoor play and children make progress in controlling their movements as they run, walk and move around using wheeled toys. However, there is a lack of focus in the teaching of skills in the outdoor play area, which results in some missed opportunities for learning. By the time they are five years old the attainment of the majority of children is at the level expected for their age. In the reception classes the children have physical education sessions in the gymnasium as well as in the playground, but they do not have access to wheeled toys. They move about in different directions and vary their speed, and run and jump with appropriate co-ordination and growing confidence. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory. The staff show children how to use the equipment safely and encourage them in the use of larger apparatus. There is appropriate feedback to the children to help them to improve their performance and to be more inventive.

### **Creative development**

84. By the time the children are five years old they have attained some of the desirable learning outcomes. In the nursery the children experience a wide range of activities in art, music, story and imaginative play and use a variety of materials to explore colour, shape and texture. Nursery children are learning about colour and how to mix colour. During the week of the inspection they made dough and discovered how red and blue made purple. They learn different techniques when painting, such as splash pictures to represent raindrops. In the "small world " corner they engage in imaginative play and take on the role of nursery rhyme characters, such as the Queen of Hearts. The quality of the teaching and the provision in the nursery is excellent. All the activities have a clear focus on developing the children's skills, knowledge and understanding and enabling them to achieve the desirable learning outcomes. In the reception classes, the children make steady progress. They take part with enjoyment in singing and action rhymes. They clap rhythms and play percussion instruments. They have some opportunities to take part in directed and undirected role play. They enjoy using paint and glue. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and the children often work on particular tasks with the teacher or nursery nurse. This level of interaction between teacher and children is a positive feature, but there is

scope for creating more opportunities for pupils to experiment with materials and paint freely at will.

## **ENGLISH**

85. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests, the pupils' performance in English at both key stages was broadly in line with that of all and similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that standards at Key Stage 1 are now above average, and that those at Key Stage 2 remain in line with those found nationally. Pupils make good progress in all aspects of the subject throughout Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2. In these classes the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is leading to clearer objectives and more focused teaching. There is an appropriate choice and range of texts, which provide good opportunities for discussion, analysis and the development of skills, knowledge and understanding. This is having a positive effect on pupils' learning. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' levels of attainment in reading and writing are above average, and their speaking and listening skills are similar to those expected for their age. Almost all pupils achieve the national standard and a significant proportion attain the higher level.

86. Inspection evidence indicates that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly average for pupils aged eleven, but that a significant proportion of higher attaining pupils are capable of achieving more. The good rate of progress in the lower classes is not sustained in the upper classes at Key Stage 2. Here the National Literacy Strategy is in need of further refinement to increase its effectiveness and improve standards. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is generally good, needs are clearly identified and teaching is well structured through withdrawal and support groups and progress is consistently monitored and reviewed.

87. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are in line with the national average at the end of both key stages. This shows an improvement since the last inspection when pupils' speaking and listening skills were judged to be below average. By the end of both key stages, pupils have appropriate listening skills encouraged through a good code of classroom behaviour. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. At Key Stage 1, skills in speaking are appropriately developed. Pupils are polite and recognise the need for more formal vocabulary in certain situations. They have a satisfactory vocabulary that gives them the confidence to join in discussions and to talk freely about their work when questioned. The majority of pupils express their opinions clearly and confidently. They are keen and enthusiastic to talk, make suitable responses and communicate their ideas effectively. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils generally communicate their views clearly. They analyse their own or others' work and express ideas in group situations, although a significant minority still have a limited vocabulary and experience some difficulty in finding a range of words to express their views at length. Pupils generally make good progress because the teachers listen to them and encourage them to think about what they have to say, and give them good opportunities to air their views.

88. Standards in reading are above average at Key Stage 1 and in line with the average at the end of Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1 reading is systematically and effectively taught with an emphasis on the development of phonic skills. Pupils make good progress in the core reading programme and parents give valuable support by reading with their children at home. Lower attaining pupils are well supported in small groups and individually and make good progress. A significant number of pupils are confident readers and have a good grasp of a variety of strategies to help them read unfamiliar texts. When sharing books they know where to find the title of the book, can explain the task of the author and the illustrator and discuss the use of the contents page. Higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of

what they have read and can provide detailed accounts of the story and are able to predict likely outcomes. Throughout Key Stage 2 a concentration on the basic skills in reading ensures generally satisfactory progress, but insufficient attention is paid to the development of reading comprehension skills through collaboration and discussion. The majority of pupils are able to read a range of texts with accuracy, fluency and expression. Whilst pupils have mastered the mechanics of reading they do not always fully understand what they have read. Although they read independently from a range of texts, many do not make good use of inference, and their knowledge of authors and children's novels is limited. Some of the higher attaining pupils are well motivated readers and read with fluency and expression, but a significant number are reluctant readers, and relatively few have developed higher order skills of skimming and scanning. Most of the pupils understand the purpose of contents and index pages and are aware of the organisation of the library, however, a minority have difficulty in retrieving information efficiently. The use of the library to support pupils in independent research and to promote enjoyment in reading is underdeveloped. The school has recently bought new books to try to address the relatively poorer performance of the boys in English and these are of good quality. There is a reasonable range of fiction and non-fiction books in class libraries and in the school library. However, many of the books, especially those used to support the teaching of English in the upper end of the school, are out-dated and shabby. This is a contributory factor to the lack of enthusiasm for reading shown by some pupils towards the end of the key stage.

89. In writing, standards are above average by the end of Key Stage 1 and broadly average by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils at Key Stage 1 are presented with a range of opportunities for writing and most pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills. Higher attaining pupils have a good feel for story language and organise their writing appropriately for that purpose. They use appropriate grammar, spell accurately and punctuate their work suitably. They make satisfactory use of adjectives to add interest to their stories. Average and lower attaining pupils consolidate their understanding of story sequence in their own writing. They write simple stories and sentences using full stops and capital letters appropriately with simple words spelt correctly. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards to their personal targets. Standards of presentation are very good.

90. At Key Stage 2, pupils extend their range of writing across the curriculum in a number of subjects and generally make satisfactory progress. The majority of pupils are able to compose pieces which demonstrate accurate sentence construction, punctuation and grammar. Many are able to adapt their writing, for instance to write a poem. Higher attaining pupils demonstrate the ability to write extensively using imaginative vocabulary to hold the interest of the reader. However, some of the lower attaining pupils, most of whom are boys, are struggling to write at the levels expected nationally. Their skills of punctuation and grammar are weaker and many pupils make careless mistakes and need constant reminders to produce accurate work. The quality of these pupils' written work is limited by their restricted vocabulary. Throughout the key stage most pupils can write in a fluent and legible style and the presentation of their work is usually of an acceptable standard. There are many examples of extended writing across other areas of the curriculum, for example, in history where pupils wrote in the character of a child in Germany at the end of World War Two and in religious education. This encourages the development of pupils' literacy skills. Pupils are motivated by opportunities to use word processors to complete the final drafts of their work. With insufficient attention given to the implementation of the literacy hour in the upper classes, pupils are not gaining the full benefit of developing their writing skills alongside their growing facility in reading and spoken English. Too frequently they are required to complete grammar exercises from a textbook rather than developing their competence to organise and structure their writing by drawing on their experience of



reading and studying a range of texts taken from fiction, poetry and reference materials.

91. Pupils respond well and behaviour in lessons is good. Younger pupils enjoy the shared reading and writing times provided within the literacy hour and in additional English lessons. They listen well, are very attentive and show interest in their work. Pupils at all levels of ability are developing confidence and are eager to explain what they have learned or to read out their written work during the plenary sessions. They are very polite and friendly.

92. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is very good and promotes pupils' learning effectively. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and a good understanding of how pupils learn and this enables pupils to make rapid progress in developing literacy skills. Lessons follow the structure set out in the National Literacy Strategy and teachers' planning is detailed, thorough and sets high expectations. Shared texts are carefully chosen to provide an interesting stimulus and used very effectively to deepen pupils' knowledge. A good example of this was seen in a Year 2 class when the text was used effectively to extend pupils' understanding of antonyms and to deepen their awareness of the way opposites in emotions can be expressed in different phrases. Teachers are very skilful in the teaching of the basic skills of reading and writing. The measure of their success is reflected in the range of strategies that pupils employ to read unfamiliar words and the structured approach they use when tackling written tasks. The work in English is successfully fulfilling the school's aim to improve the quality of pupils' writing at Key Stage 1. The hard work of the coordinator for English is an important factor in the improving standards at this key stage.

93. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is more variable. Over two-thirds of the lessons observed were satisfactory or good, but there were shortcomings in the teaching at the upper end of the key stage. In the more effective lessons, the purpose of each lesson is explained clearly to pupils, so that they understand what is expected of them. Teachers provide an interesting stimulus through well chosen shared reading texts, which capture pupils' interest and result in them working productively and putting in a great deal of intellectual and creative effort. Group work is carefully planned to challenge pupils of different abilities and is based on the word level work from the chosen text. The shared reading sessions are used effectively to focus on improving pupils' intonation and expression. Clear explanations and good use of questioning promote pupils' awareness of style and develop their interest in the characters. In such lessons, teachers skilfully grasp opportunities to reinforce pupils' use of punctuation and remind them of spelling patterns and rules, and lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Much of the best teaching is in Years 3 and 4, where lessons are usually clearly focused and a purposeful learning atmosphere is established. Here the teachers plan jointly and make good use of the structure provided by the literacy hour. However, in Years 5 and 6 the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is not secure. Here some of the teaching does not have sufficiently high expectations of high ability pupils, which results in a lack of challenge in the tasks planned and restricts progress. In all lessons, teachers manage their pupils well and use praise effectively to encourage the pupils to try harder. Day-to-day assessment is used consistently at Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 to enable the teachers to plan future work accurately for pupils of differing ability. In upper Key Stage 2 assessment is less well developed and marking in books does not always indicate to the pupils how they might improve their work. Homework, particularly in reading and spelling, is used effectively throughout the school to support learning.

94. There are formal assessments each year and national assessments at the end of the key stages. The results are analysed and the information is used to set targets for

future years. Although targets are not set for individual pupils, nor are pupils involved in evaluating their own performance and agreeing their own targets, the school has plans to introduce these arrangements in the near future. .

95. Resources for English are barely satisfactory. Appropriate resources have been acquired for the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy at Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2. However, the range of resources to support the implementation of some aspects of the strategy at Key Stage 2 is narrow and inappropriate.

## **MATHEMATICS**

96. In the most recent National Curriculum tests held in 1999, the pupils' performance at Key Stage 1 was in line with that of those in all and similar schools. At Key Stage 2, the pupils' performance fell below that found nationally and the average for similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that standards at both key stages are in line with those found nationally, but that the proportion of pupils exceeding these levels at the end of Key Stage 2 is below the national average. The majority of pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special needs, make satisfactory progress, but higher attainers are capable of better progress at the end of Key Stage 2.

97. The youngest pupils make sound progress in counting accurately and in ordering numbers to 10. They demonstrate increasing confidence when adding and subtracting numbers and when solving problems. They can generally read and write accurately the numbers involved, although a few of the lower attaining pupils have some difficulty in this respect. By the end of the key stage, the Year 2 pupils show increasing mental skills when working with numbers to 20 and beyond. They have a developing understanding of place value and know that the position of a digit signifies its value. Throughout Key Stage 2, the pupils continue to make increasing progress in understanding place value, and by Year 6 the vast majority are able to use accurately the four rules of number. They show confidence when solving a range of problems including negative numbers and the relationship of fractions, decimals and percentages. Some of the higher attaining pupils, for example, know how to use negative co-ordinates to translate shapes from the first to the fourth quadrants.

98. At both key stages, pupils make satisfactory progress in their work on shape, space and measures. At the beginning of Key Stage 1, they use accurately a range of non-standard units in their measuring activities. Most are able to estimate with reasonable accuracy and can record their findings carefully. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils use comparative language confidently and can use units of length, mass, capacity and time with reasonable accuracy. At Key Stage 2, pupils build successfully on this sound start. They use accurately mathematical vocabulary when describing and sorting three and two dimensional shapes according to their properties. The older pupils know how to measure angles accurately using a protractor and are able to use their knowledge of angles in a triangle when completing calculations where only two angles are known.

99. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' skills in handling data are well developed. They know how to gather, record and interpret information using an appropriate range of charts, diagrams, tables and graphs. For example, some of the Year 5 pupils recently studied the characteristics of a rain forest. They were able to use the computer to produce a pie chart of monthly rainfall and to interpret their results with accuracy and understanding.

100. At both key stages, pupils' numeracy skills are developed and practised appropriately in other areas of the curriculum. For example, in a class of Year 4 pupils, they

were measuring the length of bones in their bodies. They were able to estimate quite accurately and demonstrated precise measuring skills in centimetres.

101. Throughout the school, the pupils make satisfactory progress in using and applying their mathematical skills. Many are developing a range of strategies for solving problems, which they use well within mathematics and in applying mathematics to practical contexts. They present information in an organised way and can explain clearly the reasoning behind the strategies they use.

102. Pupils demonstrate very good attitudes towards mathematics and their behaviour is of a high standard. They are keen to participate, listen carefully and work co-operatively in groups. In all classes, pupils settle quickly to tasks and sustain good levels of concentration when working independently.

103. The quality of teaching is generally very good at Key Stage 1 and at the lower end of Key Stage 2, but is generally less effective in some of the upper Key Stage 2 classes. Where the teaching has strengths, staff adhere to the guidance described in the National Numeracy Strategy document. They demonstrate good subject expertise, which is reflected in the good quality planning, the pace and rigour in the work and in the high quality of questioning, which is used effectively to assess the pupils' level of understanding and also to extend their thinking. For example, in a Year 1 class, the final plenary element of the lesson was used effectively to consolidate the pupils' learning of reflective symmetry. Just before the end of the lesson the class was asked to find another way of folding a square to produce further lines of symmetry other than by folding horizontally or vertically. After a short time some of the pupils were pleased to demonstrate their thinking by coming out in front of the class to fold the square diagonally, thus producing four lines of symmetry. Some of the teaching towards the end of Key Stage 2 does not always include key elements of the National Numeracy Strategy. In one lesson, for example, time was not given to oral mental work. In another class, the content of the mental work made insufficient demands on the higher attaining pupils. In addition, the importance of the final plenary element of the lesson was not realised and the time allocated was too short to be productive. The teaching of the older pupils, especially the higher attainers, gives too little attention to matching the work sufficiently closely to their needs, and this results in a lack of challenge in the work set.

104. The school has made a satisfactory start in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy, although there are shortcomings in some of the upper Key Stage 2 classes where the structure of the lessons does not follow the national guidance. In most of the other classes a good balance is achieved in teaching the various elements of the numeracy sessions. Mental work is well conducted and a good balance is achieved between clear direct teaching, and time for the pupils to engage in group or independent tasks. Plenary sessions are well conducted and usually allocated a worthwhile length of time.

105. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to maintain standards. However, the standards achieved by the potentially higher attainers remains a priority for attention. The co-ordinator works diligently to give a lead in mathematics and has been instrumental in assisting staff to implement the National Numeracy Strategy. Consistent monitoring of numeracy lessons at Key Stage 1 and in classes at lower Key Stage 2 has been completed successfully. It is now important that this continues in upper Key Stage 2 classes so that a more consistent approach to teaching numeracy is established throughout the school. In most classes, the work in mathematics is well planned and the content of lessons meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## SCIENCE

106. In the most recent National Curriculum tests held in 1999, the pupils' performance at the end of Key Stage 2 was in line with that found nationally and the average for similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that standards at the end of both key stages remain in line with those found nationally. The large majority of pupils are on course to achieve, and a significant minority to exceed, the levels set by the National Curriculum. Most pupils at all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, make consistently good progress in relation to prior attainment. The programme of work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and makes good provision for all pupils.

107. At Key Stage 1, pupils make considerable progress in talking about and describing the simple features of what they see about them. They identify more closely the similarities and differences between the objects they examine, and are able to categorise them using simple criteria. For example, pupils in Year 1 examined materials to see which would be suitable for a particular purpose. Most were able to identify accurately and list materials which were waterproof and those which were not.

108. By the end of Year 2, pupils carry out more systematic observations using resources and equipment effectively, for example, when they investigated light. Nearly all made appropriate use of mirrors and spoons to see how light is reflected and they were able to make accurate comparisons between the effect of convex and concave surfaces on the reflection of their faces, and to observe how the reflections changed when the spoon or mirror was moved further away from or nearer to their face. The pupils drew well on prior learning. They were able to explain that light comes from a variety of sources and that it is reflected from some surfaces, particularly those which are polished.

109. At Key Stage 2, pupils build steadily on their previous learning. They develop the skills of systematic enquiry progressively and begin to use their growing scientific knowledge and understanding to link cause and effect. This was evident when pupils in Year 4 investigated electrical circuits. All of them understood that a break in the circuit caused the bulb not to light; and most were able to explain correctly why two bulbs in the same circuit were less bright than one bulb.

110. Older pupils, studying the human body, as part of their work on life processes and living things, show a good understanding of circulation. This was apparent during lessons in Years 5 and 6. Pupils were able to explain how the heart acts as a pump. They understood that exercise causes the heart to work harder and pump more rapidly. The great majority were able to work effectively in pairs to measure pulse rates and appreciated that it was necessary to take a number of measurements in order to find the most typical rate.

111. At both key stages, pupils develop good skills in the experimental and investigative elements of science. Younger pupils are able to make simple predictions and to say whether what happened was as expected. As they get older, pupils are able to carry out a fair test and explain why it is fair. Older pupils, reaching the end of Key Stage 2, draw effectively on their scientific knowledge when engaged in experimental and investigative work, they make observations with increasing precision and record their findings in an appropriate form.

112. The work in science makes an important contribution towards the development of pupils' literacy skills. They use a range of reference materials effectively to find information, and an increasing vocabulary to explain their findings. Much of the work also contributes towards the pupils' numeracy skills. The work on pulse rates, for example, involved accurate measurement as well as appropriate use of graphs to record their findings.

113. Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate good attitudes towards their work in science. They show high levels of curiosity and a good ability to recall learning from previous lessons. They listen attentively during the whole-class introductions to lessons and often ask perceptive questions, which indicate their growing knowledge. They share resources without fuss, and their ability to co-operate sensibly in pairs or small groups is a very good feature, particularly when pupils are given the opportunity to engage in experimental and investigative work.

114. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 2 and very good at Key Stage 1. Seventy five per cent of lessons observed were good, and over 60 per cent of Key Stage 1 lessons were very good.

115. The planning of most lessons is clear with precise learning objectives. This means that tasks are well matched to pupils' ability levels, and serve to extend their scientific knowledge and understanding as well as their skills in experimental and investigative work. Effective class management and lesson organisation contribute towards a brisk pace and result in good levels of productivity. On-going assessment during experimental and investigative work helps pupils to gain a good understanding of their own learning, which in turn contributes significantly towards their progress and attainment. At Key Stage 1, in particular, the very good use made of a range of objects and materials helps to capture pupils' interest and adds greatly to the quality of the learning experience.

116. The subject is co-ordinated effectively. All aspects are covered appropriately during the course of the academic year, meeting fully the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school examines closely the information from national testing in order to identify weaknesses in the programme of work and improve further the pupils' attainment. Although some use is made of information technology to support learning, this is not yet a consistent feature in the teaching.

117. Since the last inspection, about a quarter of pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 2 attain higher standards than those set by the National Curriculum. This is a significant improvement on the previous inspection which stated that few pupils exceeded the national standard. This is the result of improved planning and provision of appropriately challenging work in the subject.

## **ART**

118. Art was not well represented in timetables during the inspection week. Evaluation of the subject is based on observation of a small number of lessons at Key Stage 1, scrutiny of pupils' work in displays around the school, subject documentation including planning and discussion with the subject co-ordinators.

119. Standards in art have improved since the last inspection. At both key stages the pupils work at levels which are at least appropriate for their age, and some of the work produced by pupils at Key Stage 2 is of high quality.

120. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop their skills through activities which are closely linked to their topic work, and through practical tasks designed to teach specific aspects of the subject. They are developing good control of drawing tools, such as pencils and paintbrushes, and are given a good range of opportunities to explore the effects created by different media and techniques. In Year 1, they use marbling and colour mixing to great effect and experiment with printing using found objects. They use paint, pastels and crayons very skilfully to create their own pictures that mimic the styles of other artists such as Picasso. Pupils in Year 2 were particularly successful in producing their own delicately

painted versions of willow pattern plates. Three-dimensional work is explored effectively through activities such as the collaborative production of a large Chinese dragon head using papier mache on a wire frame. The use of 'Paint' software enables ICT to make a relevant contribution to the subject.

121. At Key Stage 2, pupils are developing their control and use of media and techniques with great success and they produce work of high quality. Their drawings of African artefacts in Year 3 show good observational skills through very effective use of chalk pastels. In Year 4, African masks illustrated the successful development of three-dimensional work and some very good wire sculptures showed imaginative interpretations of shape and form. Pupils study the work of other artists and have used chalk pastels, colour wash, charcoal and paint to produce sensitive interpretations of the work of Van Gogh and Monet. Some high quality charcoal and chalk still life drawings produced by Year 6 pupils showed a good mastery of shading to give form to their drawings.

122. The teaching of art at Key Stage 1 is good with a suitable balance between the teaching of skills and the promotion of imaginative expression. Lessons are planned carefully with clear learning objectives, and are well matched to the previous learning levels of the pupils. The teachers use effective strategies in lessons that encourage pupils to apply high levels of effort and concentration. Insufficient art teaching took place at Key Stage 2 during the inspection week for a judgement to be made on the quality of teaching at this key stage.

123. The subject has benefited from the recent appointment of two co-ordinators, who have sufficient subject expertise to make a high level of impact on the teaching of art, as evidenced by the acrylic on canvas portraits done by pupils in Year 4. The new scheme of work provides a secure basis for teaching the subject and ensures appropriate progression in the development of skills and knowledge. Monitoring of standards and progress in the subject is still in the early stages of development, but the school has identified the need for this to take place and the co-ordinators have sufficient expertise to carry out the monitoring effectively.

124. Resources for the subject are adequate, but some deficiencies have been identified in the recent review and replenishment is scheduled for the next academic year. The focus on improving the quality of displays of pupils' work around the school, contained in the school development plan, has been very successful in providing a stimulating learning environment of high quality.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

125. Due to the school's timetabling arrangements and the timing of the inspection, classroom observation was very limited during the inspection. Judgements are based on two lessons observed at Key Stage 2, the scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning, observations of displays and discussions with pupils and teachers. The evidence indicates that the school has sustained the good performance shown in the previous inspection. The standard of the work produced by pupils is of a good quality and appropriate for age at the end of both key stages.

126. At both key stages pupils have satisfactory, and often good, designing and making skills. They draw detailed, labelled designs. In a Year 4 class for example, pupils produced good quality original designs for a torch. Many of them contained fine detail of the component parts, including the mechanism for the on/off switch. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' plans include written explanations of how they will carry out their construction.

They use a variety of materials, appropriate for the models they make and use a range of fastening techniques for fixed and moving parts. Their evaluating skills develop well as they complete mid task evaluation sheets and they show an ability to make modifications to solve problems encountered in their original design.

127. Pupils enjoy their work in design and technology and their attitudes to learning are good. Most are mature in their approach to their work and realise that the planning and designing stage is necessary to ensure a high quality product. They work quietly at their tasks, and concentrate well. The great majority work together effectively sharing ideas. Pupils listen attentively, follow instructions and guidance carefully and show due regard for safety procedures.

128. The evidence of pupils' work, teachers' planning and limited lesson observation indicate that the quality of teaching across the school is at least satisfactory, often good and sometimes very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan effectively. During the course of a year, pupils cover a balanced programme of work and experience an appropriate range of learning experiences. Learning objectives are realistic and challenging for most pupils. Opportunities are provided for pupils to work independently on the designing, making and evaluating elements of the work. It is clear from the quality of the finished products and the rich and diverse displays around the school that teachers' expectations are high. Lessons are planned carefully to build on previous learning and to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. For example pupils were able to draw on their knowledge of electrical circuits from science when designing and making their torches. The subject is managed efficiently and plans are in hand to develop a scheme of work based on the new national guidance to be in place by the start of the next academic year.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

129. Due to the school timetable arrangements and the timing of the inspection it was not possible to see sufficient geography lessons in progress to make a full evaluation of work in geography. On the evidence seen in children's books and folders, displays of work around the school and discussion with the subject co-ordinator, standards in the subject are at least appropriate for pupils' age and sometimes better. This reflects the findings of the last inspection and indicates that the school has been successful in meeting its targets for geography.

130. The teachers' medium term planning shows that a good range of geography topics is studied and there is satisfactory development of geography study skills at both key stages. At Key Stage 1 the pupils can make simple plans of their own rooms and their journey to school. They are able to make very well informed comparisons between different localities such as town and country. They use the local area very effectively to study features such as the park and the canal, and represent these accurately in high quality maps and plans.

131. Pupils at Key Stage 2 achieve appropriate standards in their knowledge and understanding as a result of comparative studies of their own locality with areas further afield, including other countries such as Nigeria, and when they study the environmental issues affecting the rain forests of South America. They make good progress in their learning during their studies of the water cycle, local weather conditions and seasonal change.

132. The scheme of work for geography gives a clear structure for progression in the subject and is a secure basis for teachers' planning. It provides for a suitable range of

study and is well matched to the ages of pupils in its choice of topics. The local environment is used very well as a learning resource and older pupils are able to extend their experience of different localities during a residential visit to Scotland. Resources for the subject are generally adequate, but the quantity of graded atlases is insufficient to meet the needs of pupils at different levels of learning.

## **HISTORY**

133. Standards in history are appropriate for age at both key stages and a significant number of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 exceed expectations. This reflects closely the findings at the time of the last inspection and indicates that the school has been successful in its efforts to maintain standards in history during the implementation of the new curriculum requirements for literacy and numeracy.

134. At Key Stage 1, pupils study some aspects of the Victorian way of life, such as seaside entertainment and the features of a Victorian home. Through their studies they gain a good knowledge base about differences between past and present and develop an understanding of time passing. In their lessons about events further back in time, such as Guy Fawkes and the Great Fire of London, they learn about people and events that still have relevance to their own lives.

135. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop their history study skills very well. They know that there are different sources of information about the past and extend their ability to recognise the difference between fact and opinion. They use artefacts, pictures and documentary sources of information competently to help them to empathise with and interpret past times. Older pupils used friends and relatives very effectively as a contemporary source of information about World War Two. By the end of the key stage pupils of all abilities develop a very secure knowledge base about people and events in the past through their studies of the Tudor period, the Benin culture of Nigeria and the Second World War. Their learning is complemented by the effective use of information technology to research information about the past from contemporary documentation.

136. The quality of teaching at both key stages is generally satisfactory, and in one in five of the lessons seen teaching was good and enabled pupils to achieve high standards. In the best lessons, teachers base their teaching on the use of historical study and research skills and these ensure that the pupils make appropriate progress in the subject. Teachers challenge the pupils' thinking about the reliability of historical sources and give them opportunities for independent research. Teaching is most effective when the pupils' previous levels of learning are taken into account in planning the lessons, and the more able pupils are appropriately challenged in the tasks they are set. In a good lesson about the Second World War the teacher set appropriate tasks for all the pupils and provided a sufficiently



challenging extension task for the more able pupils, which required them to think about an alternative viewpoint.

137. The subject is effectively underpinned by a carefully planned scheme of work. Resources for the subject are adequate but there is some deficiency in the quantity of original source materials for research purposes in order to meet the needs of two or three classes at a time studying the same topic.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

138. Standards at the end of both key stages are in line with the national expectations. The great majority of pupils at all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The programme of work makes good provision for all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language.

139. The youngest Key Stage 1 pupils quickly develop confidence in using the computer. The majority show good skills in using the mouse to access relevant tools in order to create a design or build up a picture. As they progress they make effective use of the computer keyboard to produce text, and know how to delete a mistake, make a space, use capitals and lower-case letters, and press return in order to start a new line. Many of the older pupils are able to click appropriately and "drag" the mouse in order to create geometrical shapes before accessing colours to complete their patterns. This was evident, for example, when a Year 2 class engaged in tasks linked to their study of the famous artist Mondrian. The majority of pupils were able to use straight lines, geometrical shapes and various tools to construct striking designs in the style of the artist. They knew how to improve their designs and save their work before closing down the computer correctly. The pupils gain experience in handling data, using information technology to sort and present information. They also extend their knowledge and understanding of control technology by using the roamer robotic toy. This was apparent, for example, when a group of pupils working with a support teacher successfully entered a series of commands to make the roamer travel various distances.

140. Pupils at Key Stage 2 build effectively on these early skills. In communicating information, they make effective use of spell-check to correct their spelling, and are able to incorporate graphic images to complement text. Older pupils are able to use "cut and paste" methods to move text about, and to adjust their method of presentation to suit the audience. In data handling, pupils extend their skills progressively. They enter data collected following class surveys, and are able to use the information to answer questions. Older pupils are able to identify and overcome problems that arise when questions are not framed accurately, for example due to the mis-spelling of a key word in the question. The pupils' skills in the control element of technology are extended by the use of Logo. They are able to enter a set of commands for a screen image to draw some quite complex geometrical shapes.

141. Following the completion of the computer suite, the range of experiences and opportunities provided for the pupils has been extended further. All pupils and teachers have e-mail numbers. In Year 4, for example, pupils engaged in tasks to write and send e-mail messages to one another. They were able to enter their individual passwords, and understood the need for accuracy when doing so. They also recognised the need for caution when receiving unexpected e-mails and understood the importance of telling their teachers if this should happen. Older pupils also make regular use of the internet to find information.

142. At both key stages, the pupils demonstrate keen interest in the subject. They co-operate very effectively when working in pairs and their behaviour is consistently of a good standard. They listen attentively to their teachers and willingly act on the advice they are given. They show

great enthusiasm and enjoyment when working in the computer suite, and their strong interest in information technology is reflected in their ability to recall accurately learning from previous lessons.

143. Opportunities in communicating and handling information have a positive effect on the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. However, in some classes, insufficient opportunities are created for pupils to extend their information technology skills during work in other subjects.

144. The quality of teaching is very good at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. The excellent use of large screen projections in order to give clear explanations and illustrations during whole class or group introduction to lessons is a very strong feature in the teaching. This allows good interaction between teacher and pupils, creating opportunities for pupils to ask relevant questions, and for teachers to provide clarification of any matters, demonstrating on the large screen. Lessons at both key stages are planned effectively and pitched at a level to challenge and extend pupils' skills, as well as their knowledge and understanding of aspects of information technology. Perceptive levels of intervention by teachers and support staff, to sustain pupils' motivation and interest, are a strong feature in the best lessons. Class management is good in all lessons and this successfully promotes positive attitudes and good behaviour by pupils.

145. The excellent leadership and guidance provided by the subject co-ordinator are important factors in the improvements made in information technology since the last inspection. The scheme of work and policy guidance documents are of high quality. The commitment by the governing body and headteacher to providing high quality opportunities for pupils in information technology is reflected in the excellent resources now available to the pupils. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met fully.

## **MUSIC**

146. The majority of the pupils at both key stages are working at levels appropriate for their age. Most pupils, at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress during their time in school.

147. From an early stage, the pupils sing a variety of nursery rhymes and songs tunefully to piano accompaniment. They listen well and make satisfactory progress as they learn to accompany their singing with untuned percussion instruments. They develop a good sense of rhythm but limited time for the lesson restricts the number of pupils able to play instruments.

148. At Key Stage 2, music is dependent upon a commercially produced scheme. The pupils in Year 3 create and perform their own compositions of Digger music and effectively follow a graphic score competently. The higher and average attaining pupils have a satisfactory sense of performance when singing and clapping in rhythm and are able to follow a leader. All the pupils are able to handle and play a range of percussion instruments including claves, wood blocks, Indian bells and triangle. In Year 6, the pupils are introduced successfully to the twelve bar blues and sing "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" to tape recorded accompaniment. The average and lower attaining pupils make limited progress in reading music on a staff and attempting "scat" improvisation. The higher attaining pupils are able to identify the instruments in the recording and are aware of the repeated rhythmic patterns.

149. The pupils are well motivated and enjoy music lessons. They work sensibly as a

class and in group activities. They handle the expensive instruments they use with care and respect. They listen attentively in lessons and assemblies to music from a range of cultures.

150. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are well prepared and planned with clear teaching objectives. Teaching methods are varied appropriately and this makes a significant contribution to the pace of lessons and helps to support the pupils' interest. At both key stages resources are used effectively to support the pupils' learning.

151. Music makes only a limited contribution to the pupils' writing skills with the emphasis being placed on performance rather than written work. However, the extended vocabulary arising from the study of music in other cultures makes an important contribution to the development of language skills. Performances by the school band in assemblies make significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual development.

152. Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained at both key stages. Teaching remains sound and learning resources are adequate. A new scheme of work is planned for September to coincide with the re-introduction of National Curriculum requirements. Currently over 40 pupils benefit from extra-curricular recorder and brass instrumental tuition and visiting musicians help to enhance the music curriculum.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

153. At both key stages, the pupils work at levels which are appropriate for their age. The great majority at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress. Some of the Year 1 pupils make particularly good progress in dance.

154. Throughout the school, in dance and gymnastics, the pupils make good use of space varying their speed of movement effectively and changing the shape, direction and height of their movements to create interesting sequences. The Year 1 pupils make good use of facial features and hand gestures when devising three part dance movements. By the beginning of Key Stage 2, the pupils are adept at evaluating their work and making improvements to their movement sequences in both dance and gymnastics. The Year 6 pupils build effectively on these earlier skills and demonstrate increasing bodily control, working imaginatively and with growing confidence when developing more demanding and sophisticated routines and movement sequences.

155. The pupils' skills in games are similarly well developed. They make good progress in using a range of throwing, catching and dribbling skills. At Key Stage 2, the pupils use and develop these skills further in a range of relevant extra-curricular activities, which include football, cricket, netball and rounders. In addition, the school enters teams in the local inter-school athletics meetings held in the summer term.

156. The timing of the inspection and the school's timetabling arrangements meant that it was not possible to observe athletics, swimming or outdoor adventurous activities which take place in the following term. However, school records indicate that the vast majority of the Year 6 pupils can swim 25 metres unaided.

157. The pupils respond enthusiastically in their physical education lessons. They are eager to participate and behave very well, co-operating sensibly and demonstrating respect for each other and the equipment they use.

158. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. Lessons are well

planned and activities are organised effectively making appropriate physical and mental demands on the pupils. Classes are well managed and the teaching of techniques does much to assist the pupils' progress. Appropriate emphasis is given to evaluation which helps the pupils to improve the quality of their work, particularly in dance and gymnastics. In addition, the pupils are given sufficient time to plan their movements and to perform and refine their work.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

159. By the end of both key stages the attainment of the majority of the pupils meets the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus, and most pupils at all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

160. Throughout the school, the pupils make consistent progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the traditions, practices and teachings of Christianity and the main principles of other world religions. At Key Stage 1 the pupils are aware that the Bible is a special book and understand that it is divided into Old and New Testaments. For example, the pupils in Year 2 know the Commandments are in the Old Testament and are important rules for daily living. Only a small amount of work in religious education was evident in the scrutiny of the pupils' work at Key Stage 1.

161. At Key Stage 2, the pupils consider a wider range of issues and make steady progress. They extend progressively their knowledge of Christianity and develop a good awareness of other religions. This was apparent in the work being studied during the spring term. The pupils in Year 3, for example, have a very good understanding of aspects of Judaism and design their own mezuzah case and write appropriate prayers. The pupils of average and lower attainment have a good religious vocabulary and are able to use such words as 'reflect', 'prayer', 'worship' and 'respect'. The higher attaining pupils have a detailed understanding of aspects of Judaism and talk confidently about the star of David, the Torah and other Jewish artefacts. The pupils in Year 5 make good progress in their understanding of the Torah and its importance to the Jewish people. Year 6 pupils extend significantly their understanding of Jewish ceremonies, such as Barmitzva.

162. The pupils at both key stages are well motivated and enjoy religious education lessons. The great majority work effectively in whole class and small groups and as individuals. They show respect for their own beliefs and those of other persuasions. Relationships between the pupils and the teachers are mature and productive. The pupils handle the resources and artefacts with care and respect.

163. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. The majority of the teachers show a good knowledge of the subject. Lessons are well planned and managed. Lesson objectives are clear and based on the Agreed Syllabus. At both key stages, resources are used effectively to support the pupils' learning. Teaching is most effective when the lessons have clear objectives and are delivered at a good pace within an appropriate time frame. Some lessons are less effective where there is an over-dependence on work sheets. Good quality teacher explanation and skilful questioning are good features at both key stages. Religious education makes an important contribution to the development of the pupils' literacy skills. Many opportunities are created for the pupils to engage in extended writing about the topics they are studying. The subject is well coordinated.

164. Since the last inspection the school has maintained a satisfactory programme of religious education. All the pupils receive their curriculum entitlement and the religious content of assemblies complements classroom teaching.