

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **PARKFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Middleton

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105799

Headteacher: Mr David Perrin

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Nicholson  
25406

Dates of inspection: 9 – 12 July 2001

Inspection number: 191594

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Harold Street  
Middleton  
Manchester

Postcode: M24 4AF

Telephone number: 0161 643 2592

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Reverend Philip Miller

Date of previous inspection: February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Paul Nicholson Registered Inspector 25406	English Art and design Design and technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve?
Ann Taylor Lay Inspector 19743		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values, and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Jill Bavin Team Inspector 16038	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Geography History Music Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught?
Philip Martin Team Inspector 23262	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Religious education Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and the other learning opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Parkfield Primary School is situated in the centre of Middleton, a small town within the borough of Rochdale. The school serves an area with a range of social backgrounds and includes local authority and private housing. The school is popular with parents and is fully subscribed. It is similar in size to other primary schools. Currently, there are 246 pupils on roll (132 boys and 114 girls) aged from 4 to 11 years. Twenty per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average. No pupils come from ethnic minority groups and none speaks English as an additional language. The school has identified 12 per cent of pupils as having special educational needs. None of the pupils has a Statement of Special Educational Need. When children enter the reception year, their attainment varies from child to child, but overall it is similar to that expected of children of this age.

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

Parkfield is an effective school with some good features. Overall, standards by the age of 11 are average, though in some subjects they are below average. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and at times good and the school is soundly led and managed. It gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- The school provides a caring environment in which relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very good.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development. In particular their moral and social development is very good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards school and their behaviour is good.
- The school has very effective links with parents, which make a positive impact on pupils' learning at school and at home.

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

- The standards achieved by the age of 11 in writing, history, information and communication technology, music and religious education.
- Pupils' independent learning skills, as a way of improving standards.
- Teachers' planning; by ensuring the current updating of the school's curriculum is completed and is effective in ensuring all non-core subjects are taught fully.
- Whole-school assessment procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the non-core subjects so as to make teachers' planning more effective.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made satisfactory progress since its last inspection in March 1997. The school has successfully addressed the then key issue of improving the role of the governing body in monitoring the work of the school. It has begun to improve the strategies for monitoring the impact of curriculum development on the standards pupils achieve. It has maintained its strength in pupils' personal development and has improved its links with parents. Overall, standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have been maintained, though standards have dropped in some of the other subjects. The school has not made sufficient progress in ensuring its curriculum was updated in the light of recent changes. This has had a negative impact on standards.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

End of Key Stage 2 test results show a drop in standards in 2000. This was due in the main to a large group of under-achieving boys in that year group. Despite this drop, the school's performance over recent years has been improving broadly in line with the improving national trend. Inspection evidence shows that, currently, overall standards by the age of 11 in English, mathematics and science are average. In English, standards in reading are above average, but in writing they are below. Test results at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 show that standards achieved by 7-year-olds were average in reading, above average in writing and below average in mathematics. Teacher assessments show that in science most pupils achieved the expected standard, which is similar to the national average. Evidence from the inspection shows that, currently, standards by the age of 7 are average in English, mathematics and science.

These test results represent a satisfactory level of achievement for the pupils. However, a recurring theme within the results both at age 7 and 11 is that, while most pupils reach the expected levels for their age, not enough attain higher levels. The school has not been setting challenging enough targets to ensure an improvement in standards.

By the age of 7, pupils achieve average standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, physical education and religious education. Standards in music are below average. Pupils achieve average standards by the age of 11 in art and design, design and technology, geography and physical education. Standards are below average in history, information and communication technology, music and religious education. The main reason for the low standards in these non-core subjects is that there are gaps in pupils' learning. Teachers' planning has not ensured that pupils make sufficient progress in all aspects of the subjects.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have positive attitudes towards their school. They show very high levels of enthusiasm and good levels of interest.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' show good levels of personal responsibility. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very good.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are similar to the national average.

The pupils' positive attitudes and values and the very good relationships within the school make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and the life of the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
44 lessons seen overall	satisfactory	satisfactory	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.*

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and at times good. During the inspection it ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. In 5 per cent of the lessons seen teaching was very good and had a very positive effect on learning. Just over 40 per cent of the teaching was good and almost 50 per cent was satisfactory. In a small number of lessons, amounting to 5 per cent, teaching was unsatisfactory. The teaching of literacy is good and results in pupils making good progress in their reading. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory overall and there are some good features at both key stages.

All teachers manage the pupils well. They make effective use of questioning to develop pupils' understanding. In the best lessons, teachers' enthusiasm results in a brisk pace and their planning provides activities to meet the needs of all pupils. This results in quicker progress. Teachers make effective use of teaching assistants, who make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers do not develop pupils' independent learning skills sufficiently enough to help them in their learning. Occasionally, teachers do not provide appropriate activities to ensure that all pupils make at least satisfactory progress. The higher-attaining pupils are not always given sufficient challenge.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school has a satisfactory curriculum, but many recently introduced guidelines for teachers are not securely in place.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes satisfactory provision for these pupils, which ensures they make sound progress towards their individual targets.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, the school makes good provision for pupils' personal development. There is very good provision for social and moral development and good provision for spiritual development. Cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils. It has satisfactory procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school has very effective links with parents. The school values their positive involvement in the work of the school and the good contribution they make towards pupils' learning.

The school has successfully developed very good links with its parents. Consequently, parents have very positive views of the school and they make a valuable contribution towards their children's learning.

Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science are good. However, the procedures for other subjects do not provide teachers with sufficient information to help them in planning their lessons.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides sound leadership and management for the school. His enthusiastic approach plays a large part in creating the caring and friendly atmosphere within the school. Subject co-ordinators provide satisfactory leadership for their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very supportive. It successfully carries out its statutory duties and has a clear understanding of the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is taking valuable steps to evaluate its performance. It is developing an effective system for monitoring teaching and learning. It is beginning to apply the principles of best value to its decision making.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes satisfactory use of its financial resources. It uses specific grants effectively and for their specific purposes.
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	The school has a sufficient number of suitably qualified teachers and support staff. The accommodation is adequate for the number on roll. Learning resources are satisfactory overall and good in some subjects.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Sixty-nine parents attended a meeting with inspectors and 111 (45 per cent) completed questionnaires.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>Children like school and it helps them to become more responsible.</li> <li>The teaching is good and pupils make good progress.</li> <li>There are high expectations within the school and behaviour is good.</li> <li>The school works closely with parents and parents feel comfortable approaching the school with their concerns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A small number of parents were concerned about the amount of homework their children are given.</li> <li>A small number requested more information on their children's progress.</li> </ul>

The parents have very positive views of the school. The inspectors broadly support their views, though some are more positive than those of the inspection findings. The inspectors found that the school provided an appropriate amount of homework, which supported pupils' learning. The school provides a satisfactory range of opportunities, both formal and informal, for parents to discuss their children's progress. However, annual written reports do not provide sufficient useful information on children's progress in the non-core subjects.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

1. At the time of the last inspection, most pupils by the age of 7 and 11 reached the nationally expected standards in all subjects. The school has maintained the overall average standards by the age of 11 in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, though standards in writing are below average. Standards in some of the other subjects have declined and are now below average. Overall, standards by the age of 7 in the current Year 2 have remained average, except in music where they are now below average. The main reason for the decline in standards within the foundation subjects is that some aspects of the subjects have not been covered in sufficient depth to ensure pupils achieve appropriate knowledge and understanding for their age.
2. Children start full-time schooling at Parkfield in the September following their fourth birthday. Attainment on entry to reception varies between individual children and between the groups of children that enter the school each year. Overall, their attainment is broadly similar to that expected for their age. By the end of their reception year they have achieved the expected early learning goals in all areas of learning<sup>1</sup>. This is a result of satisfactory and at times good teaching and careful planning of an appropriate balance of activities. Children exceed the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development because staff help them feel happy and secure and provide regular routines in the classrooms. The children make sound progress in their learning and good progress in their personal, social and emotional development.
3. The school's results in end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests have fluctuated from year-to-year. In reading, they have ranged from above to below the national average and in writing from average to above average. In mathematics, results have been consistently below and at times well below the national average. The results for 2000 show that standards at the age of 7 were average in reading, above average in writing, but well below the national average in mathematics. These results in reading and writing compare favourably with those of similar schools<sup>2</sup>, but are low in mathematics. In reading, most pupils achieved Level 2, the expected standard for a typical 7-year-old, which was close to the national average. Fewer pupils than found nationally went on to achieve the higher standard (Level 3) in reading. In writing, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard was above the national average. The proportion achieving Level 3 was close to the national average. However, in mathematics the proportions achieving both the expected level and Level 3 were below the national average. Teacher assessments in science show that most pupils achieve the expected standard, which is similar to the national average. Fewer pupils than found nationally went on to achieve the higher standard.
4. The fluctuations in these results from year-to-year reflect, to some degree, differences in the particular groups of pupils. An underlying trend, however, has been the low standards in mathematics and the below average proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard in the different tests. Inspection evidence, which includes the results of tests in 2001 (though there are no national comparisons currently available), shows that just over three-quarters of the pupils are currently achieving standards of attainment in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Standards in mathematics have

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<sup>1</sup> Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with the following six areas of learning: communication language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; creative development; and personal, social and emotional development. There are many goals for each area of learning.

<sup>2</sup> National benchmark information bands together 'similar schools' based on the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

improved as a result of improved teaching, the grouping of pupils by ability and the introduction of an effective published scheme of work. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard, Level 3, in reading, mathematics and science remains below that normally found. In all other subjects, except music, pupils attain standards in line with national expectations. Their achievements in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology and physical education are appropriate for their age. Standards in music are below average because pupils do not gain an appropriate level of understanding in all areas of the subject.

5. The results of National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds over recent years show a similarly fluctuating pattern to that seen at Key Stage 1. Prior to 2000, the results have been close to the national average in English and science, and slightly above average in mathematics. The end of Key Stage 2 test results in 2000 showed a clear drop in standards. Results were well below average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. This was a clear reflection of that particular group of pupils, which had a high proportion of underachieving boys. While most girls achieved the expected standard in English, only half of the boys did. The school has done much to help raise the standards achieved by the boys, particularly in reading. Standards observed during the inspection, including 2001 test results (without national comparisons), indicate that standards have returned to a more typically average level in the current Year 6.
6. Currently, overall standards by the age of 11 are in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. A significant majority of pupils achieve the expected standard for their age. However, in English, while standards in reading are above average, standards in writing are below average. Pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills, but are not given sufficient opportunities to develop the writing skills they have learned. An overall trend in the school's performance is that too few pupils achieve the higher standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Currently, about a quarter of pupils achieve the higher standard, an improvement on last year, but still below that normally found. The school has identified this as an area to develop. Standards in other subjects by the age of 11 are variable. In art and design, design and technology, geography and physical education pupils achieve appropriate standards for their age. However, standards in information and communication technology, history and music are below average. These low standards are the result of pupils not making sufficient progress in all aspects of these subjects. For example, in information and communication technology pupils have appropriate skills in using the computers to help them communicate with others using a word-processing program and by e-mail. While pupils are beginning to develop their skills in the aspects of monitoring and control, they are insufficiently well developed. In history, pupils do not sufficiently develop their knowledge or independent research skills. Pupils lack experience in using instruments and their knowledge of composers and types of music is limited.
7. Pupils' achievements in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for the subject by the age of 7 years. Pupils know some of the main events in the Christian calendar and traditions within the Moslem and Jewish faiths. By the age of 11, pupils have made insufficient progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of both Christianity and other world religions. Consequently, their standards are below average.
8. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to their work and this helps them make sound progress towards their individual targets. They work well with learning support staff in well-structured, short sessions outside the classroom. They are well motivated to develop their reading and writing skills. Their progress is reduced and they become a little dispirited on rare occasions when elements of unsatisfactory teaching means that their needs are not met.

9. The use of reading and writing skills in subjects other than English does not consistently support the development of pupils' literacy skills. In science, pupils use different forms of writing to record their findings. In other subjects, such as religious education, history and design and technology, pupils do not use what they have learned in literacy to develop their writing or knowledge of the subject. Similarly, pupils do not make full use of their numeracy skills or information and communication technology skills to support their learning in other subjects, such as science and design and technology.
10. Over recent years, with the exception of 2000, pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 2 have been broadly average. The overall trend has seen a gradual improvement in line with the improving national trend. Even in 2000, the school's results compared favourably with those in similar schools, except in English where they were below average. The school provides sound support for pupils with special educational needs and lower-attaining pupils. This ensures they reach satisfactory and in some cases good levels of personal achievement. However, the school has not been as successful in ensuring its higher-attaining pupils achieve appropriately high standards. In the past, the targets the school has set for pupils have been too low and teachers have not consistently provided enough challenge for these pupils. The school recognised that it had insufficient guidance for teachers to ensure all subjects are taught in sufficient depth. It is in the middle of updating its curriculum in the light of new national guidelines, which when fully implemented will provide clearer guidance and ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum. The raising of standards is a key priority for the headteacher and the school.

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

11. This is a school where relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. Pupils' attitudes to learning, their behaviour and the way that they show responsibility around school are all good. These are important strengths, which are contributing positively to the standards of learning. The positive picture seen during the previous inspection is still in evidence.
12. Pupils come to school with good attitudes and they want to learn. Children in the Foundation Stage are keen to please their teachers and show a keen interest in the activities provided for them. Older pupils are very enthusiastic and enjoy their lessons. Parents agree that their children enjoy school and this is clearly the case. These good attitudes were typified during lunchtime, when pupils in Year 6 were completing pieces of artwork in their own time and through their own choice, rather than going outside. It was also evident during conversations with older pupils; when asked what they liked best about the school, they said, 'It is a place where you come to learn, not mess about'.
13. Behaviour throughout the school is good and pupils understand what the consequences will be if they step out of line. Parents are pleased with the standards of behaviour in the school. There were no exclusions for poor behaviour over the last year. Older pupils know that certain hard-earned privileges (such as being allowed inside during lunchtimes to play chess and watch their own videos) will be lost if they misbehave. Good behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning were shown in a very good literacy lesson where pupils in Years 3 and 4 were discussing keenly the persuasive writing on an advertisement for a new brand of chocolate. The pupils rose to the challenge of the teacher's fast pace in asking them questions that made them think. The homework they had completed (to make a jingle for a radio programme) meant that pupils made very good progress during the lesson. They were sensible when reading out their jingles to each other – one was read out in an American accent. The levels of independence that the teacher gave the pupils meant that they rose to the challenge and produced some good pieces of work. For example; 'Fiery Fudge - Burn Away Quickly' and 'Ice Lolly Fun, Yum Yum Yum!'

14. Relationships in the school are very good and pupils get on well with each other. There are very supportive relationships between pupils and adults who work in the school. Pupils show good levels of maturity and responsibility as they carry out a wide range of jobs. For younger pupils, these include sharpening pencils, putting the straws in the milk and being a 'special helper'. Older pupils help with office duties, are part of the 'Green Gang' recycling team and are library monitors. They are conscious of the needs of others and have recently collected money for the Royal National Institute for the Blind.
15. In terms of showing initiative, they are thoughtful in offering to help visitors with clearing away plates at lunchtime and offering to put away chairs. The idea of a Valentine's disco came about through pupils' suggestions, as did the practice of older pupils going to look after youngest ones at lunchtimes. In terms of showing initiative in their work, this is more limited, mainly because teachers do not provide them with the opportunities in class.
16. The attendance figure for the most recent year, at 94.8 per cent, is in line with primary schools nationally. This presents a satisfactory picture and is an improvement on the previous year. When compared to the last inspection, levels of attendance have fallen because of a growing trend in families taking holidays during term time. There is almost nil unauthorised absence as parents are good at letting the school know reasons why pupils are away.

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

17. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, and at times good. In lessons, the quality ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. In 5 per cent of the lessons seen, teaching was very good and had a very positive effect on learning. Just over 40 per cent of the teaching seen was good and almost 50 per cent was satisfactory. There was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching, amounting to 5 per cent. There is very little variation in the standard of teaching of pupils at different ages.
18. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was judged to be good. It included a larger proportion of very good lessons. There has been a slight decline in the quality of teaching, which is now mostly satisfactory and good at times. Changes in staffing since the last inspection mean that there are different strengths within the teaching team. For example, the school no longer has a music specialist on the staff with responsibility for teaching music throughout the school. This is now the subject where teachers are least confident in their own knowledge. Consequently, they are over-dependent on commercial schemes and do not teach a sufficiently wide range of skills. This means that pupils do not reach the depth of knowledge and understanding expected for their age by 7 or by 11 years. Recent initiatives to monitor teaching in order to spread good practice throughout the school have not yet had sufficient impact on raising the quality of teaching.
19. Teachers have addressed the concerns in the previous report about their teaching and understanding of science, which is now secure. Their knowledge of most subjects is sound overall. However, there are difficulties with the teaching of religious education and history for older pupils. In religious education, teachers do not use the agreed syllabus fully and so do not give older pupils sufficient knowledge and understanding of the subject. In history, in spite of planning to cover the required curriculum, teachers do not successfully give pupils the breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding in the subject expected by the age of 11 years. Teachers tend to direct activities too closely and, consequently, limit pupils' independent learning. Teachers are not sufficiently secure in information and communication technology skills and understanding for teaching older pupils. However, these pupils gain satisfactory basic skills because they benefit from the teaching undertaken by a teaching assistant.

20. Teachers plan well to meet the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy throughout the school. In good English lessons, teachers question pupils carefully, reinforcing and building on their previous learning, for example about bias in writing in holiday brochures. Overall, in literacy lessons teachers are successful in using the national guidelines to sustain a suitable pace and change of activity, and so build on pupils' prior learning well. In the Foundation Stage, staff plan carefully to ensure that they introduce children to the National Literacy Strategy sensibly and sensitively, with activities that suit children at that age well. Teachers place a suitable emphasis upon pupils' learning to match letters and sounds, and then using this knowledge to 'build' words as pupils learn to read.
21. In all key stages the teaching of numeracy is always at least satisfactory. The most successful lessons are when teachers use their knowledge of the subject to prepare useful resources and provide pupils with a good level of challenge. This encourages pupils to solve mathematical problems effectively and achieve well within the lesson. In the Foundation Stage, teachers successfully plan whole-class and group activities that follow the National Numeracy Strategy guidelines while meeting the needs of children in the early years.
22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. In the two sessions seen during the inspection when pupils were taught for a short period of time outside the classroom, teaching was good. In one of these sessions, pupils in a small group worked extremely hard to develop spelling skills. They were highly motivated because of the skills of a learning support assistant in both challenging and supporting them. Pupils benefit from early identification of their need and the regular review of their progress. However, the usefulness of targets on individual education plans varies. Some targets are too broad to measure success easily. The special educational needs co-ordinator is currently collecting information to track pupils' progress in each class on one sheet of paper. This makes it easier for staff to identify who needs an injection of extra support. In class, pupils with special educational needs mostly make satisfactory progress, learning at a similar rate to their classmates. In good lessons, teachers successfully modify work to meet their needs and teacher assistants provide sensitive and discrete support. Consequently, in these lessons pupils participate fully and learn well.
23. Relationships between staff and pupils as well as between pupils are a strength of the school. This contributes positively to the way in which pupils learn. For example, teachers expect pupils to work sensibly and co-operatively in physical education and they do. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. They mostly encourage pupils to participate in question and answer sessions because they value what pupils say. Occasionally, teachers give confusing messages regarding their expectations of behaviour. However, while this slows the pace of the lesson a little, pupils make sufficient progress.
24. Overall, the quality of teachers' marking is satisfactory and it helps pupils in their learning, but it is inconsistent. In mathematics and science, there is not enough comment and advice to encourage pupils to research and develop their ideas. When marking is helpful it values the pupil's effort while constructively suggesting areas for development. For example, pupils pay closer attention to the correct use of punctuation having been reminded by teachers' comments. Teachers use question and answer sessions skilfully, for example to assess pupils' learning within the lesson. The extent to which their findings are noted and influence the plans for the next lesson varies considerably between teachers. While teachers are beginning to determine specific targets for groups or individual pupils, they do not consistently share these with pupils. The inconsistency in marking and sharing learning goals with pupils means that, overall, pupils are not sufficiently aware of the strengths and areas for development within their learning. Also, teachers' expectations of what higher-

attaining pupils can achieve are not high enough and so they do not always plan challenging activities for them.

25. In the best lessons, teachers enthuse pupils by sustaining a brisk pace and using interesting materials or methods, such as a 'shape stepping stone game' for pupils in Year 1. In this lesson, the teacher skilfully adapted her questions to challenge each pupil at their own level. This meant that no one was aware that they were being treated differently and so preserved the self-esteem of lower-attaining pupils. These strategies result in all pupils learning very well. On the rare occasions when teaching is unsatisfactory, teachers do not pitch the level of the content of the lesson to meet pupils' needs effectively and there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to become involved in the lesson. This means that while remaining polite and well behaved, pupils do not make sufficient gains in their skills or understanding.
26. Several subjects, such as art, geography, history, information and communication technology and science, are taught at the same time to pupils in small groups. This is achieved by using teacher assistants and students to work with some of the groups in place of the class teacher. The same system is used to bring children in the reception year together periodically during the week. The teacher assistants and students provide invaluable support to staff by doing this. They follow teachers' directions assiduously and so help pupils to make mostly satisfactory gains in the sessions they are supervising. Despite this, they do not have sufficient information or experience to encourage pupils to experiment or explore material independently, or to extend pupils' learning.

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

27. As in the previous inspection, the curriculum provided by the school satisfactorily covers all the required subjects of the National Curriculum and uses the locally agreed syllabus of education for religious education. The good provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, has been maintained. There has been an improvement since the last inspection in that the governing body has now agreed the policies for all subjects and is in the process of reviewing some of these.
28. Enough time is given to most subjects except to music at both key stages and religious education at Key Stage 2. This shortage is a key factor in the below average attainment in music at the end of both key stages and religious education at the end of Key Stage 2. These subjects are not covered in enough width or depth. As a result, pupils do not make enough progress in these subjects. However, the school fully meets the requirements for a regular act of collective worship. There is sound provision for personal, social and health education and an agreed policy for sex education. Pupils learn about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and drugs through taking part in activities both at school and when visiting outside events.
29. The school has successfully introduced the national initiatives for teaching literacy and numeracy. Literacy and numeracy lessons take place as required in all classes. This helps pupils to reach the expected standards in English and mathematics by the time they are 7 and 11 years of age. These strategies provide useful guidelines for teachers' planning and help to ensure that lessons build on what pupils already know. They also help to ensure those pupils in the same year but different classes have similar lessons. However, the school has recognised that the guidelines for teaching in other subjects do not now offer enough support for teachers to ensure that this is the case in other subjects. There are firm plans to implement the nationally recommended guidelines for teaching National Curriculum subjects early in the next school year.

30. The school plans a satisfactory curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. Staff in the Foundation Stage plan the activities together so that children in both classes have equal access to a suitable range of activities. They cover the required areas of learning and include a broad range of interesting activities. Teachers' planning covers the appropriate areas of learning for young children and there is a balance between teacher-directed activities and opportunities for children to learn through exploring, planning and making decisions for themselves. Activities are stimulating and relevant to the children's needs before they commence National Curriculum work at the start of Year 1.
31. All pupils have equal opportunities to benefit from the curriculum. The school recognises that there are sometimes differences in the ways that boys and girls learn, particularly in English, and makes every effort to minimise the impact of these differences. Planning for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and, as a result, they make satisfactory progress in relation to the goals on their individual education plans. However, the usefulness of the individual learning targets on these plans varies. For example, the target 'to consolidate and extend knowledge of letter sounds 'A' to 'M'' is sufficiently specific to allow both the pupil and the adult to identify success. Whereas the target, 'to draw and copy shapes according to size' is too general to be clear, and so success is harder to identify. Not all teachers have copies of individual education plans readily accessible. This means they seldom refer to them in planning or assessment notes.
32. Pupils have good opportunities to visit areas of interest that enhance their quality of learning, for example when learning about the life of a Roman soldier or visiting a theatre to see stories about 'The Creation'. The school provides a very good range of clubs and activities outside normal lesson time. This includes sporting and non-sporting activities. From Year 4 onwards, all pupils have the opportunity to take part in an annual residential visit. These visits and clubs make a useful very useful contribution to the personal development of those pupils who take part. There are also useful links to a local dance school that have led to a resurgence of Maypole dancing.
33. There are good links to the local community and sound links with pre-school groups and the secondary schools that pupils move on to. The school provides a useful range of relevant information about pupils' progress to these schools. Pupils visit the local church monthly and the vicar, who is also a school governor, leads a whole-school assembly once a month. These assemblies make a useful contribution to pupils' personal development. For example, the vicar led an effective assembly about our responsibilities to each other and the world around us. There are good links with local colleges of further education and students from these provide useful support for teachers as they gain experience of childcare. The school produces a community newspaper that is delivered to all houses in the neighbourhood. This helps pupils to appreciate and understand their role in society.
34. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. The Christian ethos of the school and close relationship with the local church provide a strong foundation. Prayers said during the day, including the special school prayer, make an important contribution. Assemblies provide appropriate opportunities for spiritual development, although chances for pupils to quietly reflect on their own actions are sometimes missed. The school is good at valuing the achievement of individual pupils, both in and out of school. Awards gained at organisations such as Brownies and Cubs are recognised and pupils publicly congratulated.
35. Pupils' moral development is very good. Parents are happy with the values the school promotes. They feel behaviour is good and that children understand what is expected of them. Pupils compile their own sets of class rules. In one class, this is presented as a scroll to link in with their current study of Judaism. Assemblies incorporate a strong moral element. During the inspection, the theme of 'being responsible' was effectively carried through whole-school and class assemblies. It was then linked to the personal, social and



health education lessons, where pupils were given the opportunity to discuss what being responsible actually meant to them. Teachers and other adults provide good role models and give subtle but effective reminders on how pupils are expected to conduct themselves. The headteacher speaks about the 'Parkfield approach' and, along with his staff, is successful in instilling in pupils a pride in being a 'Parkfielder' and all that it demands. As a result, most pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong.

36. Provision for social development is also very good. Pupils are often encouraged to work together in small groups and pairs. For instance, in one class, they were offered the chance to complete work in their own groups, or to move places and work with their friends. They are encouraged to think of others by raising money for the Royal National Institute for the Blind. A good range of responsibilities is provided as pupils progress through the school. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are offered the chance of staying inside at lunchtimes to play chess, watch videos, make models, with the understanding that they do not break the trust the school has in them. The very good range of extra-curricular activities and residential visits considerably enhances pupils' levels of social development and maturity. In addition, very good relationships within the school make a considerable contribution to the school's positive atmosphere for learning.
37. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Art makes a satisfactory contribution and pupils study the work of David Hockney, Piet Mondrian and L. S. Lowry. An established programme of visits to places such as the Museum of Science and Industry to see the Ancient Cultures exhibition and to the theatre during inspection week to see 'The Creation' makes a good contribution. The role of music in enhancing pupils' cultural experiences is not well developed.
38. Multi-cultural education is not as strong as it was during the previous inspection. Religious education for younger pupils makes a satisfactory contribution in increasing their multi-cultural understanding. For example, during the inspection, pupils took part in a Shabbat, where they experienced Jewish food and customs. The contribution religious education makes to pupils' multi-cultural understanding is unsatisfactory for older pupils. In art, Year 4 pupils have completed work in coloured sands in the style of a mandala, building on from their visits to a Buddhist centre. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of the customs and traditions of the different groups that make up British society. Multi-cultural education is not well planned as an integral part of the curriculum. This is a minor issue for the school.

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

39. The school provides a caring environment for its pupils, firmly based upon a Christian heritage, relating to its former past as a Church school. The headteacher provides a strong lead in this; he is proud of his 'Parkfielders' (as pupils are often referred to) and is passionate about the importance of the school's role in supporting pupils' personal development. As a result, the positive standards of care seen during the previous inspection have been successfully maintained.
40. Procedures for supporting pupils' personal development are good, teachers know their pupils well and take an interest in them. Pupils spoken to during the inspection, about several aspects of school life, confirmed this is the case. Written comments from pupils in Year 6 who completed an 'exit survey' prior to leaving, confirmed the levels of two-way respect and friendship between staff and pupils.
41. Child protection procedures are appropriate. Members of staff are familiar with routines if they have a concern and the named person has recently received extensive training in

relation to her role. Governors carry out their role in overseeing health and safety well. There are regular checks made of the premises and procedures are satisfactory.

42. Procedures for encouraging pupils to behave well are good. Expectations of behaviour are high in the school and the system of rewards, based upon 'smiley face' charts leading to certificates and trophies, is working well and eagerly sought after by pupils. The school reinforces the importance of good relationships and behaviour well, mainly through assemblies and the personal and social education programme. Pupils are happy that any minor incidents of oppressive behaviour, often associated, they feel, with pupils rolling down the small grass mounds in the playground, are always dealt with well by staff. Inspection evidence confirms the school takes incidents of bullying seriously.
43. There are sound procedures for finding out and recording pupils' achievement at both key stages. Those for English, mathematics and science are good. In these cases, teachers use a range of tests, including National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 2 and 6, and further tests in English and mathematics in Years 3 to 5. Pupils' attainment is noted termly against the requirements of the National Curriculum for these subjects. Sometimes, however, it is difficult to see what progress pupils have made because the statements do not always outline the steps leading from one level to another. The results of the different tests are used effectively in forecasting realistic achievement targets by the end of the key stages. Results of English assessments are also effectively used to set individual targets in reading and writing. However, this is not yet the case in mathematics or science. There are not yet effective procedures for finding out and recording pupils' progress in the other subjects in a way that informs teachers what pupils know and can do. Consequently, they do not provide enough information for planning future work. Some teachers record on their short and medium term planning how well pupils have done. This is useful information for planning lessons, but the practice is inconsistent throughout the school.
44. The school provides satisfactory support for monitoring and supporting pupils. It meets the requirements of the Code of Practice<sup>3</sup> for pupils with special educational needs, and adjusts the amount of extra help a pupil receives according to their needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator records the level of help each pupil is receiving on the register of pupils with special educational needs. She satisfactorily reviews this periodically. There are satisfactory individual education plans for these pupils, though some targets are not specific enough to ensure better progress. Support staff provide good levels of support to these pupils in specific activities planned to develop literacy skills.

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

45. The partnership with parents is very good and one of the strengths of the school. The positive picture seen during the previous inspection has been further enhanced following the arrival of a new headteacher, who has successfully built on the good practice already in existence.
46. Parents are very supportive of the school and it is well respected within the community. The school is a popular choice for parents and is currently fully subscribed. The very positive views of parents, expressed at the well-attended meeting with Ofsted inspectors and through a questionnaire (to which just under half of all parents replied), confirm high levels of satisfaction with the school's work.

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<sup>3</sup> Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

47. There were only two areas where a few parents expressed dissatisfaction. These related to the amount of homework given and in not feeling well informed about progress. Parents at the meeting were generally happy with the annual written report, but said they would like to know how their child compares with others of the same age. In both cases, the numbers expressing dissatisfaction were small.
48. The school's provision for homework is satisfactory and in line with that seen in many primary schools. In terms of information about pupils' progress, this is satisfactory overall, with areas to improve. The school offers parents good termly opportunities to see their children's work and talk to teachers. In addition, the welcoming and friendly atmosphere within the school makes it easy for parents to see staff at other times. Annual reports provide an appropriate amount of detail about individual pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. Comments for other subjects often describe the pupils' attitudes to the subject rather than how much progress is being made. For example 'gets quite a lot of enjoyment out of anything that involves music' tells a parent very little about how much a child has learnt about the subject. Areas that the pupils need to focus on to improve are not always mentioned.
49. The special educational needs co-ordinator keeps parents sufficiently informed of their child's progress in relation to the individual education plan. This is often through informal discussion either in school or on the telephone. She offers an 'open surgery' each week so that parents have a regular opportunity to raise any concerns they may have. However, the co-ordinator acknowledges that records of parental contributions to the provision for their child are not always up to date.
50. The school is very effective in its approach to parents and in its response to their needs. Good work assemblies, started at the beginning of the year, have been a popular introduction to the calendar and many parents attend. The headteacher places great significance on his presence around school whilst parents are bringing their children into class in the morning and this sets a welcoming tone. Extra-curricular clubs, which parents attend with their children to help with homework for older pupils and to take part in numeracy games for younger ones, are good examples of the school's innovative approach. There is an example in one class of good practice, where the teacher keeps parents informed about the work pupils are currently doing. The school recognises there is not a uniform approach here and plans to resolve this, so that parents are better informed to help their child at home. This is entirely appropriate and in keeping with the school's positive approach.
51. The high regard parents have for the school's work is translated into good levels of support for fundraising activities. Organisation of the recent summer fete was instrumental in encouraging parental help and several new parents came forward to volunteer. The fete was hailed as a huge success and raised an impressive amount of money. The work of the parent-teacher association is making a significant contribution to the quality of education. Money raised is helping to buy extra resources, such as new furniture, library books and physical education equipment, and to support school visits and trips out.
52. Parents provide good support for the work pupils bring to do at home. They are interested in learning about the curriculum and several came to the literacy and numeracy workshops held over the year. Attendance at parents' evenings is high. Most parents listen to their children read in the evening and support them with homework. This is having a positive impact upon standards within the school.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. At the time of the last inspection there were strengths and weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school. The then headteacher provided effective leadership, but the school was not evaluating the impact of its work against the standards pupils achieved. Governors were not given sufficient information for them to monitor the school's progress towards its targets. Since then the school has appointed a new headteacher and has addressed some of these weaknesses. Currently, the school is soundly led and managed.
54. The school has a clear and appropriate mission statement. It states that the school aims to encourage pupils' respect for people and property, value links with parents, promote excellence and achievement in a stimulating and supportive environment. The school is making good progress towards its stated aims. Parkfield is a caring school, which provides very good moral development for its pupils and has very effective links with its parents. Staff and governors show strong commitment to the personal and social development of the pupils. The school's aim for pupils to achieve excellence is less well fulfilled.
55. The relatively newly appointed headteacher is enthusiastic and provides sound leadership. He has quickly gained the respect of parents, almost all of whom feel the school is well led and managed. He has identified the need to raise standards, especially those of higher-attaining pupils and has introduced more effective arrangements for evaluating the work of the school. These include more formal arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning, training in monitoring for subject co-ordinators and the tracking of pupils' performance. However, these recent initiatives have not yet had sufficient time to impact on the standards achieved. Subject co-ordinators are beginning to expand their role in developing their subjects. For example, the literacy co-ordinator has monitored teaching and learning throughout the school. This has led to the introduction of new strategies to improve writing and improve the standards achieved by boys. This good practice does not yet include other subjects. Overall, co-ordinators make a satisfactory contribution to school improvement.
56. The quality of the leadership and management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The co-ordinator reviews the register of pupils with special educational needs appropriately. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs works closely with the co-ordinator and is well informed about the school's provision.
57. The governing body is very supportive of the school. It successfully fulfils its statutory responsibilities by ensuring all legally required documents and policies are in place, including a school prospectus and special educational needs policy. The chair of governors ably carries out his various functions, including liaison with the headteacher. The governing body meets regularly and has an appropriate structure that includes committees for staffing and curriculum, finance and buildings. Governors receive good information from the headteacher. They have effective links to individual year groups and they regularly visit the classrooms. Consequently, they have a good understanding of the work of the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Governors see questioning policy and practice as an important part of their role. They satisfactorily monitor spending, which has supported the school's priorities of increasing staffing and improving the accommodation and resources. The school makes effective use of specific grants to support, for example, special educational needs, in-service training and improvements to the accommodation.
58. There is a shared commitment between headteacher, staff and governors to further school improvement. The headteacher and staff satisfactorily identify appropriate priorities for each subject in the school development plan. The governors' initial involvement in identifying priorities is limited. The headteacher and governors regularly monitor progress towards the plan's targets. However, the plan does not clearly identify whole-school

priorities to give a strong lead to school improvement. The targets do not always clearly focus on improving standards and their success criteria are not always specific enough to measure their success.

59. There is an appropriate number of suitably qualified teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Overall, there is good range of experience and subject experience amongst the teachers. Teachers lack confidence in the teaching of information and communication technology and music. Due to reasons beyond the school's control, training to update teachers' skills in information and communication technology has not taken place and, consequently, expertise is unsatisfactory, more especially at Key Stage 2. Previous dependence upon a music specialist has meant that teachers are not well skilled in teaching the requirements of the National Curriculum in music. The role of subject co-ordinators is being carried out satisfactorily overall and many teachers have received appropriate recent training to support their professional development. The school appropriately recognises the need to develop their expertise to monitor classroom teaching and learning, and to spread good practice. The teachers are well supported by talented classroom teaching assistants, who make a positive contribution to pupils' learning, especially in the areas of information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology and in supporting numeracy and literacy.
  
60. The quality of accommodation is satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, an additional classroom has been built, a new computer suite created and the playground resurfaced and marked for games. The interior of the building is kept clean and is enhanced by good quality displays. It provides a pleasant working environment, but some classrooms for older pupils are cramped for the numbers using them. Learning resources are satisfactory overall, with strengths in the quality and quantity of books for teaching English, the number of resources for mathematics and in physical education. There is a satisfactory range of reference books in the school's library. The school makes satisfactory use of new technology, for example to store financial data.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. To further improve the quality of education provided and to raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:

**raise the overall standards of pupils by the age of 11, especially of higher-attaining pupils, and particular in writing, history, information and communication technology and religious education, and in music by the ages of 7 and 11,**  
(Paragraphs: 4, 6-7, 10, 84-86, 119, 123, 126-130)

**by:**

- giving pupils more opportunities to use and develop their writing skills in other subjects;  
(Paragraphs: 9, 84, 86, 111)
- ensuring all aspects of the subjects are taught in sufficient depth;  
(Paragraphs: 28, 118, 123, 126, 140)
- providing appropriate in-service training to improve teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in teaching these subjects;  
(Paragraphs: 18, 124, 126)
- developing the use of information and communication technology in other subjects;  
(Paragraphs: 9, 86, 97, 104, 125)

**and also by:**

- providing more opportunities for pupils' to develop their independent learning skills and to take more responsibility for their own learning;  
(Paragraphs: 19, 85, 89, 96, 105, 111)
- ensuring that the school's recently adopted guidelines to help teachers with their planning are securely introduced, so that there are no gaps in pupils' learning, and that their effectiveness in respect of raising standards is carefully monitored and evaluated;  
(Paragraphs: 29, 100, 105, 111, 120, 136)
- developing whole-school procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the non-core subjects so teachers' planning can more closely match the needs of pupils.  
(Paragraphs: 105, 111, 116, 130)

In addition to the key issues above, the following minor issues should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan. They are indicated by the following paragraphs:

<b>Area for development</b>	<b>Paragraph/s</b>
Enriching the school's curriculum through the inclusion of opportunities in all subjects to explore examples of the rich variety of cultures found in Britain.	38, 103
Having a clearer focus to the school development plan, ensuring the governors' involvement in the setting of its priorities and by having clear targets and success criteria against which to measure progress.	58

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	5	43	47	5	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	246
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	50

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	21	14	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	18	19	18
	Girls	13	13	12
	Total	31	32	30
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	89 (94)	91 (89)	86 (86)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	19	19	19
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	32	32	32
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	91 (94)	91 (83)	91 (89)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	20	12	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	11	16	18
	Girls	10	12	11
	Total	21	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	66 (74)	88 (83)	91 (83)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	8	14	17
	Girls	11	10	10
	Total	19	24	27
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	63 (63)	75 (71)	84 (89)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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



### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	211
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.7
Average class size	30.8

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	104

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	426,211
Total expenditure	416,105
Expenditure per pupil	1,699
Balance brought forward from previous year	30,000
Balance carried forward to next year	40,106

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 45%

Number of questionnaires sent out	246
Number of questionnaires returned	111

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	25	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	74	23	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	72	27	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	34	12	2	2
The teaching is good.	75	23	1	1	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	38	11	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	88	10	1	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	86	14	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	68	30	2	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	80	16	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	30	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	35	5	0	5

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**

62. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (children in the reception year) is satisfactory and children make sound progress overall. When children join the school in the year following their fourth birthday they have average levels of skills, knowledge and understanding. This is shown in the initial assessments made when they enter the reception class. Since the last inspection national guidance for the curriculum and provision for children prior to beginning the National Curriculum has changed. At that time, children achieved expected levels by the age of five. They now reach the expected levels of skills, knowledge and understanding, the 'early learning goals', in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year. They exceed the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development. They make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning except personal, social and emotional development where they make good progress.
63. At the time of the inspection 25 children were in one reception class and 10 were in a mixed-age class alongside pupils in Year 1. Reception staff have worked extremely hard, and successfully, to introduce appropriate planning for all children in the reception year. Children have equal access to a suitable range of activities because staff plan together and teach the reception children altogether for some sessions during the week. On these occasions, after an introduction from the reception class teacher, children work in smaller groups led by a nursery nurse or a teaching assistant as well as the teacher.

**Personal, social and emotional development**

64. Most children have experience of working in pre-school settings before joining the reception classes. Staff plan for a gradual introduction to the school for children and their families. This means that children settle securely and happily into the consistent routines of the reception classes. They soon become independent in moving around the classes and using the various resources. Additionally, staff recognise that this area of development provides the basis for children's learning. The teaching for this area of learning is good and overall children learn well, exceeding most of the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development.
65. Children confidently embrace new experiences, such as searching for 'buried treasure' in the sand tray. They respond well with a range of emotions to various ideas when they listen to stories. For example, they appreciate the humour of 'Delilah' finding potatoes when she was expecting treasure in *Delilah Digs for Treasure*. They demonstrate a very secure understanding of what is acceptable behaviour and what is not. For example, when the teacher asks them to correct the mistakes made by a puppet at the beginning of a mathematics session. One child comments that the puppet 'needs to stop chattering and listen'. Children listen carefully, answer politely and help to tidy equipment away sensibly. They treat each other with concern and respect, collaborate well and take turns with impressive maturity.

**Communication, language and literacy**

66. The teaching of this area of learning is satisfactory overall and contributes to children making steady progress and meeting the early learning goals. Children make satisfactory progress in matching letters and their sounds (phonics). They use this knowledge to help 'work out' what a word in a book says. Older and more confident children are established on the school's reading scheme. Most children are beginning to recognise common words such as 'the' and 'cat', and use a combination of methods to 'read' simple sentences. Children are very clear about how books work because teachers use the National Literacy Strategy guidelines well. For example, children understand the terms 'fiction' and 'non-

fiction' and many know that the writer is the 'author'. They listen closely to stories and in a large group are prepared to predict what will happen next. However, their willingness to communicate often exceeds their language skills. For example, their story predictions come in the form of 'yes' or 'no' answers to the teacher's questions. Teachers use some interesting methods to keep children interested in recognising words in activities outside literacy lessons, for example burying cards with labels such as 'fish' or 'ship' with the hidden treasure in the sand tray.

67. When children join the reception classes the marks that they make on paper are a little immature. They make steady progress in early writing skills and most children meet the early learning goal of beginning to write simple sentences by the end of the year. The most confident children write sentences such as, 'I like my Easter egg because its yum'. Most children willingly try to record their ideas, for example about visiting an 'exciting' zoo. However, while there is a customary spread of early writing skills in the reception group, there are a few more children than expected whose formation of letters is still a little immature.

### **Mathematical development**

68. Children make steady progress in their knowledge and understanding of mathematics overall and by the end of the reception year most of them meet the early learning goals. Teaching is sound overall and contributes to the steady progress made by most children. During the inspection in the only lesson seen based on the National Numeracy Strategy, teaching was good because the lesson was planned well to meet the needs of different groups of children. Most children read, write and order numbers to 10 accurately. They are also interested in using the language of number in conversation, for example asking the inspector, 'How old am I?'
69. Children begin to solve practical mathematical problems using individual techniques to work out how many sweets are left, 'if I had ten and 'daft duck' took six'. They also use mathematical ideas practically in other areas of learning. For example, they sort materials according to how they feel, and they record 'which sound travels furthest'. Those children who are most confident begin to record calculations on paper. Most children name and recognise two-dimensional shapes, such as squares, circles, rectangles and triangles. In a good lesson focussing on two- and three-dimensional shapes, the older and more able children named three-dimensional shapes confidently and most children began to recognise shapes such as cubes and cones by their characteristics.

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

70. Through sound teaching children make reasonable progress and reach the early learning goals overall in this area of learning. Most children use the computer mouse independently to 'click and drag'. This means that they use an art package independently to draw 'shape people' and block fill them with colour. Additionally, once they recognise the relevant picture icons they print these pictures independently. Good use is made of the school environment to develop early geographical skills. Children begin to use language to direct each other to find the hidden treasure. They begin to understand the purpose of a map and enjoy drawing their routes to school.
71. They are introduced successfully to early scientific ideas through suitable activities for their age. For example, they discuss how different materials feel, experiment with floating and sinking and conduct a simple investigation into which sounds travel the furthest. They recall recent, significant past events in their own lives, and begin to appreciate the passing of time by acknowledging that people start life as babies and grow into children and then adults. They have opportunities to join materials; for example, during the inspection children used various shaped containers to create artefacts connected with pirates in some way. Although staff plan for children to celebrate the Chinese New Year and so introduce them to

the wider world of celebrations and festivals, this aspect of the area of learning is not planned for consistently throughout the year.

### **Physical development**

72. Teaching for this area of learning is satisfactory overall and, consequently, children make steady progress and achieve the early learning goals. Although there is not easy access to outside space for children from the reception classes, they do have regular opportunity for outdoor play. The school has plans for the development of an outside play area that is due to be completed and ready for use by September 2001. Large wheeled equipment, such as tricycles and bicycles, is on order for use in this area. Children have regular lessons in the school hall where they demonstrate a good awareness of space and hold a balance well for their age. Children use scissors and implements to paste glue with the level of dexterity expected for their age. They mostly use pencils and crayons with similar control, but a significant minority of children does not use a pencil to produce the shapes of letters on paper with quite the expertise expected for their age.

### **Creative development**

73. Children meet the expectations of the early learning goals in this area of learning through sound teaching and satisfactory progress. They experiment with mixing colours to produce striped fish, and they use their skills of observation to produce observational paintings of Van Gogh's *Sunflowers* with an appropriate level of accuracy for their age. They have regular access to materials that support imaginative play. This means that children use their imaginations to tell stories and demonstrate their understanding of the world around them. This enhances their learning in all areas throughout their various activities. For example, in dance they cool down by pretending to be slowly curling flowers, and they support mathematical learning by creating objects such as a 'pirate's playground' using a variety of three-dimensional shapes. They use large equipment collaboratively to build a 'pirate ship' and then use language such as 'walk the plank' and 'up the anchor', that they have heard in stories. They also have regular access to musical instruments, although these were not seen in use during the inspection.

### **Summary**

74. The strengths in provision for children in the Foundation Stage lie in the teachers' knowledge and understanding of how children at this stage learn best. There are also strengths in teachers' planning to ensure that all children in the reception year have suitable access to play and learning through their imaginations. Staff recognise that areas for further development include consistently planning clear learning outcomes and ensuring that all groups of children are challenged well when they are working independently. Children in reception classes receive a sound start to their education.

## **ENGLISH**

75. At the time of the last inspection most pupils achieved the nationally expected standard by the ages of 7 and 11 years. The school has maintained these overall average standards, though standards in writing at Key Stage 2 are below average. Above average standards in reading by the age of 11 show a good level of achievement for the pupils, but progress in writing is less well developed. Pupils with special educational needs are well motivated and make sound progress in their reading and writing skills.
76. Over recent years, standards by the age of 7 in reading have fluctuated between above and below average, and in writing they have been average or slightly above. In the National Curriculum tests for 7-year-olds in 2000, overall standards were average in reading and above average in writing. Most pupils achieved the expected standard in both tests. The proportion achieving the higher standard, Level 3, was below the national average in reading and similar to the average in writing. Inspection evidence shows that overall

standards in English in the current Year 2 are average. While slightly fewer pupils have achieved the expected level both in reading and writing compared to the previous year, slightly more have achieved the higher standard in reading. These findings do not represent a lessening of the effectiveness of the teaching and learning, but reflect the different ability within the year-groups. The standards obtained represent a satisfactory level of achievement for the pupils.

77. Standards achieved in national tests for 11-year-olds over recent years have been in line with the national average, except in 2000. In 2000, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard (Level 4) and the higher standard (Level 5) was well below the national average. This sudden decline in standards was a clear reflection of that particular year group of pupils. There was high proportion of boys and a significant difference between the achievements of girls and boys. While most girls achieved the expected standard, only half of the boys achieved Level 4 or above. The school has done much to help raise the standards achieved by the boys, including providing more books of interest to boys and introducing a reading partnership involving adult volunteers to provide the boys with positive role models. This has resulted in an improvement in the standards observed during the inspection in the current Year 6. A significant majority of boys and girls has achieved the expected standard in this year's tests, though as yet there are no national comparisons for these results.
78. Weaknesses at the end of Key Stage 2, however, do remain. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 5 is below than normally found. Standards in reading are good, with most pupils achieving the expected standard and over a third going on to achieve the higher standard. Standards in speaking and listening are average. However, in writing, less than two-thirds achieved the expected standard and only a few pupils achieve Level 5. The school has identified this weakness and has introduced a number of initiatives to raise the standard of pupils' writing. This has included more careful monitoring of pupils' work through the use of 'continuation books' and the setting of individual targets. These initiatives are beginning to positively impact on pupils' writing skills, but further development is required.
79. Standards in speaking and listening throughout the school are variable. They are slightly below national expectations by the age of 7 years. In Key Stage 1, pupils are attentive and listen carefully. This is because teachers manage behaviour well and have good story-telling techniques. Consequently, pupils follow instructions accurately and listen attentively to stories. Some pupils speak clearly and ask relevant questions. For example, a pupil sensibly asked, 'How does oil stop birds flying?' during a discussion on the environment. They take part in role-play situations, as when using a puppet theatre. Pupils respond clearly to direct questions, though they often reply using only one word or a short phrase rather than a sentence. They often find it more difficult to explain their work and express opinions because their range of vocabulary is limited. Teachers do not develop pupils' awareness that in some situations more formal vocabulary or tone is used.
80. In Key Stage 2, most pupils make good progress in steadily developing their speaking and listening skills and they meet the national expectations by the age of 11 years. They continue to be attentive and show good levels of concentration. By Year 6, pupils express personal opinions, as when discussing what they would like to see improved within the locality over the next 20 years. They are beginning to modify their own opinions in the light of others' comments, as observed during a 'brainstorming' session. A minority of pupils still finds it difficult to express their ideas clearly. Teachers do not always give sufficient focus to the key words within a lesson or provide pupils with word lists to help fully develop their vocabulary. Little use of drama is made to develop pupils' spoken language and to increase their confidence when speaking aloud.

81. By the age of 7, overall standards in reading are average. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their early reading skills. Pupils in Year 1 recognise simple sound patterns in rhymes when reading a 'pirate' poem with their teacher. The teacher develops a positive interest in books through her enthusiastic approach. Having read a poem in a monotone, she brings it to life by reading it with much expression. As a result pupils are keen to join in the chorus and read it in a lively way. This fun approach to reading has a positive impact on pupils' learning. By Year 2, about a quarter of pupils read simple texts accurately and with fluency and expression. They are able to comment on their reading confidently, demonstrating clear understanding of the story. Most pupils are technically competent in reading, but around a quarter struggle to recognise key words. They are aware of the basic strategies for word recognition; for example, they break down unknown words into small sections. A number pay insufficient attention to punctuation and, because of this, they lose the meaning as they read on from one sentence into the next. Most pupils are developing knowledge of alphabetical order and have appropriate library skills for their age.
82. Standards in reading by the age of 11 are above average because teachers use the National Literacy Strategy well to develop pupils' reading skills. Over a third of pupils achieve a higher than expected level by the end of Year 6. These pupils are fluent and expressive and have a good range of strategies for word recognition. They display good understanding and discuss their reading clearly, analysing plot and character in stories. Most other pupils achieve the expected standard. They understand the main points of the story and can retell it in their own words. They recognise bias when reading persuasive writing in advertisements and brochures. The small number of pupils who find reading difficult read without expression and lack a range of strategies for word recognition. Pupils develop appropriate research skills for their age. They use the index and contents confidently and are beginning to skim text for information. Pupils make good progress in their reading as they move through the key stage, building on the sound start made in Key Stage 1. Pupils throughout the school read regularly at home and this is having a positive impact on their progress. Reading diaries form a good link between home and school. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support in small groups and individually. They develop appropriate knowledge of letter sounds and are successfully encouraged to enjoy reading.
83. In writing, standards by the age of 7 are average. Most pupils make steady progress in their writing. They move from using simple words and phrases to writing sentences, often with capital letters and full stops used correctly. They develop their ideas into a sequence of sentences, as when retelling the story of *Jack and the Beanstalk* and writing their own versions of *We are going on a Bear Hunt*. Pupils write for an appropriate range of purposes. For example, as well as writing narrative they write lists and labels. They use suitable vocabulary and spell most simple words correctly. Pupils in Year 2 wrote, 'I am furry. I come out at night' and 'I am black and have eight legs' when successfully writing riddles about a hamster and a spider. More complex words, such as white (wite) and lettuce (letis), are often spelt incorrectly. Pupils form their letters accurately and most write in a joined and legible script.
84. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in writing are below average because too few pupils achieve both the expected and higher standards. The work of just over half of the pupils meets the required standard. Throughout the key stage, teachers give a high priority to the teaching of grammar and parts of speech. Pupils satisfactorily develop their understanding of punctuation. They learn to write stories in different styles; for example, in Year 4, pupils write their own versions of a fairytale and they keep reports in their 'not-so-secret diaries'. Pupils redraft their work and make appropriate improvements to the final copy. Handwriting is generally fluent, joined and legible and spelling is generally accurate. By Year 6 only a small number of pupils develops a higher than expected standard of writing. These pupils

successfully use both simple and complex sentences, good vocabulary and speech within their writing, for example when producing their own non-fiction books. However, many pupils do not successfully transfer what they have learned in literacy lessons to their extended writing. Their spelling is at times weak and their writing involves simple sentences rather than a variety of more complex sentence constructions. Pupils are given to few opportunities to develop the quality of their writing.

85. The quality of teaching and learning ranges from satisfactory to very good. Overall, it is good because teachers carefully plan lessons. In most lessons, teachers plan activities to meet the needs of the different ability groups within the class. Planning for higher-attaining pupils is not sufficiently influenced by teachers' day-to-day assessment. Consequently, these pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. For example, the higher-attaining pupils in a Key Stage 2 lesson were given the same templates in which to write as other pupils, rather than allowing them to develop their own ideas and style.
86. Teachers make effective use of the good quality resources available. During literacy lessons they use a good range of texts relevant to the pupils needs and interests. For example, a poem on pirates in Key Stage 1 and a holiday camp brochure and an extract from *Carrie's War* in Key Stage 2 all successfully motivated the pupils. Teachers have a good knowledge of the teaching of reading and possess effective strategies for teaching basic skills in writing. They do not, however, always share their learning objectives with the pupils and this reduces their own knowledge of their learning. Expectations of behaviour are high and teachers use effective strategies to reward good behaviour. Consequently, pupils are well behaved in lessons. Expectations of the standard or amount of work to be completed are often not given. At times this leads to a slow pace to lessons and so reduces the possible progress, particularly in writing. Teachers have introduced various strategies to improve writing, including the daily development of an opening sentence into a longer piece of writing and the setting of individual targets. This is beginning to have a positive impact on standards. However, the use and development of writing in other subjects is limited. Opportunities for pupils to develop their writing in subjects such as religious education, history and geography are often missed. Little use is made of information and communication technology in drafting and editing pupils' written work.

## **MATHEMATICS**

87. By the end of both key stages standards of attainment are in line with national expectations. Last year's National Curriculum test results show that attainment at age 7 was well below average. However, recent developments, such as teaching pupils in their own year groups and the effective use of a published scheme, have helped to improve teaching and, consequently, pupils' learning. In the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds last year, a higher proportion of pupils than average reached the expected level, but fewer than might be expected attained higher levels. The picture is very similar this year. This is also the judgement of the previous inspection, when most pupils were reported as reaching the expected levels. There is little difference between the attainment of boys and girls in the national tests at the end of both key stages. In lessons also, girls' and boys' work is of a similar standard.
88. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make sound progress. This is because of the satisfactory teaching and the pupils' positive attitudes, which lead to satisfactory learning in lessons. Teachers use a published scheme, which helps to make sure that the work pupils do builds on what they already know. Their understanding is reinforced by suitably planned activities that help to provide a wider range of experiences. They have a good grasp of mental mathematics. Younger pupils count forwards and backwards in tens and fives and use this understanding to work out the answer to addition and subtraction problems. Older pupils work out what coins total certain sums of money up to £2 and select the fewest number of coins to make



that amount. They work out how much change they would get from certain amounts. Older pupils correctly use conventional mathematical symbols in their work. They recognise and name two- and three-dimensional shapes, such as squares, circles, triangles and cubes. They use suitable language to describe two- and three-dimensional shapes and younger pupils play a team game using this effectively to identify shapes.

89. Pupils continue to make sound progress at Key Stage 2. They use a published mathematics scheme that satisfactorily takes them through the required mathematical knowledge and understanding. It helps to provide due emphasis on numeracy with a sound balance of other areas of mathematics. This scheme is soundly supported by activities drawn from other materials. By the age of 11, most pupils have a sound understanding of place value and use this to round numbers to the nearest 10,000. They mentally recall multiplication tables up to X10 and in some cases beyond. However, their practice of counting on in the particular number, for example in sixes when remembering the six times table, restricts mental recall for some of the younger pupils. Pupils in Year 4 use their knowledge of the two, five and ten times tables when carrying out division and finding remainders. Older pupils have a good grasp of mental mathematics strategies. Pupils in Year 6 play a game in which they quickly identify a number from a couple of statements. This leads into a useful activity in which most pupils learn to use mathematical symbols to record a statement such as 'add one to the number rolled on a dice'. They learn sound strategies for systematically recording and tackling problems. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to carry out practical mathematical activities or to investigate problems that directly relate to their own lives and experiences. This is a key factor in hindering higher-attaining pupils from reaching higher levels.
90. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and there are some good features at both key stages. The school has made a sound start to the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers have successfully adopted the suggested lesson structure and lessons are thoroughly planned. The mental mathematics sessions at the start of the lesson are useful in helping pupils to practise existing skills and usually link well to the main theme of the lesson. This leads to a satisfactory quality of learning during lessons. Teachers generally use resources appropriately to support their teaching and pupils' learning. However, sometimes the teacher uses resources that are too small to be fully effective. For example, when showing the right coins for a particular sum of money, a teacher at Key Stage 1 used actual size coins which some of the pupils could not see clearly. Usually, the pace of lessons is brisk and this, coupled with pupils' willingness to learn and positive attitudes, encourages them to persevere at their given tasks and make sound progress. Pupils with special educational needs at both key stages are supported well, so their quality of learning matches that of the rest of the class.
91. The recent reorganisation of lessons so that pupils are taught for some of the time in groups of similar ability is having a positive impact on learning. This system means that teaching can be pitched at a suitable level. The teacher of a lower-attaining group of Years 5 and 6 pupils effectively led pupils through ways of organising information about a problem, involving them at every step of the way. Consequently, all pupils made good progress and, by the end of the lesson, had used these strategies well to find solutions. Teachers manage their classes well so all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make similar progress. Marking is generally up to date, but often does not offer pupils useful guidance on how to improve their work. Consequently, pupils do not always have targets to aim for, or a clear understanding of how they can improve. Teachers use the time at the end of each lesson soundly to review what has been learned. This helps pupils to understand what they have learned, for example when a teacher reviewed the work that pupils in Year 5 had done using the language of probability.

92. The school does not yet make enough use of information and communication technology in mathematics. Pupils sometimes use practice programs that fit into the theme of the lesson and, in a few cases, use programs to display information as graphs. For example, younger pupils use information and communications technology to produce bar charts of their favourite lunches. Older pupils produce similar work, for example graphs showing the number of pupils who favour a particular wrestler.
93. There is a useful system of recording pupils' attainment in terms of their progress through the National Curriculum. This is used appropriately in predicting possible National Curriculum test results, but is underused in setting challenging targets for individual pupils.

## **SCIENCE**

94. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils' attainment in science is average. Most pupils reach the expected levels, but not enough attain higher levels. These findings agree with teachers' judgements on attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000. Inspection findings also agree with the results of National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in the same year. The overwhelming majority reached the expected level, but the proportion that achieved the higher level is below the national average. Results for the current Year 6 suggest that the situation is similar. Standards of attainment are similar to schools with similar intakes. Last year, more girls than boys reached the expected level at the end of Key Stage 2. This is because there was a number of underachieving boys in that class. There is little difference between boys' and girls' results this year. No differences were noted in their standards in lessons. Standards of attainment were noted to be similar at the time of the previous inspection. Most pupils reached the expected levels.
95. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 because of their sound quality of learning. They learn to answer questions and record their findings appropriately. They conduct simple investigations and find out the conditions seeds need to germinate. They listen to sounds and know that these are made in different ways. They construct working circuits with bulbs, wires and batteries and some identify reasons why some of these do not work. Younger pupils sort materials according to their properties, for example when finding out about what would be the best material for writing a letter to a friend who lives under the sea. However, pupils do not carry out enough investigative work to help more of them to achieve higher levels.
96. Pupils continue to make sound progress during Key Stage 2. This is due to sound teaching and positive attitudes to the subject and good behaviour in lessons leading to a satisfactory quality of learning. At Year 6, pupils soundly review and consolidate the factual knowledge required by the National Curriculum. However, they have fewer opportunities to extend their understanding and awareness of the process of scientific enquiry in sufficient depth. They sometimes follow instructions when carrying out investigations, but have too few opportunities to ask questions, make and test predictions and carry out a wide enough range of measurements. In one lesson, pupils began a series of challenges, but had little opportunity to use their initiative except in selecting a recording method. This is a key factor in the low proportion of pupils reaching higher levels. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a sound understanding of the processes common to all living things and the functions of the main organs of the human body. They look at materials in more detail and know that these can be changed and some of these changes are reversible and others are not. Pupils look at forces such as friction during practical work and know that this is a force that causes things to slow down or stop.
97. At both key stages, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make similar progress. Pupils make sound use of their literacy skills in science when writing reports and descriptions. Year 6 pupils created interesting logs of their visit to a science exhibition

centre. However, not enough use is made of numeracy or of information and communication technology.

98. The quality of teaching is sound at both key stages. Teachers plan satisfactory lessons and introduce these clearly. Teachers foster pupils' enthusiasm so that learning is enhanced. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn to answer questions and record their results in words, table and pictures. In a lesson at Key Stage 2, the teacher revisited what pupils knew about forces and led them well into a lesson about different forces. This helped them to focus on the task in hand and remember information useful in the lesson. Her questioning was also effective in helping her to gauge pupils' level of understanding. Teachers plan investigations, but these are often over-directed and do not give pupils enough chance to ask questions or devise ways of finding answers. Sometimes there are not enough resources, for example when seven pupils use one set when considering the best shape for a plasticene boat. This means that not all pupils have the opportunity to try things out themselves, reducing their quality of learning.
99. Teachers' explanations are clear. This enhances the quality of pupils' learning and gives them a clear illustration of the concept. As a result, they settle quickly to productive work, for example when younger pupils at Key Stage 1 investigated ways of speeding up or slowing down toy cars. Teachers maintain a reasonable pace to lessons so that pupils make good use of the time available. However, in one lesson, progress for a small group was restricted when they spent too much time in the lesson drawing the tread of a trainer. Marking is generally up to date, but does not offer pupils enough information about what they need to do to improve. Sometimes, marking is inaccurate; for example, a statement that 'the Sun is made of carbon dioxide, oxygen and fire' is marked correct.
100. Up until very recently, pupils were not taught the required topics in a way that helped them to understand the necessary scientific concepts at a suitable level. The school has recognised this and is introducing the nationally recommended guidelines for science teaching to improve the situation. Planning now means that pupils build on the work they have done before and that those in different classes in the same year group at Key Stage 1 are taught equally effectively. Teachers record pupils' attainment at the end of each year, but, as yet, insufficient use of these records is made in setting targets for individuals. The assessments sometimes do not offer enough information about how much progress pupils have made in a particular year.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

101. No lessons were observed during the inspection, but examples of pupils' previous artwork feature prominently in the displays that enhance the entrance hall, corridors and practical areas. Pupils aged 7 and 11 achieve standards that are in line with national expectations for their age. This represents a slight decline since the last inspection when attainment by the age of 11 was above average. However, in each key stage there are pupils who produce work, particularly paintings, of a good standard. Other aspects of the subject are not as well developed.
102. By the time pupils are 7, they know how to manage paint and mix colours. They know that by mixing primary colours other new colours can be created. For example, pupils mix red and blue to make purple and red and yellow to make orange. They know colours may be darkened by adding black and lightened by adding white. Pupils show reasonable brush control when creating a pattern of irregular black lines and filling them with solid colour. Teachers give pupils opportunities to develop an appropriate understanding of pattern and line. Pupils use paint to create simple symmetrical patterns and pencil to draw and shade pictures of a cactus plant. Pupils gain knowledge of the work of famous artists when gluing magazine cuttings of eyes, noses and mouths to create portraits in the style of Picasso.

They use a range of media, for example, when studying Vincent Van Gogh's *Sunflowers*, including pencil and crayon, paint, clay and a computer art program. During the inspection a small group of pupils working with a student showed positive attitudes and were keen to talk about their paintings.

103. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to use various media, but the major focus is on the use of paint. They produce paintings of a good standard when producing work in the style of famous artists. In Year 3, pupils paint water lilies in the style of Monet while pupils in Year 4 imitate the style of David Hockney by using wax and a colour wash to show scenes with moving water. Pupils in Year 5 paint abstract pictures using the primary colours and rectangular style of Mondrian. Pupils use their skills in painting when producing artwork to illustrate aspects of their work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 5 used their artistic skills well to produce portraits of Henry VIII and his six wives. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the use of other media, such as when weaving and producing collage. Pupils in Year 3 weave coloured paper and in Year 5 they use woven strips of paper within a larger picture. In Year 6, pupils satisfactorily weave textiles to decorate the lid of a box. Pupils in Year 4 used coloured sands to create 'mandala' pictures (circular designs symbolising the universe) as part of their work on Buddhism. Although there are links between art and design and non-western cultures, these are very limited. The subject, therefore, makes little contribution to pupils' knowledge of other cultures found in modern day British society.
104. Other aspects of the subject are not as well developed as pupils' use of paint. Pupils throughout Key Stage 2 make insufficient use of their sketchbooks to fully develop their use of tone, to experiment with their designs or to record the development of skills. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory use of information and communication technology to support learning in art and design. For example, they use a simple art program to draw, colour and print pictures of sunflowers. In Key Stage 2, pupils make insufficient use of information and communication technology to enhance and develop their standards in art.
105. Teaching assistants and students, working with small groups, carry out much of the teaching of the subject. They make a positive impact on pupils' learning. However, they tend to carry out specific activities with each group in turn. Consequently, there are few opportunities for pupils to experiment with their own ideas or to extend their skills beyond those set out in the planning. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and is developing a new scheme of work based on national guidelines and the school's current topics. She has gathered together a useful portfolio of pupils' work, though this has not been labelled so as to show teachers which skills the piece of work is developing and at what age these are appropriate. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop a simple whole-school system of assessing pupils' progress linked to the developing scheme of work.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

106. At the time of the last inspection, attainment was in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The school has maintained these standards and, currently, pupils aged 7 and 11 achieve average standards for their age. No lessons were observed during the inspection. Evidence came from a scrutiny of pupils' previous work and teachers' plans, and discussions with pupils and staff. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall in developing their planning and making skills.
107. Pupils satisfactorily develop their planning skills. In Key Stage 1, for example, pupils produce neat drawings when designing a seed packet. They give appropriate consideration to the information required on the packet, including the type of seed and the price. By the age of 7, pupils include simple lists of what they need to make their models, such as scissors, adhesive tape and paper. In Key Stage 2, pupils use published worksheets to

draw neatly presented pictures of their models, as when designing a model of 'Green Machine' (a machine to clean up the environment). By the end of the key stage, pupils generate imaginative designs that develop a modern object into one for the future. Their neat drawings show, for example, a toaster for big families that takes 12 slices of bread and an oven that also irons clothes. Pupils communicate their designs using neatly drawn sketches, often using labels and lists of resources required. There was no evidence, however, of them producing step-by-step instructions of how to make their model or the use of mathematical skills to quantify the amounts needed or the actual sizes of the models.

108. Pupils develop appropriate practical skills for their age through the activities teachers have planned for them. In a focused practical activity, younger pupils in Key Stage 1 learn a range of ways to join circles of paper together. These include the use of paper fasteners, adhesive tape, treasury tags and a stapler. In Year 2, pupils use construction kits when investigating the strength of simple structures, then follow this up using rolls of paper. They use the knowledge they have gained to help them design and make models of simple shelters using paper, card and textiles.
109. Pupils in Year 3 use recycled material to build a vehicle capable of carrying a tennis ball. They apply their knowledge of simple axles, made from dowel and attached to their 'ball carrier' by clothes pegs, to make their models move on wooden wheels. Making skills are not always progressively developed. For example, the use of an axle was not further developed when in Year 4 pupils made a model street-cleaning vehicle from recycled materials using fixed wheels. However, links to science work were made by the inclusion of a simple electric circuit to give their model a light. By the age of 11, pupils satisfactorily cut and fasten pieces of modelling wood to make the framework for a box with a lid. They use cardboard corners to strengthen the frame before using card to make the sides and base. They use a piece of weaving created in art to decorate their box.
110. Pupils in Key Stage 1 satisfactorily evaluate their work. The use simple 'smiley faces' to indicate their satisfaction with their model. They add a phrase or short sentence to indicate what they might change. For example, a pupil wrote 'more leaves' when evaluating her seed packet and another pupil wanted 'more zigzags' on her model vase because 'I would like more'. There was less evidence of pupils in Key Stage 2 evaluating their work.
111. Teachers have a satisfactory understanding of the subject. They have high expectations of the quality of work to be produced and this results in pupils producing neat drawings and carefully decorated models. The best results were achieved where pupils had clearly learned an appropriate skill through a focused task before applying this knowledge to a design or model of their own. Occasionally, the models reflect a high level of teacher direction rather than pupils generating their own designs and solutions to problems. Little use of literacy skills, in the writing of step-by-step instructions, or numeracy skills, in the measuring of materials, was observed. Information and communication technology is not yet used to help pupils in their designs. The current scheme of work for the subject gives insufficient guidance to teachers on the progressive development of knowledge and skills. The school has identified this as an area for development and it is about to introduce national guidelines that provide a more detailed and progressive scheme of activities. Currently, there are no effective procedures for assessing pupils' progress.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

112. Pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 achieve average standards. This means that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. During the inspection, because of the organisation of the timetable, it was only possible to observe one geography lesson, in Year 2. However, judgements are also based on seeing pupils working in small groups, discussions with pupils and staff, teachers' plans and a close scrutiny of pupils' work.

113. Before pupils are 7 they usually study geography as part of a topic, such as 'Transport' and 'Near and Far'. They focus mostly on their immediate environment and begin to use appropriate geographical skills for their age by drawing routes, for example from home to school. They begin to develop satisfactory mapping skills by drawing a map of an imaginary island and by plotting Hollingworth Lake on a single grid reference plan. They make sensible suggestions for relevant symbols on maps and identify the directions north, south, east and west. They record their observations of their local environment and have strong ideas about what they like and what they do not. For example, having conducted some fieldwork around the school grounds, pupils in Year 1 record that they have seen squirrels, which they like, and a 'messy junior wall', which they do not approve.
114. By the age of 11, pupils begin to understand that the environment has an impact upon people and vice versa. They compare the landscape of a village in Pakistan with that of Middleton. Between the ages of 7 and 11 they work on projects about preserving and protecting the environment. For example, in Year 3 they design posters to shame 'Litter Bugs on the Loose'. They recognise that people may pollute air or rivers. In Year 4, they develop their map work by following instructions to identify selected places on maps of varying scale. Older pupils visit London and travel on the underground to support their understanding of how and why cities grow. In Years 5 and 6, pupils extend their awareness of other parts of the world, as well as developing their views about the area where they live.
115. This evidence indicates that teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject, they plan for it satisfactorily and so promote a satisfactory level of attainment and learning as pupils move through the school. The subject is often taught to a small group of pupils alongside other groups studying a different subject. The class teacher focuses on each group in turn over a few weeks. In this situation, pupils often work on their own or with a student or teaching assistant. This means that opportunities for pupils to extend their skills, knowledge and understanding through independent research or posing geographical questions are limited. Currently, teachers provide only limited opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills within the subject.
116. The subject benefits from a programme of visits, including a residential trip to Cefyn Lea in Wales for pupils in Year 6. The subject is soundly led. The co-ordinator checks teachers' plans, to ensure that the subject is covered as required for the National Curriculum guidelines, and ensures that there are sufficient resources available to teach the topics. However, the co-ordinator has no time allocated to observe teaching in the subject and she does not monitor pupils' standards or achievement. Although the co-ordinator has recently begun to look at pupils' work to determine how well it matches the standards described in the National Curriculum guidance, she does not record her findings. There is no consistent approach to assessing the quality of pupils' geographical work throughout the school. This means that it is very difficult for teachers to monitor pupils' progress and extend their learning according to their needs.

## **HISTORY**

117. Pupils achieve the standards expected by the age of 7, but not by the age of 11 years. This means that standards for younger pupils are similar to those at the time of the last inspection, whereas there has been a decline in standards for older pupils.
118. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 compare items that we use now with their counterparts in the past, for example modern washing machines with old washing boards. They have a satisfactory understanding that the past was different from now and are fascinated by the idea that people used to live without electricity. In discussion with an inspector, they begin to pose questions for each other, such as 'Why didn't they have electricity in the olden days?' While

unable to answer this, their own question, they are able to give examples of lighting before electricity as candles or gas lamps. They are beginning to develop a sense of chronology and know that the Victorians pre-date their grandparents! This evidence indicates that teachers plan effectively and have sufficient subject knowledge to teach the subject soundly.

119. In Key Stage 2, pupils cover the main topics required by the National Curriculum, but not in sufficient depth. Pupils know that the study of the past is divided into periods of time and they identify those that they have studied, such as 'the Greeks' and 'the Victorians'. However, their knowledge of these periods is superficial. For example, while they know that Victorians used a 'penny farthing' bicycle, they are uncertain about significant inventions during the Victorian period. Similarly, while they name sources of historical evidence, they are vague about what could be learned by looking at a piece of an old Greek vase. A scrutiny of pupils' written work shows that teachers concentrate more on chronology and identifying past events, than on skills of historical enquiry and interpretation. Opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills, such as by descriptive and empathetic writing, are often missed. Standards are below expected levels because events are covered in insufficient depth and pupils do not have enough opportunity to investigate and research independently.
120. The co-ordinator monitors the coverage of topics as planned. She has correctly identified the need for a more comprehensive system of planning to support teachers. She also recognises the need to develop systems for assessing what pupils know, understand and can do in history. The subject is appropriately included in plans for development on the current school development plan. As the subject is planned and taught currently, many opportunities for pupils to value the contribution of a variety of cultures to our present society are missed.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

121. By the age of 7, pupils reach standards of attainment in information and communication technology that are similar to those expected nationally. However, by the time pupils leave school at the age of 11, standards of attainment are below those expected from pupils of that age. They are competent in those areas that they have learned, but there are gaps in their knowledge. This is similar to the picture described in the previous report.
122. Pupils in Key Stage 1, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress as they learn to use computers, keyboards and mice. They confidently use the tools of a painting program to create controlled and colourful designs that they later recreate in art. They display interest and enthusiasm, which has a positive impact on their learning. Younger pupils move objects on screen to sort them into different groups and pupils in Year 2 type in sentences about events of the weekend. They create bar graphs showing their favourite lunches.
123. Standards of attainment are below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2 because of gaps in pupils' learning. Pupils are confident and competent in starting the computers and programs. Their obvious interest and enthusiasm when using computers is notable and helps them to benefit from these activities. Pupils in Year 3 have a sound understanding that information and communication technology can be used to communicate with others. They have sent e-mails to a 'Roman general' asking about events from that time and read his replies. Pupils in Year 5 effectively use the Internet as a research tool to access web sites about Tudor explorers as part of their work in history. Pupils in Year 6 show a good grasp of the technology as they produce pages for the school newspaper. They transfer photographs from a digital camera and combine these with text to describe their recent visit to an activity centre. However, pupils have not yet covered a wide enough range of

activities to reach the expected level by the end of Key Stage 2. Some pupils are developing an understanding of controlling and monitoring events and have built a plant incubator using a construction kit. However, this strand is not systematically taught. Consequently, the majority of pupils lack experience of monitoring external events and controlling events through a sequence of commands. The school has recognised this deficiency and has firm and useful plans to plug the gaps.

124. Currently, pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making sound progress as a result of recent improvements in resources and in staffing, and sound teaching. A knowledgeable classroom assistant works with pupils and supports them well as they use the computer suite. This is a major factor in the provision of satisfactory teaching. Teachers themselves began an in-service training programme to increase their understanding of the use of information and communication technology in other subjects. This programme was intended to help teachers to use the suite, but proved to be unsatisfactory and did not meet their requirements. Consequently, the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the use of information technology to enhance teaching and learning is underdeveloped. The school is investigating effective ways to improve this situation.
125. Although there is some good use of information and communication technology in other subjects, for example history, it is underused in teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy. Practice programs are used to reinforce spelling and mathematics, but there is not enough work in drafting and editing written work. Information and communication technology is underused in collecting, displaying and interpreting information, for example in science. The school has yet to develop an effective system of finding out what pupils know and understand so as to help it plan activities more effectively.

## **MUSIC**

126. Pupils do not attain expected levels of skill, knowledge or understanding by the time they are 7 or by the age of 11 years. This represents a decline in standards since the last inspection when music was judged to be a strength of the school. Since then the music specialist with responsibility for teaching the subject throughout the school has left. There is no music specialist with this responsibility in school now. Consequently, most staff are over-dependent on commercial schemes. They lack confidence and experience in the subject and so do not teach the full curriculum. The headteacher is well aware of the situation and has bought resources to support non-specialist staff ready for use in September 2001.
127. Throughout the school pupils have opportunity to sing during assemblies. On these occasions they sing enthusiastically, tunefully and younger pupils have a good sense of timing with songs and hymns that they know well. However, they mostly sing accompanied by pre-recorded tapes or compact discs and are, therefore, dependent on these to hold a tune well. School assemblies also provide pupils with an opportunity to listen to a reasonable variety of music. During the inspection on two occasions pupils heard pieces of gospel music as they entered and left the hall. However, these occasions do not provide pupils with an opportunity to listen for an extended period of time, to discuss and evaluate the music.
128. While pupils in Year 1 begin to represent sounds by recording symbols or illustrations on paper to a satisfactory standard, this work is not sufficiently extended as pupils move through the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not know a range of songs or identify types of music to the extent expected for their age. They are tentative when given untuned percussion instruments to play. They do, however, imitate a simple rhythm and are beginning to distinguish between high and low and short and long sounds. These skills are close to those expected at their age.



129. In Year 6, pupils sing regularly, accompanying the recorded music of the commercial scheme. They recall painting how they felt while listening to music in Year 4, but their skills in using untuned percussion instruments to evoke a mood or feeling are unpractised. Unlike the younger pupils, they are not tentative but excitable when handling instruments. They are keen to compose a line of music for the inspector, but lack experience in using the instruments and in noting down their musical ideas. Their knowledge of a range of composers and types of music is insecure. They clearly hear music when they are working on dance, but they are hazy about the origins of the music they have danced to when it originates in a culture beyond their own experience. For example, they know they have danced to Michael Jackson, but are confused about Hindu, Pakistani, Buddhist or African music.
130. A small number of pupils receive tuition in playing the acoustic or electric guitar. The school has a choir that convenes periodically for special occasions, such as Christmas or Easter. Skills in performing, composing, appraising and listening and applying musical knowledge are not taught and assessed systematically throughout the school and the subject is not sufficiently supported by special events, such as large group performances or weeks of music workshops, to compensate for this.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

131. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils achieve the expected standards for their age. The school has maintained these average standards since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are given sufficient help to enable them to make sound progress.
132. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils develop appropriate co-ordination in gymnastics. They successfully perform a simple sequence while moving along a bench or box top and mat. They move bearing their weight on their hands, jump confidently from the bench and perform a basic log roll or forward roll on landing. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their games skills. The younger pupils in Key Stage 1 learn to co-operate with a partner. They sensible share a piece of small equipment, such as a beanbag, quoit or hoop. When using a bat and ball, they satisfactorily develop their hand-eye co-ordination. The majority can balance the ball on the bat and control the direction of the ball when dribbling it with the bat.
133. Pupils, by the end of Key Stage 2, respond imaginatively to music and stories in dance. They link to actions to make expressive movements, for example when performing a 'Dracula' dance as part of a taped programme. The school operates an adequate programme for swimming. Weekly lessons take place during the autumn and spring terms at a nearby pool. Pupils attend a series of six or seven lessons during each of their four years in Key Stage 2. They develop their confidence in water and learn to swim on their front and back. By Year 6 almost all swim 25 metres, the expected standard for their age. Many swim longer distances and a few learn water safety and survival techniques. An effective scheme of awards encourages pupils to develop their swimming skills.
134. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, and at times good. Teachers have very good rapport with their pupils and they manage them well. Consequently, pupils are well behaved within lessons. They show interest in their work and work hard at improving their performance. For example, pupils in Year 6 demonstrated good levels of creative effort in a dance lesson. They used facial expressions well to reflect 'fear' in their mime of a silent horror movie. Teachers have a sound understanding of the subject. They begin lessons with an appropriate warm-up, have a good awareness of safety and finish lessons with a cool-down. Teachers encourage pupils and make frequent use of praise. They use pupil-demonstrations and pupil evaluations of the work of others to highlight good performances.

They do not always then give pupils opportunities to use these newly gained ideas to develop their own performance.

135. Teachers satisfactorily plan their lessons and make effective use of the good range of resources available. In the best lessons, they clearly identify the skills to be developed and this results in better learning. For example, in a Key Stage 1 games lesson, the teacher's planning focused on developing pupils' skills, such as how to correctly hold the bat. This resulted in good levels of improvement in pupils' control of the ball.
136. There is a curriculum map that ensures that pupils experience different National Curriculum activities, including gymnastics, dance and games, appropriate for their age. Opportunities for pupils to perform outdoor and adventurous activities are limited to the activities completed during residential visits. These include the use of a climbing wall and an artificial caving experience. Teachers do not, however, provide opportunities of an adventurous or problem solving nature within the school grounds. Currently, there are insufficient guidelines available to help teachers in their planning. The school is correctly addressing this short-fall by introducing a published scheme of work, which will provide sufficient support for teachers' planning and ensure progression in pupils' learning.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

137. By the age of 7, pupils reach the level of attainment expected by the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. However, by the time they are 11, standards of attainment are below those expected from pupils of that age. This indicates a decline in standards since the previous inspection when standards of attainment were reported to be satisfactory. However, there has been an improvement since the previous inspection in that there are now enough resources, including artefacts, to teach the subject.
138. The quality of teaching is sound at Key Stage 1 and, as a result, pupils make satisfactory progress. Teachers plan lessons that effectively cover the required knowledge and understanding at a suitable depth. Teachers lead good quality discussions that inform and explore ideas and they provide useful resources to stimulate pupils' activity. Pupils learn about the main events of the Christian calendar and something of their meaning. They learn about the Christian wedding ceremony by taking the lead roles in a mock ceremony at the local church. During their work on Advent, they make their own promises about how they are going to be helpful to other people. Pupils in Year 2 learn well in a series of lessons about the main features of the Moslem faith. They know that there are five main aspects and make sensible comparisons between Islam and Christianity. They know, for example, that both Christians and Moslems pray and that Moslems prepare carefully when doing so. Pupils learn about aspects of other faiths, for example about the importance of tradition in Jewish family life when they take part in a Shabbat (Sabbath day) ceremony.
139. As a result of very good relationships within the classroom and the sound teaching that is pitched at the right level for pupils of this age, pupils have good attitudes during lessons. They work hard and are happy to talk about their work. They discuss the different religions and display interest without prejudice. In Key Stage 1, religious education makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development.
140. At Key Stage 2, progress is inconsistent and, overall, unsatisfactory. Teaching is unsatisfactory because pupils are not taught enough of the knowledge and understanding required by the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils learn something about Christianity and the other faiths required by the locally agreed syllabus. However, they do not learn about these in enough breadth or depth to develop an understanding of the main festivals and leaders. Nor do they learn enough about the impact of faith on people's lives. They know about the meaning of Christian festivals, such as Lent, Easter and Christmas. Pupils in Year 4 have

visited a Buddhist centre and have produced some good quality work around this theme. They demonstrate an understanding of Buddhism appropriate for their age and know about the views that underpin the faith. In general though, pupils' knowledge and understanding of major world faiths is shallow and confused. Some Year 6 pupils know that the main religion of this country is Christianity, but do not recognise that 'Catholics' are also Christians. Even with considerable prompting, they are unable to name some of the different places of worship, such as a synagogue. Religious education does not play a significant part in pupils' personal development.

141. There is a plan outlining which religions and aspects should be taught each term at Key Stage 2. However, this plan does not contain enough information or guidance about the main ideas that should be taught through those topics. There has not been enough checking to ensure that these plans are being followed. The co-ordinator for the subject has only been in post for a short time and knows that there is a good deal of work to do to raise standards. She is fully committed to do so.