

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **NORTHWAY INFANT SCHOOL**

Tewkesbury

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115563

Headteacher: Mrs L Williams

Reporting inspector: Mrs M E Hamby  
20498

Dates of inspection: June 19<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> 2000

Inspection number: 191681

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Northway Infant School Virginia Road Northway Tewkesbury Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL20 8PT
Telephone / fax number:	01684 293447
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Spencer
Date of previous inspection:	28 <sup>th</sup> to 30 <sup>th</sup> January 1997

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM**

<b>Team members</b>		<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Mrs M E Hamby	Registered inspector	Mathematics	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school
		Art	The school's results and achievements
		Under Fives	Teaching and learning
		Geography	
Mr W G Twiss	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	How well the school is led and managed.
			How well the school works in partnership with parents and carers
Mrs P B Cassidy	Team inspector	English	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		Special educational needs	How well the school cares for its pupils.
		Physical Education	
		Music	
Mrs M C Hartley	Team inspector	Religious Education	The curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils.
		Information technology	
		Design & technology	
		History	
		Science	

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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
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London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This school, situated on the outskirts of Tewkesbury, serves an area of established private and council housing. There are currently 85 boys and 75 girls on roll. None of the pupils are learning English as an additional language, and there are no children from ethnic minority heritages. Thirteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; in national terms this is lower than average. Most of the children enter the school in the autumn of the year in which they will be five, and many of them have had pre-school education. At the time of the inspection, most children in the reception classes were already five years old, but 14 were still four. The attainment of most of the children entering the school is similar to that of other four year olds. However, there is a minority of children who have difficulty with their speech, and whose abilities across the board are lower than expectations. In the school as a whole, 32 per cent of the pupils are identified as having special educational needs; this is higher than the national average. Less than one per cent of the pupils have a statement describing their special needs, and this is lower than average. The school population is a similar mix to that at the time of the last inspection in January 1997.

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

This is a good school. It is very effective in providing a caring atmosphere in which all pupils feel valued, and have good opportunities for speaking and listening. Standards are in line with national expectations, and most of the pupils make sound progress across all areas of the curriculum. The recently appointed headteacher leads the school very well. Her enthusiasm and inspirational style is having a marked effect on school improvement. The school gives good value for money.

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

- Provides well for the personal and social development of the pupils.
- The headteacher has introduced excellent systems to track the pupils' progress in English.
- The teaching in Year 2 is very good, and helps the pupils make good strides in their learning.
- The school has an effective partnership with the parents, and has excellent links with a range of other institutions, and these links enrich the pupils' learning.
- Pupils who need extra help with their learning are quickly identified, and the school has thorough systems to check how well these particular pupils are getting on.

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

- Procedures for assessing what the pupils know, and the way the teachers use this information to plan the next steps for the pupils.
- The ways that teachers respond to the pupils' work in their verbal and written comments.
- Record keeping, and target setting for most pupils.
- More focused teaching for the able pupils, to help them achieve more.
- The roles of the coordinators, so that they have a stronger influence on their subjects.
- The quality of parts of the accommodation.

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

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

In January 1997, the time of the previous inspection, the inspectors identified five key issues for the school to address, and judged that 18% of the teaching was less than satisfactory. The school has rectified most of the issues, although there is still work to be done on planning and assessment. The teaching is considerably improved, with no unsatisfactory teaching. In particular, there has been improvement with the teaching of spelling, punctuation, handwriting and history. There are now detailed schemes of work to help the teachers to plan the focus of their lessons. Annual reports are clear and helpful to parents, and contain targets for the pupils to work towards. Some of the targets, however, need more challenge, particularly for the more able pupils. The children under five now have ample opportunities to extend their physical, creative and technological activities. The new headteacher is working closely with the governors to collect key information

about the work of the school, so that together they can evaluate its effectiveness. Standards have risen steadily since the previous inspection

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	D	B	C	C
Writing	D	C	C	C
Mathematics	C	A	C	C

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

In reading, standards in 1998 and 1999 show an improvement on the previous two years, when they were just below the national average. A similar trend can be seen in the standards of writing over the past few years. In 1998 and 1999 standards in writing were just above the national average, representing an improvement on the previous two years, when they fell below the national average. In mathematics, standards have been just above average for the last three years, and significantly so in 1998, when, for part of the time, the pupils worked in ability based groups with the headteacher. In comparison with schools of a similar intake, this school's results are in the average band.

Inspection findings show that standards meet the national expectations in all subjects, with evidence of good attainment in aspects of numeracy. There is evidence of good improvement in spelling and writing over the course of Year 2, and maintenance of reading standards. The pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The pupils under five are on track to achieve the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes in all areas of learning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. Able pupils in the school make satisfactory progress in Year 2 in all subjects, but in the Reception and Year 1 classes they do not achieve all they are capable of in English and mathematics lessons.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils love coming to the school, and greet each other, and the adults enthusiastically each morning. They settle down to work quickly, and clearly enjoy all that the school offers them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The majority of the pupils behave well in classes and move sensibly and quietly round the school. They pay attention to their teachers, and show respect at quiet times like prayers.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The teachers show great interest in their pupils, and ensure that they feel valued. There is a purposeful and happy atmosphere in the school, and a clear love of learning.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average.

No pupils have been excluded from the school.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	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 percentages for the teaching during the inspection were 21% of lessons very good, 19% good, and 60% satisfactory. The best teaching in the school is in the Year 2 classes, where over half of the teaching is very good. The quality of the commitment that the Year 2 teachers give to their lessons, combined with their good subject knowledge and excellent use of resources, enables the pupils to achieve well. In the Year 1 classes most of the teaching is satisfactory, with some good teaching. The teachers have good relationships with the pupils and have good strategies for pupil management, which work well with the larger numbers that they have in their classes. In the Reception classes, all the teaching, including the teaching of the children under five, is satisfactory. The teachers have established good relationships with the children and parents, and have settled the children well into school routines. Some of the teaching however is not focused well enough on what the children need to do next, in order to make the most of the available teaching time. There is also some time slippage in the lessons. The pupils with special educational needs are helped very well with their learning by a range of adults who make a significant contribution to the teaching in the school. These adults work purposefully with the pupils, encourage them to try hard, and show great care for them.

The school has adopted the national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy, and these are helping the teachers to structure their lessons well. All of the English lessons are taught satisfactorily, with good attention to purposeful opportunities for speaking and listening. Mathematics is taught very well in Year 2, where the teaching includes lively mental mathematics sessions, which help the pupils to improve their methods of calculation. Elsewhere in the school mathematics is taught soundly. The teachers make good use of all the resources available to them, but in some lessons there is not enough attention given to planning the activities to ensure that all the time is used as productively as it might. In the Year 1 and Reception classes, there is not enough thought given to extending the learning opportunities to meet the needs of the able pupils in English and mathematics lessons.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the age of the pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The pupils are quickly identified, and given good support by dedicated and experienced staff. Management of the provision is very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for moral and social development is very effective. The pupils are courteous, honest, and play fairly with each other. Spiritual and cultural development are promoted well. The pupils are taught to reflect on their own lives. They appreciate their own cultural tradition, and the diversity and richness of others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Sound. Staff know the pupils well and provide a very good level of care. They work well with a variety of external agencies to the benefit of the children. Although a start has been made on assessing the pupils' work, and keeping records of it, the systems are not yet fully effective

The school considers partnership with parents to be central to the education and care that it provides. The school works hard to involve the parents fully in their children's education. It provides a range of useful information to the parents, who are appreciative of what the school provides.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a visionary and energetic leader. Her recent appointment has brought new life to the school. There has been recent staff changes and absences, which have hindered the development of management functions of curriculum coordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are well informed and bring a considerable degree of expertise to the school. They make personal visits to the school, and receive regular reports from the headteacher. Their last report to parents however, did not contain all the information that it should.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses its test results and other indicators of performance very well. The headteacher and governors are working together to evaluate other aspects of the school.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of all the resources and specific grants to provide a stimulating environment in which the pupils can learn. The school has begun to adopt the principles of best value in its spending decisions.

Although there is ample accommodation, some of it is in a poor state of repair. The window frames in the hall are rotten, and the glass is in danger of falling out. There is mould in two classrooms, and the paintwork is in a shoddy state. In consequence, the staff have to spend valuable time before school checking for leaks, and other inconveniences in stead of devoting this time entirely to lesson preparation. Although most resources are sufficient to teach the curriculum, there are not enough library books, and many of those in existence are in need of renewal.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents feel welcomed into the school, and feel that their opinions are valued.</li> <li>They like the level of care offered to their children.</li> <li>Most parents are pleased with what the school offers, and feel that it helps their children to make good progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A few parents thought that their children were not given hard enough work.</li> <li>A few parents would like their children to be better prepared for the junior school.</li> </ul>

The inspection findings agree with some of the positive comments made by parents. The school offers a very high level of care to the pupils, and values the opinion of the parents. However, not all the pupils do make good progress. Overall progress is satisfactory, but for the able pupils in the Reception and Year 1 classes, progress is not as good as it could be. The parents are right in thinking that some of the children are not given hard enough work. This is especially true in mathematics and English lessons. A few parents felt that their children were being "babied" and were not well enough prepared for the Junior school. The inspection team found no evidence of this whatsoever. Rather the reverse, the Year 2 teachers make great demands on their pupils, and run a very tight ship in terms of expectations and discipline.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards meet the national expectations in all subjects, although there is evidence of slight variations within various aspects of English and mathematics. In mathematics, the pupils at the end of the key stage a show a better ability to calculate than most other pupils of a similar age, but in English they are not generally as good at writing. There is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys. At the time of the previous inspection, the attainment of the majority of pupils was in the main, in line with national averages. There were some fluctuations around the average, for instance, with evidence of higher attainment in aspects of mathematics and art, and evidence of lower attainment in English, particularly with spelling and presentation of work. Spelling and presentation have improved since then. Parents are generally pleased with the standards that their children reach, although a few parents remarked that their children could do harder work than they were given in school.
2. In the past four years, standards have shown fairly steady improvement. In reading, standards in 1998 and 1999 show an improvement on the previous two years, when they were just below the national average. A similar trend can be seen in the standards of writing over the past few years. In 1998 and 1999 standards in writing were just above the national average, representing an improvement on the previous two years when they fell below the national average. In mathematics, standards have been slightly above average for the last three years, significantly so in 1998, when, for part of the time, some of the pupils worked in ability based groups with the headteacher. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected standards in science was higher than the national average. When the school's results are compared only against schools with a similar intake, results in reading, writing and mathematics are close to the average.
3. In last year's tests in reading and mathematics, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level (Level three) was below the national average, but in writing, the percentage at level three was close to the national average. The school had a greater number of pupils with special educational needs than other schools, and this could account for why there were not as many pupils achieving the higher level. In the school this year, 32 per cent of the pupils are on the register of special educational needs, and almost half of them need the support of an individual education plan to guide their learning. In this context, the school is doing well to enable them to reach nationally expected standards at the end of the key stage.
4. The children come into the school with varying levels of ability, but overall their attainment is broadly similar to most other four-year-olds. They are on track to meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the age they are five, in all areas of learning. The speech and language of a minority of the children is not as good as is expected, but on the other hand a few of them show a high level of independence for their age. The school makes good use of baseline assessment to identify those children who may need extra help in their learning. The children are confident, settle down to their work quickly, and listen to what the teacher tells them to do.
5. Most of the pupils make sound progress in all subjects. Steady gains in learning can be seen in lessons, and over longer periods of time. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards achieving the targets in their individual education plans. The able pupils make steady progress in Year 2, but the progress of able pupils is not as good earlier in the school, particularly in English and mathematics. The lack of challenge in the activities, and unsystematic teaching has meant that the pupils have not achieved all they could. Some of their targets are too easy, or not reflected in the work that is presented to them. Some of their time in lessons is wasted when they finish the activity and do not have anything else to extend and challenge their thinking. The headteacher is aware of this issue, and has started to address it by tracking the pupils' performance. She has collected an impressive amount of data about the pupils' performance in English, and has plans to introduce similar systems for mathematics. Although there has not been time since her appointment earlier this year for these systems to have a great impact yet, there is clear potential for them to be of help in identifying challenging targets for future groups of pupils.

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

6. At the time of the previous inspection, the pupils had good attitudes to learning, and the inspectors wrote positively about how well the school promoted good behaviour. There have been no exclusions, and the parents are pleased with the way in which the school promotes obedient behaviour, good manners and courtesy. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average, and unauthorised absence is below the national average. Although the pupils generally arrive at school punctually, and the teachers are in their classrooms, the lessons do not always begin on time, and so some lesson time is lost each day.
7. The pupils' attitudes to the school, personal development and relationships are very good, and have improved on the previous good standards. The children under five, and the pupils throughout Key Stage 1 are keen to come to school. The teachers care for their pupils, and set up interesting activities for them at the start of the day. This impacts well on the pupils' personal development, and attitudes to school life. Even the youngest pupils in the reception class arrive eagerly, choose apparatus, and settle to activities. This affords good opportunities for their parents to discuss with the teachers, any concerns that they may have. These young pupils are already well adjusted to the school routines. They sit quietly on the carpet, and understand that they need to go to assembly in an orderly manner. During registration all the pupils are courteous, responding very politely to the teachers' welcoming words of, "Good morning."
8. The pupils are well motivated and are eager to learn. They listen attentively; offer their own ideas during discussions, and concentrate well during most group activities. They show a keen interest in new learning, for example, when Year 2 pupils were excited at the 'magic' of how a magnet can attract a paper clip through a sheet of paper. The pupils with special educational needs are developing a positive attitude to learning as a consequence of the commitment of the staff.
9. The pupils' behaviour overall is good. They are very clear about the code of behaviour in school and have a good understanding of what is acceptable. This is well illustrated, in the pupils' display of work, about school rules, and in the importance of their personal conduct towards others. This helps to create a happy atmosphere in school. The pupils respond very well to the school's reward system, and are keen to have their individual or class achievements recognised. The pupils move round the school in an orderly fashion. During the well-organised lunchtime activities, they play sensibly together. The pupils generally behave well in lessons, although, at times, there is some minor misbehaviour in Year 1. The teachers have responded by developing positive behaviour strategies, which sort out potential problems very quickly. There were no signs of bullying, sexist, racist or other form of oppressive behaviour during the inspection.
10. The pupils have very good relationships with each other and with adults, which enhances their learning. The pupils enjoy working together and obey the rules, for example when playing games. Even the youngest pupils wait patiently for their turn during a game. The girls and boys relate well to each other. This was clearly demonstrated during a Year 1 country dance lesson, when they danced happily in pairs and groups. They show respect and care for others' feelings, particularly those with learning difficulties.
11. The pupils respond well to the many opportunities that they are given to be involved in the daily routines of the school. Pupils in Year 2 take responsibility as monitors, setting out the playground toys, sharpening pencils and putting away equipment. The pupils from each class take the registers to the secretary, and perform other duties appropriate to their age. The youngest pupils understand the 'routine job board,' which shows when it is their turn for a group activity. The pupils are willing and enthusiastic to work at these jobs, and perform them well and efficiently.

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

12. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but there are differences in the quality of teaching in the various year groups. The parents are pleased with the ways in which their children are taught, and express particular appreciation for the individual attention that their children receive.

13. The best teaching is in the two Year 2 classes, where over half the lessons are taught very well indeed. The planning in these lessons ensures the progressive development of the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, and the teachers adapt their plans sensibly to take account of the pupils' responses and their progress within each lesson. The staff share a deep commitment to providing high quality experiences for their classes, and show real joy in the achievements of their pupils. They have confident knowledge of the different subjects that they teach, and they are able to communicate this confidence to the pupils so that they too show a high level of confidence in their learning. Each classroom has a "can do" ethos, which celebrates achievement and effort, not just outcome. This is of particular benefit to the pupils with special educational needs, whose confidence is developing very well indeed.
14. In Year 1, most of the teaching is satisfactory, with 19 per cent of the lessons where teaching is good. The teaching staff work very well with other available adults, and use resources well to arouse the interest of the pupils. Some of the resources, for example, a clown number game, have been made by the teachers themselves. This game helps the pupils to familiarise themselves with the addition of numbers less than ten, in an exciting way. The teachers have larger classes than the other year groups, and they have a good range of strategies to ensure that the pupils have the opportunity of contributing to class lessons. For example, in one lesson, the teacher asked the pupils to put their thumbs up, down or across to show whether they agreed, disagreed or weren't sure of the answer. The teachers make good use of the agreed planning format for their lessons to ensure that their lessons have a specific focus. However, some of the activities that are planned lack sufficient challenge, and so the pupils mark time rather than learning new things.
15. In the Reception classes, the teaching, including that for children under five years old, is consistently sound. Good opportunities are created for the children to engage in structured speaking and listening situations, for example, in talking about a journey with one of the staff, after they had listened to a story about a train ride. Children who have speech and language difficulties are identified quickly, and other special needs are well provided for. The staff have good relationships with the children and show a high level of care for them, reminding them to wash their hands, and encouraging them to take on suitable responsibilities. These qualities help the children to settle well into school routines, and make them feel valued. When the teachers are working with a group, the teaching clearly focuses on improving children's understanding, and enabling the children to acquire new skills. However, in these group times, the remainder of the class do not have enough structure, challenge, or direction in their work. As a consequence, they do not learn as much as they could. They spend too much time colouring in worksheets instead of having their learning enhanced through purposeful activities.
16. Overall, English is taught soundly throughout the school. The teachers are making good use of the National Literacy Strategy to plan their lessons. Letter sounds are taught well, and this is having a positive impact on helping the pupils to read unfamiliar words, and try spellings for themselves. The routine of the Literacy Hour is well established in most classes, but sometimes there is not enough time given at the end of the lessons to assess what pupils have learned, or to illustrate to them what they are now able to do, by further questioning or associated tasks. More able pupils are not always given tasks that they can extend for themselves, or provided with challenging learning opportunities, and in consequence do not make the progress of which they are capable.
17. Mathematics is taught soundly in the Reception and Year 1 classes, and well in Year 2. The teachers use the guidance in the National Numeracy Strategy, and this is having a beneficial impact on their teaching. The pupils, particularly the ones in Year 2, learn how to calculate quickly and correctly, as a result of the mental mathematics session at the start of the lessons. In these classes, the teachers use their knowledge of the pupils to give them questions at an appropriate level of difficulty. In the other classes the range of questions is not broad enough to encompass the range of abilities within the class.

18. At the time of the previous inspection the majority of teaching for the under fives was sound, with good teaching in half of the lessons seen. At Key Stage 1, most teaching was sound, with good teaching in art and mathematics. The strengths of the teaching were judged to be the effective ways in which the teachers used resources to enhance the learning, and the ways in which they organised the lessons to engage and motivate the pupils. In 18% of lessons, however, the teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. The weaknesses in the teaching were judged to be the teachers' use of questioning to extend the pupils' knowledge, and expectations, which were too low. There has clearly been an improvement in much of the teaching since the last inspection. There is now no unsatisfactory teaching, and a two out of every five lessons are taught either well, or very well. The teachers still make good use of resources, and in most lessons still engage and motivate the pupils well. Questioning has improved, but expectations are still too low, particularly in the Reception and Year 1 classes in English and mathematics lessons, especially for the most able children.
19. A general weakness throughout the school is the assessment and record keeping systems, and how the teachers respond to the pupils' work by their verbal or written comments. Although a good start has been made on assessment this year, it is not yet having a positive effect on planning the next steps for the pupils' learning. The teachers are not specific enough in identifying the focus of their assessment, or how they will go about it. There is too little assessment, apart from the baseline, of the youngest children in the school. Some work has started to identify strands in the area of personal and social development, but it is not yet up and running.
20. Records of the pupils' attainment are not analytical, so that they do not contain sufficient information about what progress has been made. Some work is kept, but it is not clear why, because there is no commentary about the significance of the learning that the work illustrates. There is too little recorded of the children's achievement in the reception classes. Understandably, there is not as much written work for the teachers to use for their records, and so it is important that detailed observations of the children's achievements are kept in order to track their progress properly.
21. Marking is regular and accurate, and indicates that the teachers are interested in what their pupils have done. However, it is not as informative as it could be in helping the pupils to improve their work. The same can be said for the verbal comments that the teachers give when receiving work from the pupils. They are good at giving praise, such as "well done", but there is not enough comment relating to the target of the activity, like "you have tried hard to make your letters the same size, remember that next time you write."

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

22. The curriculum throughout the school is broad and balanced, and meets statutory requirements. The early years' curriculum covers all of the recommended areas of learning for children under five. The curriculum for the pupils at Key Stage 1 meets the statutory requirements. The school makes very good provision for personal, social, and health education. The curriculum provided for the pupils with special educational needs is firmly grounded in appropriate individual education plans, and enables the pupils to make good progress. The school has a clear commitment to providing equality of opportunity for all its pupils, and is successful with this aim. The parents are pleased with the range of subjects that their children learn in the school, and expressed particular support for the environmental education that their children are introduced to at the school.
23. Curriculum planning is supported by suitable policies and schemes of work, and makes good use of nationally available guidance. The school organises a number of educational visits to provide first hand experience for pupils, which enable them to understand their subject topics more easily. For example in their study of geography, pupils in Year 2 will visit Weston Super Mare to help them compare and contrast the location with Northway. Visits are also made to the forest of Dean and to a theatre in Birmingham, which enrich learning in other subjects. Visitors to the school extend the provision. These include visits

from the local clergy, police, lifeguards, and the fire service. A governor is a weekly visitor and provides professional expertise to help the pupils improve their skills in Design and Technology.

24. There are strong links with the local community, for example visits to the elderly residents near the school to provide choral entertainment at Christmas. These help the pupils to understand how they can make a valuable contribution to the world in which they live. Excellent links with local colleges means that the school provides regular long term training opportunities for students, and in turn, the school benefits from the additional dimension that the students provide to the teaching. The school is developing good links with the school to which most pupils transfer, and thus pupils are soundly prepared for the next stage of their education. In addition there are useful links with the local nursery and playgroup, which helps the pupils to settle quickly on entry to the school.
25. The school cultivates the pupils' spiritual development well in assemblies. The pupils listen to and meditate on short prayers such as "Thank you God for friends". They display wonder at the size of the bag of "worries" which the headteacher used to talk about the meaning of worrying. They reflect on how things can often seem worse than they really are, unless you share your concerns. In lessons, they show amazement, for example by the power of magnetism, or how quickly their toy cars run down a slope. The youngest children show frequent delight in their own creations, for example their paintings and music making. The regular visit of the local pastor enhances the provision for spirituality. The pupils listen thoughtfully and meditate upon the theme of the story. They clap happily to the guitar as they take part in an action hymn.
26. Very good provision is made for the moral development of the pupils. This provision gives a strong emphasis to moral values and the behaviour code. The teaching and other staff promote the pupils' understanding of right and wrong, and of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour. Minor incidents of mischief are dealt with firmly and fairly and with great patience as they arise. The teachers regularly recognise and applaud good behaviour, and the pupils are keen to behave themselves as a consequence. Through the personal, health, and social education programme pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves, each other, and the school. When one child was asked if he had any jobs to do in school, he replied, "We care for everything in this school." Caring for others is encouraged through a programme of fund raising for local and international charities.
27. The provision for the social development of the pupils is very good. The teachers successfully encourage the pupils to relate positively towards each other and other adults in the school. There are opportunities for pupils to work together, and pupils have opportunities on a rotational basis, to take responsibility for small jobs to help with the smooth running of the school. At playtime, the lunchtime supervisors help the pupils to play together and to learn games like "Oranges and Lemons", which rely on a collaborative effort. The staff work together to provide the pupils with the security to learn and grow in the knowledge that they are valued. This knowledge permeates and underpins the whole life and work of the school, and is of particular benefit to the pupils with special educational needs.
28. The school makes good provision for the cultural development of the pupils. The religious education curriculum helps to develop the pupils understanding of the beliefs of people from their own, and other cultures; for example they learn about the Bar Mitzvah of the Jewish boy. Visiting musicians also enrich the cultural life of the school, for instance, a string quartet has recently given a performance. Pupils participate to produce their own performance for parents, and festivals such as Christmas and the Chinese New Year are celebrated. The pupils take part in local festivals, such as the recent country dancing festival, and in this way they gain in knowledge about their own background and cultural heritage. They look at and handle artefacts such as an old Teddy Bear and so gain insights into the past. They study India as part of their work in geography, and so are starting to appreciate the cultural heritage of a different race.
29. A particular strengths at the time of the previous inspection was the success of the school's programme of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, some weaknesses were noted in the way the



curriculum was offered. The school has maintained its strengths, and fully rectified its weaknesses in this aspect of its work,

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

30. The school provided well for the support and guidance of its pupils at the time of the last inspection. The pastoral leadership is strong and the school continues to provide positive support and guidance, but is less successful in assessing pupils' academic achievement, and ensuring appropriate progress is maintained in learning. The parents are very pleased with the way that the school cares for their children. Although there have been a few incidents of boisterous behaviour reported to, or by, the parents, they have been pleased that the school has responded promptly to these incidents, and dealt with them effectively. They expressed strong support for the system of rewards and sanctions that the school operates, and felt that the system is understood by all and effective in motivating the children to perform at their best. Evidence from the inspection supports the parents' views.
31. The procedures for promoting the pupils' well being, health and safety are good. Risk assessment is ongoing, and the headteacher makes daily checks to identify any risks. She herself, has a very caring attitude, for instance, coming into school very early to open windows on a very hot summer's day. The school is fully aware of the poor condition of the premises and the headteacher is working hard to get support to improve the present conditions. Fire drills occur at regular intervals, and are properly recorded. The school nurse provides regular health screening for the pupils. Visitors, such as the community police officer, the lollipop lady and a fire officer, are invited to talk to the children about safety. There are sufficient staff trained in first aid, and there are effective procedures to care for pupils who get hurt or are taken ill during the day. The school complies fully with child protection guidelines.
32. Early identification and monitoring of progress for pupils with special educational needs is a strength of the school. As a consequence, the pupils are fully involved in lessons and the everyday life of the school. The teachers and the support staff have a clear understanding of the individual needs of the pupils, and provide effective extra tuition, which has a positive impact on the pupils' progress and learning. External agencies, such as the educational psychologist and the speech therapist give appropriate support.
33. The staff know the pupils well, but the monitoring of pupils' personal development is too informal and as a consequence records of personal and social development are not as useful as they might be. The staff are available in their classroom before and after school to discuss with parents any issues that arise. Attendance is monitored efficiently and the parents cooperate well with the school to ensure that there is no unauthorised absence.
34. Since the new headteacher's appointment, there has been a considerable range of monitoring and evaluation taking place. Now, there are excellent tracking records for monitoring of academic performance in English and the school has plans to follow this practice for mathematics. Individual teachers maintain a variety of records and curriculum portfolios are being developed for most subjects. However, the current procedures for recording pupils' progress remain unsatisfactory. The information is not always used productively to inform planning, or identify relevant targets. For example, tick sheets are frequently used, to assess what the pupils have achieved in their learning, but these are too broad in scope, and are not particularly effective in helping teachers to know what specific, and individual help the pupils need. There is also too little analysis of what the pupils have achieved. Consequently, assessment procedures do not sufficiently promote the pupils' learning, or ensure that the pace and challenge of work is appropriate.

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

35. The school enjoys good relationships with the parents, and this is of great benefit to the pupils' learning. At the meeting held for them before the inspection and in responses to the questionnaire, they expressed a high level of satisfaction with most aspects of the school's work. This is an area of strength in the work of the school.

36. The parents are positively encouraged to become fully involved in the life of the school. The welcoming atmosphere, and open door policy is appreciated by the parents. The teachers are accessible and, for example, the parents often talk to them before and after school about such things as homework and their children's reading books.
37. The school provides a helpful range of information for the parents. The annual report for instance, indicates what the pupils can do and how they can improve in the future. The school has recently held open mornings so that the parents can see how literacy is taught. This is helping the parents to assist their children with learning at home. As a result of positive feedback from the parents, the school is extending this aspect of good practice so that the parents can see how numeracy is taught.
38. The school has a strong commitment to ensure that the parents support their children's learning. It has informed and engaged the parents through a succinct home school agreement, which clearly sets out roles and expectations. The vast majority of the parents have endorsed this and regularly help their children at home. A useful homework diary records comments about the work that the children are doing at home. The school welcomes parents of new pupils to see its daily routines and to help children settle. The teachers invite parents in to discuss relevant plans, targets and the type of additional support available, if their children are in need of extra help.
39. The school maintains good relationships with the junior school to which the majority of the pupils transfer on leaving. A very small number of the parents said at the pre-inspection meeting that they felt the school was over-protective of the Year 2 pupils. Consequently they felt that the pupils were not well prepared for the move on to junior school. The inspection found that the support offered to the pupils is good and therefore does not agree with the parents' views. A small number of parents indicated concerns in their responses to the questionnaire about homework and information on their children's progress. The inspection did not find evidence to support either of these points of view.
40. The teachers recognise the value of parental help in the classroom. They encourage volunteers to come in and brief them fully on how to make a positive contribution in class. Consequently, a band of the parents help with such important things like reading work. An active school association organises social and fund raising events. It is, for example, currently providing funds to help the school to replace some obsolete equipment.
41. The school has a successful history of working in partnership with the parents. The previous inspection noted that the school's links with the parents were good. The same positive picture is still apparent. Overall, the school's partnership with the parents makes a positive contribution to the pupils' learning. Comments like "I can only give my heartfelt thanks to the school" endorse what the parents think of it.

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

42. The leadership and management of the school are good. Although she has only been in post for six months the headteacher is successfully leading the school out of an unsettled period, during which there have been several changes in staffing and membership of the governing body. As a result of this new order of strong and visionary leadership, there is renewed optimism and confidence in the school's ability to improve further. The clear direction set by the headteacher is recorded in a set of aims, which are suitably underpinned by a vision. This positive ethos is fully reflected in the everyday life of the school and consequently, the climate in which the pupils learn is good.
43. The headteacher is strongly focused on making the school accountable for what it achieves. She has conscientiously analysed the school's strengths and development needs in considerable depth. Following this, the school now has a compelling range of data which is giving it an accurate picture of what needs to be done to drive forward improvements. Much effort is, for example, being directed towards improving the standards achieved overall, and for individual groups of pupils.

44. The ethos in the school rightly recognises the crucial importance of evaluating the teaching and learning that is taking place. The headteacher has started to monitor what is happening in the classroom and, she provides the teachers with sensitive and professional guidance about areas for improvement. All of the teachers, have for example, recently benefited from observing the school's leading mathematics teacher. This has helped the planning of numeracy lessons and provided professional advice on development of the subject. The monitoring and evaluating of teaching is having a positive effect. A high proportion of good teaching was apparent during the inspection.
45. The management of the provision for the pupils with special educational needs is a strong feature of the school. Effective co-ordination ensures that each pupil who needs it has a good quality plan setting out clear targets and how they will be achieved. This is efficient in making sure that scarce resources are directed towards the pupils who need extra help with their learning whilst in the care of the school.
46. The school does not currently have a deputy headteacher, or other effective arrangements for senior management consultation to support the headteacher. A team of co-ordinators is in place, but their roles are underdeveloped. The co-ordinators are well motivated, but they have had limited experience of managing and the shaping the direction of their subjects. Whilst there is helpful professional dialogue between them, their impact on monitoring and guiding what is taught is, as yet, limited. Most subjects have coordinators, but the current arrangements do not embrace all subjects, nor do they take account of the expertise of some of the recently appointed staff.
47. The governing body is properly constituted. It has a newly formed an appropriate committee structure. Many of its members are new and are just getting to grips with how the school functions, its positive features and areas for improvement. They are willing and have already formed constructive relationships with the headteacher, staff and pupils. Governors visit the school and one member, for example, frequently helps with the teaching of design and technology. The governors' annual report to the parents however, does not currently provide all of the information required by law.
48. The headteacher has already made changes to school improvement planning. A suitable framework is now in place, which sets out the school's targets, and how it will achieve and resource its priorities. A start has been made on applying the principles of best value through comparing such issues as quality, price and suitability of purchases for the needs of the school and its pupils. Good administrative systems are supported by up to date technology and provide the school's leadership with an accurate picture of progress against the budget. These records also clearly show that grants made to the school are spent for their intended purposes.
49. The school has an adequate number of teachers whose experience and expertise is effectively matched to the demands of the curriculum. Similarly, support staff are well deployed and make a beneficial contribution to the pupils' learning especially in literacy and numeracy. Arrangements for the appraisal of teachers are in place, and suitable opportunities for professional development are offered to staff. The school has no newly qualified teachers, but methods of supporting new staff and students are both welcoming and effective. The school has, for instance, trained a member of staff to mentor students. The school hosts students from local colleges who are preparing to enter careers as support staff and teachers. Programmes are well-structured, effectively supported, and often long-term. Consequently, the school benefits from additional support in the classes, provides useful guidance for tomorrow's professionals and has built good relationship with the training institutions.
50. The school is adequately resourced in most areas of the curriculum. However, the range of library books is inadequate across most areas of the curriculum. The school is clean and tidy, but is in a poor state of repair. Several window frames are in need of replacement and much of the external woodwork is defective. The building lacks appeal to parents and visitors, and the rotten window frames make it potentially hazardous. There is mould in two classrooms, and the paintwork is in a shoddy state. In consequence, the staff have to spend valuable time before school checking for leaks, and other inconveniences in stead of devoting this time entirely to lesson preparation. The staff work hard to

improvise and make a good job of making it attractive. The school inside is adorned by attractive displays of the pupils' work, which celebrate the pupils' achievements.

51. The previous inspection judged the leadership and management of the school to be good. The current inspection confirms this, and supports the positive views of the parents on the leadership and management of the school.

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

52. Many of the issues below have already been identified by the headteacher, in the analysis which, she conducted shortly after her appointment. She has astutely perceived the main areas for school development, and already written them in to the updated school improvement plan. In order to make the necessary improvements, all the staff should help her to:

- (1) Improve the procedures for assessment, so that :

- Assessment is a regular part of each teacher's work,
- It is based on systematic observation of the pupils, particularly in their early years,
- It has a specific focus, and identifies what the teachers are looking for,
- It embraces the whole curriculum, including religious education, and areas of learning for children under five,
- It takes account of national guidance, for example the "Early Learning Goals",
- It involves the pupils themselves where appropriate,
- It helps to plan the next steps for the pupils.

*(Paragraphs 19, 34, 86, 90, 115)*

- (2) Improve the quality of marking, and other ways of responding to pupils' work, by:

- Reviewing the marking policy,
- Writing comments, or giving verbal feedback that relates to the lesson objective,
- Involving the pupils in evaluating their work.

*(Paragraphs 19, 21, 76)*

- (3) Improving record keeping and target setting for pupils, so that:

- Records are systematically up-dated,
- They contain pertinent comments, which show what new learning has taken place,
- They have nationally recognised levels recorded where appropriate,
- They show evidence of when pupils have reached their allocated targets,
- Targets are reviewed regularly.

*(Paragraphs 5, 19, 34)*

- (4) Improve provision for the able pupils, so that:

- The work contains sufficient challenge,
- Play is structured so that it build progressively on what the children know, understand and can do,
- They spend less time in low level activities like colouring in,
- They have clear instructions before working on their own, so they know exactly what they have to do.

*(Paragraphs 5, 16, 74, 75, 80, 85)*

- (5) The roles of the subject coordinators should be reviewed and strengthened, so that:

- The headteacher has colleagues to help her with school development,
- All subjects have a coordinator, and the role takes account of staff expertise and strengths,
- The coordinators have a good oversight of their subjects, through regular monitoring,

- They are involved in school development planning and budget management for their subjects,
- They are aware of, and active in their role in raising standards.

*(Paragraphs 46, 56)*

- (6) The appropriate authority should secure improvements to the quality of the accommodation to reduce risks to users of the building.

*(Paragraph 50)*

In addition, the governing body should consider the following less important weaknesses for inclusion in their action plan:

- *Improving time keeping, so that the most amount of time is available for the pupils to learn.*

*(Paragraph 6)*

- *Extending the range of library books*

*(Paragraph 50)*

- *Producing an annual report to parents, which contains the required information.*

*(Paragraph 47 )*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	21	19	60	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	160
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	20

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR - Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	51

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

### *Attendance*

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1***

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	26	29	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	26	25
	Girls	27	28	29
	Total	50	54	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (100)	98 (90)	98 (98)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	25	25
	Girls	27	28	28
	Total	50	53	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (91)	96 (91)	96 (91)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

*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	142
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### ***Exclusions in the previous 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 – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.5:1
Average class size	26.7

#### **Education support staff: Y[ ] – Y[ ]**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

### *Financial information*

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	276761
Total expenditure	276150
Expenditure per pupil	1782
Balance brought forward from previous year	6400
Balance carried forward to next year	7011

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	160
Number of questionnaires returned	28

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	36	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	43	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	54	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	54	14	0	0
The teaching is good.	54	46	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	43	18	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	18	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	40	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	32	62	3	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	32	57	0	0	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	29	64	7	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	68	7	0	0

### **Summary of parents' and carers' responses**

Most responses were very positive, thanking the school for all the effort that they had put in on behalf of the pupils.

## **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**

53. The children, who have not yet reached statutory school age, are taught in two reception classes. They are admitted to the school in the autumn term of the school year in which they will be five. The admissions programme is gradual, so that the children become familiar with their teachers and the school itself, before they stay for the whole school day. There is no significant difference in the provision or attainment in both classes. Both classes are taught satisfactorily. Most of the children are on track to achieve the nationally recognised standards by the time they are five. Standards are similar to those found in the previous inspection.
54. At the time of the previous inspection, the inspectors noted that there were insufficient opportunities particularly for the physical development of the children. The school has now remedied this, by regular hall times, and the introduction of activities in the "blue room". This is an area dedicated to extending the provision for children in the Reception classes, including the children under five. It contains a very good range of safe, large equipment, which the children can move for themselves. They play imaginatively in there, and in doing so, learn and develop a range of useful skills, like cooperation and the importance of completing a task.
55. Both classes benefit from the extra help given by the two classroom assistants. Their patience, dedication and sensitive manner with the children make a very positive contribution to the teaching of the youngest children in the school. A supply teacher taught one of the classes throughout the inspection. She had got to know the children very well, and was suitably implementing the school's planning systems. There is a coordinator for the under fives, but as yet, her role has not been fully developed to include opportunities to monitor the teaching and learning in both classes.

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

56. The children have settled very well into the routines of school, and wave goodbye cheerfully at the start of each day. They have made friends, and talk to each other about their games, often playing cooperatively together, for example, with a construction set. They know that they have to wait their turn, for example when playing instruments in a circle, or when their teacher is busy with another group, and do so very patiently indeed. They get on with things by themselves, like colouring a picture, and show enjoyment and pride in their achievements, when completing a threading activity.
57. The children respond well to questions, and realise the importance of giving a correct answer, for instance, in saying whether they are having a packed lunch or a school meal. They make choices about what to play with, and generally show perseverance with their choice, for example by completing a difficult jigsaw. When playing outside they join in the chasing games with the other children, but at other times, like assembly, know that they have to sit quietly.

#### **Language and literacy**

58. Good opportunities are provided for speaking and listening, which helps the children to make good progress. Although some of the children still have difficulty in pronunciation, most of them are able to reply to questions, and have a good understanding of the nature of conversation. They talk to themselves, and to each other during play, providing sound effects for such things as trains, or engaging in a dialogue about cooking tea in their play tent. They listen very well, at class times or in individual interactions. They look at the person who is speaking, and show by their expressions that they are concentrating on what is being said. They carry out simple instructions, like getting into a queue, and are able to comply with more complicated instructions such as passing a small red block, or a long yellow pencil to a visitor.

59. The children are making good headway with early reading skills. Most of them know that books are read from front to back, and that the text is followed from left to right. They sometimes choose to look at books during activity times, and supply their own versions of the story, turning pages in sequence and pointing to the words as they go. The children are able to predict what a book might be about by using the picture on the front cover.
60. The children show an interest in writing, but standards are not as high as they could be. They know that letters have to be written in a certain order to have a particular meaning, and that writing is linear in form. Some of them trace patterns which are designed to help their writing practice, but without guidance, they sometimes start at the right hand edge of the paper and work towards the left. This results in bad habits that will impede later writing development. The more able children can write their name independently, and are starting to record other thoughts and ideas. Children of lower ability produce marks that have meaning for them, and are beginning to include recognisable letter shapes in their independent writing.

### **Mathematics**

61. The children join in singing of number rhymes, like "One, two, three, four, five, once I caught a fish alive." They know how to count to ten, and can count small numbers of objects correctly. They are aware of larger numbers and relate them to their everyday experiences, such as in recognising their house numbers, or the number of children in their class each day. They are beginning to be aware of number operations like addition, knowing, for example, that when you add two and three, the answer will be five. They make good use of their fingers to help them count on, and are starting the good habit that their teachers show them of "putting the bigger number into their head", and then counting on.
62. They have a good understanding of the language of position, such as "in front of", and "behind", and use this in their play. They match similar objects and sort objects with the same attributes, such as colour or size. They incorporate these activities into their play, such as in sorting the blocks with wheels out of the construction set, before building their train. Most of the children recognise circles and the more able children also identify squares, rectangles and triangles.

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

63. The children talk about the journey from home to school, and know that care is needed when crossing the road. They can name some of the features that they pass on the way to school, such as the shop, phone box and the church. They know that Tewkesbury is very busy and that it has more shops and cars than the local centre. They can name some of the things that the town has, that are not available in Northway. They name certain features of distant localities, like the rain forest, which they have been learning about, and know that the toucan does not live in this country.
64. The children fit together pieces of railway track to form a continuous route, and they build objects using large and small construction kits. They are aware of basic principles in design, for example that a ramp will help their cars to travel more quickly, but that it will need some support if it gets too long. One child spent fifteen minutes experimenting with a ramp, which he made for himself out of a construction kit. He tried out several ideas until he found one, which was stable enough to allow cars to travel down, without falling apart. The children are also aware of other properties of materials, knowing for instance that wet sand is better for making tunnels and castles, and that dry sand is better for sieving. They are aware of the natural environment, and name features like the beach and the sea from their big picture book. They name common birds like a pigeon, but are unsure that a swan is also a bird preferring to label it as a duck.
65. The children use the computers confidently and are eager to learn more about them. They use arrow keys to help them move a figure around the screen and are aware that if they move the left hand arrow, the figure will also move to the left. They are aware of other forms of technology, like the listening centre, which they enjoy using. They also use pretend "remote controls" to change channels on the television in

their pretend play. They are beginning to understand the usefulness of technology in the world around them, for instance that mobile phones are good because "you can put them in your handbag".

### **Physical development**

66. The children have sound pencil control, most of them hold pencils and crayon properly and use tools, like spatulas and cutlery with reasonable skill. They develop increasing hand control through a range of activities such as rotating a jig-saw piece until it is correctly orientated, or threading a lace through holes on a board. Many of them are adept at dressing themselves, and make good attempts with fastenings, such as buttons and buckles.
67. They move with good awareness of space, and of each other, for instance in their country dancing lesson. They skip and dance with agility, and clearly love the opportunity to be physically active. They show reasonable coordination and balance, and are able to keep themselves still when requested.

### **Creative development**

68. The children are confident in their use of materials for art. Their paintings are typical of those of other four-year-olds, developing from broad swathes of colour into much finer detail including recognisable representations of what the children imagine and remember. Some children's paintings of daisies show a definite likeness, with stems, leaves and petals. They work successfully with ready-mixed colours, or with a variety of media, such as pastels, chalks and crayons. They explore texture and shape by using different coloured paper in their collages, and when using the adhesive, they know that it would be wasteful to use too much.
69. The children have appropriately developed imagination. They enjoy playing pretend games in their role play areas. Some of the imaginative play helps to reinforce key skills like numeracy, for example when the children count and match cutlery in the play tent. The children sing songs, such as a Turkish song about frogs, and this enhances their cultural development. They have a good sense of rhythm, for example clapping in time to the music in their country dance lesson, and at music time when they worked successfully with a range of percussion instruments.

## **ENGLISH**

70. Standards in reading, writing, speaking, and listening meet the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1. The attainment of pupils with special educational needs, is in line with their abilities and their learning is good. The 1999 National Curriculum test results show that the school's results were broadly in line with the national average, and also in line with schools having a similar intake. The proportion of pupils reaching level 2 or above was above the national average in reading, and well above in writing. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level, (Level 3) was below the average in reading, and close to the average in writing. Trends over the past three years show that standards are improving.
71. In Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are similar to those found in other schools. Good opportunities are provided for the pupils to engage in discussions, conversations, and real purposes for both speaking and listening. Teachers act as good role models, and listening skills are consistently and thoughtfully encouraged. A strength in the pupils' learning is their ability to listen attentively to their teachers. The pupils answer clearly and correctly in lessons, particularly in the introductory and plenary sessions in the literacy hour. They concentrate, contribute ideas, and talk about their own experiences in lessons. A good example of this was in Year 1, when pupils were able to talk fluently, about the dangers of playing near a railway line, and the associated hazard of electricity. Since a high proportion of the pupils on the school's register of special educational needs are on there because of language difficulties, the school does well to improve their attainment and their confidence in communication skills.
72. Boys and girls make secure progress overall in individual reading, and good progress in guided reading groups, and at the end of the key stage, their attainment is similar to that of others nationally. Year 2 pupils read confidently, and show understanding of the content of their fiction books. They discuss the

plot of a story, have a developing understanding of the text, and can predict a suitable ending. Most of them understand the layout of the library, know the purpose of the contents and index of books and many can find a specific subject book to locate information. Some of the pupils are able to extend these research skills through the use of the CD-ROM, and this contributes positively to their learning.

73. Attainment in writing is similar to that of other schools nationally. In Year 2, the pupils write in complete sentences, usually with correct punctuation, and with good attempts at spelling unfamiliar words. They remember their teacher's advice to stretch the word out and listen to the sounds in the words. Most pupils sequence sentences correctly to make stories or descriptions of an appropriate length for their age. Spelling has improved since the previous inspection, when the inspectors noted that pupils overall had insufficient spelling strategies to support their independent writing. The resulting emphasis on the importance of spelling strategies, and spelling targets is helping the pupils to become more confident writers. Handwriting is taught as a discrete skill and recorded in specific handwriting books. These books show consistent careful handwriting, with letters of even size, and appropriate joins. However, the pupils are not applying their good handwriting to other written work.
74. The teaching is never less than satisfactory, with some good teaching in about a third of the lessons. When teaching is good it focuses sharply on the requirements of the literacy hour, there are high expectations of pupils' behaviour, the work is challenging, and the questioning probes the pupils' understanding well. The teachers use the literacy hour well to reinforce research skills and this contributes to the pupils' attainment in English, and in other subjects. Where the teaching is satisfactory, there are always pleasant relationships, and the teachers clearly have appropriate subject knowledge, but some of the lessons lack pace. The needs of the more able pupils are not fully met, particularly in the group work, when there is insufficient challenge in the activity, or not enough work planned to promote sustained learning for the whole of the lesson.
75. At the time of the previous inspection the teaching was sound overall, but was inconsistent. There was some good teaching, which stimulated the pupils' imagination and built on the pupils' existing knowledge, and made effective links between speaking, reading and writing. However, one in five lessons were unsatisfactory. The inspectors noted that some teaching did not take sufficient account of the pupils' abilities, and the teaching did not make sufficient demands of the pupils, particularly the more able. They found that the quality of the pupils' writing was let down by inaccurate spelling. The teaching has maintained its strengths in making effective links between speaking, reading and writing, and overall it has improved. There is no longer any unsatisfactory teaching, but there is still room for further improvement, particularly in the teaching of more able pupils in the Reception classes.
76. The teaching is based on National Literacy Strategy, and this is having a beneficial effect on learning. The teachers plan in detail to ensure that they cover the word, sentence and text-level work. Some of the lessons are organised well, and clear gains in the pupils' learning are evident. There are, however, occasions when insufficient time is left at the end of lessons for effective consolidation of the learning, or opportunities for the teachers to assess what their pupils have learned. Marking shows that the teachers are interested in what the pupils have written, but comments about what the pupils could improve in their work are not a strong feature of the subject. Reading records are kept, and are up-dated frequently with lists of what the pupils have read. Good home-school diaries are in place, so that parents can contribute to their children's records. The headteacher has introduced an excellent tracking system, which has the potential to make great improvements to assessment and record keeping in the subject.
77. The pupils learn steadily through their reception and Year 1 classes, and their learning speeds up in Year 2. An example of this was evident in Year 2, where the pupils were able to read out and spell the sound, 'ea', using it to make words such as 'head,' 'steady,' 'bread,' and 'ready.' Their writing shows a range of different forms and purposes, for example diaries, records of visits, and books written about their holidays. Their work in poetry is particularly effective, and they show an interest in writing poems, promoted through their reading of poetry such as modern verse. The pupils know that poetry sometimes rhymes, and understand poetic humour.

78. Throughout the school the behaviour and attitudes of the pupils in English lessons is very good. They show a keen interest in their work, cooperate well, and also show concentration and independence. They are eager to share and discuss their work with visitors, and take pride in reading their own poems. Positive attitudes to learning are demonstrated by the pupils with special educational needs, as a consequence of the commitment of the teachers, together with that of the supporting staff.
79. There is an English coordinator, and an overall curriculum plan for English, which promotes secure coverage of the required programmes of work. There is a good range, of structured reading material. There is a particularly wide range of resources, which are very well used to support the learning, for example, group texts, big books, with stands, and classroom whiteboards. However, the stock of library books is insufficient to support the curriculum, and many of the existing books need renewal. There is a good English portfolio, containing annotated examples of pupils' work. This is very useful in helping the teachers to moderate the work, particularly at the end of the key stage.

## MATHEMATICS

80. Standards meet expectations in most areas of the subject. In numeracy, standards are slightly better than those expected nationally. Last year's National Curriculum test results show that the school's average points scores were broadly in line with the national average, and also in line with schools with a similar intake. The proportion of pupils reaching level 2 or above was well above the national average, but those reaching the higher level, (level 3) was below average. The school shows slight improvement on standards reported at the time of the previous inspection. Then, the pupils in Year 2 had acquired much of the knowledge and skills expected of seven years olds, but they were not as good as applying their knowledge in different contexts, and the progress of the more able pupils was not as good as it should have been. Now, the pupils apply their knowledge well, for instance in Year 2, measuring distances that magnets pull objects, and in Year 1, making a diagram of different hair types. The able pupils in Year 2 are progressing soundly, but those in the earlier years in the school could achieve more.
81. The pupils in Year 2 have a suitable range of mathematical vocabulary, and understand, for example, that "difference", "take away" and "counting back" are all features of subtraction. They have good mental strategies for working things out, using ideas like near doubles when adding sums like  $9+8$ . They also use their knowledge of tens and units to explain that adding 80 and 80 is similar to adding  $8 + 8$ . They are familiar with number patterns, and the able pupils quickly identify patterns like 27, 32, 37, 42, and the rest of the pupils count confidently in twos, fives, and tens. They know what the word "multiple" means, and the most able pupils make accurate estimations of, for example, the number of multiples of four that there are in 100. They recognise shapes like hexagons and triangles and can describe some of their properties in terms of the number of sides and corners that each shape has. They work with standard units, like centimetres, when measuring, and make reasonable estimations of length.
82. The pupils throughout the school have good attitudes to the subject. They enjoy the challenge of mathematical games, and have a confident attitude, inspired by their teachers' confidence in them. They are willing to explain how they have arrived at their answers, and realise that each method is equally valid if it produces the correct answer. They listen to each other, and say things like "that's clever" to show that they have been impressed by a classmate's ability. They share equipment like scissors when cutting shapes out, and show persistence when colouring in. They use mirrors carefully when checking if their designs are symmetrical, and alter them carefully to make the appropriate improvements.
83. The teaching is sound overall, with very good teaching in Year 2. The strengths of the teaching are that the teachers have very good command of the subject, and inspire confidence in their pupils to succeed. The questioning is very good, and relates very well to what the pupils already know. For example in the Year 2 lessons the teacher asked some pupils to tell her an even number greater than 12, and others to find a multiple of five which was less than 30. Both questions offered a similar amount of challenge, and enabled the pupils to experience success. The teachers make very good use of resources, including some that have been made by the teachers themselves. They are good at securing the attention of their pupils, and giving clear instructions. Some of the teaching includes good opportunities for the pupils to explain their

methods, but this is not consistent through the school. The teaching is supported very well by the contribution of other adults in the school who help the younger pupils to become familiar with numerals in free play situations, and when playing games with a mathematical dimension.



84. The teachers are making very good use of the guidance in the National Numeracy Strategy, particularly to give their lessons a brisk start and to improve their pupils' mental calculations. The group work and plenary sessions work well in some classes, but need further development in others. Some of the group work does not have sufficient mathematical challenge, and opportunities are lost to extend the pupils' acquisition of mathematical vocabulary. The plenary session is sometimes rather rushed, and so the teachers miss valuable opportunities to assess the impact of their lessons.
85. The teaching of able pupils in Year 2 is good and relevant to their need for mathematical challenges. In one lesson the pupils thought that their teacher had set the a very easy task, in sorting 12 counters into 3 pots, so that each had 3 counters more than the pot before. It was only when they engaged in it that they realised it was not as easy as they thought. In Year 1 and Reception, the needs of the able pupils are not so well catered for. Although they have specific work for their groups, it does not always keep them occupied, and extend their mathematical skills. Progress over the past year is not as good as it could have been. This is in part attributable to a lack of sequential teaching. For instance work recorded in January being pitched at an easier level than for November, and the pupils revising previously acquired skills rather than moving on. In the Reception classes too little work is recorded in the books to track progress, and records do not show what the children have learned, or indicate what they might learn next.
86. There is a good range of expertise in the school, including a leading mathematics teacher and experienced coordinator. The school is working to review the assessment system for the subject, and some good work has already been done in establishing assessment criteria. However, the system is not fully up and running, and as yet, is not having a beneficial impact on the teaching and learning.

## SCIENCE

87. Standards are in line with the national expectation. Boys and girls across the key stage make sound progress in science. The pupils with special educational needs also make sound progress, and learn well. The results of the 1999 teacher assessments show that the percentages of the pupils achieving Level 2, the expected level, was in line with the national averages. When comparing the assessments with those of schools with a similar intake, the pupils' results were above average at level 2, but below average for the higher level, (level 3). Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection.
88. The pupils in Year 2 identify pushing and pulling forces confidently. They make relevant observations about how forces can make things move, for instance identifying the push and pull forces in their experiments with magnets. They also know that a force can be used to change the shape of some materials, like dough. The pupils conduct simple investigations, structured well by their teachers, and make good use of their previous knowledge and practical experiences to develop and deepen their scientific understanding. The pupils remember their previous learning, for example the able pupils know that providing the same conditions in a test is important. They apply this knowledge well when testing the strength of various magnets. They make reasonable predictions, based on sensible ideas, for example suggesting that bigger magnets will be stronger than smaller ones, and they have an open mind when testing them, and accept that their predictions are not always right.
89. The pupils behave well in lessons, and this helps them to learn. They listen to instructions and respond appropriately. They especially enjoy investigative work in science, and during this work they cooperate with each other, and share resources sensibly. The oldest pupils are able to work as a group, or in pairs, sharing out the jobs of testing and recording their findings. They realise that if they do things together, they can get results more quickly, and enjoy the discussion about who was right in their prediction. They work hard, concentrate well, and their attitudes to learning are good. Younger pupils also have good attitudes to their work, they use their equipment carefully and show excitement and anticipation when they are finding things out for themselves.

90. The teaching in science is sound overall, with some very good teaching in Year 2. The teachers' knowledge of the curriculum is sound, and they provide the pupils with suitable experiences drawn from their agreed curriculum plan. They organise the pupils in a calm and positive way, and ensure that the pupils get sufficient time to investigate problems, and test out their ideas. The teachers challenge the pupils effectively by providing direct practical experiences which clearly interest them. The strongest feature of the teaching is the variety of ways in which the activities in the Year 2 classes are geared towards the specific needs of different pupils. Very good introductory teaching sessions remind the pupils of what they know already, and they introduce the next steps in such a way that the pupils are very eager to start. The teachers circulate well during the lessons, providing extra impetus to help the learning, and at the end of the lessons they reinforce the learning with an excellent summary. Weaker aspects of the teaching, in the school as a whole, are that assessment is not a regular enough feature to track the pupils' development. Responses to the pupils' work do not enable them to see clearly what they need to do in order to further improve their work further.
91. The teaching includes good links with literacy and numeracy. For example, the pupils extend their vocabulary to include specific words like "repel", and "attraction", and learn that hair is described as "blonde", and not "yellow". In the Reception class they extend their range of adjectives to describe wet and dry sand. In Year 2, the pupils practise their skills at measurement in the lessons, and in Year 1 they record their results in a graph. In Reception, they see the importance of measuring in their tests about how far cars travel down ramps. Science links well with information technology as the pupils use their knowledge to search the interactive dictionary to find out more about magnets.

## **ART**

92. Standards are similar to those in other schools, and both boys and girls make sound progress through the key stage. At the time of the previous inspection standards were sound, with evidence of some very good standards, and so standards aren't quite as good as they were a few years ago. However, there are now some very good links with other subjects like information technology, and in this respect the school has maintained its development of the subject as a whole.
93. At the end of the key stage, the pupils use a wide variety of materials to record what they see, imagine or remember. Their observational drawings of shells show good understanding of form, and they are beginning to appreciate how shading can give their pictures a three-dimensional appearance. The pupils with special educational needs fully engage in the tasks, and their confidence grows when they receive suitable praise for their efforts. Some of the lessons show useful links between learning about artists in the past and the pupils making things for themselves. However, although the pupils have studied artists, they cannot remember much about them, or talk with any certainty about the visual elements in the pictures they have copied.
94. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, but there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the teaching of the subject in the school as a whole. The teaching in the lesson observed gave the pupils ample time to engage practically in investigating and making artefacts, and linked well with the design elements of other subjects. However, too little attention was given to help the pupils evaluate what they had done, and so the pupils did not learn to improve their ideas or relate them to work that they had done earlier. At the time of the previous inspection the teaching was very good, with good planning and pertinent questioning.
95. The coordinator has a range of examples of pupils' work, which is useful in giving ideas to her colleagues about the sorts of techniques that can be developed across the key stage. She has an understanding of the needs of the subject, for instance that more attention needs to be given to pupils to work in three dimensions, or in different scales. She offers helpful advice to her colleagues, but as yet, has not monitored planning, teaching or learning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

96. Standards are similar to those found in other schools nationally, and girls and boys across the key stage make sound progress. The pupils with special educational needs attain appropriately, and make sound progress. The school has maintained the standards reported at the time of the previous inspection.
97. In Year 2 the pupils write out the recipe and instructions for making chocolate nests, and use a graphics' program to enhance their work on the computer as they plan and design Joseph's coat. They employ simple finishing techniques as they experiment with ways of using paper by tearing, cutting, folding, plaiting and twisting. Their designs show an awareness of purpose, and they are beginning to see the value in re-visiting their original ideas in order to make improvements. In Year 1, the pupils realise the importance of drawing a plan first in their design for a playground.
98. The pupils have good attitudes to the subject, and behave sensibly when working in groups. They discuss things together well, and offer ideas and solutions when, for example the Lego slide collapses. The pupils are interested in what they are doing, and respect each other's work. They share tools, materials and ideas willingly. The relationships between teachers and pupils, and pupils towards each other are constructive, leading to effective learning. The pupils ask questions confidently knowing that they will receive helpful support from their teachers.
99. Teaching is sound. The teachers give pupils the opportunity to practise the skills of designing and making, and organise resources so that pupils can begin their practical activities efficiently. They show a suitable knowledge of the appropriate skills and techniques, and make good links to other subjects, like art. The teaching is clearly based on the school's scheme of work, which, by gradually increasing the difficulty of the task, ensures that the pupils make suitable progress as they move through the year groups. A strong feature of the provision is the contribution of adult helpers. Some of the helpers have specific subject expertise, and give of their time willingly to help the pupils learn about the subject. For example, in one lesson the pupils were taught very carefully about how to join materials with adhesive, and the importance of keeping the surfaces still until they had bonded together.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

100. Standards are similar to those found in other schools nationally, and the both girls and boys make sound progress through the key stage. The school has maintained the standards that were reported at the time of the previous inspection. In Year 2, the pupils have appropriate geographical skills. They identify natural and human features in their environment, like hills, rivers, shops and roads, and are starting to understand the effect that people have on the environments in which they live. They understand that localities can have features that are similar, and identify features that are common to both Weston-super-Mare, and Northway. They understand how symbols are useful, for example, in recording the weather, and they have begun to use symbols on their own maps of routes to school.
101. The only lessons planned for the week of the inspection were in Year 2. The teaching in these lessons was very good. The teachers were thoroughly prepared for their lessons, and had taken great care to produce excellent resources to support their learning objectives. They used A4 size photographs very well to attract the interest of the pupils, and then motivated them well by asking them to "be detectives" in discovering the similarities and differences in two localities. Specific vocabulary was introduced to the pupils, and this helped them to acquire the right words to describe the key features of the two localities. Questioning was superb; the pupils were asked to justify their answers with a range of "tell me how, tell me what" prompts. There was a clear purpose to the lesson, which was communicated to the pupils at the outset, so the pupils were clear about what they had to do. Both lessons had good pace, which helped all the pupils, including those with special educational need to learn new skills, and acquire new knowledge.
102. There has been progress in the management of the subject in the past few years. At the time of the previous inspection, the policy and scheme of work were criticised for being too brief, and not containing

learning objectives or advice on teaching methods. This has since been remedied, and the scheme of work shows clearly what the pupils will learn each year.

## **HISTORY**

103. Standards are similar to those found in other schools. Girls and boys, including those with special educational needs make sound progress. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. The oldest pupils are developing a sense of chronology, and are able to talk about how homes have changed this century. For example, two pupils named several household gadgets, like electric washing machines and mobile phones that would not have been present at the turn of the century. They show an understanding of the lives of some famous people, such as Florence Nightingale. Their work shows that they can suggest similarities and differences in nursing between then and now. The pupils in Year 1 think about holidays in the past and show amazement at the difference between beachwear today and in the early 1900's.
104. The standards of behaviour and attitudes to learning in history are good. The pupils listen attentively, and answer the questions appropriately. They value and show interest in the resources provided, and they understand that special care is needed with other people's property. Pupils of all abilities actively participate in the lessons, and are eager to contribute their ideas for example when talking about the pros and cons of horse transport.
105. The teaching is sound overall, with some good features. A good feature of the teaching is that it includes good links with English and mathematics. The teachers include good opportunities for the pupils to engage in purposeful speaking and listening activities, for example when they encourage the pupils to debate the restriction of wearing long dresses. The time lines reinforce numerical skills, and also help the pupils develop a sense of chronology. The teachers make use of available expertise, for instance in inviting two nurses to discuss their work, and this helps them to see how things have changed in the past. The teachers are aware of the sequential development of historical skills, but do not assess them thoroughly enough. Consequently plans are not specific enough to help the pupils learn as much as they could in lessons.
106. At the time of the previous inspection the policy and scheme of work were too brief, and did not contain learning objectives or advice on teaching methods. This has since been remedied, and the scheme of work shows clearly what the pupils will learn each year. Structured activities in chronology take place throughout the key stage. The coordinator is very keen to extend the curriculum for history to include information technology to enable the pupils to learn as much as they can from all available sources.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

107. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are similar to those seen in other schools nationally. Girls and boys, including those pupils with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The school has maintained the standards reported at the time of the previous inspection. At the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have sound skills when operating a computer. They are familiar with the keyboard and use it with increasing accuracy, and are able to give competent instructions on how to open and how to close a program. They control the mouse to place the cursor on the screen accurately and to operate programs with which they are working. Some of the pupils know how to access software from CD-ROM, such as the interactive dictionary. The most able pupils can search the CD ROM for information using key words, and they confidently explain the use of a digital camera.
108. The pupils have very good attitude to their learning, and show enthusiasm for the subject. The pupils know how to handle and care for a compact disc correctly. When they close a program they realise that this leaves the computer ready for the next person to start, and that it is necessary to close a program down properly, rather than just switching the computer off. The children in the Reception classes respond well to opportunities to use technology for themselves, for instance, how to check that the tape recorder is on by looking for the light. They listen intently to the story and obey the instruction to turn the page when the

bell rings. In Year 1, the pupils show a high level of cooperation with each other, for example when using a programmable toy, they see the importance of taking turns to key in the numbers.

109. The teaching is good overall, with some very good teaching in Year 2. A good feature of the teaching are the effective links made with a wide range of other subjects. For example in a class lesson in Year 2, the pupils became familiar with the a range of specific vocabulary, like "backtrack", "options", and "quit." In this lesson, the teacher usefully compared her dictionary with the CD program as she taught the pupils use the interactive dictionary. In a contribution to their maths work the pupils produce a pictogram. Links with geography are strengthened by producing maps and plotting routes their route to school. An art program is used to produce versions of pictures in the style of famous artists. The relationships between teachers and pupils are constructive, leading to effective learning. Careful demonstration enables pupils to practise and gain a sound understanding of the skills used in word processing and control and modelling. Teachers use their sound knowledge and understanding of the processes involved to benefit of the pupils, for example, when describing in simple terms how memory is stored on a computer.
110. There has been clear improvement in the teaching since the time of the previous inspection, when teaching varied between being satisfactory and unsatisfactory. The main criticism was that some teaching did not prepare the pupils well enough, and there was insufficient help given to the pupils who were experiencing difficulties. This has been remedied, and now the teaching is generally good. The teaching enables all the pupils to become more confident before they use the computer. New programs are explained in class sessions and the pupils are questioned to assess their working knowledge.
111. There is an enthusiastic coordinator who has recently completed an audit of information and communication technology. A good policy guides the teaching, and in-service training is a strong feature of the policy. The coordinator is aware that the pupils need increased access to technology in order to raise standards higher.

## **MUSIC**

112. Girls and boys attain standards appropriate to their age and they make satisfactory progress in lessons, and over longer periods of time. The pupils with special educational needs, attain satisfactory standards in relation to their abilities. Standards are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection.
113. By the end of the key stage, the pupils use a range of percussion instruments to create a poem of sounds. They collaborate well to produce a simple composition and perform with confidence. They concentrate intently on the teacher and listen well to each other's parts. They can draw and read symbols to represent the sounds. They sing with reasonable pitch and have a good sense of rhythm, and in this respect standards show slight improvement on those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Then, the pupils had good rhythmic skills, but were not as good at singing in tune. Now, the pupils are enthusiastic, showing great enjoyment of singing in unison in assemblies and in hymn practice. They sing tunes that have a clapping refrain and concentrate intently to keep in time. They show delight in listening to music from other countries, and become absorbed in the mood of the music. They handle instruments with care, and collaborate very well when playing an instrument in pairs.
114. The teaching is satisfactory overall. Some very good teaching was seen in Year2, where the teacher gave good opportunities for the pupils to explore and select instruments to create a particular mood. In this lesson, the teacher chose good examples to demonstrate the sounds, and challenged the pupils to evaluate the best sound effect. Throughout the school, teachers provide plenty of practical activities that capture the pupils' interest and motivate them to learn. They explain the activities clearly so that the pupils know what to do. Occasionally, the ending of the lesson is rushed and, although opportunities are given for the pupils to record their work, there is not always sufficient time to make an effective appraisal.

115. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Then, the teaching varied in quality, but was sound overall. The strengths were noted as the teachers' good preparation and good use of resources to cover a range of musical activities. This is still the case, the teachers provide many opportunities to listen and respond to different kinds of music, including those from other cultures. For example, a composer of the month is chosen for assemblies and there is an interesting variety of visiting musical workshops. These activities contribute positively to the pupils' cultural development. In some lessons, at the time of the school's previous inspection, the pace of lessons was too slow, and it was not clear what the learning intention of the lessons were. There was no systematic approach to assessment, and some of the staff lacked confidence in the subject. The teaching shows more confidence now, and staff are aware of the importance of identifying learning objectives. However, there is still some way to go with assessment, and there are still inconsistencies in the quality of the teaching throughout the school.
116. The coordinator has an enthusiastic approach to the music curriculum. She has produced a good scheme of work that plans well for progression in the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding and gives good guidance for teaching. She has clear plans for the development of the subject, including forming links with information technology.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

117. No gymnastics lessons were seen during the inspection and so no judgements can be made about the pupils' gymnastic achievements. Standards at the end of the key stage in dance and games are appropriate to the age of the pupils. Boys and girls, including those with special educational needs make steady progress, and this is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The oldest pupils are beginning to recognise the effect exercise has on their bodies after running round the field. They are aware of the safe use of equipment. They can throw, catch and hit a ball with increasing control and apply these skills when playing with a partner. They are beginning to understand that competitive games need rules and make steady progress in learning how to play as a member of a team. The pupils listen attentively to instructions and obey them promptly. They show enthusiasm and perform their dance routines confidently to others. They cooperate, in groups and are eager to practise, and to improve. They change quickly into their physical education kit and go in an orderly way to the hall or the playing fields. This promotes a purposeful beginning to the lesson.
118. The teaching is sound overall with some good features. The lessons are suitably planned, with clear learning objectives, building on the pupils' previous skills. The teachers organise appropriate warming up and cooling down activities, paying due attention to safety. They give clear instructions and effective use is made of praise and demonstration. Therefore the children know what is expected of them and how well they are performing. They manage the pupils well and have good relationships, which encourage the pupils to remain on task. There are some good opportunities given for the pupils to evaluate and improve their performances, for example in a Year 1 country dance lesson. However, evaluation is not a consistent feature of each lesson. Good links are made to other areas of the curriculum, such as using information technology as a teaching aid for games skills, making capital letter shapes with the body, and counting out steps.
119. There have clearly been improvements to the teaching of the subject since the previous inspection. Then, some lessons did not include sufficient challenge for the pupils, or cover the identified teaching points. This is no longer the case. However, there are still variations in the quality of the teaching, and the inconsistencies about some teachers not including sufficient opportunities for the pupils to evaluate their performance are still evident. There is currently no coordinator therefore the subject lacks clear management and direction.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

120. The standards at the end of Key Stage 1 meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The school has maintained the standards reported at the time of the previous inspection. The pupils in Year 2 have an appropriate knowledge of the principles of the Christian faith. In a simple way they can explain what it means to be a Christian. They know about the main Christian festivals of Easter and Christmas, and that the church has a part to play in Christian celebrations, such as christenings and weddings. They know that the Bible is a significant Christian book and that it is in two parts. They can talk in simple terms about the practical application of Christian principles, such as caring for others. They have a rudimentary understanding of other faiths, and a developing ability to see the world through someone else's eyes. They study festivals from other religions, and are beginning to see some similarities between world faiths. For example, they know that there are special texts other than the Bible, and that the Koran is the Muslim holy book. They know that Muslims fast because it reminds them what it is like to be poor and hungry.
121. The attitudes and the behaviour of the pupils in lessons are good. They listen carefully and eagerly to offer suggestions from their own experience. They talk with interest about the meaning of the miracle of the "Feeding of the Five Thousand", and they are responsive to, and respectful of the views of others. Stories in assembly provide good opportunities for the pupils to consider the lives of others, and to reflect on their own. The assemblies are planned so that they enhance and extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding and also to help pupils to see the significance of worship in religion.
122. The teaching is sound, with some good features. The lessons observed showed many strengths, particularly in the sensitive use of questioning to encourage the pupils to think about the plight of others. The teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons to ensure that they cover the learning objectives. Lessons are guided by the locally agreed syllabus, and successfully provide the pupils with a range of experiences, which develop their knowledge and understanding of the main world faiths. At the time of the last inspection, the teaching was judged to be sound, with interesting topics planned to cover the locally agreed syllabus. The teachers then did not have any successful arrangements for assessing the pupils' achievements, and this is still the case.