

INSPECTION REPORT

HILLESLEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hillesley, Wotton-under-Edge

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115716

Headteacher: Mrs B Freeman

Reporting inspector: Mr Graham R Sims

RgI's OIN: 28899

Dates of inspection: 14th – 17th February 2000

Inspection number: 191698

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs H Cooke
Date of previous inspection:	27th - 30th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr G R Sims Registered Inspector	Areas of learning for children under five Mathematics Art Design and technology Information technology Physical education	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught Leadership and management Equal opportunities
Mrs D Thomas Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils The school's partnership with parents
Mrs L Simmons	English Science Geography History Music	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hillesley CE Primary School is a voluntary aided Church of England primary school for boys and girls from 4-11 years old. It has 54 full-time pupils, which is much smaller than average. The attainment of most children when they enter school is above that found nationally. The school is situated in the village of Hillesley, close to Wotton-under-Edge in Gloucestershire. Most of the pupils come from the village and its immediately surrounding area. There are no pupils currently eligible for free school meals; this is well below the national average. At the time of the inspection, there were 10 children under the age of five in the Infant class. Nearly all pupils are of a white ethnic background, and no pupils come from homes where English is not the main spoken language. Almost a quarter of the pupils are identified as having special educational needs; this is above the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Hillesley CE Primary School is an effective school. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve above average standards in English, science and information technology, and average standards in mathematics. The overall quality of the teaching is good. The teachers work exceedingly hard to provide for the wide age range and very diverse needs of the pupils in each of the school's two classes. The school is well led by the headteacher and well supported by the governors. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils achieve above average standards in English, science and information technology.
- Teachers and assistant staff work very well together, providing good quality teaching.
- Through their very good knowledge of the pupils, the staff provide a good level of individual guidance and constructive advice.
- The staff are very supportive and work hard to provide a caring environment.
- The school is well led by the headteacher and has a very effective governing body.
- The school has a very constructive working partnership with parents, who are very supportive of the school.

What could be improved

- The pupils' achievements in mathematics are not high enough.
- The unsatisfactory behaviour of a small minority of pupils and occasional inconsiderate behaviour from others spoil the generally good behaviour of the majority. Staff are not always consistent in the way they handle behavioural problems.
- The presentation of pupils' work in some subjects at Key Stage 2 is not as good as it could be.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been a good degree of improvement since the last inspection, which took place in January 1997. Good features pointed out in the last inspection have been maintained, in spite of a significant rise in numbers and limitations of space in both classrooms.

The school has dealt effectively with all of the key issues from the last inspection. The programmes for teaching English and mathematics have been completely revised and improved in the light of national initiatives. The curriculum for children under five is entirely

appropriate. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of teaching. The scheme for teaching design and technology has improved. Procedures for child protection are now good, and pupils receive appropriate education about the abuse of drugs.

Inspection evidence suggests that standards have improved at Key Stage 1 and in English and science at Key Stage 2. The school achieved its targets for attainment in English and science in 1999, but not in mathematics. Targets for future years have been based on a realistic appraisal of individual pupils.

STANDARDS

The table showing standards achieved by 11-year-olds in each of the last four years has been omitted from this report because of the very small number of pupils in each year group, which can make comparisons with national figures and similar schools very misleading. In 1999, for example, only three pupils took the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2. The school achieved its aspirational targets for these pupils in English and science, but did not achieve the targeted results for all three pupils in mathematics. The school has looked carefully and realistically at its targets for the next few years.

Averaged out over the last four years, the school's results have been above the national average in English, similar to the national average in science and below average in mathematics. Over the same period, results at the end of Key Stage 1 have been slightly above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that standards are improving and that they are above average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1, confirming the improvement shown in the 1999 results over previous years. At Key Stage 2, standards in English and science are above average. The school has been working hard to rectify perceived deficiencies in the teaching of mathematics, with some success, and standards are now similar to the national average.

The youngest children exceed the national expectations for five-year-olds. Standards in information technology are above average at the end of both key stages. The pupils also produce a good standard of work in history and geography. The staff are very conscious of the widely differing needs of the pupils in each class. Whilst they cater successfully for these needs and enable the pupils to make satisfactory progress in most subjects, the pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in their work in mathematics. Standards of presentation are good at Key Stage 1, but not enough attention is given to the way work is presented in some subjects at Key Stage 2.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils enjoy coming to school. Their attitudes to work are mainly positive, particularly when the work is challenging or new ideas are presented. Many pupils are keen to stay behind after school when extra-curricular activities are offered.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. A small minority show restless and inattentive behaviour and occasional discourtesy towards staff. The behaviour of a small number of pupils is challenging and, at times, disruptive.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils' relationships with their peers and adults are generally good. A particularly good feature is the way older pupils help the younger ones. Whilst many pupils become more independent in their learning and take responsibility for their own actions, many are still too dependent on adult or parental help.

Attendance	The level of attendance is very good and well above the national average. Pupils arrive punctually.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of the teaching is good. The teaching was satisfactory or better in all of the lessons seen. It was very good in 12% of lessons and good in a further 52%. The rest were satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching.

The teachers are very competent and work extremely hard to cope with the very wide age range and hugely differing needs of the pupils in each of the school's two classes. Much careful thought is given to the planning and organisation of lessons and there is good teamwork between teachers and assistants. In English and in most other subjects, the teachers are successful in meeting such diverse needs. This is not always the case in mathematics where, too often, the more able pupils have to mark time.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides an appropriately broad and balanced curriculum, which meets statutory requirements. Good attention is given to teaching literacy skills, and the provision for teaching numeracy skills is improving. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits, and extra-curricular activities. The after-school club is well run and provides an interesting variety of activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Early identification, good intervention and well-formulated education plans help to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs successfully. There is appropriate liaison with outside agencies.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Circle time, assemblies and a quiet time at the end of each day are used effectively. Residential experiences contribute to their social development. Staff provide good role models. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a caring and supportive environment in which staff show great concern for the needs of individual pupils. Staff are not entirely consistent in the way they manage challenging behaviour. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' academic performance and personal development are good.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school has strengthened its already very positive partnership with parents. Parents are kept well informed of all aspects of their children's education and the life and work of the school. Parents feel welcome in school and contribute much to their children's learning, through help given both at home and in a voluntary capacity in school. The parents' association provides financial support for the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is well led by the headteacher, who has made good improvements to the school since she joined. Under her leadership, both teaching and non-teaching staff work well as a team, and contribute much to the good management of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body exercises its role very well. It fulfils all of its statutory responsibilities. Governors are supportive and well informed. They have a good understanding of the needs and difficulties of a small school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a good perception of what needs to be developed. It has devised appropriate action plans to deal with identified priorities.
The strategic use of resources	Staff and learning resources are used effectively. The school considers fully the principles of best value for all spending. Financial management is careful.
Adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	For its size, the school is well staffed, with appropriately trained and experienced teachers. Accommodation is adequate, although the size of both classrooms and the school hall is small. The school has sufficient resources to teach the curriculum. They are accessible and well maintained.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The education their children are getting – their children are making good progress because work is targeted to the needs of individual pupils ● The very supportive attitude of the staff – the staff know the children very well. ● The quality of the teaching and the school's leadership. ● The general ethos of the school – the staff promote good values and attitudes. ● The standard of behaviour. ● The school's approach to homework – homework is matched to individual needs and the school has consulted parents. ● The way the school relates to parents – parents feel involved, welcome and part of the community and know that any complaints or suggestions will be taken seriously ● The school is improving – they feel the school has always been good, but many small things have improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents raised very few adverse comments. A very small number of parents would like to see the following improved: ● The information provided for parents about school routines when a child joins the Reception class. ● The range of extra-curricular activities. ● Homework

Inspection findings largely support all of the positive views held by parents. This is a caring, supportive school, where the staff do their utmost to provide appropriately for each individual pupil. There is a very good partnership between the school and parents. Whilst acknowledging that the standard of behaviour is generally good and that, individually, the pupils are polite and courteous, there is room for improvement in certain aspects of behaviour and the consideration pupils give to their teachers.

Inspectors felt there was little justification for parents' concerns. The school keeps parents well informed and the staff are very approachable and willing to talk to parents. The school does all that can reasonably be expected to provide extra-curricular activities. In addition to activities provided by staff and parents, the after-school Spider Club provides a very good range of well-run activities. The school has a sensible and well-balanced approach to homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The number of pupils in each cohort in this school is very small. In 1999, for example, only three pupils took the National Curriculum assessment tests at the end of Key Stage 2. For this reason, tables showing the school's National Curriculum results and the national comparative figures have been omitted from this report.
2. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' results were well above both the national average and the average for similar schools in reading, writing and mathematics. The results have improved steadily over the last four years and are now higher than they were at the time of the last inspection. The combined results of the last four years are above the national average in reading and writing, and slightly above average in mathematics. Most pupils reach the national expectation of Level 2. Almost two thirds reach the higher Level 3 in reading, a third reach this level in mathematics, but very few reach it in writing.
3. With only three pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, the school's results can be misleading. The school achieved its aspirational targets in English and science, but did not meet its targets in mathematics. Individual results ranged from well below the national expectation in mathematics to above the national expectation in all three subjects. Over the last four years, standards have remained fairly constant in science, but there have been considerable fluctuations in English and mathematics. The combined results for this period are above the national average in English, similar to the national average in science and below average in mathematics. Overall, the school's performance is very close to the national average.
4. There has been little discernible difference in the performance of boys and girls over the last four years at Key Stage 1. However, over the last three years, boys have performed significantly better than girls at Key Stage 2. Nothing was noted during the inspection to explain these differences. Staff give boys and girls equal consideration, and there was no discernible difference in the responses of boys and girls during lessons, or in the standard of work in their books.
5. The school achieved its targets for pupils' attainment in 1999 in both English and science, but not in mathematics. The targets set for future years are realistic, and are based on the teachers' detailed knowledge of each pupil. The school is concerned to set challenging targets and is working hard to meet these. The predictability of performance and the outcomes have been affected in the past by pupil mobility. A third of last year's Key Stage 2 cohort had only been in the school for a short time before the assessment tests took place. One family leaving the area can result in the loss of almost 10 per cent of the school population.
6. The initial assessments undertaken when children start school in the Reception class indicate that their achievements are above average. The children make sound progress overall and, by the time they are five, they exceed the expectations which are

¹ The school's results are compared both to the national average (ie the average of the results of all schools in England, where pupils took National Curriculum assessment tests at the end of Key Stage 2) and to the average for similar schools (ie the average of the results for all schools whose pupils come from similar socio-economic backgrounds, determined by the eligibility of pupils within the school to receive free school meals).

outlined in the Desirable Learning Outcomes² in all aspects of their learning. They are well prepared to start the National Curriculum. The children make good progress in their personal and social development, gaining rapidly in confidence and learning to make positive relationships with other children and adults. They also make good progress in language and literacy. They have a good understanding of letter sounds. They know letter shapes and some are able to read simple words. They trace or copy words with increasing skill and accuracy. The children make sound progress in mathematics. They handle numbers confidently and complete their work with enthusiasm. Through a series of well-planned opportunities, the children acquire a good knowledge and understanding of the world, acquiring concepts of space and location, understanding of the past, and early technological and scientific skills. The children make satisfactory progress in their creative and physical development.

7. Inspection findings are broadly consistent with the picture given by the school's National Curriculum assessment test results over the last four years. The pupils' attainments are above average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, their attainments are above average in English and science. Weaknesses in mathematics are being rectified and, although not yet as high as it should be, the attainment of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 2 is average.
8. In English, standards in speaking and listening are above average throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils listen carefully and are confident in speaking aloud. Many use an extended vocabulary and speak in complex sentences. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils are sufficiently articulate to explain their thinking, apply what they have learned from reference books to a topic being studied and inform others. Standards in reading are high. By the end of Key Stage 1, they are able to read text of an appropriate level accurately, with expression and good understanding. They are very interested in books; many pupils are well supported in their reading at home which raises standards. By the end of Key Stage 2, they can decode multi-syllabic words and are learning higher-order reading skills such as skimming, scanning, inference and deduction. They have favourite authors and describe different genres. All pupils are secure in the knowledge and understanding of library and research skills, including the use of computers. Standards in writing are above average. By the end of Key Stage 1, they convey meaning, using appropriate and interesting vocabulary and adapt their writing to different readers. They use punctuation simply, their spelling is accurate or phonetically plausible, and their handwriting is legible. By the end of Key Stage 2, they analyse text, apply their learning to new situations and write in a wide variety of styles and for many different audiences and purposes. Most English work is well presented, although, on occasions, careless writing and spelling is offered which does not reflect the pupils' best efforts. By the time pupils leave school, they have well-developed literacy skills, which are used well in other subjects of the curriculum.
9. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' attainment in mathematics is above average. The pupils have a secure knowledge of addition and subtraction facts using numbers to 20. They do mental calculations quickly. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are average. The pupils have satisfactory computational skills and sound understanding of the four rules of number. They use a variety of strategies for carrying out mental calculations. By the time they leave school, they have sound numeracy skills, which they are able to use in the context of other subjects. Standards in mathematics are

² The nationally agreed goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory schooling at the age of five. The skills, knowledge and understanding which are deemed to provide a suitable foundation for young children are described in the Government's guidance document *Desirable Learning Outcomes for Pupils entering Compulsory Education*.

improving, but the difficulties imposed by having to teach such a wide range of age and ability in each class has a detrimental effect on the progress of both lower and higher-attaining pupils.

10. The pupils achieve above average standards in science. By the end of Key Stage 1, they have a good understanding of life processes and living things and are developing good investigative skills. The range of science work recorded in their workbooks is impressive. By the end of Key Stage 2, they show greater understanding of important scientific concepts and have a clear appreciation of the need to establish a fair test when conducting experiments. The pupils' own accounts of their science work show good levels of knowledge and understanding.
11. The pupils' attainments in information technology are above average; the pupils exceed the national expectations at the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are proficient in using the basic features of a word processor and graphics program, and know how to use a digital camera. Work produced using information and communication technology enhances their learning in subjects such as geography and mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils are very familiar with the way computers work. They transfer their existing knowledge to the use of new programs and show at least a sound and generally good level of competence in all aspects of the information technology curriculum. The school's arrangement to bring in a specialist teacher once a fortnight has had a significant impact on the pupils' progress in acquiring new skills.
12. The pupils' achievements in art and design and technology are appropriate for their age and, occasionally, better than those normally found. At Key Stage 1, the pupils produce good three-dimensional work in clay. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 show good observational skills in their pastel drawings and paintings in the style of Monet. The provision for design and technology has improved. Pupils are aware of the importance of careful design, planning and evaluation but, at Key Stage 2, their recorded work is spoilt by untidy presentation and lack of detail.
13. The pupils' attainments in both geography and history are above average. The school makes good use of the local environment, which helps pupils at Key Stage 1 to understand both the geographical and historical features of their village. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have good recollection of all they have learned since their early days at school. They describe topics with enthusiasm, and visits to places of interest and visitors to the school are etched in their memory.
14. In music, the pupils achieve satisfactory standards in both key stages. Above average standards are achieved by pupils who undertake additional musical activities, such as learning to play the recorder, guitar or violin. Participation in concerts and music festivals also makes a positive contribution to the pupils' progress. In physical education, the pupils achieve appropriate standards. They participate with enthusiasm, but progress is occasionally hindered by inappropriate behaviour and unnecessary chatter. In order to compensate for the difficulties of organising team games with the small number of pupils in each year group, the school attaches particular importance to swimming. Most pupils are able to swim 25 metres unaided and know the principles and skills of water safety and survival well before the end of Key Stage 2. By the time they leave school, many pupils have progressed well beyond the nationally expected standards in swimming.
15. Whilst the teachers are very conscious of the widely differing needs of the pupils in the two classes, the wide spread of attainment has an effect on the progress of higher-attaining pupils and, to a lesser extent, on lower-attaining pupils. The former do not always find the work sufficiently challenging, particularly when the whole class is

taught together. The latter are, occasionally, somewhat bemused when the level of work is pitched at a higher level than they can understand. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because of additional help given by learning support assistants.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Overall, the pupils have positive attitudes towards the school. They are interested in most lessons and are keen to participate in the activities provided. They take pleasure in their own successes and those of others. They are confident in replying to adults' questions or offering opinions and explanations, and they listen with attention to what other pupils say. Older pupils apply what they have learned to new work. They can make predictions, investigate and formulate hypotheses, not losing confidence if their ideas prove to be wrong. The pupils' attitudes to their work are most enthusiastic when they are provided with challenging tasks or new ideas. The children under five have settled well and enjoy school life. Although somewhat quiet when taught together with pupils in Years 1 and 2, they participate enthusiastically when they are taught as a separate group. Older pupils in both classes generally listen politely when the teacher has to deal with concepts which they have already understood, but which the younger pupils need explaining in more detail. Occasionally, however, the older pupils switch off. Pupils are keen to stay behind after school when extra-curricular activities are offered.
17. Overall, the pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. The great majority behave well in lessons, particularly when they are challenged appropriately, with tasks well matched to their attainment levels. The behaviour around the school is good. Lunch-times and break-times are pleasant social occasions. The pupils are aware of right and wrong; all pupils fully understand the school rules and are aware of the consequences of their actions.. Individually, the pupils are polite and courteous when talking with adults. All pupils show respect for property. Litter, graffiti and vandalism are unknown, and the care taken of school resources by pupils extends their life. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour or bullying and the pupils feel safe and secure within the school environment. However, the behaviour of a small number of pupils with special needs is frequently challenging and occasionally disruptive. In addition, a small minority of other pupils display inattentive and immature behaviour at times, and the respect which all adults show towards the pupils is occasionally met with undeserved discourtesy. Whilst staff endeavour to deal with these problems, they do, occasionally, have an adverse effect on the progress made during lessons. In the previous year, one pupil was excluded from school for a short fixed-term period.
18. The pupils form constructive relationships with one another, their teachers and other adults. When required, they cooperate and collaborate well together, helping one another as a matter of course. Through the opportunities created by the teachers for pupils to accept responsibility, the pupils are making satisfactory progress in their personal development. Children under five know how they are expected to behave and cooperate within a school setting. Pupils in Key Stage 1 tidy their work away and do small jobs about the classroom. Older pupils extend their responsibilities and duties. They help to supervise younger ones, for example, by pairing up for travel to the swimming baths or reading with them. The 'buddy' scheme operates well for mutual support and friendship. As they get older, many pupils also show increasing personal development in their work, trying to meet their teachers' expectations, and learning to undertake research and study for themselves. Some pupils are reluctant to show initiative or to behave with due independence, and rely heavily on parental or adult help whenever this is proffered. The school held an 'Independence Day' for which they gave parents guidance on encouraging their children to develop more maturity, self-help and self-discipline. This met with a positive response and has

helped many pupils to become more independent; however, some pupils are still not fully independent in the way they behave or approach their work. Some pupils have yet to develop a mature and sensible attitude to working with partners of the opposite sex. In a physical education lesson, for example, both boys and girls displayed a rather petulant and immature response when asked to form boy-girl pairs for a dance.

19. The level of attendance at the school has improved since the time of the last inspection, and is now very good. It is well above the national average. Pupils and their families value education and want to ensure that they miss as little of their schooling as possible. The pupils arrive punctually each morning. There are very few instances of unauthorised absence. Occasionally, pupils are withdrawn from school for family holidays during term time, which disrupts the continuity of the pupils' education and creates additional pressures for the teachers when the pupils return.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. The overall quality of the teaching is good throughout the school. During the inspection, 56 per cent of the lessons were good, 12 per cent were very good and the remainder were satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Positive aspects noted in the last inspection have been maintained and some weaknesses have been rectified. The teachers are very conscious of the differing needs of the pupils in each class. The teachers are now more discriminating in their use of workbooks and worksheets. There is no subject in which the teaching is weak. The teachers are committed, very hard-working and reflect carefully on the quality of their teaching. They take on board new initiatives and have responded positively to the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, both of which have led to improvements in teaching. The quality of the teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' standards of attainment throughout the school, and enabling the pupils to make good progress in most subjects. Some refinements, however, are required to adapt the methods advocated in the Numeracy Strategy to the needs of a very small school in order to enable the most able pupils to achieve at higher levels.
21. The needs of children under five are now catered for better than at the time of the last inspection. Whilst they are taught together with pupils in Key Stage 1 for much of the day, the teacher coordinates lessons very carefully with the nursery assistant and other adult helpers. The children are withdrawn for short sessions on their own and provided with additional opportunities, for example, for outdoor play, which meet their needs well. An appropriate range of activities is provided for each area of learning, and regular teaching and practice during the literacy hour and numeracy session help the children to develop their literacy and numeracy skills.
22. Good attention is given to pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are used effectively to target specific weaknesses, and additional support is provided for these pupils in order to help them make progress.
23. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects of the National Curriculum are good. They demonstrate this through good questioning skills and the ability to answer pupils' questions clearly. The teachers' own knowledge of history, for example, has imbued the pupils with a keen interest in the subject. In dance, the teacher helps the pupils to understand what is required by giving a clear demonstration of movements. The good progress and level of attainment in information technology in aspects such as control technology is directly attributable to the expertise of a visiting teacher. The teachers are very competent in teaching the skills of literacy and numeracy. Progress in mathematics is affected by organisational issues to do with the wide spread of attainment in each class; the teachers are competent in teaching the subject and providing clear explanations and guidance.

24. The teachers devote a great deal of thought to the planning of their lessons, which have clear learning objectives. As far as is possible, tasks are well matched to the needs of the pupils, and careful consideration is given to the needs of both the youngest and the oldest in each class, even though parts of some lessons are not always relevant for all pupils. When additional adult help is available, the teachers are able to be more precise in the way they target work to the needs of individual pupils.
25. The teachers' expectations are generally good, although there are some weaknesses at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, the teacher sets high expectations in the way pupils present their exercise books, giving them a good example by the care which has been taken in producing covers for each book. This is not always the case at Key Stage 2. The presentation of some work is very untidy. Pupils are inconsistent in the way they date and head each piece of work. In some subjects, work done on worksheets is not carefully organised or stored. Occasionally, careless work is tolerated in spelling and handwriting.
26. The teachers use a good variety of teaching methods and styles, and strike an appropriate balance between whole-class teaching, group-work and individual tasks. Pupils are given clear explanations at the start of a lesson as to what they are going to learn. In the infant class, the teacher gains the pupils' interest well at the start of the lesson, for example, through the recitation of two nonsense rhymes in which all pupils are keen to participate. A particular strength at Key Stage 1 is the absence of worksheets, and the encouragement given to pupils to write and record their work in their own way.
27. Good relationships exist between staff and pupils throughout the school. The teachers know the pupils very well and they respect and value the pupils' contributions to lessons. Some pupils, however, do not always respond with the same level of respect, and the teachers sometimes find it hard to manage the pupils and achieve the highest level of discipline. Pupils in Key Stage 2, for example, needed constant reminders about their behaviour in a physical education lesson. However, the lenient treatment of one badly-behaved pupil and a harsh reprimand for another for a much lesser misdemeanour sent confusing messages to the pupils and did not help to establish the right level of discipline. In some lessons, the teacher's praise is at times unmerited. For example, the pupils are told: 'You have done very well so far,' when it is clear that this is not the case. This provides pupils with an unclear message about what is an acceptable standard.
28. The teachers use their time and resources well. In mental mathematics sessions, for example, the teachers maintain a brisk pace. The pupils are given a clear indication about what they are expected to do in a given time. In most lessons, the pupils are productively engaged throughout the session. There is good coordination between the teacher and assistants when pupils move to another area for group-work. Assistants are well briefed and are generally used effectively to provide additional support for the pupils. The teachers make effective use of resources, which help to achieve the objectives of the lesson. In a mathematics lesson, for example, the use of different boards with number squares and magnetic shapes helped the teacher to reinforce concepts of shape and size very effectively. The use of laptop computers enabled a visiting teacher to provide a very effective lesson for one year group in a confined teaching space; this would have been impossible with the school's own desktop machines.
29. The teachers have a good awareness of pupils' abilities and frame their questions well to cater for the wide age range. They are good at asking appropriate questions to ensure that pupils understand their work. When pupils are working on their own or in groups, the teachers, assistants and other adult helpers use their time profitably to

assess what pupils are doing and to provide appropriate help and feedback. Most books are marked regularly and, occasionally, in some detail. However, the pupils are not always given a clear enough indication as to how they might improve their work. Not enough attention is given to the correction of English mistakes which occur in pupils' writing for other subjects.

30. The school has a sensible approach to homework and parents appreciate the thought which has gone into devising the school's homework policy. The school gives good guidance to parents, who are encouraged to help their children with homework and to make comments in their children's reading diaries. The work which pupils are doing at home is appropriate and helping them to make progress.
31. Pupils' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding is generally good. It is promoted by the teachers' subject knowledge and well-planned lessons. Occasionally, however, the more able pupils do not make as much progress as others when, for example, the focus of the lesson is directed towards the middle of the age range. However, when these pupils are offered suitably challenging and stimulating work, they respond very positively and made good progress. Generally, the pupils are keen to learn and usually stay on task.

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

32. Pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum, which covers all the required areas of learning for the under-fives and all National Curriculum requirements at both key stages. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and adapted it successfully to meet needs of the wide age range in each class. Literacy skills are used well in other curriculum areas. The school has identified the need to raise standards in mathematics, and there is evidence that teaching strategies have improved through implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. However, the school has not yet found a way to cope entirely successfully with the widely differing age range, to ensure that the most able pupils are consistently stretched in this subject. Opportunities for learning are particularly successful in English, science, information technology, history, geography and in each area of learning for the under-fives.
33. The Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs is fully implemented and arrangements are satisfactory. Early identification and good intervention help to meet the needs of these pupils. Individual education plans are well formulated and used to guide pupils towards realistic targets. Assessment is used sensibly to measure progress towards them. The school liaises successfully with outside agencies and is well supported by the County Educational Psychology Service. Learning support assistants or the class teacher give extra help to pupils, and care is taken to meet special needs mainly within the classroom, so that pupils have full access to the curriculum.
34. Within the limitations of its size, the school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities. These vary during the course of the year. All staff provide some activities during the year, and additional assistance is given by parents. In music, pupils can learn to play the recorder, guitar or violin. The size of the school limits its ability to participate in competitive fixtures with other schools, but good liaison with other small schools offers some pupils the opportunity to participate in joint team fixtures. Individual pupils represent the school in events such as cross-country. Visits to places of educational or cultural interest are arranged, sometimes combining with other small schools in order to make the visit financially viable. Visitors to the school bring useful expertise and interests, and widen the pupils' knowledge and experience of different

roles in society. The Spider Club provides after-school care for pupils on a paying basis. It is very well run and well supported, offering a variety of activities of interest to pupils.

35. Good provision is made for the pupils' personal, social and health education, including sex education and drug misuse. Circle times gives pupils the opportunity to contribute their ideas and opinions on a wide range of social and moral issues. The staff are fully committed to providing equality of opportunities for all pupils. There are good links with the local community and partner institutions, which make a good contribution to pupils' learning. The Christmas concert is held in the church. The annual school pantomime is supported by parents and the local community. Students in training at local colleges take up placements at the school and make a useful contribution to pupils' learning. The 'cluster' initiative is particularly successful and of great benefit to pupils and teachers. Through good cooperation, the six small schools which belong to the cluster are able to provide a good range of training opportunities for teachers and joint ventures for the pupils.
36. The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. School assemblies are structured to emphasise the spiritual and moral dimensions in life. 'Still time' at the end of the school day is an example of the way in which pupils are encouraged to reflect upon their feelings, attitudes and values and to think about issues that affect their lives and the lives of others. An area of the school grounds has been developed to provide a place for quiet contemplation. The school welcomes visitors to school to talk to pupils about their interesting life-experiences and to show some of their treasured possessions. Their involvement extends and enhances pupils' learning and adds to the overall quality of school life. Circle time is used effectively to address moral and social issues and to familiarise pupils with the standards expected of them. The way in which pupils are encouraged to set their own personal targets for learning is a positive feature of the school's work.
37. All adults within the school provide good role models, and they work together to ensure that pupils work and play together cooperatively. Older pupils are encouraged to help the younger ones and to accept responsibility by carrying out various monitoring duties in class and around the school. They gain an awareness of community living and self-reliance through the residential visits organised by the school, and all pupils are reminded of the less fortunate people in society as they raise money for various charities and worthy causes. The strong links with the local and wider community help pupils to gain an understanding of citizenship and the links with other schools, colleges and training establishments enhance the personal development of pupils in all year groups.
38. The school's provision for the pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Through their studies of aspects of history and geography, pupils are able to gain a wider understanding of the lives, values, traditions and cultures of other societies and races. There is little provision for the pupils to gain a greater awareness of the multi-cultural nature of our society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. Pupils are taught in a supportive environment where they can develop as individuals. The way in which the school cares for its pupils is one of its main strengths.
40. The school has done much to improve the way in which child protection issues are dealt with. Procedures for identifying, recording and monitoring incidents of a worrying nature are fully implemented and understood by staff. Pupils are confidently able to approach staff with any worries or concerns they may have, knowing that they will be

dealt with promptly and in a tactful manner. The school has well-established links with the support agencies who work closely with staff, providing practical help and guidance for those pupils who have special educational and physical needs. Their expertise and support in the teaching of health and sex education, for example, in raising pupils' awareness of drugs and substance misuse is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. The health and safety policy contains clear guidelines, and all staff do much to ensure that the school is a safe and secure learning environment. The procedures for recording and dealing with accidents are good. Staff have received appropriate first-aid training and pupils who become ill or are injured are well cared for until their parents can be contacted. The high levels of individual care, support and guidance provided for pupils enable them to feel confident, comfortable and happy in school.

41. The system adopted by the school to monitor pupils' personal development is good. All teachers know the pupils very well and provide them with constructive advice and guidance, which enables the pupils to make progress and to develop confidence and self-esteem. In classes, pupils of all ages and ability are praised for effort and achievement and encouraged to persevere in order to overcome any difficulties they may encounter. Circle time is used effectively to provide opportunities for pupils to discuss their thoughts and feelings and to air their views. They also enable staff to discuss topics relating to pupils' health and safety and generally to promote positive attitudes and values throughout the school. Teachers regularly exchange information regarding pupils' personal development and progress and formally record any comments made. This enables any worries or concerns they may have regarding individual pupils to be identified speedily and dealt with appropriately. The 'buddy' system and paired-reading scheme provide pupils with opportunities to accept responsibility for aspects of their learning and to form and sustain friendships. Pupils are also provided with opportunities to set their own learning targets; for example, Key Stage 2 pupils are involved in writing their own reports. Procedures adopted by the school for new pupils entering the reception class are good, and children quickly settle in their new environment.
42. The school has high expectations for standards of behaviour, and the school rules are fully understood by pupils of all ages throughout the school. The home-school agreement reminds parents, pupils and staff of their respective responsibilities. However, the behaviour and discipline policy is not implemented consistently by staff and the strategies used by staff for ensuring good standards of behaviour are not effective at times with some pupils. This provides inconsistent messages for other pupils, especially when younger pupils in a class see an older pupil misbehaving and, apparently, getting away with it.
43. The school's procedures for recording and monitoring attendance and lateness are good. Registers are regularly analysed for patterns of non-attendance and the educational welfare officer is contacted if the need arises. Parents are made fully aware of the school's high expectations for standards of attendance.
44. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainments and progress are effective. Procedures begin early in the pupils' school careers, with appropriate procedures for assessing children as soon as they enter the school. These assessments are used, in conjunction with the teacher's emerging knowledge of the individual child, to plan their learning. The overall picture of each pupil's progress is regularly checked through a good range of assessment measures, including standardised tests which are used to monitor pupils' development. These procedures are unobtrusive but thorough, and they inform teachers' plans for the next steps in learning. Teachers and support staff keep good records of pupils' development, both academic and personal. Teachers and other adults know pupils well and the school monitors the progress of each individual

pupil, enabling work to be satisfactorily matched with their developing skills. Assessment in the core subjects is detailed and evaluative. Assessment in the foundation subjects is evolving satisfactorily. The school is developing portfolios of pupils' work, illustrating agreed National Curriculum levels of attainment. These give useful guidance to teachers and ensure common standards of assessment. This has improved since the last inspection and the assessment of pupils' academic performance and personal development is now good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. Since the last inspection, the school has worked very hard to maintain and strengthen the links with parents. The partnership with parents is very good and has a significant impact on pupils' learning and the standards they achieve.
46. Parents and carers speak highly of the headteacher and staff and the way in which they always make themselves available to discuss any worries or concern they may have. Parents are very happy and satisfied with all aspects of their children's education. They feel that they are warmly welcomed and encouraged to play an active part in the daily life of the school, by helping in classrooms and on educational visits. Their involvement does much to enhance pupils' learning and adds to the overall quality of school life in general.
47. Formal links with parents are very good. The school ensures that parents are fully informed of all forthcoming events through regular, interesting newsletters. The provision made by the school for ensuring that parents have a knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and the work their children do is very good. Parents and governors are able to gain hands-on experience of the numeracy and literacy strategies through workshops organised by the school and by observing lessons. This involvement is extremely beneficial to parents and helps to support pupils' learning at home. Annual reports enable parents to have a good account of their children's progress and areas for improvement. The home-school agreement clearly defines the respective responsibilities of the school, the family and pupils. However, in some cases, there are differences in the expectations of parents and those of the school regarding pupils' behaviour. Some parents found the recently organised 'independence day' helpful, in enabling them to gain a clearer understanding of how the school expects pupils to develop independence and good standards of behaviour.
48. The school's informal links with parents and the local and wider community are also very good. The school welcomes visitors to school to talk to pupils about interesting and relevant topics, to work with them and to share their expertise. Their involvement supports, enhances and extends pupils' learning across the curriculum, particularly in extra-curricular activities. The Friends of Hillesley School work hard to support the school financially by organising various fund-raising and social activities. Their help is very much appreciated by the headteacher and staff, and the money raised is put to good use by the school. The school is well supported by the local community who attend special school events.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The overall quality of the leadership and management within the school is good. Since joining the school just over two years ago, the headteacher, with the support of the governors, has moved the school forward. Good features pointed out in the last inspection have been maintained, and the school has dealt effectively with all of the key issues. The programmes for teaching English and mathematics have been completely revised and have also benefited from implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The curriculum for children under five and the

scheme for design and technology have improved, as have procedures for child protection and education about the abuse of drugs. Careful consideration has been given to all of the school's procedures, indicative of much thought and hard work on the part of the headteacher, good support from the governing body and good skills provided by the school secretary. The school implements its policies consistently and well, and is successful in fulfilling its main aims.

50. The headteacher leads a small but very hard-working and cooperative team of teachers and assistants effectively. They work together very well as a team, and the teachers share management tasks and coordination roles willingly. They are self-critical and determined to provide the best possible opportunities for their pupils. Appropriate attention is given to the coordination of provision for pupils with special educational needs and children under five.
51. The governors show a good sense of commitment to the school. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well. They have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the difficulties facing a small school. They provide good support for the headteacher, but are also challenging and hold the school to account for the quality of education provided. They assume collective responsibility for what happens in the school and have clearly delineated roles and responsibilities. Nominated governors assume responsibility for various subjects and aspects of the school. The committee structure is well organised and meetings are efficiently minuted. They keep parents well informed through their annual report.
52. Procedures for the monitoring and support of teaching, learning and curriculum development are satisfactory. The headteacher has offered staff development interviews for all members of staff and appraisal for teaching staff. Because of her teaching commitment, however, it is very difficult for her to monitor the teaching of others on a regular basis. The school has made effective use of external support to help in monitoring, and these visits have helped to improve teachers' awareness of teaching issues. The staff also work very closely together and provide much mutual support and help in developing the curriculum and each other's teaching. The governors are very committed to developing their staff, both teaching and non-teaching, seeing this not only of benefit to the staff, but also to the school.
53. The overall quality of the school's development planning is good. The headteacher has a very good grasp of all aspects of the school, and knows its strengths and weaknesses well. There are appropriate targets for improvement for the coming year. The plan is linked to the school's budget and staff training needs, and is monitored regularly by the headteacher. The school also benefits from initiatives which are outlined in the development plan drawn up for the local cluster of schools. The school has considered its targets for pupils' attainment carefully. Given the level of attainment when pupils enter the school and the current national targets, the school's targets are somewhat low at present. However, they are kept under review and the school is working hard to raise attainment where it is weak. The commitment of the staff and governors to maintaining high standards and improving wherever possible, together with the support of parents, indicates that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.
54. The school's finances are planned carefully, although the small size of the school makes the task very difficult; the governors have to contend, for example, with substantial percentage changes in the school's income when families move out of the area. A clear and detailed finance policy outlines delegated responsibilities which are undertaken effectively. The governors approach financial management in the right way. They look at the school's priorities and then work hard to make the finances match these. The governing body's marketing committee has publicised the school

and its benefits, and this has stabilised the school population and led to a slight increase in the number of pupils on roll. The school has taken action on all of the points raised in the last financial audit which concluded that the school's systems were operating very well. It also commented on the quality of the records presented for audit. The carry-forward from the previous budget, in excess of 10 per cent, was justified in the light of plans to extend the school building. The surplus funding has, however, been used to provide additional teaching to boost standards of literacy and numeracy in Key Stage 2.

55. The school makes good use of its staffing, accommodation and resources. The school makes good use of new technology. The staff are competent computer users; in Key Stage 1, for example, classroom displays are greatly enhanced by the use of effective labels and text produced on computer. The school secretary has a good command of the programs at her disposal to produce well-presented school documentation and financial information. Communication with the chair of governors and other bodies are made more efficient through the use of electronic mail. The school applies the principles of best value in its spending decisions.
56. The school has a good number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum, including provision for pupils with special educational needs and children under the age of five. The education support staff work closely with teachers and do much to contribute to the overall progress pupils make and the standards they achieve. There is a strong sense of team spirit amongst all staff, and students from higher education institutions placed at the school benefit from the support the school has to offer. The school has a well-structured programme for staff development and staff take part in a range of professional training courses to ensure that their subject expertise is maintained. All of the ancillary and administration staff, including the caretaker, make a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school.
57. The school has satisfactory standards of accommodation with weaknesses in some areas. Staff work hard to provide pupils with a pleasant learning environment by creating interesting areas and bright colourful displays of pupils' work. They also organise classrooms and timetable lessons so that the limited space available is used effectively. The outside area of the school has been enhanced by the addition of a seating area, outdoor play equipment and playground markings which all help to encourage good behaviour through stimulating play sessions. However, classrooms are small in size and this inhibits practical and investigative work in science, design and technology, art and information technology. The cramped conditions in both classrooms and poor acoustics in the Key Stage 2 classroom are not conducive to good standards of behaviour.
58. The school has an appropriate range of quality resources to support pupils' learning across the curriculum. Resources in English are good, with a wide variety of children's books available, including children's classics. Good use is made of local resources in both history and geography and, in music, resources are particularly well organised and maintained. Contributions from the 'Friends of Hillesley School' have enabled the purchase of resources to support pupils' learning in information technology, physical education and English, and outdoor play equipment has been provided for the Reception class.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. In order to raise standards and to continue to improve the quality of education provided, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1) Raise pupils' attainment in mathematics by:

- ensuring that sufficient attention is given to the needs of the more able pupils;
- making sure that all pupils are sufficiently challenged during mental mathematics sessions.

[Paragraphs 9, 15, 16, 76, 81, 83]

2) Improve standards of behaviour of the small minority of pupils who are discourteous or whose behaviour causes disruption by:

- ensuring that the school has effective procedures which are well understood by staff and parents;
- ensuring that staff implement these procedures consistently.

[Paragraphs 14, 17, 27, 42, 47, 83, 109]

3) Improve the standard of presentation of pupils' work at Key Stage 2.

[Paragraphs 8, 12]

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

In addition to the key issues for improvement, the school should consider the following areas for improvement:

- Help pupils to become more independent and take responsibility for their own actions; *[Paragraphs 18, 47]*
- Improve acoustics in the Key Stage 2 classroom by carpeting the floor. *[Paragraphs 57, 84]*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils [In addition to this figure, there were many informal discussions with staff, other adults and pupils]	13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	12	52	36	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

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	–	54
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	–	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	–	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	–	13

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	2.7	School data	0.0
National comparative data	5.4	National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete 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	100
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.0:1
Average class size	27

Education support staff: Y0 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	39

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	–
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	–

Total number of education support staff	–
Total aggregate hours worked per week	–

Number of pupils per FTE adult	–
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
	£
Total income	113,331
Total expenditure	108,933
Expenditure per pupil	2,095
Balance brought forward from previous year	4,398
Balance carried forward to next year	12,919

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

54

Number of questionnaires returned

36

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50.0	47.2	0.0	2.8	0.0
My child is making good progress in school.	58.3	36.1	2.8	2.8	0.0
Behaviour in the school is good.	36.1	55.6	5.6	2.8	0.0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50.0	36.1	13.9	0.0	0.0
The teaching is good.	72.2	22.2	0.0	2.8	2.8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52.8	44.4	0.0	2.8	0.0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	83.3	13.9	2.8	0.0	0.0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66.7	30.6	0.0	2.8	0.0
The school works closely with parents.	58.3	38.9	0.0	2.8	0.0
The school is well led and managed.	80.6	16.7	2.8	0.0	0.0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58.3	36.1	5.6	0.0	0.0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41.7	38.9	19.4	0.0	0.0

Other issues raised by parents

The responses to the parents' questionnaire and the comments made at the parents' meeting indicate that parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate the great efforts which staff make to meet the needs of each individual pupil. A very small number of parents raised some concerns, but these were not representative of the experience or views of the great majority of parents.

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

60. Children under five are taught in a class of mixed Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Assessments undertaken when the children enter the school show that attainment on entry is above average overall, although the standards of a small number of children are below average. The children have a good start to their education and make sound progress in all areas of learning, achieving or exceeding most of the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the time they are five. The planned curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to their needs.
61. The previous inspection report stated that little distinction was made between the character of the work for children under five and those in Key Stage 1 in the mixed-age class. This is no longer the case, as significant improvements have been made. Work and activities are clearly differentiated for children under five, and there is good use of the nursery nurse in providing appropriate activities. Time within their own age group and with the rest of the class is well coordinated, and good use is made of extra teaching space in the school hall or outside. There is now an appropriate policy for early years, and schemes of work and assessment are firmly based on the Desirable Learning Outcomes. The class teacher has recently successfully completed a Master of Education degree, which has increased her expertise in providing for children under five and has raised standards.

Personal and social development

62. The opportunities for personal and social development are good and children make good progress in this area of learning. They gain in confidence and learn to make positive relationships with other children and adults. They develop increasing confidence in organising their activities, undressing and dressing for physical activities both indoors and outside. Most of the time, children are engrossed in their activities and behave well. Occasional instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with skilfully and quickly by the nearest adult, minimising disruption. All adults work well as a team and provide good role models, creating a calm and purposeful learning environment. There is a good planned programme of personal, social and health education which encourages appropriate behaviour. This is particularly evident when reception children play together outside, or when the nursery nurse takes them into the hall for planned activities. They take turns and share fairly. Reception children participate confidently in whole-class sessions. Most reception children are well on course to achieve the expected outcomes in this area of learning.

Language and literacy

63. Most children on entry have good skills in language and literacy. They make good progress in their learning, and effective teaching prepares them well for work in the early stages of the National Curriculum. Adults do all they can to promote language development and engage children in conversation. Opportunities are provided for children to undertake role-play which promotes speaking and listening and develops imaginative interaction. Sometimes, the role-play themes are linked with literacy, as is the current theme of *Percy the Park-Keeper's Hut*, where the role-play area is equipped with clothes for cold weather and a selection of furry puppets. Staff work effectively to promote early reading and writing skills. Adults share books with children and early literacy teaching encourages children to 'read' books with interest. They are already acquiring good understanding of letter sounds. In a lesson with the nursery

nurse, they all recognised letter J and gave words with that as the initial letter. They easily identify initial and final consonants in single syllable words and the higher-attaining children can also identify the vowel sounds. They know letter shapes, selecting the correct magnetic letter to stick on to the board. Some are able to read simple words and can differentiate pictures, words and letters. There are regular opportunities for developmental writing, and children are fully aware that writing is a way of communicating. Written work in their books shows good attainment, and the standard of presentation is very high. Children trace or copy words with increasing skill and accuracy. Most are in line to achieve or exceed the expected outcomes in language and literacy.

Mathematics

64. The children make sound progress in mathematics and, by the age of five, nearly all exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes and are working towards level 1 of the National Curriculum. They have a good understanding of numbers up to ten, most work comfortably with numbers up to 20, and a few show awareness of larger numbers. Most children write numbers accurately, and are starting to show an awareness of number operations such as addition and subtraction. They participate, albeit a little hesitantly, in the mental mathematics sessions, but are very forthcoming when working as a separate group in the hall. They have a good understanding of shape, confidently identifying circles, squares, rectangles and triangles, saying how many sides each has and naming colours correctly. The quality of the teaching is good. Activities are very carefully planned to ensure that children have the opportunity to develop their mathematical understanding. The teacher is careful to ask appropriately targeted questions for the Reception children during mental mathematics sessions although, of necessity, many of the questions asked are beyond the understanding of the youngest children. The teacher coordinates group activities very well with the nursery assistant, and sessions during which the Reception children move to the hall for 15 minutes teaching on their own are very profitable. The staff make good use of a range of colourful and attractive resources, which are used effectively to help the children develop their concepts of number and shape.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Children are taught well in the area of learning associated with knowledge and understanding of the world and this results in good learning. Children explore the school and its grounds and take frequent walks around the village. Sometimes the walks have a particular theme and are recorded in class books such as 'My Listening Walk' or 'My Colour Walk'. There is a satisfactory range of miniature world toys for children to re-create their environment and extend their learning after their village explorations. They play with a satisfactory range of tracks, play-mats and toy vehicles indoors, extending their mapping and tracking skills outside with wheeled toys and painted lines to follow. Children develop early awareness of history by learning about themselves and their families, making attractive books about 'Special Me'. They plot their growth and change since babyhood and look carefully at old and new toys and artefacts to see how things change over time. Technological skills are developed through construction toys and games which offer increasing challenge to higher-attaining children. The classroom is equipped with up-to-date computers and children have good access to information technology for reading, writing, mathematics and drawing. They learn to use a programmable robotic toy. Early scientific activities include making a bulb light up from a home-made circuit. Children learn about their bodies and which foods are good or bad. They record which things are nice to touch and make cardboard robots with moving arms and legs. Visitors come into the class to talk about topics of interest. Postman Pat visited and, during the inspection, a mother came to explain her job in a residential nursing home, giving the young children

knowledge of different roles in society. Most children are well on target to meet or exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in early historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning.

Creative development

66. The children make satisfactory progress in their creative development and, by the time they are five, nearly all exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes for this aspect of their education. The children's drawings and paintings reveal a good level of detail. They sing with enthusiasm and show an awareness of pulse. They handle tools and equipment competently and safely, and use a range of construction toys to build models. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The children are given a variety of activities, many of which stimulate the imagination and help to develop their creative talents.

Physical development

67. Although it was not possible to observe any physical education lessons in which children under five were involved, circumstantial evidence suggests that the teaching is sound and the children make satisfactory progress in their physical development. By the age of five, they exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes for this aspect. They show well-developed fine motor skills in activities such as cutting, sticking and painting. Their actions and movements are well coordinated. Although they are taught with older pupils for most of the week, they are given appropriate opportunities to develop physical skills on their own, as well as having the opportunity to gain confidence in water during their weekly swimming lessons.

ENGLISH

68. Inspection findings are that, by the ends of both key stages, standards in English are above the national average. These findings are reflected in the results of school and national tests. In Key Stage 1, the pupils make sound gains in speaking and listening. Pupils are given good opportunities to listen in class and to speak aloud in lessons and informal play situations. The role-play area in the infant class encourages the use of imagination and sustained talk. Puppets are available for shyer pupils who prefer to speak through an intermediary. By the end of the key stage, pupils listen carefully and are confident in speaking aloud. Many use an extended vocabulary and speak in complex sentences. In circle time, they make valid oral contributions and were able to advance reasons for appreciating this week's 'special' pupil. In Key Stage 2, pupils are encouraged to make more formal oral contributions in presentations and debates. They are confident enough to express their opinions and seek to persuade others by reasoned argument. By the end of the key stage, pupils are sufficiently articulate to explain their thinking, apply what they have learned from reference books to a topic being studied and inform others. They articulate a good awareness of moral and environmental issues.
69. Standards in reading are high. There is a good balance between teaching of reading strategies, including phonics, and the provision of a stimulating literacy learning environment. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 learn letters and their associated sounds and practise word-building skills appropriately. They begin to apply phonic strategies to their reading and move steadily through the carefully graded reading scheme. By the end of the key stage, they read text of an appropriate level accurately, with expression and good understanding. They are very interested in books and many are well supported in their reading at home which raises standards. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue reading from the structured reading scheme and from self-chosen books which are colour-coded at an appropriate level until they are able to read

independently from any chosen text. This is usually the standard reached by the end of Year 4 when pupils have extended their reading skills to a good standard and are developing their own preferences. By the end of the key stage, they decode multi-syllabic words and are learning higher-order reading skills such as skimming, scanning, inference and deduction. They have favourite authors and describe different genres. There is a sufficiently wide variety of fiction, including children's classics, to sustain their interest and motivation. They can use the reference library, understand the Dewey classification system and show skills of independent research and study. Many pupils read at home and benefit from the close involvement of their parents.

70. The pupils' standards in writing are above average. The majority of pupils approach writing tasks with confidence and are able to write in a variety of forms. In Key Stage 1, pupils move quickly from making marks on paper to forming letters, tracing, copying and writing their names and simple words. By the end of the key stage, they convey meaning, using appropriate and interesting vocabulary and adapt their writing to different readers. Basic grammatical structure is developing, punctuation is used simply, spelling is either accurate or phonetically plausible and handwriting is legible. Both spelling and handwriting are taught through structured schemes and both skills are practised regularly. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to build upon this good foundation and increase the range, style and extent of their writing. They learn more advanced rules of spelling, punctuation and grammar in their literacy lessons. By the end of the key stage, they can analyse text, apply their learning to new situations and write in a wide variety of styles and for many different audiences and purposes. A recent visit to the Dome has prompted letters of both congratulation and condemnation to the organisers, which express the writers' views very clearly. Most English work is well presented, although on occasions careless writing and spelling is offered which does not reflect the pupils' best efforts. Literacy skills are used well in other subjects of the curriculum.
71. Standards in English have improved since the last inspection. Higher-attaining pupils are now given ample opportunities to write at length in extended forms. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented conscientiously and good assessment procedures now ensure consistent curriculum coverage. The school library is now housed in a section of the school hall which makes it easier for pupils to use it for independent research and study. Book stock is still adequate and has been reviewed for all curriculum areas, but the school is conscious of the need for continual extension.
72. The overall quality of English teaching is good. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. Tasks are matched well to pupils' different ages and prior attainment. Teachers know the subject well and appreciate the clear structure of the National Literacy Strategy. They give clear instructions, challenge pupils appropriately and have high expectations of them. Assessment in English is well developed and recorded regularly. It is underpinned by regular tests and other measures used unobtrusively to confirm teachers' judgements of pupils' attainment. Samples of written work form part of pupils' records and these are assessed according to National Curriculum levels. Pupils are encouraged to set targets for themselves and write their own reports to accompany teachers' reports at the end of the school year. Self-assessment by pupils is encouraged. This allows pupils to measure their own learning and is leading to more realistic self-knowledge about their progress.
73. The subject is well coordinated by the headteacher who monitors standards closely and evaluates teaching and learning throughout the school. There is a clear determination to succeed and a commitment by staff and the governing body to raise standards still further.

MATHEMATICS

74. The school's National Curriculum assessment test results at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved each year since the last inspection and the results achieved by the small cohort of pupils in 1999 were well above both the national average and the average for similar schools. Most pupils achieved the nationally expected Level 2 securely, and a third achieved the higher Level 3. The aggregated results for the last four years have been just above the national average. Inspection evidence confirms that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved since the last inspection and that they are now above average. Given the above average level of attainment of children when they enter the school, this represents satisfactory progress.
75. At the end of Key Stage 2, the school's results for the last four years are below the national average. Although there were only three pupils in the 1999 cohort, the school did not meet its aspirational targets. Since the last inspection, the pupils' progress at Key Stage 2 has been unsatisfactory. However, the school has been working hard to rectify perceived deficiencies in the teaching of mathematics, with some success. Standards are still not as high as they ought to be, but the pupils are now making better progress, and the inspection findings show that standards are currently similar to the national average.
76. There is no doubt that the teaching of mathematics has improved since the last inspection. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy, teachers have undertaken training for the subject and the school has looked closely at its teaching methods and the way it groups pupils. However, the teachers have yet to overcome fully the difficulties posed by the very wide range of attainment caused by three or four different year groups in each class. Whilst pupils in the middle of the ability range have their needs catered for adequately, higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and lower-attaining pupils sometimes struggle. With the current emphasis on whole-class teaching, these pupils have to mark time in many lessons whilst questions are directed to other groups of pupils.
77. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have developed sound number concepts. They have a secure knowledge of addition and subtraction facts using numbers to 20, and handle larger numbers with confidence. They are quick with mental arithmetic and explain clearly how they have arrived at their answers. They count on from a given number accurately in steps of two, five and ten. They have a good understanding of shape, naming two and three-dimensional shapes with confidence, and showing a good grasp of symmetry.
78. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils have sound computational skills and securely established concepts of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Their ability to perform calculations mentally is developing satisfactorily, although some pupils still take quite a long time to answer. Nevertheless, they use a variety of strategies for carrying out mental calculations and explain their methods, describing, for example, how they can work out the 18-times table using known facts from the 6-times table. They have a satisfactory understanding of coordinates, and know how to simplify fractions. They recognise and give the properties of a variety of shapes, identifying, for example, the lines of symmetry in a dodecagon. They convert pounds into foreign currency with a reasonable degree of understanding.
79. By the time they leave the school, the pupils have developed satisfactory numeracy skills. They have a good sense of the size of a number, and are learning number facts by heart. Their calculations are usually accurate. They recognise whether their answers are reasonable and have strategies for checking. Numeracy skills are developed effectively in other areas of the curriculum. Some use is made of

information and communication technology to develop mathematical skills. Pupils have recently completed some work on a screen control program which involved calculation of angles and, through their work with a spreadsheet, pupils are developing an understanding of how modelling can be used to help with mathematical calculations.

80. The overall quality of teaching in mathematics is satisfactory and, in some lessons the teaching is good. The teachers have a sound understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and good subject knowledge. This enables them to explain concepts clearly, ask thought-provoking questions and help pupils to find different ways of solving problems. Basic skills are taught well and there is appropriate emphasis on the acquisition and use of mathematical vocabulary. This does not extend, however, to the writing in pupils' books, where incorrectly spelt mathematical terms are frequently not corrected.
81. Throughout the school, the teachers' weekly planning is detailed and methodical, and provides them with a good basis for teaching effective lessons. The teachers are very conscious of the widely differing needs of their pupils and endeavour, as far as is possible, to provide differing levels of work to meet their needs. Teachers work closely with classroom assistants and other additional helpers. The presence of extra adults is very beneficial when pupils are working on their own or in groups, but their potential help is not properly utilised when the whole class is taught together. The more able pupils frequently have to mark time during these sessions, whilst questions are directed at younger pupils, or the teacher revises concepts with which they are already familiar.
82. Most lessons are well structured, providing an appropriate balance between whole class, small group and individual activities. The teachers make good use of resources. In one lesson, for example, the pupils were referred to a large number square on the board, a smaller board with magnetic numbers and a variety of shapes, boards on which to make symmetrical patterns, and a variety of worksheets; all served to reinforce the main concepts of the lesson. In another lesson, a large cut-out in the shape of a Maltese cross was used effectively to deal with the concept of rotational symmetry. The school has started to set homework in mathematics with greater regularity, and the set tasks are helping to consolidate pupils' ability in the subject.
83. Most pupils show a positive attitude to mathematics and participate enthusiastically in mental mathematics sessions. Some pupils, however, do not participate as enthusiastically, particularly when there is little challenge for them in the questions which are asked. A group of older pupils appeared politely bored at the start of one lesson, but clearly relished the challenge of more demanding individual tasks later in the lesson. Although their behaviour is generally good, the behaviour of some pupils at Key Stage 2 is inappropriate and, at times, somewhat arrogant. The changeover from class sessions to individual or group-work is frequently unnecessarily noisy and wastes time as pupils settle down to their work. Once settled, however, most pupils concentrate well. When required to work together, they collaborate well. At other times, however, there is evidence of petty squabbling and some unnecessary comments which spoil the otherwise good quality of learning. The pupils at Key Stage 2 do not take enough care over the way their work is presented, and the teachers' expectations in this regard are not high enough.
84. The implementation of many aspects of the National Numeracy Strategy has been effective, and pupils are given a broad and balanced curriculum. Not enough attention, however, is given to investigative work or solving problems expressed in words. The school has revised its assessment procedures, although the current practice has not yet had time to prove its effectiveness. Some analysis of previous test results has helped the school to identify areas of weakness, and further annual testing is

providing the school with better information on which to make decisions about future planning. Parents have appreciated a very helpful session to explain, with the help of their children, how numeracy skills are taught, and a further session giving them examples of what children are expected to be able to do in preparation for their National Curriculum tests. The school has received good external support, and some staff have been able to gain further experience by visiting other schools. Although staff talk frequently about what they are doing in mathematics, there is not enough monitoring of pupils' work or the quality of teaching. Resources have improved recently and they have been put to effective use. Whilst generally adequate, the size, shape and acoustics of the Key Stage 2 classroom makes it difficult to conduct mental maths sessions.

SCIENCE

85. Standards of attainment at the ends of both key stages are above average. The pupils have a good understanding of scientific processes and their skills of observation, prediction and inference are well developed. Many have a good basic scientific knowledge and they are able to use technical language. By the end Key Stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of life processes and living things. They explain how frog-spawn develops into frogs and write about human senses with understanding. They have a basic understanding of forces, sound, light and electricity. They use their knowledge of electricity to make simple circuits and investigate what happens when the circuit is broken. Their investigative skills are good. In an investigation into light sources, they experimented with dark boxes, reflective materials and torches and could record and explain their results clearly. The range of science work recorded in pupils' workbooks is impressive.
86. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to increase the range of their work. By the end of the key stage, they show greater understanding of important concepts as well as the need for careful investigations. They have a clear appreciation of the need to establish a fair test when conducting experiments to test predictions or hypotheses. During the inspection, clear progress was seen between Key Stage 1 pupils studying sources of light and Key Stage 2 pupils working on shadows. The older pupils explain how the apparent position of the sun changes over the course of a day and replicate its effects using sticks and torches. They understand reversed images and reflection and use some abstract ideas in descriptions.
87. The last inspection report pointed to an insufficient emphasis on fair testing and a lack of challenge for higher-attaining pupils in Key Stage 1. These issues have now been satisfactorily addressed. At Key Stage 2, there was an over-use of photocopied worksheets. This is now not the case. Pupils write their own accounts of their science work which show good levels of knowledge and understanding.
88. The teaching in science is effective in both key stages. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject, plan lessons well and have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour, which are met when pupils are given interesting and suitably challenging tasks. The progress pupils have made is directly linked to the coordinator's skill and interest in science which has been used to implement helpful schemes of work which have benefited teaching and learning. Standards are monitored closely and action is taken to meet the school's targets. The use of information technology is effective and pupils are applying their research skills through CD-ROM encyclopaedias. These, and county library books on termly loan, extend the small school science library satisfactorily.

ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

89. Only one design and technology lesson was observed during the inspection; there was no opportunity to see any art lessons. Judgements have been based on a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion with subject coordinators. The pupils achieve standards in both art and design and technology that are appropriate for their age and, occasionally, better than those normally found. The school has maintained the positive features noted in the last inspection in its provision for art and has improved the opportunities for pupils in design and technology.
90. At Key Stage 1, the pupils produce good three-dimensional work in clay. In a recent project, for example, the pupils produced attractive models of hats, which were carefully decorated and then fired at the local secondary school. The pupils are developing an appropriate range of skills in painting and drawing, evidenced in the work on display within the classroom. In design and technology, they are learning the importance of designing a product before making it. Their notebooks contain designs for a wheeled vehicle which is then made using food boxes and other junk material. Some of the pupils' work shows above average ability in drawing and designing, for example, in the production of some very detailed and well-labelled designs for a mail van using a construction kit. Other pupils show age-appropriate ability in their designs for magnetic toys and fridge magnets.
91. At Key Stage 2, pupils show good observational skills in their pastel drawings and paintings in the style of Monet. Good collaborative work is evident in the textile work which pupils completed for the Millennium Tapestry which, disappointingly, was not on display when pupils visited the Millennium Dome. A project to make clocks in design and technology reveals appropriate conceptual thoughts in the pupils' designs. Appropriate making skills are evident in their constructions of Greek temples using different techniques with paper to form columns, create a roof and join materials together. Probing questions from the teacher help the pupils to learn how to evaluate their own clock and those made by others. In their design briefs for making a sandal from recycled materials the pupils show a sound awareness of the process of designing, planning, making and evaluating. Their recorded work, however, is spoilt by untidy presentation and lack of detail.
92. On the basis of the limited range of evidence, the quality of teaching in both subjects is satisfactory. The teachers provide pupils with an appropriate range of activities which, over time, extend the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of both subjects. Greater thought is given to the presentation of pupils' work at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2. The younger pupils, for example, have a notebook in which to record their designs and evaluations, and the books are carefully presented. At Key Stage 2, however, work is thrown together in a folder and little attention is given to the way in which the work is presented. Greater care is taken over making the products than at the planning and evaluation stages. The quality of teaching in the lesson observed was satisfactory. The teacher showed a clear understanding of the importance of evaluation and endeavoured to get pupils to think more deeply about their evaluation and move them on from simplistic statements by asking pertinent questions. It was evident that an appropriate range of resources had been used well in previous lessons. The lesson provided good opportunities for pupils to practise speaking and listening skills and to work collaboratively, although the pupils' response was not as quick or as cooperative as it could have been and noise levels were too high for part of the lesson, which impeded the progress they made.
93. The school has tried hard not to cut back the curriculum offered for both of these subjects. The staff have evaluated the provision for both subjects carefully. The art coordinator has combined the strengths of two commercially produced schemes of

work in order to provide a curriculum which helps pupils to develop their skills systematically. In design and technology, a new scheme of work suits the needs of the pupils better than the previous scheme. The curriculum in art is enriched through visits to exhibitions and liaison with other schools from the cluster group. Parents have also provided valuable help in art. The school is adequately resourced, but the accommodation is unsatisfactory for both subjects. Space is at a premium in both classrooms, which makes the organisation of practically-based activities difficult.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

94. History and geography are taught as a humanities element of the curriculum in rotation termly. Standards in both subjects are above what is expected at both key stages. Pupils in the infant class take walks around the village, begin to notice geographical and historical features and make simple sketch maps. In a humanities lesson in Year 2, the pupils showed good knowledge of the village, knew the difference between a village and a town and named several towns in the area. Pupils study the weather and record daily weather in a table. They are introduced to a sense of chronology through their topic of 'Special Me' when they trace their development from babyhood and begin to develop understanding of changes over time. This is extended by the topic 'Then and Now' when they study old and modern toys recording the differences in pictures and writing. Key Stage 1 pupils in geography learn to make a street map, give directions and contrast a polar region with a tropical one. They extend their village fieldwork into a study of the Cotswold Hills.
95. At Key Stage 2, pupils achieve good standards in both elements of the humanities. No lessons in history were observed during the inspection, but ample work recorded by pupils in workbooks and on display shows a good range of historical studies, and pupils at the end of the key stage have good recollection of all they have learned since their early days at school. Topics are described with enthusiasm and visits to local museums and places of historical interest are clearly identified with their work on Tudor times and the Victorian era. A local visitor impressed pupils studying World War Two with personal reminiscences of the period. In a geography lesson, the same enthusiasm was shown for the current topic on rivers. Pupils reached very high standards in transferring their knowledge gained in fieldwork visits to understanding of a video programme about river pollution and how people can improve or damage the environment. At the end of the key stage, pupils have good geographical skills, knowledge and understanding. Their fieldwork studies enhance their learning and the residential visit to the Forest of Dean adds significantly to their humanities learning.
96. The teaching of both history and geography is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and keen interest, which has raised standards since the last inspection. Practical work is well balanced with direct teaching. Investigations are effectively directed towards encouraging pupils to use sources of evidence for independent research and study. Visits and visitors to the school enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding.
97. Both subjects are coordinated efficiently, and the comprehensive schemes of work guide teachers' planning and assessment effectively. Resources are satisfactory and very good use is made of the village locality with its wealth of history and geographical features. Good use is made of the school's digital camera in recording work in the environment. Pupils are well prepared for their secondary education.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

98. Standards of attainment in information technology are above average at the end of both key stages. The school has thought carefully about the way the subject is taught

and, as a result, the school's provision for information technology and the range of work covered by pupils have improved since the last inspection. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school.

99. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good command of a range of skills. They are proficient in using a word processor and graphics program, and know how to use a digital camera. In connection with work in geography, for example, the pupils have taken photographs of the school and added captions to each photograph to create an attractive and educational display. They know how to centre text, alter its size, change the font and import clip art. In history, for example, they have produced display pages for their topic, combining large text and imported clip art. They know that data can be displayed in a variety of ways. Within their mathematics work, they have collected data, entered it into a spreadsheet and produced block and line graphs to illustrate their findings. The way the class teacher uses information technology herself help the pupils to appreciate the versatility of the subject and the use to which it can be put. Displays within the classroom are clearly labelled, the pupils' books have attractively produced covers, and some of their recorded work makes good use of carefully designed templates.
100. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils are very familiar with the way computers operate. They know how to load programs, navigate menus and save and print their work. All pupils, from Year 3 to Year 6 know how to use the basic features of a word processor. By Year 5, they show greater awareness of their audience, paying attention to their layout, aligning text, creating drop capitals, altering the size and colour of text and incorporating clip art. Pupils in Year 6 use a word processor effectively to produce some long pieces of extended writing. They use their existing knowledge to tackle new programs or new options within a program. For example, when introduced to Word Art, the pupils quickly understood what was involved, and showed a willingness to experiment with designs for a logo. They show a good level of competence in using a graphics program and in control technology. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 had produced a design with cut-outs into which lights were inserted and, during the inspection, they were programming sequences for switching the lights on and off. The designs were attractive and well produced and the pupils showed a good understanding of the commands required to produce control sequences. Most showed a good ability to analyse their mistakes and edit their procedures in order to produce the desired result. The pupils have an appropriate level of capability within the areas of modelling and handling data. They know how to enter text and variables into a spreadsheet, and then use simple functions in order to make calculations. They used these skills, for example, when working out costs for a holiday, altering some of the costs to see what effect this might have on the money available to spend. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils had created a database of geographical information. They set up the file structure, defined their field names and entered records. They were then able to sort these into order and produce graphs to show, for example, comparative lengths of rivers or heights of mountains. They are competent in using CD-ROMs as a source of information. By the time they leave school, the pupils are very competent users of information technology.
101. From the evidence of the standards achieved by pupils and the work displayed around the school, the quality of teaching in information technology is good. The teachers have a good knowledge of most aspects of the subject curriculum, and the school brings in a specialist teacher once a fortnight to teach some elements of the subject. The lesson observed during the inspection was very good. The pupils benefited from the visiting teacher's expertise in this subject; the teacher provided clear instructions, dealt quickly with problems as they occurred and ensured that pupils were able to extend their knowledge and capability within the aspect of control technology. Planning for the lesson built effectively on what the pupils already knew. Because the

activities were interesting and challenging, they engaged the pupils' interest and helped them to make good progress. The school's positive approach to information technology ensures that the quality of learning for the subject is good. The pupils' positive attitudes and willingness to work together also contribute to the progress they make in learning new skills.

102. All aspects of the National Curriculum for information technology are covered, and pupils are given the opportunity to progress beyond the nationally expected level. The teachers endeavour to use information and communication technology to help pupils' learning in other subjects. Arrangements with the visiting teacher work very well. Not only does he provide expert tuition for the pupils in Key Stage 2, but also additional training for the teachers. Through this arrangement the school's resources are supplemented by a number of laptop computers, which enable all pupils in a year group to work on the week's project at the same time. The school's own resources have improved since the last inspection, although the location and set-up for each of the school's computers is unsatisfactory. There is insufficient room to operate the keyboard and mouse and view the screen at the correct angle. The school has an adequate range of software.

MUSIC

103. Pupils in both key stages achieve satisfactory standards, with some pupils reaching above average standards in recorder, guitar and violin playing. Younger pupils acquire an appropriate sense of rhythm and learn to sing with gradually increasing confidence, joining in hymn-singing in assembly with enjoyment. The whole school sings tunefully with a sweet tone and good rhythm and diction. In Key Stage 2, the older pupils play or clap rhythms of increasing complexity and use a range of percussion instruments to follow a score with symbolic notation accurately. They learn note values and identify repeated rhythms when listening, keeping a steady beat in accompaniment. Pupils learning to play the recorder in both key stages use standard notation and perform well in unison. Those learning guitar are able to play chords accurately. Violin is taught by a visiting specialist. Parents give willingly of their time and the pupils benefit from their expertise during after-school recorder groups.
104. The teaching of music is sound. All teachers follow the music curriculum, and the published scheme which they follow provides useful support to teachers with no musical expertise. They are further assisted by the music coordinator who works part-time and includes leadership of the subject in her duties, taking Key Stage 2 pupils and overseeing music in whole-school assemblies. The provision helps pupils to attain satisfactory standards overall and those with special aptitude or interest to attain above average standards. Teachers monitor pupils' achievements, record them and report to parents appropriately. The coordinator gives satisfactory support in helping pupils to improve their performance. The Christmas concert, the annual pantomime and participation in the Wotton Schools' Music Festival give opportunities for singing and playing to wider audiences. Resources for music are good, with a wide range of tuned and untuned instruments and a good selection of recorded music for listening. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 listened to classical piano music playing softly whilst they worked quietly and harmoniously in mathematics. Music from other cultures is used to extend pupils' experience and understanding. Pupils use information technology in composing, but do not record in writing or symbols enough to create a portfolio of what they are learning through the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. It was not possible to observe a full range of physical education activities during the inspection. Evidence for physical education was gathered from the observation of one

dance and one games lesson at Key Stage 2 and discussions with staff and pupils. No lessons were observed at Key Stage 1. As at the time of the last inspection, the school continues to work hard to mitigate the difficulties of organising many aspects of physical education when there is such a small number of pupils in each year group. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. In dance, they achieve standards which are appropriate for their age. In swimming, their attainment is above average.

106. The pupils participate enthusiastically in their physical education lessons and have a good capacity for vigorous physical exercise. In both the games and the dance lessons, the pupils participated actively in their warm-up sessions and in the various activities organised during the sessions. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 demonstrate an appropriate level of skill in passing and handling a rugby ball. In Years 5 and 6, most pupils listen carefully to instructions and produce movements and step sequences in time to the music.
107. In order to compensate for the difficulties of organising competitive games, the school places particular emphasis on swimming. There are regular sessions during the school year for all pupils in Key Stage 1 and in alternating terms for the different age groups in Key Stage 2. As a result, virtually all pupils quickly gain confidence in water. Most pupils are able to swim 25 metres unaided and know the principles and skills of water safety and survival well before the end of Key Stage 2. By the time they leave school, many pupils have progressed well beyond the nationally expected standards in swimming.
108. The overall quality of the teaching in physical education is satisfactory. Some aspects of the teaching are good. The teachers have a good level of personal expertise and show enthusiasm for the subject. They set the right example by changing into appropriate clothing and participating with the pupils. They give clear instructions and demonstrations. In the dance lesson, for example, the teacher's demonstration gave the pupils a very clear idea of the movements expected. The teachers expect and obtain a good level of participation from the pupils. Lessons are adequately planned, where appropriate drawing on commercially prepared lessons, for example, in dance. The teachers place due regard to health and safety procedures, particularly when walking from school to the playing field and crossing the road. Lessons are suitably structured, and the teachers give due importance to warm-up and warm-down exercises. In the games lesson, for example, the pupils were provided with a variety of skills-based activities, as well as opportunities for small-sided games. In the two lessons observed, not enough attention was given to analysing what was done well and where improvements could be made, or of ensuring that pupils looked critically at their own performance in order to try to improve it.
109. The quality of learning in physical education is satisfactory. The most positive feature is the pupils' willingness and enthusiasm to participate. Lessons are spoilt, however, by unnecessary chatter, some misbehaviour and, occasionally, by immature attitudes from the pupils and poor attention to the teachers' instructions. These aspects are not always managed effectively or consistently, and too much time is lost by reminding pupils about their behaviour. In one lesson, lavish praise was unmerited, giving pupils the impression that a mediocre performance and inattentive behaviour were more than acceptable.
110. Given the constraints of its size, the school provides an appropriately balanced programme of physical education, which is enhanced by some extra-curricular activities run by the staff and some parent helpers. Whilst unable to field its own teams, joint ventures with other small schools give pupils the opportunity to take part in competitive team games. Pupils represent the school in sports for individuals, such as

cross-country. All pupils have the opportunity to participate in the school's annual sports day. In addition, older pupils experience outdoor and adventurous activities on their residential trip. The school's accommodation for physical education is just adequate. The hall is small and limits the range of activities which can take place indoors, although the range has improved as a result of new gym equipment which was purchased with the help of the Friends of Hillesley School. The village field, a short walk away from the school, provides good facilities for outdoor games, weather permitting.