

## INSPECTION REPORT

### JENYNS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Braughing, Ware

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117087

Headteacher: Mrs S D Wilbourn

Reporting inspector: John Messer  
15477

Dates of inspection: 5 -7 June 2000

Inspection number: 191825

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

|                              |                                    |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Type of school:              | First                              |
| School category:             | Community                          |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4-9                                |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed                              |
| School address:              | Braughing<br>Ware<br>Hertfordshire |
| Postcode:                    | SG11 2QE                           |
| Telephone number:            | 01920 821461                       |
| Fax number:                  | -                                  |
| Appropriate authority:       | The governing body                 |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mr P Saggars                       |
| Date of previous inspection: | November 1996                      |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members                        | Subject responsibilities  | Aspect responsibilities                             |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| John Messer<br>Registered inspector | Mathematics               | What sort of school is it?                          |
|                                     | Geography                 | The school's results and pupils' achievements.      |
|                                     | History                   | How well are pupils taught?                         |
|                                     | Physical education        |   |
|                                     | Equal opportunities       |   |
| Judith Telfer<br>Lay inspector      |                           | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. |
|                                     |                           | How well does the school care for its pupils?       |
|                                     |                           | Partnership with parents                            |
| Sandra Teacher<br>Team inspector    | Under Fives               |   |
|                                     | English                   |   |
|                                     | Design and technology     |   |
|                                     | Music                     |   |
|                                     | Religious education       |   |
|                                     | Special educational needs |   |
| Anthony Shield<br>Team inspector    | Science                   | How good are curricular and other opportunities?    |
|                                     | Information technology    | How well is the school led and managed?             |
|                                     | Art                       |   |

The inspection contractor was:

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London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This village first school has 95 pupils on roll and is smaller than most primary schools. There are rather more girls than boys, particularly in the class for the youngest pupils. The pupils are almost exclusively from white English speaking families. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, 4%, is below the national average. Children's achievements on entry to the school are above those normally expected of four year olds and pupils come from relatively advantaged home backgrounds. Pupils are aged between four and nine years old and are taught in three classes. Only six children were under the age of five at the time of the inspection and all had progressed to following the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum. Most pupils are taught in two temporary hatted classrooms which have been placed close to the original Victorian buildings. There is also a temporary hut outside the main school which houses the children's lavatories. The school has a large playing field. No pupils have statements of special educational need though five are entered on the school's register of special needs because they require some extra learning support. This is well below the national average. Children are admitted to the reception class in the September of the year in which their fifth birthday falls. The school admits pupils from within the village and from neighbouring hamlets and is over-subscribed.

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

This is a good school with many strong features and very few areas for development. The standards attained by pupils of all abilities are high in English, mathematics and science. Teaching is good and results in effective learning. Pupils are exceptionally well behaved and have excellent attitudes to work. Pastoral care is very good and relationships between pupils and teachers are warm and friendly. The headteacher provides strong leadership and she is well supported by parents and the governing body. Resources are used efficiently to provide an effective learning environment but poor accommodation restricts some areas of the curriculum. The school strives to maintain high standards and provides good value for money.

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

- The provision for the youngest pupils is very good and strong foundations are laid for further learning.
- A rich curriculum is provided and pupils attain high standards which prepares them well for the next stage in their education.
- Pupils develop good levels of self-esteem and speak confidently.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and enables them to make good progress.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent.

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

- Accommodation is poor which restricts the teaching of physical education, wastes time and creates health and safety hazards.
- Subject co-ordinators do not monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in order to identify weaknesses and set targets for improvement.
- There are inconsistencies in the teachers' lesson planning and assessment procedures.

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

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

Since the last inspection in 1996 the school has moved forward well. The high standards reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained in English and science and have improved in mathematics. Two of the four key issues raised at in the last inspection report have been addressed successfully. There is now a whole school curriculum framework to guide teachers' planning and promote continuity in learning. The school development plan is now closely linked to financial planning. Two key issues remain unresolved. Teachers' planning does not follow a common format

and does not always identify the skills to be taught or assessment opportunities in lessons. Teaching and learning is still not monitored systematically though the overall quality of teaching has improved.

## STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with |      |      |                 | Key   |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|---|
|                 | all schools   |      |      | similar schools |   |
|                 | 1997          | 1998 | 1999 | 1999            |   |
| reading         | A             | A*   | A    | A               | well above average A<br>above average B<br>average C<br>below average D<br>well below average E |
| writing         | A             | A*   | B    | C               |   |
| mathematics     | A             | A*   | A    | A               |   |

By the time they are five children attain standards which exceed the nationally defined desirable learning outcomes for five year olds. At seven years of age, standards are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. No pupils attained the higher Level 3 standard in writing in 1999, which adversely affected the school's overall performance, the proportion who attained the national target of Level 2 was well above the national average and inspection evidence indicates that standards in writing are currently better than they were in 1999. As the number of pupils who take the National Curriculum tests is relatively small, statistical comparisons should be treated with great caution. A clearer indicator of the standards attained in the school derives from an analysis of trends over the past three years which shows that pupils are two terms in advance compared with the national picture in the key areas of reading, writing and mathematics and that boys are more advanced than girls. The school sets realistic targets for the proportion of pupils who are expected to attain the national target in English and mathematics and in 1999 the school's results exceeded its targets. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4, pupils attain standards which are well above national expectations of nine year olds in English, mathematics and science. These standards represent good achievement; pupils attain standards which are even better than might generally be expected of pupils with high prior levels of attainment.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school                | Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic, keen to succeed and eager to learn.   |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Excellent. Pupils are exceptionally well behaved, courteous and sensitive to the feelings of others.                              |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. Pupils are very willing to take responsibility and show initiative. Relationships throughout the school are very good. |
| Attendance                             | Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school.   |

Relationships between pupils, teachers and support staff are very good and this enables pupils to talk freely with staff and ask questions confidently. Most parents feel able to approach staff openly. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility in the classroom and around the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING



| <b>Teaching of pupils:</b> | <b>aged up to 5 years</b> | <b>aged 5-7 years</b> | <b>aged 7-9 years</b> |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 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 quality of teaching in English, mathematics and science is good at both key stages. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and encourage effective learning. Literacy and numeracy are taught well and pupils use their skills well in different areas of the curriculum. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs who need extra learning support as well as for higher attaining pupils who also require appropriate challenges. Teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons; it is good in 50 per cent of lessons, very good in 27 per cent and excellent in 3 per cent. The mostly good teaching promotes good progress and results in effective learning. Teachers' lesson planning is inconsistent.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

| <b>Aspect</b>   | <b>Comment</b>  |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. Good provision is made for the under fives. Learning is enriched by a very good range of educational excursions and residential visits to places of interest. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs   | Good. Very few pupils have special educational needs. All are provided with good support so that they achieve well.   |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good overall. Provision for moral and social development is very good and provision for cultural development is good. Spiritual provision is satisfactory.  |
| How well the school cares for its pupils  | Very good. The school provides high levels of pastoral care.  |

The partnership which has been developed with parents is good. Parents assist in reading development by sharing books with their children at home and a number of parents help in school by supervising cooking and assisting with swimming and visits. The school is held in high regard by parents though a minority believe that the partnership should be closer. The school provides a rich, stimulating curriculum although poor accommodation means it does not satisfactorily fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum in physical education. The installation of computers is also hampered by the limited accommodation and this restricts opportunities for the development of information technology. All pupils have the opportunity to swim. The accommodation also presents safety hazards and the different levels and high steps in some areas lead to minor accidents as well as causing a great deal of time to be used in ensuring that pupils move about the site as slowly as required to negotiate the hazards. The school exercises extreme care and pupils feel secure in a happy learning environment.

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

| Aspect   | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher provides very good leadership. She firmly maintains a clear educational direction for the work of the school and is committed to provide pupils with a well rounded, balanced education. The role of curriculum co-ordinators in terms of monitoring, evaluating and improving the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | Governors are very supportive and fulfil their responsibilities well. Governors have been strenuous in their efforts to improve the accommodation.   |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | The school analyses data from tests and assessments and the analyses are used well to identify specific areas for development.   |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Financial planning is good and all allocations are linked with appropriate priorities.   |

There is a adequate number of staff to meet the school's curricular needs and learning resources are sufficient to support teaching and learning though there is no dedicated, well-equipped area to promote the physical development of the under fives. Accommodation is poor and does not allow the National Curriculum requirements for physical education to be taught in full. Leadership and management are strong. The school uses all financial allocations prudently and ensures that the principles of best value are applied to spending decisions.

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

| What pleases parents most   | What parents would like to see improved   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like coming to school.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Most parents would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> <li>• Children make good progress.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A significant minority of parents would like to be better informed about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>• A minority of parents would like the school to work more closely with parents.</li> </ul> |

Inspection findings support parents' positive views. Parents receive a great deal of information from the school and attend meetings on curricular developments, such as literacy and numeracy, but school reports do not give targets for future learning or how parents might support pupils' learning and the rolling programme of parent consultations does not work well in practice. There is scope for a closer partnership between the school and parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Most children enter the reception class with achievements which are generally above expectations for their age. They make rapid progress and at the time of the inspection all had exceeded the nationally defined learning outcomes in all the nationally recommended areas of learning and were working within the early stages of the National Curriculum for Key Stage 1. The youngest children make rapid gains in confidence and by the time they are five they have well developed language skills. They speak fluently and talk about their work sensibly. They have a clear understanding of how letters make words and how words can be built to make sentences. All can write their names clearly. They enjoy singing and acting out number songs and they count accurately to at least fifty. They manipulate tools, such as brushes and pencils, with increasing precision and they run fast in the playground without knocking into others. Their physical development is satisfactory though they have few opportunities to climb on large apparatus or manoeuvre wheeled vehicles around pathways. The under fives have an acute awareness of the world around them and their learning is highly effective because they are so eager to find out about things and because they are provided with a rich and challenging learning environment.
2. Inspection findings show that by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment exceeds national expectations and pupils reach standards which are in line with those which should be expected of these pupils when set against their prior achievements in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils also attain standards which exceed national expectations and represent good achievement in relation to prior learning in history and geography. Standards in information technology, art and music are in line with national expectations and pupils' achievements are in line with what might be expected in relation to their prior levels of attainment. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. There was insufficient evidence in both key stages to make judgements about standards in design and technology and the dance and gymnastics part of the curriculum for physical education. Nearly all pupils read fluently and most have well developed research skills both when using reference books though computers are not used extensively for research. They calculate quickly and many remember number facts with ease. They are beginning to learn their multiplication tables and are gaining confidence in arithmetic. They can see patterns in sequences of numbers and are developing a good grounding in mathematics. They understand why the shadow cast by a stick moves and changes height slowly throughout the day when they plot its movements on the playground and which food is healthy and which should be eaten in moderation. They have a good knowledge of a wide range of artists and use this to inspire their own paintings which are often of high quality. They are learning to compose in music and they sing well in unison.
3. The National Curriculum tests and assessments for seven year olds confirm that pupils make good progress through the course of Key Stage 1 and attain high standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils' results in 1999 were well above the national average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing when compared with all schools. When compared with schools who have pupils from similar backgrounds standards are well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. In science teacher assessments show that whilst all pupils attain the national target of Level 2 no pupils attained the higher Level 3 standard. Over the past four years the school has maintained standards in reading and mathematics which have been very high in comparison with the national average and well above the national average in writing. An analysis of results over the past four years shows that boys perform much better than girls in reading, writing and mathematics. The school is aware of this though no particular reason is apparent. There was no discernible difference in the performance of boys and girls in the lessons seen.
4. Across the school pupils are eager to learn and rise to challenges set. They learn rapidly in the reception class where expectations are high. Learning continues to be effective and pupils make good progress through Key Stage 1 though the pace of lessons is not always in tune with pupils' ability to learn rapidly. The quality of learning is good in Years 3 and 4. Inspection

findings show that by the end of Year 4, pupils attain standards which are well above national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Pupils also attain standards which exceed national expectations and represent sound achievement in relation to prior learning in history and geography. Standards in information technology, art and music are in line with national expectations and pupils' achievements are in line with what might be expected in relation to their prior levels of attainment. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

5. By the time they leave school at the age of nine pupils have developed a wide range of skills associated with literacy. They write at some length both imaginative and factual accounts using a legible joined script and mostly accurate spelling. They use the skills developed in literacy well across different areas of the curriculum, such as writing imaginative accounts of times past in history and recording results of investigations in science. They use their ability well to measure accurately when cooking and when recording weather data in geography. There are, however, instances where the teaching of skills is unrelated to real life situations and the reasons for learning skills and their possible applications are not made explicit. In such situations opportunities are missed to give greater purpose to learning. Pupils are very well prepared to continue their education in the middle schools to which they transfer.

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

6. The pupils' response to the school is exceptionally positive and makes a very powerful contribution to the standards of learning and the atmosphere of the school. Parents strongly approve of the impact of the school on their children's behaviour and personal development. Almost all their children like school.
7. Attitudes to the school are very good. The children line up briskly and enter their classrooms in a purposeful manner. They listen to instructions well and prepare for work quickly. They are eager to answer questions and to play a full part in lessons, for example, volunteering to represent Beethoven in a whole school assembly on deafness. Many pupils participate in extra-curricular activities, such as the recorder club.
8. The pupils' behaviour is excellent, in and out of lessons. There have been no exclusions. Pupils are polite and respectful to one another and to all adults. This leads to an environment in which all pupils are able to concentrate on learning and lessons can proceed without interruption. Behaviour in the playground is also excellent, the pupils play well together at traditional games or use small equipment such as hoops and skipping ropes with care.
9. The pupils are very willing to exercise responsibility, offering to help with tasks in the classrooms and around the school. The older pupils in particular are involved in many daily routines. At lunchtime, the atmosphere is very civilised as all the pupils sit down to eat together in mixed age groups, served by Year 4 pupils. Pupils demonstrate initiative, for example in raising funds for charities, and they are very involved in the local community.
10. Relationships between pupils and with the adults in the school are very good. The pupils work and play well together. They co-operate well when they are using the computers. Even the youngest pupils take turns patiently, for example when playing instruments in turn to hear whether they make long or short sounds. They show respect for others' feelings, listening supportively to the performances of other groups, as in a Year 1/2 literacy lesson. They are keen to praise one another and to help younger pupils if they need it.
11. The level of attendance is very high and unauthorised absence is low. No pupils have been excluded. The pupils enjoy coming to school and almost always arrive on time.

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

12. Throughout the school teaching is mostly good. Nearly a third of teaching is very good and occasionally excellent, half is good and a fifth is satisfactory. No unsatisfactory lessons were

seen during the inspection. Teaching for the youngest pupils is always at least good and in substantial proportion of lessons it is very good. Teaching for the older Year 1 pupils and for pupils in Year 2 is good in nearly three quarters of lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is occasionally excellent; it is very good in a third of lessons, good in a third and satisfactory in just over a quarter.

13. Across the school relationships between pupils and teachers are excellent. Pupils feel at ease and feel free to ask questions, discuss ideas or share views. In all classes a serious approach to work is generated. This encourages pupils to strive hard to do their best. Pupils are happy and are eager to please the teachers. Excellent behaviour makes a strong contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. Children receive a great deal of praise and encouragement. A four year old boy was told that he was a 'good man' because he remembered which month came before May. In all classes teachers are very sensitive to pupils' needs, especially the need to feel successful and be valued. Most lessons progress at a brisk pace and opportunities are grasped to reinforce learning as, for example, when filling in the daily weather board, the class practise their knowledge of days of the week, months of the year and seasons. Language is developed alongside such activities as children are encouraged to predict what the weather will be like during the remainder of the day and discuss sensibly whether or not rain might be expected and what effects this might have on the school day. Teachers take care to match work to pupils' widely differing stages of development, as in one lesson on mathematics where a wide range of different work books had been prepared by the teacher to match the needs of different pupils in the class. Classroom assistants have a positive impact upon the quality of teaching and the support provided in the early years classroom is especially effective. In a small minority of lessons in both key stages tasks are not well matched to pupils' requirements firstly because assessment of pupils' prior learning is imprecise and is not always recorded in a form which enables teachers to see clearly what the next steps should be and secondly because expectations of pupils' performance, especially the higher attaining pupils, are too low. There are inconsistencies in teachers' daily lesson plans. There are good examples of lesson planning which include the skills, knowledge and understanding to be taught in a lesson, how tasks will be matched to pupils' varying stages of development, how information technology will be used and how learning will be assessed. Teachers do not plan consistently and the quality of planning varies both between and within classes. Some lessons are planned well and others are not. Teaching tends to be more effective when lessons have been planned thoroughly.
14. Homework is used well to reinforce and extend learning. Reading books are taken home regularly and pupils learn spellings and number facts at home. Pupils are also challenged to find out information. In one history lesson, for example, pupils were tasked with finding out exactly what AD meant on their historical time line. Teachers have good subject knowledge and staff are deployed imaginatively to provide good learning opportunities. A specialist music teacher visits for half a day each week and her skills are used well to provide all pupils with good music lessons. The large Year 3/Year 4 class is divided into sets for literacy and numeracy each morning when a part time teacher joins the teaching force and in the afternoons the Year 3 pupils benefit from a small learning group when taken by another part time teacher. The teachers in Key Stage 2 plan together and work effectively as a team to provide teaching of high quality.
15. The literacy hour and the National Numeracy Strategy are both well established. Early reading and writing skills are taught very well and pupils make rapid progress. Mathematics is taught well and pupils are confident in handling numbers. There are many opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in real situations, such as measuring quantities carefully when following the recipe to cook scones. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and in Key Stage 2 for higher attaining pupils who are generally challenged appropriately. In a minority of lessons, mainly in Key Stage 1, the pace of learning is too slow for pupils with very high levels of prior attainment. The teaching of English is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2 and it is good at both key stages in mathematics, science, music, history and physical education. Teaching is good in information technology at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Teaching is satisfactory in religious education at both key stages. Insufficient evidence was available in design and technology, geography and art to form judgements on the quality of teaching. Clearly the mostly good and very good teaching leads to effective learning and enables pupils to make good progress. The quality of

teaching is better than at the time of the last inspection when the proportion of very good teaching was not as high.

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

16. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which meets statutory requirements in all subjects except physical education where the poor accommodation means that the requirements for dance and gymnastics cannot be fully met. The curriculum for children under five is also suitably broad and balanced and provides an effective variety of activities covering the recommended areas of learning. It is well structured and includes a wide range of opportunities for pupils in the early years to learn through a rich variety of activities.
17. In Key Stages 1 and 2, all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, and the programme for religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Assemblies meet the requirements for a daily act of collective worship. There is no formal sex education programme, although aspects of the science curriculum introduce the pupils to living things and the concept of growth change and reproduction. The very good relationships which have been developed between teachers and pupils enable all matters to be discussed openly and the informal arrangements for sex education and drugs awareness are appropriate and effective. Similarly there is no formal curricular provision for personal, social and health education, although important aspects are covered when appropriate.
18. The school's strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy are effective. Both have been appropriately implemented and the time during lessons is well structured.
19. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects. Some aspects of the National Curriculum are effectively taught through cross-curricular topics. The school operates a two-year curriculum cycle for science and foundation subjects and the majority of schemes of work are at least satisfactory. The school's response to the curriculum issue raised in the previous inspection has been satisfactory, and progress through the school in all subjects is now more carefully planned. Daily planning is less satisfactory, and teachers do not use a consistent format for recording learning objectives and lesson outcomes. This means that assessment of progress is not secure and hence the next steps in learning are not always clearly identified
20. Pupils have equal access to the curriculum and teachers make appropriate arrangements for pupils who are withdrawn for specialist music teaching.
21. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are identified early and their needs are analysed carefully. They are given good support both through matching tasks to their needs and through extra adult help with completing tasks successfully. Regular checks are made on their progress.
22. The range of extra-curricular activities is good, effectively enhancing the pupils' interests and abilities in music, athletics, gardening and cookery. The school makes good use of the local environment and educational visits to enrich and make more relevant its school based studies. Older pupils are given the opportunity to visit Cuffley Camp every year to experience the facilities of a woodland site and field study centre. They also visit a residential technology centre in Norfolk to study information technology. The school regularly invites visiting drama groups, musicians, authors and poets to come to school and perform. During the inspection week itself, children visited the Millennium Dome and a visiting theatre group reinforced children's work in English.
23. The school has very good links with partner institutions for ensuring that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. Discussions are held between the school and the middle school to which most pupils move to ensure curriculum coverage is matched and that standards are appropriate. The school also has good links with local play groups and records of pupils' attainment on entry are shared to allow for effective transfer to school.

24. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good overall. Provision for moral and social development is very good. The school's moral framework is very clear. Teachers set high standards of behaviour and have very high expectations of the children. The school's values of honesty, tolerance and good relationships are set within clear boundaries of what is right and wrong. Pupils develop a keen sense of honesty and fair play and a keen sense of justice. Provision for cultural development is good and for spiritual development it is satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to be reflective in a number of subjects such as art, music and in through writing poems in English. Assemblies also provide good opportunities for reflection through singing and prayer. The clear rules, codes and boundaries make the school a safe place for pupils.
25. Pupils' social development is a strength of the school. Very good opportunities are provided through the lunch arrangements. Pupils sit in family groups and there is a real sense of social occasion about eating together. Responsibilities are given to individual pupils to serve food, clear away and dismiss the tables. In class, pupils take the opportunities for helping out and clearing away sensibly and with a good sense of responsibility. Many good opportunities are provided for pupils to work together in pairs and small groups, for example, when working at the computer. Several good examples were observed of pupils helping each other at the computer, with patience and understanding. The good range of activities which takes place outside school time and visits to places as class groups, provide opportunities for pupils to get on well together. Good opportunities are provided to promote the responsibility of citizenship through, for example, the distribution of harvest gifts to old people and fund raising events for the local hospice.
26. The school does much to promote cultural awareness. Music and art are particular strengths of the school's curriculum, and visiting artists are common. There is less emphasis on preparing pupils for life in a multi-cultural and multi-faith society, although during the inspection in music, children were given opportunity to listen and watch Indian music and dance.

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

27. The school provides a high quality of care for its pupils. There is a safe and supportive environment in which all pupils are well known to staff and all are enabled to make good progress. Almost all parents state that their children like school.
28. The school has very good measures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of the pupils. From their first term in the school, their needs are sensitively met. Relevant precautions are undertaken to address perceived risks to individual pupils or groups, including the courses in emergency resuscitation, deep pool rescue and the action to avoid and respond to allergic reactions. Procedures for child protection meet locally agreed guidelines. Unfortunately, due to the constraints of the accommodation, pupils with physical disabilities are not able to be admitted.
29. The school effectively promotes exceptionally good behaviour by its shared ethos, its high expectations and the consistency of its approach to the pupils. Rewards are very well used and the very rare allegation of bullying is carefully investigated and sensitively handled. The very good relationships which have been developed between pupils and adults, coupled with the good support of parents in the promotion of courtesy and good manners, contribute to achieving excellent standards of behaviour. Supervision of pupils, at playtimes and before and after school, is very good.
30. The promotion of attendance is also very effective, leading to the level of attendance which is well above the national average for primary schools. However, procedures for monitoring absence, in particular recording the reason for pupils' absence in the registers, are inconsistent between classes and at times unsatisfactory.
31. There is a wide range of good procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress. Statutory tests and teachers' assessments are carried out at the end key stage 1, and there is a

baseline assessment for children under five. These tests are further enhanced by reading tests. The progress made by pupils is carefully monitored in English and mathematics, and the cumulative record of achievement builds a comprehensive picture of long term progress. However, records of progress in other subjects is only just satisfactory. Assessment in information technology for example, records coverage of a particular topic but does not assess the standard achieved or relate it to National Curriculum levels.

32. The results of tests, both baseline and at the end of Key Stage 1 are used to group children. An analysis of test results is carried out to ensure appropriate curriculum coverage and balance, and that progress across all attainment targets is similar. Day to day assessment is used to inform curriculum planning but this is more often informal, and there are inconsistencies of practice between the three classes. Class 2 for example sets weekly learning targets for pupils based on an assessment of their needs. However, this practice is not consistent across all classes. Teachers know their pupils well and tasks are often adapted to meet specific needs but this is not always the case.
33. The personal development of the pupils is monitored well. An initial assessment, involving the parents, is carried out during the child's first term at the school and reviewed at appropriate intervals. Should there be any delay in personal development, this information is used to modify the pupils' targets for academic performance.

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

34. The parents have a very high regard for the quality of education provided by the school. It is a popular school and places are much in demand. Parents particularly value the high standards achieved in academic, behavioural and in personal development. They appreciate the good quality of teaching, the strong leadership and the high levels of pastoral care. A significant minority has reservations about the information they receive on their children's progress and the closeness of the school's partnership with parents.
35. Parents receive a good range of information from the school. The school prospectus gives parents a good insight into the school's ethos and expectations. This is supported by newsletters giving details of activities and events and by an informative governors' annual report to parents. Information on the work to be carried out in each class during the term is not sufficient for parents to support their children fully at home. Curriculum meetings are held when appropriate to help parents to understand new developments, such as the numeracy and literacy strategies.
36. Parents are fully involved in the initial assessment of their children and provide helpful information on their children's strengths and weaknesses, areas for improvement. They agree targets for learning and social development. Most parents regularly hear their children read and write frequently in their home-school book. They are sent an annual report on their children towards the end of each summer term, followed by a formal opportunity to talk over their children's progress with the class teacher. These reports offer good information on pupils' work, particularly in English and mathematics and their developing attitudes and maturity. However, they do not give sufficient guidance on targets for future learning, how learning could be supported or ways in which parents might help at home. Parents have an opportunity to arrange a planned interview with their child's teacher in a rolling programme, but this is not fully operated as described in the prospectus and many parents do not discuss their children until near the end of the school year. There is a policy which encourages parents to seek advice or discuss any problems with teachers immediately they occur and within the constraints of their classroom responsibilities teachers are accessible and approachable to any parent with a concern about their child. The headteacher is always available each morning on the playground to listen to any concerns or information which parents might like to share.
37. Parents and other volunteers are very supportive of the school through the friends organisation. This makes a major contribution to the resources available to the school, as well as providing a social focus for the life of the village. Parents regularly help with cookery, swimming and as escorts for educational visits. As a matter of policy they are not asked to support teachers in



the classroom on a regular basis. Several parents participate in an annual event in which parents are invited to bring their individual talents into the school and work with pupils during a special activities week.

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

38. The headteacher provides clear educational direction and sense of purpose. She has worked tirelessly to create and maintain a school ethos which promotes pupils' academic and personal development in line with the school's aims. By example and through a clear sense of what she wants to achieve, the headteacher has done much to promote and sustain high standards. The plan to relocate the school in a new building is a good example of the farsighted and dynamic vision the headteacher brings to the school's work.
39. Governors have supported the headteacher effectively. The chair of governors in particular works closely in partnership with the headteacher in planning, setting priorities and monitoring progress towards them. Individual governors bring a wide range of experience and expertise to the school's work. Decisions are well informed, carefully thought through, and guided by the headteacher. Governors, many of whom are parents, make regular visits to the school and report back formally to the governing body. Governors are less confident in questioning the professional view of the headteacher, and their role in acting as a critical friend and maintaining an oversight of the school's work is not fully developed.
40. The headteacher is also the special needs co-ordinator and she ensures that the procedures outlined in the national code of practice for pupils with special educational needs are followed properly. The management of provision for these pupils is good. The subject co-ordinators' role in monitoring and leading curricular development is unsatisfactory. Informal communication is good, but this is not always sufficient to ensure subject co-ordinators have a good overview of standards, progress and the quality of teaching in their subject. As a consequence, planning for improvement across the whole curriculum and within individual subjects is patchy and not consistent. The development plan for information and communication technology is detailed and well constructed. It serves as a useful management tool for improvement. However plans in other subjects are non-existent. Co-ordinators are not being held accountable for monitoring and improving standards in their subjects.
41. The school's policy for monitoring and evaluation is only in draft form. It provides a useful framework for establishing a more formal mechanism for evaluating the school's strengths and areas for development. Currently the headteacher has insufficient opportunity to monitor classroom practice. As a consequence there are inconsistencies in a number of school procedures, for example in lesson planning, assessment and the setting of homework. In addition, the potential for spreading good practice is not fully realised.
42. The school's aims reflect its commitment to the personal development of pupils. School policies and practice are consistent with these aims. Teachers and support staff work well to support the school's aims and help establish a positive school ethos which is committed to maintaining high standards, equality of opportunity and good relationships. Statutory requirements are met, although the requirement to appraise all teachers is not currently being fulfilled as the school is waiting for the introduction of the new national initiative on performance management procedures.
43. The school development plan is carefully drawn up in consultation with staff and governors. Targets are costed and the relationship between the budget plan and the development plan is good. Progress on this issue since the last inspection has been good. The school has moved forward well since the last inspection, continuing to offer a very positive ethos for learning. The school's ethos is rooted in a commitment to improve standards further. This commitment ensures that it is in a strong position to maintain its improvement.
44. The school's budget is carefully managed, and financial planning is good. A small excess of expenditure over income in 1999/2000 was comfortably met by the previous year's carry forward. Financial planning is carried out on the basis of realistic assumptions about income

and an awareness of the educational priorities identified in the school's development plan. Regular monitoring statements ensure governors maintain a good oversight of spending.

45. The most recent audit report dated May 1998 judged the school's financial administration and record keeping to be 'generally very good'. The school has responded to the minor recommendations made. The school is careful to ensure the cost effectiveness of its spending plans, and applies best value principles to the use of the school's resources. Taking into account the good progress which pupils' make and the high standards which are achieved, together with the very positive attitudes to learning and the excellent behaviour, the school provides good value for money.
46. The deployment of staff is efficient and the accommodation was used well throughout the week of the inspection. The buildings are kept clean and well maintained by the caretaker. The school secretary ensures that all day-to-day office procedures run smoothly and efficiently. She also makes sure that teachers are not burdened with administrative tasks which might otherwise detract from the time available for preparing lessons. The caretaker, secretary and other support staff are very much a part of the team which is committed to maintaining high standards. Inspectors found little evidence of underused resources in the school but, while computers are mostly used well, opportunities are missed to incorporate the use of information technology into some lessons.
47. Accommodation is poor. The lack of a proper hall does not allow the full implementation of the National Curriculum in physical education and the cramped Victorian buildings make the establishment of a proper suite of computers difficult to include. Great care has to be taken when moving the classes from one building to another. This takes time from the teaching day, especially in bad weather. The different levels make flights of steps inevitable and some are steep and present a safety hazard. Minor accidents occurred during the week of the inspection. There is no designated area for the youngest pupils to develop their physical skills on apparatus or wheeled vehicles. The governing body has been strenuous in its attempts to implement the plans for a new building and a good exhibition outlining the imaginative proposals was recently held in the school. Progress has stalled slightly and governors have to maintain the impetuous to effect the necessary rebuilding of the school if all subjects are to be taught to the highest standards.

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

48. In order to improve standards further the headteacher, staff and governors should:
  1. as a matter of urgency advance the plans for creating the new school building in order that the curriculum can be taught to the highest standards in all subjects;  
(paragraph 47)
  2. develop the role of curriculum co-ordinators and the headteacher so that they are able to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in order to identify areas for improvement; (paragraphs 61,69,74,80,83,100)
  3. ensure a greater consistency of high quality teaching by:

- clearly identifying the skills, knowledge and understanding to be taught in each lesson;
  - refining assessment procedures so that assessment of pupils' stages of development can be used to match tasks more closely to pupils' specific learning needs.
- (paragraphs 13, 32, 57, 68, 72, 103)

Other less significant areas for development;

There is insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' awareness of the rich cultural diversity of the society in which we live. (paragraphs 26, 59)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 30 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 27 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 3         | 27        | 50   | 20           | 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

|  | YR – Y4 ] |
|--|-----------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 95        |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals        | 3         |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

|   | YR – Y4 ] |
|---|-----------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | 0         |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 5         |

#### 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           | 2            |

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 2.5 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

#### Unauthorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 0.3 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

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

|  |      |      |       |       |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|  | 1999 | 8    | 9     | 17    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading  | Writing  | Mathematics |
|---|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 8        | 8        | 8           |
|   | Girls    | 9        | 8        | 9           |
|   | Total    | 17       | 16       | 17          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 100(100) | 94 (100) | 100 (100)   |
|   | National | 82 [80]  | 83 [81]  | 87 [84]     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English   | Mathematics | Science   |
|---|----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 8         | 8           | 8         |
|   | Girls    | 9         | 9           | 9         |
|   | Total    | 17        | 17          | 17        |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 100(100)  | 100 (100)   | 100 (100) |
|   | National | 82 [ 81 ] | 86 [85]     | 87 [86]   |

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

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

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

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y4**

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 4.4  |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 21.6 |
| Average class size                       | 31.6 |

**Education support staff: YR – Y4**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 4  |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 77 |

**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                             | 1998-99 |
|  | £       |
| Total income                               | 185 634 |
| Total expenditure                          | 189 304 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 1972    |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 16 486  |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 12 816  |

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 90 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 37 |

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

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 73             | 21            | 6                | 0                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 63             | 30            | 7                | 0                 | 0          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 73             | 24            | 0                | 0                 | 3          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 42             | 41            | 10               | 0                 | 7          |
| The teaching is good.  | 56             | 38            | 6                | 0                 | 0          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 28             | 44            | 14               | 14                | 0          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 89             | 31            | 7                | 3                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 52             | 45            | 3                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 37             | 43            | 20               | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 79             | 21            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 67             | 30            | 0                | 0                 | 3          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 35             | 52            | 3                | 7                 | 3          |

### **Other issues raised by parents**

At the parent's meeting high levels of satisfaction with the school were expressed but there was general agreement that parents would appreciate more avenues for communicating with the school.

## **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**

49. At the time of the inspection during the second half of the summer term, only six children in the Reception class were still under the age of five. On entry to the school children's achievements are above the levels normally expected of four year olds. All the children in the Reception class have been given a very good start to their education. They benefit from good teaching which has enabled them to reach standards that are well above the expectations of the nationally defined desirable learning outcomes for five year olds. All the children have made good progress and are studying the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum programmes rather than the areas of learning which would normally be appropriate for the under fives.
50. The lack of a secure area for outdoor play and no large scale climbing apparatus restricts the learning in physical development.

### **ENGLISH**

51. Results in the National Curriculum tests in 1999 showed that in Key Stage 1 the proportion of pupils reaching Level 2 or above, 100 per cent in reading and 94 per cent in writing, was very high in comparison with the national average. No pupils attained the higher Level 3 standard in writing, however, so the school's performance at this level was well below the national average. When compared with similar schools, the school's overall performance was well above the national average in reading and in line with the national average in writing. By the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, they also achieve standards which are well above the national expectations of nine year olds. Standards in reading at Key Stage 1 have been maintained at a high level, compared to the national average, over the last three years. The school has been working hard to improve the standards in writing and initial indications are that results this year will be better than last with more pupils reaching the higher Level 3 standard. Inspection evidence confirms this high standard of work, which is reflected in very good overall progress. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in the lessons observed though an analysis of test data shows that boys perform better than girls.
52. Overall, the standards observed during the current inspection are similar to those reported in the previous inspection. By the end of both key stages pupils attain standards which are well above national expectations. In both key stages standards of speaking and listening are very high. Pupils speak about their interests and experiences confidently, in one-to-one situations. In small groups they take turns to speak and they make sure they express themselves so that others can understand. They repeat their statements in a different way to express their intentions clearly. Pupils develop confidence in speaking to an audience during the review session at the end of the literacy hour, which encourages pupils individually and in small groups to explain what has been achieved. They speak clearly and confidently when reading to an adult and during discussions about what they have been learning and about their attitudes to school life. They pay good attention to instructions from their class teacher and show a great deal of respect for others, as observed in Class 2, when enthusiastic pupils were reminded that it would be their turn next time to share their ideas with the class. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 listened attentively and with great interest to their peers when they described their imaginary experiences gained from reading during a literacy lesson on 'Being Inside A Poem'. They listened intently when their class teacher read the poem, while they imagined what the scene looked like, the sounds they could hear and the feelings they had. Teachers' reinforcement of the need to listen carefully at all times helps to establish good habits of listening and this contributes positively to pupils achieving good standards. Pupils in Class 1 spoke with enthusiasm about the story 'The Hare and the Tortoise', while the rest of the class listened attentively and asked questions appropriately. They expressed interesting ideas of how the story might have ended, giving reasons for their choice. They learn to express ideas and feelings clearly and effectively.



53. By the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4, attainment in reading is well above national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils read competently and fluently at the expected level. They show good understanding and read with expression. Pupils use phonics as well as the context of the story as cues to interpret unfamiliar words. They show sound comprehension of meaning and predict likely outcomes for the story. Most pupils recall with accuracy what they have read so far and readily find pages referred to when talking about what they read. Pupils show confidence when reading to an adult and are keen to demonstrate their skills. The school has established a positive ethos for reading and parents are encouraged to participate. Home-school reading records are regularly checked and kept up to date. The comments of parents indicate that they play an important part in the development of pupils' reading achievements. In Key Stage 1 most reading follows a reading scheme, but in Key Stage 2 pupils read from a wide variety of books and they show a preference for particular authors or themes. For example, in Year 4 their reading books include information books and stories on World War 2, or classics such as 'The Iron Man' by Ted Hughes. By the time they leave school pupils read fluently, accurately and with good expression. Regular library periods enhance their reading development and their ability to locate and retrieve information.
54. Attainment in writing is above that expected nationally in both key stages. Pupils make good progress in their ability to write independently. In Key Stage 1 pupils write sentences and short stories using capital letters and full stops correctly. They write extended accounts of well-known stories such as the 'Owl and the Pussy Cat' or 'Old Bear'. They write for a variety of purposes such as letter writing to Father Christmas and thank you letters for presents received. Pupils have planned regular handwriting exercises throughout the school and this has a positive impact on the standards achieved. The presentation of written work is generally satisfactory. In Key Stage 2 pupils structure sentences correctly and express their ideas clearly. They write creatively when analysing features of well-known stories, such as 'Cinderella', or when devising suitable verbs and adverbs to dramatic effect, using examples such as 'spluttered' or 'mumbled' instead of 'said'. Pupils write in a variety of styles and for a range of purposes including poetry, instructions, observations and summaries. Class 3 pupils write autobiographies, which give a clear picture of their feelings and reactions to situations. They use appropriate vocabulary to convey meaning clearly and analyse how words have changed their meaning over time. They study aspects of grammar and apply what they learn to improve their writing. They use the art of persuasion to create an advertisement for a hair brush. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the good support given to them by classroom assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator and part-time teacher.
55. The quality of teaching was good or better in approximately 80 per cent of lessons seen. Teaching was very good in Key Stage 2. Where teaching is good teachers use their subject knowledge well and use first-hand experience to stimulate pupils' interest and enthusiasm and to enhance their learning. This was clearly demonstrated in Class 3 when the teachers' enthusiasm was transmitted to the pupils who in turn were keen to record their own reactions to poetry. Work is well planned across year groups and carefully matched to pupils' needs so that pupils understand what they are doing. They find tasks demanding but they have achievable goals. Not all teachers explain the learning objectives at the beginning of each lesson so pupils know what they are going to learn by the end of the lesson.
56. Teachers manage pupils well, using positive strategies, praising pupils for good behaviour and giving stars and stickers as rewards and incentives. Teachers apply behaviour strategies consistently and quietly and they achieve excellent standards of behaviour, creating an atmosphere where pupils concentrate and learn effectively. Very good questioning techniques are employed to assess pupils' level of understanding, to reinforce previous learning and to extend ideas. In shared reading lessons all teachers recap on what has happened so far before moving on to the next section. Teachers use the good supply of resources for literacy effectively, for example 'Big Books' enable whole class reading which helps the lower attainers to increase their reading skills by participating with others. Teachers also prepare their own resources such as opposite words used for group games. In some classes teachers make provision for pupils to use information technology to enhance learning, but often the computer was not being used effectively to help raise standards of literacy.

57. All pupils do homework regularly in the form of set reading tasks and work related to classroom exercises. This is effective in extending pupils' knowledge beyond the classroom and involving parents at home. Where teaching is less than good the expectations of teachers are not sufficiently challenging. Objectives are not clearly focused and pupils are not stretched to achieve the standards of which they are capable.
58. Extra support for pupils with special needs is being provided for two pupils. This consists of two hours per week language support to assist during lessons and through advice to, and liaison with, class teachers. Class teachers and assistants also provide valuable additional support and these pupils are making good progress.
59. There is a good range of good quality books in classrooms and the library although there are fewer books that reflect cultural diversity.
60. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy Strategy and this is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment. Literacy skills are used across the curriculum. For example, vocabulary is developed well in science. Younger pupils write about the Honey Bee and about how honey is made. Extended writing in the first person is used in Years 3 and 4, to convey pupils' ideas of what it was like living during World War 2. Pupils make their own books which are bound and illustrated. Titles include, 'The Magic Computer' and 'Down the Stream'.
61. The co-ordination of the subject is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has not attended courses or run Inset for the staff. The teaching and learning is not monitored and clear targets for improvement have not been identified on the school development plan.

## **MATHEMATICS**

62. Pupils enter the school with achievements which are above expectations of four year olds and by the time they are five, they attain standards which exceed the nationally recommended learning outcomes for their age. They learn effectively and make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain standards which are higher than national expectations of seven year olds. This represents sound achievement for these pupils. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, they attain standards which are well above expectations of nine year olds. The National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in 1999 confirm inspection findings. The school's overall performance in the tests for seven year olds was well above the national average both when compared with all schools and when compared with similar schools. The school has maintained the high standards at Key Stage 1 which were reported at the time of the last inspection. There is evidence that standards attained by pupils by the end of Year 4 are significantly better than in 1996 and now most pupils are two years in advance of the standard which would normally be expected of nine year olds. This indicates good progress in Years 3 and 4 and represents good achievement for these pupils. An analysis of results over the past four years shows that boys perform much better than girls. There was no discernible difference in the performance of boys and girls in the lessons seen.
63. In the Reception class pupils develop a good understanding of number patterns and learn to make deductions about which numbers will be next in a series. They measure the width of the playground using different units, such as toe steps, rope lengths or hoops. They remember that the playground is nine and a half rope lengths wide. Pupils gain an initial understanding of probability as they play a 'horse race' game to see which number on a dice wins the race by being the first to reach the end of a six step course and contemplate why the number three won twice whilst the number four failed to win at all. They begin to understand pattern as they stitch threads from one axis to another in a right angled quadrant and make a perfectly curved line from their straight stitching. Pupils use their skills effectively when conducting traffic surveys and when measuring ingredients for cooking.
64. In the class for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, pupils learn to develop a sharp response to number questions and to recall number facts quickly and accurately. They learn to count backwards from 59, in unison, and stop at fifteen, for example. By the end of Year 2 most know their two, five and ten times tables. They understand symmetry and create colourful symmetrically

painted butterflies by folding paper, which has had blobs of paint applied to one side, along its axis of symmetry onto itself. Pupils predict what the emerging pattern might look like and gasps of awe greet the revelation of the butterfly's symmetrical colouring. Most can identify axes of symmetry and the more able pupils were intrigued to note that a circle could have an infinite number of such axes.

65. Partly due to the good grounding pupils receive in Key Stage 1 and partly due to the accelerated pace of learning in Key Stage 2, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding develop rapidly in Years 3 and 4. This acceleration is also the result of imaginative teaching and pupils' exceptionally positive attitudes. Pupils calculate rapidly and enjoy the challenge of rapid fire questions. They have a good understanding of different aspects of the subject. This was clearly revealed in a lesson on capacity. The teacher explained the relationship between a cubic centimetre and a millilitre. As part of the explanation she demonstrated that if a wooden cube measuring one cubic centimetre were to be carefully hollowed out, then it could contain one millilitre of water. Several pupils disagreed and said that the sides of the cube would still occupy space so the capacity would be closer to 0.99 recurring millilitres. One pupil correctly deduced from the label on a plastic coke bottle which offered 25 per cent extra, that a container would probably hold 1.25 litres. Her estimate was accurate. Pupils use their skills well in other subjects, such as geography where a local study included a survey of the different proportions of litter found in different parts of the village. The data collected was carefully recorded and illustrated in graphs and pie charts. Similarly a study of noise pollution included a survey of noise levels in different parts of the school at different times of day. The resulting data was well presented in graphs and charts which helped to illustrate the findings effectively so that comparisons could more easily be made.
66. Overall teaching is good. The quality of teaching for the youngest pupils is very good. A rich variety of activities is provided and a keen enthusiasm for the subject is generated. The teacher's measured, clear explanations contribute to high levels of understanding and confidence. In one lesson in the hall, for example, pupils were shown very clearly how to set a ramp at different heights and to measure in footsteps the distance a toy car travelled as a result of rolling from the top of the ramp across the floor. The need to record the data accurately was emphasised and all pupils succeeded in completing accurate records which clearly revealed that the car travelled twice as far when two blocks instead of one block was used to create the ramp and that when three blocks were used the car travelled nearly three times the distance. This activity is extended in Key Stage 2 where pupils accurately plot the distance travelled against the angle of the ramp and make deductions about the friction generated by different surfaces. Overall teaching in Key Stage 1 is good. Teaching generates enthusiasm and excitement. Pupils particularly enjoy the warm up activities which involve quick thinking and enjoy the challenge of working against the clock to complete a task. Pupils enjoy conducting a survey into the different number of smarties and the different proportions of colours in each box. They present the results of their survey well, using graphs and charts to illustrate their findings.
67. An example of excellent teaching was seen in Key Stage 2 in a lesson on capacity. The lesson started with challenging oral questions where pupils were required to calculate 0.4 of 1000 and 0.6 of 1000, for example. When the emerging pattern was secure the teacher asked if measuring liquids, like the tea in her tea cup, with a ruler would be sensible and if not, why not. Straight sided and conical containers were provided to stimulate suggestions about measuring the capacity of containers. The teacher listened very carefully to each pupil's contribution and skilfully led their thinking forward until a secure understanding was established. Humour was used well to maintain interest and enhance relationships. Practical work to consolidate knowledge gained and to extend measuring skills was then introduced. This lively, imaginatively conceived lesson proceeded at a brisk pace and pupils were disappointed when the end of the lesson stopped further activity.
68. Teaching in both key stages is good but there are variations within this overall picture; teaching is occasionally excellent and in a small minority of lessons is just satisfactory. Across the school teaching is less effective when expectations of the amount of ground which can be covered in a given time are too low and the pace of lessons is too slow. There are occasions when the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. This is partly due to imprecise assessments of

pupils' prior attainment which results in lesson plans not building effectively on previous learning. Teaching is enhanced where lesson plans indicate precisely what skills are to be taught in a lesson. Where learning intentions are imprecise, such as, 'To become mentally more agile and to understand mathematical vocabulary', the lesson lacks a clear focus on which skills are to be taught. Without such a focus it is difficult for the teacher to assess which skills have been learned.

69. Overall teaching and learning are now somewhat better than at the time of the last inspection. The National Numeracy Strategy is well established and is taught effectively. Resources are adequate to support teaching and learning but opportunities are missed to use information technology to enhance learning opportunities. All too often computers remain unused and the use of information technology does not feature in lesson plans. The subject co-ordinator analyses test results in detail to identify areas for improvement but her role in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning across the school is underdeveloped. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory but are not advanced. There are no individual short term targets set for pupils, partly because there is no clear picture of precisely which steps individuals need to take next.

## SCIENCE

70. In 1999, one hundred per cent of pupils achieved the national target of Level 2 in the National Curriculum teacher assessments. This is very high in comparison with both the national average and when compared with similar schools. However, no pupils achieved the higher Level 3 standard whereas nationally nearly a fifth of pupils attain this level. In previous years pupils have done well at the higher levels, but staffing changes during last year meant that there was insufficient time for working at the higher levels. Evidence from the inspection confirms that standards are well above expectations both at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave the school at the age of nine. Now more able pupils are achieving the higher levels as should be expected of these pupils. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection.
71. The work seen in Year 2 shows that pupils are confidently working at the nationally expected levels and many at levels above those normally expected for their age. Pupils describe and record their observations and use simple tables to display results. Pupils recognise and name external parts of the body and have some understanding of healthy eating. In investigations, most pupils have a reasonable idea of a fair test. Good progress has been made by the time the pupils reach the end of Year 4. Technical language is used more confidently and pupils know how to write up investigations accurately. Some pupils are less confident in drawing conclusions from the results. Scientific skills are well developed and their knowledge and understanding across a wide range of topics are good. Work in pupils' books on solids, liquids and gasses, electricity and the solar system demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding.
72. Teaching is mainly good in all classes and as a result pupils learn and achieve well. In the reception and Year 1 class, the teacher's enthusiasm involves pupils very well and they concentrate well and try hard. A clear demonstration and explanation of magnetic force by the teacher was given, during which pupils listened intently. The subsequent activity was well organised and pupils worked positively and made good progress in learning about the forces of attraction and repulsion. A well-designed test to find out in what conditions mustard seeds grow best was the basis for a satisfactory lesson observed with Years 1/2. Appropriate emphasis was placed on ensuring a fair test and pupils understood the principle as it applied to their work. Pupils demonstrated a good understanding of the factors necessary for growth and were able to make reasonable predictions about the outcomes of the test. However, the teaching lacked pace and some pupils became distracted as the lesson progressed. In addition, the work was not planned with different ages and abilities in mind, and some of the younger pupils had difficulty in writing up their experiment. As a result, learning for most pupils was only satisfactory.
73. Very good learning took place in a Year 3/4 lesson observed on investigating the habitat of woodlice. The lesson began with a review of previous learning in which pupils demonstrated a

very good knowledge and understanding of living things. They confidently used technical vocabulary such as 'photosynthesis', 'habitat' and 'hypothesis'. Effective questioning of the class drew out ideas about how they might test their initial hypothesis. Pupils showed a genuine interest and curiosity, asking questions as well as answering them. Group work was well planned and prepared by the teacher, who subsequently moved round the class, intervening only when necessary to prompt, probe to assess progress and question to deepen the pupils' knowledge and understanding. The teacher's communication skills were excellent, and the language used was clear and accessible. Pupils responded by working with interest and purpose in groups, researching information on the Internet or working from worksheets. Towards the end of the lesson, a discussion with the whole class effectively pulled the different ideas together in preparation for the next lesson. Very good organisation and planning, clear learning objectives and excellent relationships and communication skills ensured pupils made very good progress during the lesson.

74. The subject is well planned through the school using a commercial scheme as the basis for ensuring progression. A two-year planning cycle enables work to be covered in mixed age classes and learning to be reinforced and revised. The co-ordinator's role in monitoring and leading developments is underdeveloped. This is partly because the school has been concentrating on other subjects, but also because of the lack of time allocated for this role. There is good informal communication between all teachers, but this is not sufficient. As a result, the co-ordinator's understanding of standards and the quality of provision in science is patchy, and she has no clear plan for future developments.

## **ART**

75. Very little teaching was observed during the inspection, but from the evidence of work in classrooms, attainment meets expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave school. Some work is of a higher standard. Year 4 pupils work in paint, textiles and on the computer, and some images are effective and striking. They use adopted styles and techniques successfully, for example work inspired by Monet and Klee. Pupils take care, pay attention to detail and are aware of the visual impact of their work. The drawing of transformed faces inspired by the paintings of Klee showed a good understanding of tone and a good sense of proportion. Appraisal skills are often of a high standard. Some of the work on Monet is particularly perceptive, demonstrating a good awareness of the techniques used and of the emotional impact. One pupil in Year 4 described a waterlilies picture as 'relaxing and peaceful, as if you were bathing in sun'. Many evaluations are word processed. Overall, the standards observed during the current inspection are similar to those reported in the previous inspection.
76. The work of pupils in the Reception/Year 1 class meets expectations in a wide range of media. Some teaching was observed in this class in which pupils made an effective portrayal of lupins in paint using just two colours. The activity was well planned to ensure pupils looked carefully and tried to imitate the shape and texture of the flower and leaves. Pupils made good progress in observing detail and controlling the paint. Literature is used well as a basis for creative work. Excellent tapestries featuring 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' and 'Rosie's Walk' are displayed in the hall.
77. In Years 1 and 2 some striking images have been produced imaginatively. Overall standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with expected standards, though work is produced which exceeds these standards. Effective work on colour demonstrates that pupils have a good understanding of tinting, and reasonable skills of control and adding and mixing paint to achieve the desired colour. There was little evidence of three-dimensional work on display, although pupils have experience of printing, tie-dyeing and collage.
78. Although insufficient teaching was observed to make a judgement about the quality of teaching, it is evident from the work scrutiny that teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the art curriculum, and satisfactory skills to demonstrate to pupils what is required. Good attention to pupils' critical and evaluative skills gives pupils good opportunities to write thoughtfully and imaginatively in response to other artists' work. The curriculum is well planned to cover a range of media.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

79. During the week of the inspection no lessons in design technology were observed. It is not always scheduled for this half-term. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the teaching and learning in this subject, as there was a very limited record of work previously covered. Activities were included in the long and medium term plans and some elements of both designing and making were included in other subject areas. For example, the younger pupils made maps and models to illustrate their knowledge of stories such as 'The Owl and the Pussy Cat' or 'Old Bear'. They were challenged to design a method of rescuing Old Bear from the attic and constructed a ladder to reach him. Good links are made with numeracy and one child deduced that if a column of nine bears reached the attic then there would need to be eighteen bears to make two columns. Pupils in Class 1 made detailed, well constructed models of bi-planes like the one in the Old Bear story. Pupils in Class 2 designed and made intricate musical instruments from litter. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 designed and made a well constructed model of the village which included different buildings such as the church and the post office. All the pupils are involved in regular cooking sessions which are supervised by volunteer parents. The cooking activities are closely prescribed and pupils have too little scope for designing, creating, evaluating and improving upon the set recipes though pupils in Year 4 can choose which type of scones to make, such as cheese or cherry for example, and can design their own icing patterns to decorate their cakes.
80. The previous inspection report was concerned with the lack of co-ordination and the lack of progression in learning the skills of designing, making, evaluating and improving. These issues have still not been fully addressed.

## GEOGRAPHY

81. No lessons were observed during the inspection. Therefore, judgements are based on discussion with pupils and teachers, scrutiny of the pupils' work and photographic evidence. By the end of the Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4, standards exceed national expectations of seven and nine year olds. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be sound. Pupils have a good understanding of maps. Imaginary maps, gleaned from literature such as 'Rosie's Walk' or 'The Gingerbread Man', are drawn. Knowledge of the locality is particularly strong. Good use is made of the local area within topics to stimulate pupils' interest. Visits to farms and a local working water mill create great interest. A residential camp for the older pupils stimulates enquiry and provides good opportunities for fieldwork as does a visit to a managed wood to observe coppicing and the making of hurdles, baskets and charcoal.
82. As no lessons were observed, it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching or learning in lessons. However, a scheme of work is in place and long and medium term planning contributes to good learning in lessons. Discussions with pupils and the analysis of books and displays, confirms that pupils' learning is good. The majority of pupils make good progress and those spoken to clearly enjoy the subject. The written work of the pupils shows that they are developing a good foundation of knowledge about their local environment as well as places further afield. For example, in a village study pupils located and described important features of the village on a map. They understand aspects of man's influence on the environment and study where litter is most prevalent in the village. The youngest pupils note and discuss daily weather patterns and the older pupils record weather data. Older pupils compare their village with towns, such as Stevenage, noting the similarities and differences and conduct traffic surveys which reveal differences in traffic use in Stevenage compared with their village. They are eager to share their knowledge and talk with confidence about Salty the bear who travels the world with pupils in Class 2 when they go on holiday. Salty sends postcards to school describing his travels and brings back photographs for the class to study. This imaginative approach heightens interest and understanding.

83. Resources are satisfactory overall but there are a limited number of artefacts. The co-ordinator has good knowledge of the subject and is aware of the strengths and areas for development. However, she has too few opportunities to work alongside colleagues or to monitor work in the classroom.

## **HISTORY**

84. The subject is well established in the school's curriculum and work of high quality is produced. One very good lesson was seen in history and there is clear evidence that a broad range of experiences is provided for learning. By the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4, pupils attain standards which exceed national expectations. Pupils have good opportunities to experience what it may have been like for children in Victorian times when they all dress up in 'Victorian' clothes and spend a whole day in role. They sit in rows silently and complete exercises in chalk on black paper. They learn by rote and recite the alphabet in unison. They do drill in the yard and are photographed, unsmiling, in the poses which children who attended the school in Victorian times might have adopted. Pupils in Class 2 study toys from the past and compare similarities and differences. They note particularly the changes which the invention of plastics has made to the manufacture of toys. They have a good sense of chronology and identify the old and more modern houses in the village. They study old photographs and enjoy being detectives when they spot differences between then and now. Pupils in Key Stage 2 study the Roman, Viking and Saxon invaders of Britain. They make good models of Roman villas with carefully crafted mosaic floors and good models of oil lamps from clay. Good links are made with geography as they study where in Europe the invaders came from. The high standards of work produced in both key stages indicate that standards are similar to those attained at the time of the last inspection.
85. Very little teaching was seen during the three days of inspection but pupils' knowledge and the work they produce indicate that teaching is effective. One very good lesson was seen in Key Stage 2. Here planning was thorough and clear learning intentions were described. Previous learning was explored and pupils demonstrated a very good knowledge of the conditions experienced by people in Victorian times. The pupils correctly identified the period they were studying on a well prepared time line. They have visited the village pump and have considered the effects of no piped water to houses. When the teacher showed pictures of living conditions a hundred and fifty years ago they were shocked and indignant at the wide differences in living conditions between the rich and the poor and recoiled at the social injustices and cruelty of the times. The teacher had hidden a good selection of Victorian artefacts under cloths. This in itself stimulated curiosity. Each group of pupils had to examine each artefact and using the evidence of their prior knowledge and understanding determine the use of each object. This proved a very exciting and amusing activity. Few pupils had any idea what a bedchamber pot might be for and many identified as some sort of tea pot. They correctly identified a carpet beater and deduced that it was no longer used because people now had fitted carpets and vacuum cleaners. Good links were made with science as pupils noted that the bell shaped candle snuffer would prevent air reaching the wick and hence help to extinguish the flame.
86. The subject is managed well and the co-ordinator gives good support and advice. The school borrows a good range of artefacts from people in the village as well as from the local authority's loan service. A good village trail has been developed which helps pupils to consider evidence when making deductions about life in the past.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

87. Overall by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4, levels of attainment meet the standards expected nationally of seven and nine year olds. Overall, the standards observed during the current inspection are similar to those reported in the previous inspection. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 can store and retrieve information, and use a database to record information about a traffic survey. Results are displayed using both bar and pie charts. Pupils' keyboard skills are satisfactory though not particularly fluent. Pupils in Year 1/2 use a word processor in their writing and, with help, can print it out. In Key Stage 2 pupils use the

computer to communicate information; some good examples of house agents advertisements, with pictures dropped into the text, were seen. In addition, pupils understand how to manipulate text for different effects. Art programs are imaginatively used to create a range of images. Much work is produced on the word processor. Some work in control is planned but no evidence was seen during the inspection, apart from some work where pupils give instruction to a programmable robot, a 'roamer' and 'turtle', to generate patterns. Computers were used well to produce an image of a stained glass window.

88. Pupils have access to the Internet and several pupils confidently log on and search the web. In one Year 3/4 lesson observed, pupils were being introduced to the Natural History Museum site to research for information. Although pupils came to the lesson with varying experience, all made good progress as a result of clear planning by the teacher, effective communication and the positive attitude of the pupils. Good preparation meant that the difficulty of all working around one computer was overcome. Technical terms such as 'search engine' and the 'World Wide Web' were learnt. Good teaching overall ensures effective learning.
89. For most of the time, however, computers are used to support learning in other lessons, and there is little formal teaching. Pupils are keen to use the computers and often work well in pairs, supporting and learning from each other. When given opportunity to work on their own, pupils learn quickly. Currently pupils have fewer opportunities to use computers in Class 1 than in other classes.
90. Schemes of work are in skeleton format, but cover all the required aspects at both key stages. Each pupil has a record of the different activities completed, but this is not used to record actual levels of achievement. The school has placed the subject as a major development area in the light of its application for additional funding. The development plan is well considered, and the co-ordinator has a clear sense of the use of information technology across the school and what is needed for improvement. There are imaginative plans to develop a school website. The school has had good financial support from the 'Friends of Jenyns' to purchase additional computers. Pupils in all but the youngest class have access to up to date computers and software.

## **MUSIC**

91. As in the previous report, pupils make good progress in music through the school. By the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave at the age of nine, their standards are broadly in line with national expectations though standards are particularly good in performing. The specialist teacher has excellent subject knowledge and a good understanding about how pupils learn. Consequently, the quality of teaching in lessons is always good. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual development although the constraints of the timetable do not always allow for musical integration and enrichment into the other areas of the curriculum.
92. Pupils enjoy their lessons and gain immense pleasure from making music. They immerse themselves completely in the experiences of, for example, playing untuned percussion instruments and conducting the playing of others. They feel the beat and sense the rhythm, gaining aesthetic pleasure from both listening to others create music and creating it themselves.
93. By the time they leave school, most pupils have a very good sense of rhythm, maintaining their own instrumental line whilst having regard to the underpinning beat and the contributions others are making to the overall performance. They move well in response to music and perform eagerly to their classmates. They describe the music of Saint-Saens' 'Carnival of the Animals' in terms such as 'high', 'low' or 'smooth'.
94. When listening to music, they are aware of changes in dynamics and tempo and they use musical vocabulary with growing confidence. They talk confidently about how music from their own and other cultures such as India makes them feel. They watched a video about structure in dance and showed understanding of musical symmetry.
95. The quality of teaching is good. Teaching builds well upon pupils' earlier learning, although the weekly lessons are short. The teacher uses praise effectively to build pupils' confidence in their



own ability to create music. She has good relationships with the pupils, promoting very good behaviour and attitudes to their work. She makes good demands on the pupils and has high expectations about what they can achieve. She keeps clear records. She discusses her work with the class teachers.

96. Some pupils benefit from learning the violin and the recorder. The annual performances contribute to the pupils' personal development and are highlights in the year.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

97. During the inspection week, it was not possible to observe all aspects of the curriculum for physical education. However, from the lessons observed, evidence indicates that by the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Year 4, standards in games are broadly in line with national expectations though opportunities to practise and refine a sequence of gymnastic activities using apparatus are severely restricted by the absence of a suitable hall and appropriate apparatus. There is clear evidence from planning documents that dance features significantly in the school's curriculum. Pupils learn to swim and all attain the end of Key Stage 2 target of being able to swim competently for at least 25 metres. Findings are similar to those described in the previous inspection report.
98. In the very few lessons seen the quality of teaching was good in both key stages. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and set a good example to pupils by dressing appropriately and leading by example. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage the pupils well throughout lessons. Lessons are well planned and include the essential elements of warming up and cooling down. However, pupils were not seen to be given enough opportunities to observe, discuss and refine their work with each other, and with the class teacher, in order to develop their skills.
99. The progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. They are enthusiastic about their learning. They work purposefully to produce improvement, and make good use of practice and repetition in order to refine performance. They respond well to activities, and show enjoyment in lessons. They work well individually, in pairs and in groups. For example, in an outdoor Year 1 games lesson, pupils concentrated hard on improving their skills of throwing and catching a small ball and worked well together in small groups when practising skills and in team games and team races when they put their skills to use. Concentration was good when working individually and when working with a partner and groups.
100. Since the previous inspection, a policy and scheme of work have been adopted to promote continuity and progression in learning. The co-ordinator has good knowledge of the strengths and areas for development in the subject but has had too few opportunities to monitor in classes or to work alongside colleagues. The school uses its large field well for outside physical education and sporting activities. The pupils enjoy working towards qualifications in a national athletics scheme. There is a good range of small apparatus and the playground is used well. The school strives hard to offset the effects of the unsatisfactory accommodation but the lack of a proper hall or suitable apparatus means that the requirements of the National Curriculum cannot be fully met.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

101. In the previous report, the school had recently adopted the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus. For this September a new syllabus has been introduced, so the school is in an interim period. By the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school, standards in religious education meet the expectations of this previous syllabus. Since September 1999, the status of religious education has been raised to that of a core subject. The school has not taken this curriculum issue sufficiently into account to ensure that attainment in religious education matches the high standards reached in other subject areas. Attainment is also hampered by limited resources and the lack of visits to places of religious interest, other than the local churches. There are no visitors from the other faith communities.

102. In religious education, at Key Stage 1 the pupils learn to explore and respond to human experiences. They draw and write about things that are special to them, for example their first day in school and their birthday. They know that other people have special times. The pupils talk and write about how they feel. With reference to the stories from the Bible, the older pupils imagine how other people feel; for example, when they imagine how the people felt in the time of the flood in the story of Noah, or how Joseph's brothers were jealous of him. The pupils can think and reflect. They express their opinions about different people in the class in a positive way to help build up confidence and self - esteem. They are starting to recognise that there are religious symbols, for example the lit candle, the Cross and the Star of David. When they investigate religious traditions the pupils know that Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and understand the importance of Easter to them. They know that Jesus told a number of stories. They understand the meaning of the word parable and act out stories like The Good Samaritan or The Prodigal Son. They know the moral messages these parables contain. They study Judaism, stories of the Creation and can name the features of a synagogue. Their knowledge and understanding of other world religions, such as the Moslem or Hindu faiths, is more limited. The middle schools have accepted responsibility for teaching a large part of the Key Stage 2 agreed syllabus requirements. Religious education makes a limited contribution to pupils' literacy development. Most of the pupils' work is on worksheets and there are too few opportunities to record their work through writing. Their speaking and listening skills are developing well in class discussions. There are opportunities for spiritual and moral development when they learn about special books, places and people, such as a Hindu Shrine. They discuss moral issues sensibly such as caring for the environment and pollution. There are frequent opportunities to work together and listen and respect the views of others.
103. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Good features include teachers who are secure in their subject knowledge, plan effectively and relate the moral issues to a religious base. During the week of the inspection the books and artefacts with which the school is resourced were not being fully used to enhance the teaching and the learning. Teachers do not yet assess pupils against the attainment targets of the Agreed Syllabus. This leads them to planning work that is not always precisely matched to pupils' current needs. For example, the higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to make the good progress of which they are capable.