

INSPECTION REPORT

BARMSTON VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Washington, Tyne and Wear

LEA area: Sunderland

Unique reference number: 108835

Headteacher: Mrs. C. S. Smith

Reporting inspector: Mrs C McBride
2810

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th March 2000

Inspection number: 191874

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. L. Wanless
Date of previous inspection:	13- 16 January 1997

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Mrs J Overend	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. Pupils' welfare, health and safety. Partnership with parents and carers.
Mr B Ashcroft	Team inspector	Mathematics Music	
Mr M Bowers	Team inspector	Provision for the under-fives Science	
Mr J Hagan	Team inspector	Equal opportunities History Physical education	
Ms S Øyen	Team inspector	English	Quality and range of opportunities for learning.
Mrs L Traves	Team inspector	Geography Religious education	
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The Registrar
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the town of Washington, close to Sunderland, Tyne and Wear. It is a primary school with a nursery and serves pupils between 3 and 11 years. The school is bigger than other primary schools (345 pupils compared with the average size nationally of 226 pupils). 36 children attend part-time in the nursery. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (76% per cent) is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language (0 per cent) is low. The school has identified 62% of pupils as having special educational needs, including statements. This is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs (1.7%) is broadly in line with the national average. The area served by the school is one of considerable social disadvantage. Attainment on entry is very low overall. Pupils frequently move in and out of the school as their family circumstances change.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school, which supports pupils particularly well in achieving good standards in behaviour and personal development. Standards in English, mathematics and science are well below national standards. However, taking into account the numbers of pupils with special educational needs, pupils do as well as those from similar backgrounds. Teaching is satisfactory overall. The headteacher, staff and governors work as an effective team towards agreed improvements. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- High quality provision for children under five, gets them off to a good start at school
- Pupils achieve good standards in personal development; they take responsibility well and their behaviour is good
- A very effective partnership with parents and the community; parents feel welcomed and supported by the school
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics; they also gain confidence
- Head's leadership is strong in directing the work of the school and drawing everyone's efforts together
- The school is good at caring for its pupils; there is excellent practice in child protection; health and safety procedures are very good

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science at 11 years are well below those found nationally
- Higher attainers do not achieve as well as they should in both key stages
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. It is much better in some lessons and in some classes than it is in others

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1997. Since then its progress in addressing the weaknesses identified has been mostly good although some important areas still require improvement. There are now far fewer unsatisfactory lessons as teaching quality has improved. As staff have left, new staff offering valuable skills and expertise have replaced them. Teachers now have clearer guidance on what to teach and how to teach it. The quality of work in reading, writing and number has improved because teachers cover more

ground in lessons by following national guidelines for these. The school has improved its curriculum provision, particularly for information technology, art and design and technology and pupils now achieve the standards of work expected for their age. Less success has been achieved in raising standards in spelling and handwriting and these remain low. The school has put a lot of effort into developing pupils' speaking and listening skills but whilst these have improved, speaking skills are still below average by the time they leave the school.

The most striking improvements have been in pupils' personal development and behaviour. This was an area which the school itself identified and has worked hard to develop. It is now a strength of the school and the positive approaches used by teachers and adults mean that classrooms are orderly places where pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils have benefited through increased confidence and opportunities to express opinions or make suggestions, particularly through the opportunities they have to refer suggestions or problems to the school council. Arrangements for child protection have also improved and these procedures are now of an excellent standard.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	E*	D	E	C	Well above A average above B average
mathematics	E*	D	E	C	Average C Below average D
science	E	E	E*	D	Well below average E

Although these results are below and sometimes well below national averages, they are rising steadily in line with the national trend. 38 per cent of pupils who took the tests in 1999 were identified by the school as having special educational needs. When taking this into account, the school's performance is in line with that of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The school's results are also much lower than national averages because very few pupils achieve higher levels. Some higher attainers do not achieve the standards they could. Average and lower attaining pupils fare better, sometimes making good progress, for example in mathematics in Year 3. There is no significant difference in the standards achieved by boys or girls although the performance of boys in reading and writing has improved since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs cope well with their work and achieve good results considering their identified learning problems.

Children achieve better in reading than in writing at both key stages. Standards in writing are lower because most pupils do not achieve as well as they should in spelling, grammar and presentation. In mathematics, most pupils are competent at making mental calculations and remember their tables well. Better teaching is resulting in a steady rise in standards, particularly at Key Stage 1 although the benefits of this have not yet worked their way through to show in higher test results at 11 years. Results in science are in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. Pupils' have little knowledge of the world around them on entering school and do not gain enough ground in their knowledge of scientific facts. These are below

average, as are their skills in investigating and experimenting. Pupils' work in information technology is average for their age. In religious education they meet the standards required by the local agreed syllabus and in all other subjects, the standard of pupils' work is typical of that seen in other schools.

Children enter the nursery with sparse achievements in many areas of learning. They make up good ground in the nursery and reception classes. By the time they are five, despite high quality teaching, most are still below average in all areas of learning with the exception of physical and creative development.

The school's targets for pupils at 11 years are challenging but realistic, as they take into account its assessment of pupils' achievements in previous years.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are good. They show an interest in their work, concentrate well and work well independently. In nursery and reception, attitudes are very good. Children are eager to learn and settle quickly to activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is good. They are polite, friendly and considerate and move about the school in an orderly, quiet way. They respond well to school rules and conventions.
Personal development and relationships	This is very good. Pupils show sensitivity to the feelings of others and are pleased when other children do well. They are keen to take responsibility and often show initiative. Relationships throughout the school between pupils and adults are very good. The school runs on an understanding of mutual respect between all members of its community. Pupils' involvement with the school council is a particular strength
Attendance	Satisfactory. This is close to the national average. Punctuality is good and there is no unauthorised absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Inspectors judged 11% of teaching to be very good, 29% good, 53% satisfactory and 7% unsatisfactory. Teaching the nursery and reception is consistently good or better and there is high quality teaching by the whole team. Children achieve well because the staff keep regular checks on their progress and adjust work to give more practice or move them on. They are particularly skilled at supporting children's personal and social development. Teaching is satisfactory overall throughout the rest of the school but it is better in some lessons and in some classes than it is in others. For example, there is some very good teaching in one Year 3 class, particularly in mathematics whereas there are weaknesses in mathematics lessons in one Year 6 class. Pupils' progress is linked closely to the quality of teaching. In the classes where teaching is more ordinary, the pace of learning is steady rather than rapid. All teachers cater well for lower attaining pupils and those with special

educational needs. Whilst teaching ensures that pupils make satisfactory progress, it is not of a consistently high enough quality to accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards. Teachers' expectations of what children can do are not always high enough and sometimes they accept standards of work and presentation which are too low. The teaching of reading and writing is satisfactory but overall, there is not enough pace and sense of excitement in literacy lessons. In some lessons, teachers are unsure of how to get across more complicated ideas to children or how to liven up more dull aspects of the work to maintain children's interest. The teaching of number work is better than in reading and writing because teachers prepare more interesting and imaginative lessons. There is some high quality teaching in Year 3. Children are achieving well in mental calculation because they are being asked to explain their answers and look for different ways of working them out. Teachers manage pupils' well and keep a calm and orderly atmosphere in classrooms. This means that at the start of lessons children settle quickly and are ready for work. Most teachers are good at explaining new ideas to their class and at using questions to make children think harder.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Strong emphasis on developing skills in reading, writing and number work. Opportunities for pupils to use, practise and develop skills in other subjects are insufficient overall. Links with the community enrich the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. They are quickly identified and are supported well through programmes of work targeted specifically at their needs. Progress is regularly reviewed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Spiritual development and cultural development are satisfactory. Social development is good. Moral development is very good. The school is good at cultivating pupils' personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. The school provides very good support for pupils with problems. It monitors and promotes good behaviour and attendance very well. Very good practice in child protection and health and safety. There are weaknesses in the way the school keeps an on-going check on pupils' achievements.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and senior staff make a good team and have common goals and a corporate way of working. Monitoring does not focus sharply enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. Commitment and enthusiasm for school improvement is strong.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Supportive group who are very involved with school. Play their part in shaping the direction of the school, discussing its performance and consulting parents on their views.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Has identified many issues raised by the inspection but needs to monitor its teaching more rigorously

The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of the resources it has. There are sufficient suitably qualified staff and learning resources to teach the curriculum. The school's accommodation is spacious, clean and mostly well maintained. The school applies the principles of best value successfully.
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PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy school and like coming • School tries to involve parents, they feel welcome and supported • Pupils are given good support and guidance if there are problems • Receive good information about what children are taught • School is well managed. Teachers and head seen as supportive and helpful • School expects good behaviour and pupils achieve this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children do not have enough homework • There are not enough extra curricular activities

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and inspection findings endorse their positive views. The amount of homework is in line with recommended levels but the school does not always offer enough incentive to ensure that it is returned or completed. The range and number of extra curricular activities are the same as found in many schools although, like many schools, there is more for the oldest pupils particularly in sport. The drama, gymnastics and choir groups have a positive impact on pupils' achievement and the homework club provides additional opportunities for pupils to develop work started in class.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children's achievements on starting school are generally well below average. Although they achieve well in the nursery and reception classes, by the time they are five, most are still below average in all areas of learning with the exception of physical and creative development. Having made a good start, pupils' achievements are never as markedly good throughout the rest of the school although in some classes, their rate of learning increases more than in others. This is directly affected by the quality of teaching. Where teaching is of consistently high quality, the pupils make more gains. Where it is more ordinary, the rate of learning is steady rather than rapid. Throughout the school, mathematics teaching is of better quality than the teaching of reading and writing and this is reflected in pupils' achievements.
2. The school's results for 11-year-olds over the last three years have followed the upward national trend although they have been below, and in some years well below national averages. They keep pace with similar schools in English and mathematics but results in the most recent national tests show the school's performance in science to be in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. This is partly because they do not do enough investigating and experimenting to find out scientific facts for themselves and partly because they find it difficult to express what they know using scientific language.
3. At 7 years, results have been consistently low compared to national figures. Although they have kept in line with national trends in mathematics, results have drifted downwards in reading and writing. At this age, pupils' achievements keep abreast with similar schools in reading but are below in writing and mathematics.
4. Inspection findings indicate that reading standards are better than writing standards at both key stages as writing is affected by weaknesses in spelling, grammar and presentation, particularly at Key Stage 2. Speaking skills are generally below average for many pupils and their often limited knowledge of vocabulary is a further reason why pupils' writing is short of more interesting words or expression. Boys have made a more significant improvement than girls since the last inspection. Their performance was much lower and they have now started to catch up. Also, the school has attempted to stimulate boys' interest in reading with a wider range of books. The picture is one of improvement at Key Stage 1. With a greater depth of work covered in lessons, all pupils' writing skills are developing at a faster rate than in previous years.
5. In mathematics, standards are better at the end of Key Stage 1, where inspection findings indicate that most pupils are in line to meet the average for their age. Teaching in mathematics has improved in the last two years. The greater emphasis placed on developing skills in working mentally with number has begun to have a real impact on results for younger children. Older pupils are still making up lost ground and the effect of better teaching methods is not yet reflected in results at 11 years. At both key stages, higher attaining pupils are not challenged hard enough and work does not push them on as fast as it should. By the time they leave the school, pupils' skills in calculating mental problems have developed well but they are not skilled or confident enough in applying this knowledge to solve practical problems.

6. The school's average scores in all three subjects at 7 and 11 years are further depressed because too few pupils achieve higher levels. At both key stages, average and lower attaining pupils make better headway and generally achieve at a satisfactory pace. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well taking into account their difficulties because they make good progress in reading, writing and number work. With support, they are able to cope with most work undertaken by the rest of the class.
7. Pupils' work in information technology is average for their age at the end of both key stages. In religious education, it meets the levels required by the local agreed syllabus. In all other subjects, the standard of pupils' work is typical of that seen in other schools.
8. The school has set its sights on a continual improvement in results. Although targets are based on assessments of pupils' achievements in previous years, they are nonetheless demanding.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Children under the age of five show very good attitudes to learning. In the nursery they are eager to learn, settle quickly to activities and show respect for classroom rules. By the time they reach reception they help to tidy away, know when to wash their hands and can dress themselves with little help. They work well in groups taking turns fairly. For example, in games lessons when they are practising ball control skills in teams.
10. Children in both key stages show interest in their work and enjoy being in school. They join in class discussions enthusiastically and contribute thoughtful questions or comments. In the majority of lessons they sustain their concentration well, completing their task even when working in groups away from the teacher.
11. The children's good behaviour means that classrooms are ordered and calm places with a good atmosphere for learning. Pupils are polite, friendly and considerate to adults and to each other. They hold doors open for others as a matter of course. Words of thanks for this are often returned by a child replying, "You're welcome!" Children are trustworthy and respond well to school rules and conventions. This is seen clearly in assemblies where they are attentive and respectful. Movement around school is orderly and quiet. Playground behaviour is usually good-natured. A small number of children show poor behaviour but the majority show sensible attitudes to any disruption and are more likely to ignore problems and carry on with their work.
12. The personal development of pupils is very good. In class discussion times, they show sensitivity to the feelings of others and confidently express their own feelings. They show pleasure at the achievements of others and spontaneously applaud good work or effort but also show sympathy as appropriate.
13. Pupils are very keen to take responsibility and will also show initiative in seeking to help others or asking for jobs which are completed conscientiously. The school council is an excellent example of how the school enables pupils to have their ideas valued and to play their part in improving the school. Issues such as bullying are referred to the council by children and there are many instances where an approach by the school council has brought about improvements in behaviour and attitude.

14. The school's attendance is satisfactory. Attendance is near to the national average though this is adversely affected by parents taking family holidays in term time. Punctuality is good and there is no unauthorised absence.
15. Parents show a justifiably high level of satisfaction with the behaviour achieved and the values promoted.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Pupils' rate of learning throughout the school is closely linked to the quality of teaching. The pace of their learning is fastest in the nursery and reception classes. After this good start, it slows or accelerates depending upon how good the teaching is in a particular class or in a particular subject.
17. Under half of teaching is good or better whilst most, although satisfactory, is more ordinary and this is reflected in the pace of pupils' learning. Most teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good or very good and this high quality is maintained throughout each area of learning. In these early years, teachers use interesting activities which excite the children and encourage them to experiment with new ideas and language. A close check is kept on their progress and teachers adjust activities to stretch those who have moved further on or give more practice to those who need it.
18. There is less difference between the quality of lessons in classes of pupils the same age at Key Stage 1, than in the junior classes. In the parallel classes from Years 3 to 6, teaching in one class is often better than in the other. In Year 6 for example, teaching in one class is often good or better and pupils are generally achieving well. In the parallel class it is ordinary at best but unsatisfactory on other occasions. Here, pupils' rate of learning is slowed and they do not achieve as well as they should.
19. A further inconsistency is the quality of teaching in different subjects. For example, teachers are better at teaching mathematics than reading and writing and pupils' skills in mental calculation are improving faster than in other areas of learning. In most classes, numeracy lessons are more stimulating, fast moving and productive than literacy lessons. Much teaching of reading and writing has less spark and pupils are not as fired with enthusiasm.
20. Teachers are finding more interesting ways of teaching the most important ideas in mathematics. Where learning number facts could be dull for pupils, teachers are using lively activities to motivate their class and maintain interest. Pupils are fully involved and teachers make sure that all pupils join in with question and answer sessions. Teaching is particularly good in one of the Year 3 classes. In one lesson observed, the teacher cleverly questioned the pupils to make them explain how they had arrived at the answer to a mental calculation. She encouraged them to compare their methods with other children's. "How did you do that?" she asked one child. When he had explained his method, she asked, "How was that different to the answer the last person gave?" To participate, pupils had to concentrate hard and follow each response given. By working in this way, they learned several methods of calculating to arrive at the same answer.
21. Teachers also use resources well to illustrate particular ideas. Pupils find this helpful and their level of understanding increases as they work on new ideas with practical equipment or watch demonstrations by the teacher. In a Year 4 lesson for example, the teacher used a game to develop pupils' skills of mental calculation. They joined in readily and after several attempts had sharpened their

skills considerably in halving and doubling numbers. At Key Stage 1, teachers use songs to reinforce children's knowledge of number facts.

22. In contrast, teaching in literacy is less lively. Although most lessons are of satisfactory quality, teachers rely too much on explanation rather than giving pupils practical examples of what they mean. This causes problems for older pupils who are trying to understand more complex aspects of written English. For example, pupils in Year 5 class, had difficulty in understanding the difference in the style of language used to write a story and that used to write a report on a science experiment. Although the teacher made many attempts to explain this, the class did not have enough good examples to draw from and made little progress in understanding the idea.
23. Most primary schools are typical in putting most energy and liveliness into the first part of literacy lessons where teachers share books with the class. In many lessons seen at Barmston school, this is more muted. Teachers tend to dwell on aspects such as spelling and grammar rather than stimulating children's interest and appreciation of the richness of the language or the author's choice of words.
24. Teachers' keep a check on pupils' progress but their methods do not give them an accurate enough picture of what children have achieved or where they need to improve. Although they set work according to how they think pupils are doing, the level is not always correct. As a result, most pupils maintain a pattern of steady achievement in reading and writing but their learning rarely accelerates past this pace. Lower attaining pupils and those on the school's register for special educational needs fare better. Records kept on their progress pinpoint more accurately what they can do. They receive good support from teachers and support assistants and develop their reading and writing skills at a quicker rate. Higher attainers do not make the gains that they should, particularly in reading and writing because work does not demand enough of them.
25. In other respects, there are strengths in teaching throughout the school. Teachers have good relationships with their classes. The mutual respect which exists leads to good discipline and behaviour. Lessons are calm and well ordered and work gets off to a prompt start. Most lessons are characterised by teachers using good questioning techniques to help children order their knowledge. For example, in a Year 3 science lesson on materials, the teacher used good questioning to help pupils predict which tights would stretch the most. She focused her questions around what they already knew and had covered in a previous lesson and devised an experiment, which was guided by their answers.
26. Teachers set tasks that pupils can complete at home. Although they keep a check on work which is returned, they tend not to question children who do not complete homework and insufficient incentive or reward is offered to those who do.

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

27. Overall, the school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities for all pupils. The high quality provision for the children in the nursery and reception classes enables them to get off to good start especially in personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics. Similarly, the good provision throughout the school for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. All pupils in all year groups have equal access to the curriculum although higher attaining pupils are not always challenged as hard as they could be.

28. In planning the curriculum, the school gives high priority to the teaching of English and mathematics. Sharper focus is now appropriately placed on the teaching of spelling and number skills. In the nursery and reception classes, much time and careful thought is given to developing the children's listening, speaking and number skills through well planned activities around a common theme which often includes all six areas of learning. Play is valued as a way of learning and good use is made of opportunities for the children to experience and talk about things at first hand. For example, nursery children observed, smelt and touched daffodils as part of looking at how flowers grow.
29. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the school's strategies for teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and number are effective. The programmes of work for English and mathematics largely follow the national framework for daily literacy and numeracy hours. The teachers have used published material to establish a common way of working throughout the school but are now rightly looking to ways to widen the curriculum. Work in history at Year 6 is providing a good model to show how particular reading and writing skills can be developed through using them in another subject. At the moment, this way of working is often overlooked.
30. In many subjects, the curriculum focuses more on pupils' acquisition of facts and less on the development of pupils' skills. In science, design and technology and geography there too few opportunities for pupils to use, practise and develop their skills. When planning for the half term, the teachers do not always identify clearly the skills and specific information they wish the pupils to learn. This is particularly important as many aspects are revisited in different year groups. For example, there is little difference in the art skills shown by Year 3 and Year 5 pupils in working in the style of Van Gogh.
31. Religious education is taught in line with the new locally Agreed Syllabus. Acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements and also form a valuable part of the overall curriculum. The school celebrates pupils' achievement and brings pupils' attention to a wide range of issues. During the inspection, pupils heard about water safety, Commonwealth Day and the play written by the school council.
32. The school is very effective in extending and enriching the curriculum through contact with the community and other institutions. High priority is given to pupils' involvement in projects and in the moves to being recognised as an Eco-school. Each year group makes at least two visits out to places of interest, such as the Wetlands Waterfowl Trust and Arbeia Fort, which give pupils vital chances to experience things at first hand. Visitors bring specialist knowledge and expertise, especially during the Health and Safety week when pupils engage in outdoor pursuits including canoeing and learn about aspects of personal health and safety. Trainee nursery nurses and teachers contribute much to the curriculum and the support of pupils. A joint project with students from Monkwearmouth College enabled pupils' designs to be realised in brick seating areas around school. The school has successfully used the resources of the secondary school to boost pupils' experience and attainment in information technology.
33. Particular strengths lie in the very good provision for moral development and the effective way in which the school promotes pupils' social development. There is a true sense of community and family in the school and in each class. The headteacher takes the lead in upholding high expectations of how pupils should behave and treat others. The pupils understand the strong moral code and the pattern of dealing with inappropriate behaviour. Time is given in assemblies to

reinforce this and the School Council also plays a vital part in judging the behaviour of their peers. Time is set aside each week for pupils and their teachers to openly discuss moral and social issues. For example, Year 2 pupils talked about the value to them of possessions and Year 4 pupils discussed sensibly and sensitively a problem that had arisen at lunchtime. A key strength of these sessions is the way teachers encourage and expect pupils to treat all fairly and responsibly and to show tolerance and respect for others' views.

34. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. School assemblies set a tone of reverence and provide pupils with opportunities for reflection and prayer. Nursery children showed wonder and delight when others constructed high towers which then teetered for several seconds before falling. At Key Stages 1 and 2, there is less provision for pupils to explore, investigate and observe closely. Curriculum topics and visits ensure that pupils gain a sound awareness of their local culture and heritage particularly through work in geography and history. Aspects of cultural diversity and similarity are introduced through English, art, music and religious education but the school places less emphasis on developing pupils' awareness of cultural values.
35. The good provision for pupils' personal development underlies the work of the school. All members of staff work hard to sustain pupils' awareness of what the school expects of them in behaviour, attitude and achievement. There are effective systems to support this and parents rightly value the way the headteacher and all staff foster their children's maturity and sense of responsibility.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school is a very caring supportive community where pupils are happy and secure. The staff know the pupils well and the parents are very satisfied with this aspect. All staff have received child protection training and the coordinator ensures staff are kept aware of issues. The children are taught about keeping themselves safe, for example by not talking to strangers. This aspect of the school's work is greatly improved since the last inspection. All staff have received first aid training. The health and safety committee and all staff are vigilant. Very good use is made of community expertise to assess the school for risks and to teach areas of safety to the children. During the inspection week for example, each class took part in a session on water safety instruction.
37. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good and they help to develop pupils' good attitudes to their work and to each other. This is helped by the consistent manner in which all staff apply the behaviour policy and the skill with which children with behaviour problems are managed.
38. Children know the school rules well and are motivated by the praise and rewards. The classroom behaviour files provide an effective means by which behaviour can be monitored.
39. The procedures to prevent and eliminate bullying are very well thought out. The "dare to share" policy, use of class discussion times, parental links and the involvement of the school council all help to target oppressive behaviour.
40. The school has an agreed way of checking pupils' progress with their work. Test results are analysed and from these, teachers are able to set targets for the next year. However, the information teachers gather from tests is not detailed enough for them to use when planning work. Consequently, they are not as successful at

helping pupils to gain the smaller steps in knowledge and understanding which they need to make to achieve the broader targets.

41. The personal development of each child is carefully recorded. Every member of staff is involved in providing support and advice to pupils. This raises pupils' achievements, especially their attitudes, behaviour and personal development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. This is a school which respects and values the contribution of its parents and tries hard to encourage a good working relationship with them.
43. Parents receive good quality information about the daily life of the school and events through newsletters and personal contact with staff. Parents' evenings provide good opportunities for them to learn about their child's progress and to receive any other information that they require. The school gives guidance to parents on how to help with homework. The family literacy and numeracy courses help the parents to be more closely involved in their children' learning. The school also runs "reading together" and "numbers together" courses to raise parents' confidence in helping their children.
44. Although some end of year reports on pupils are more thorough than others, all of them pinpoint areas that need further effort or support. Parents of children under five receive good advice about how to help their child settle at school and what they will be taught. They receive a comprehensive report at the end of year on how their child has progressed. Parents of children with special needs are contacted regularly and kept well informed of their child's progress.
45. The school has successfully encouraged some parents to help out in school. They help by hearing readers or supporting children at work on computers, art and maths activities. The school is currently running a 'Parents in School' course and this has extended the knowledge and expertise of parent helpers.
46. Parental views are regularly sought and surveys have been sent out on a variety of aspects such as the home-school agreement and the forth-coming breakfast club. Many parents feel justifiably, that the school is a great source of support for themselves and their children. Confidence among parents in the school and the equality of education it provides is high.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The school is well led and managed. The head teacher is a strong motivator of staff and pupils. She provides the driving force behind many of its efforts to improve by drawing together the efforts of the whole staff team and pointing them in the same direction. This is a school where there is a shared commitment to improvement and a good basis for moving forward with developments in the future.
48. The business of staff development is taken very seriously and the school recently gained the 'Investors in People Award'. This is a well-deserved recognition of the systems which the school has in place. These ensure that all members of the school community plan and undertake programmes of personal training and professional development. The quality of education offered by the school benefits in many ways. For example, high quality work is carried out with pupils with poor patterns of behaviour. Staff have been trained in how to handle difficult situations whilst preserving the self-esteem of the child and a calm working environment for others in the class. The deputy headteacher is an excellent exemplar in using this approach.
49. Subject co-ordinators and the headteacher have been observing lessons and checking the quality of teaching in different subjects. As a result, they have been noting some ways in which lessons can be improved. However, their observations have not been sharp enough in getting to the heart of why children learn at a faster rate in some lessons than in others.

50. Governors work closely with the school. They are a very supportive group who know the school and its pupils well. Many governors are regular visitors to the school and some work in the school on a voluntary basis. This gives them a good insight into the school's strengths and areas for improvement and they are able to play an active role in shaping its future direction. Together with the Head, they apply best principles of management to the school successfully. For example, they discuss the school's performance in relation to local and national test results and seek to obtain best value for money spent. Parents are regularly consulted about proposed changes or new initiatives and the views of children are also taken into account through the school council.
51. The school runs smoothly from day to day and clerical staff provide an excellent service in dealing with all administrative matters with great efficiency. Most information is generated using computers. Documents, for example those sent out to parents, are of good quality.
52. The school's finances including specific grants, such as those for special needs, are carefully administered. The last auditor's report noted that the school's systems of financial management were very efficient. Although there is a large budget surplus, this has been accumulated to cushion the effect of reduced funding due to a smaller number of pupils on roll from September 2000.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. To further improve the quality of education offered by the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should draw up an action plan to address the following issues:

(1) Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:

- raising teachers' expectations of what children should achieve, particularly higher attainers
- providing more opportunities in lessons for pupils to practise and apply skills and knowledge
- make more accurate assessments of pupils' progress and use these to set targets for the next stages of work

Paragraph references: 5; 24; 27; 30; 40; 81; 85; 88; 103; 105; 108; 109; 123; 135.

(2) Further improve the quality of teaching at both key stages by:

- sharing existing good practice
- using a greater range teaching methods which involve pupils in activity rather than in listening
- increasing teachers' subject knowledge, particularly in reading and writing
- making sharper observations of teachers at work to pinpoint why pupils learn at a faster rate in some lessons than in others
- being clearer about the most important teaching points in each lesson

Paragraph references: 1; 16; 18; 19; 22; 23; 30; 49; 76; 81; 82; 95; 103; 115; 155; 160.

In addition to these issues, the following less important issue should be considered for inclusion in the school's post-inspection action plan.

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in information technology by using them in other subjects.

Paragraph references: 84; 132; 138 -147.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

75

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

82

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11	29	53	7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	18	327
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		249

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	26	184

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	42
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	52

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6
National comparative data	5.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	21	27	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	13
	Girls	17	21	19
	Total	29	33	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	60 (81)	69 (70)	67 (72)
	National	82 (80)	82 (81)	71 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	14
	Girls	21	18	21
	Total	35	32	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (87)	67 (87)	79 (91)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	20	23	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	8	9
	Girls	10	11	9
	Total	19	19	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	44 (56)	44 (50)	42 (62)
	National	68 (64)	68 (58)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	10	9
	Girls	13	13	11
	Total	19	23	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	44 (50)	53 (56)	47 (71)
	National	68 (64)	69 (64)	75 (70)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. First bracket = 1999 second bracket = 1998

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.

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	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	2	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	149

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33

Number of pupils per FTE adult	18
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	601,782
Total expenditure	574,090
Expenditure per pupil	1,755
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,401
Balance carried forward to next year	50,093

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	327
Number of questionnaires returned	67

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	48	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	37	58	1	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	51	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	54	21	3	7
The teaching is good.	52	45	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	51	7	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	43	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	39	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	45	46	7	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	45	49	0	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	43	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	40	13	4	9

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

54. Provision for pupils under five is a strength of the school. There has been good improvement in the standards of provision identified in the previous report. The school has a 42-place nursery with all pupils attending half-day sessions organised as a morning class and an afternoon class of 21 children each. There are two reception classes of 20 and 19 children. At the time of the inspection in the nursery 16 children were aged 4; 12 were aged between 3 years 6 months and 3 years 11 months. The remaining children were 3 years of age. In the reception class half the children had not reached their fifth birthday.
55. On-going nursery records show a good overall rate of progress in all areas of learning although the assessment results indicate that many children are still below what is expected nationally when they leave the nursery. A large number of children have special needs including 17 with speech problems and 25 with problems associated with literacy, numeracy or behaviour.
56. By the time they enter the reception classes almost all the children have made good progress and are able to work with others. They sustain their interest and attention and form positive relationships with adults. 16 children are identified with special needs in the two reception classes. They experience difficulties with language skill acquisition and mathematics. By the time they leave reception, in most areas of learning, about one third of the children are meeting all the expected learning outcomes. However, in language and literacy, less than this proportion attain these levels. In personal and social development and physical development almost all achieve the expected level. Considering the very low levels of attainment recorded when the children enter the nursery, this represents good progress overall and very good progress in personal and social development, physical, and creative development.
57. Key factors in the continued strength of the school in raising standards for children under five are the high quality of teaching by the whole team, the relevant, stimulating and challenging activities provided and the way in which adults keep a careful eye on the progress children make. Each child has an individual record of their progress, which is updated regularly and this guides teachers' planning for activities. There are very good relationships formed between adults and children. The Foundation Stage is well managed with very good liaison between the nursery and reception classes and staff regularly work in both areas. There are good links with parents.

Personal and Social development.

58. This is given high priority in both the nursery and reception classes. Children's achievements are well below average for their age when they enter the nursery but they quickly learn the routines and begin to share equipment when working in groups. They confidently follow the agreed rules for the number of children working at the various activities and they can make choices. Many are able to either play on their own or alongside each other where they take their turns and share resources fairly. When preparing for physical education activities they confidently take off their shoes and socks and automatically wash their hands when they have finished playing in the sand. There are very good relationships

with all adults who are totally involved with the children, carefully introducing new activities and praising when children work hard and concentrate. Pupils are taught to behave in appropriate ways and become aware of what is right and wrong.

59. The reception class builds purposefully on the very good start made in the nursery and children show a very good response to the activities planned for them. They are attentive during listening time and respond positively to the teachers' instructions. They display open and friendly relationships with each other. They are keen and interested in the chosen activities with many children persevering to complete difficult tasks. This is a direct response to the interesting and challenging teaching and the respect shown by all adults for the pupils. Many children, in both the nursery and reception class, work in the role-play areas without direct supervision by adults. Children are given responsibility to record their involvement in specific activities by signing the weekly record sheet. This successfully promotes the development of self-respect and responsibility. There is a happy atmosphere and children enjoy themselves.
60. All staff working in the under fives classes have a very good understanding of individual children's needs and plan activities which are challenging and achievable. Good progress in this area is a direct result of very good teaching where all staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and their ability to work, play and co-operate with each other. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report.

Language and Literacy.

61. Children's achievements in language and literacy are well below the average expectations for children of this age. Although they make good progress particularly in speaking and listening skills, initially they are slow to begin talking. However, spoken language is better by the time children enter the reception classes. The nursery staff work purposefully to involve children in discussion and to increase their vocabulary, continually encouraging them to talk about what they are doing.
62. Despite this very good start, a significant number of children enter the reception classes with low levels of vocabulary or lacking the ability to express themselves fluently or engage in discussion to talk about what they have been doing. Almost all the children in the reception classes are able to write their name, but few have developed a clear style of letter formation. Good teaching of early writing skills, forming letters in sand, under writing and tracing are all used by teachers to help children improve their writing. All children regularly enjoy listening to stories read to them. They listen carefully and attentively. Very good use is made of the recommended methods of teaching for the literacy hour in both the nursery and reception classes to introduce children to reading. The younger children know that words carry meaning and many read the story along with the teacher. All children know where to begin a story and many are able to sequence the plot by analysing the picture illustrations. Some more advanced children in reception are beginning to write words that are correctly spelt or have many letters in the correct order. They read simple sentences in their books and recognise words out of context. The majority of children can hold a book correctly and turn the pages. However, only a minority choose to use the writing corner or choose books. Adults regularly work alongside children during these activities and question them skilfully about the events in the stories. In the reception classes a significant number of children have special needs and are slow to gain the necessary skills.

63. All staff working with children in the Foundation Stage have high expectations and work hard using a very good variety of techniques to teach early phonics and rhyming words in a challenging and interesting manner. For example, when children are involved in role-play purchasing items in the garden centre as shop assistants, they write receipts. They are continually introduced to new scientific vocabulary when they label the parts of plants on diagrams and sketches. They are encouraged to write simple sentences on the computer. However, well below average numbers of children are in line to achieve the expected learning outcomes in reading and writing skills at the age of five.

Mathematics.

64. Children's overall attainment is below average in both the nursery and reception classes although they make good progress in these early years. In the nursery, almost all count together in groups and good teaching challenges children to learn the value of individual numbers through sorting objects. Teachers use methods recommended for the numeracy hour, for example to teach sequencing through counting songs, and this is very effective. Because teachers keep a careful eye on how children are progressing, they can single out the more advanced to work with the teacher attempting more demanding tasks. The rate of learning in lessons is very good. For example, children begin to understand that an array of socks of the same size and colour, hanging on a clothes line, is a pattern and the more advanced pupils begin to create patterns using coloured beads in a recurring sequence according to their shape and colour.
65. In the reception class children accurately count in two sets of cubes as they begin to learn about addition and accurately calculate three cubes counting on two more. With help, more advanced children record this process in the form of horizontal sums such as $3+2=5$, showing secure knowledge of early addition of numbers to 7. Some children are beginning to use the techniques of putting one number in their head and counting the other number on. More able children can write the numbers to 10 without help. All children are encouraged to use mathematical language when describing their activities and good use is made of stories that include the ordering of numbers.
66. The quality of teaching is always good and often very good. A very good learning environment is provided. Classroom assistants and support assistants are all well informed and work as a team to stimulate, motivate and guide the children. They encourage the children to be part of the learning process and there are special moments of wonder when a child suddenly realises that when he forms a tower of $2+5$ blocks they are the same height as the one the adult has prepared. Very good progress is made and, at the time of the inspection, one third of the children were working independently achieving the expected learning outcomes. However, one child in six has special needs and works at lower levels of achievement within the subject.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World.

67. Children make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are offered a good range of experiences to support their learning. For example, they draw sketch maps of the school garden and their routes of exploration and know that fir cones grow on trees. In the nursery they observe the changing features of growing plants, observing roots and shoots when cress

seeds and beans are grown in cotton wool or on the sides of clear plastic cylinders supported by moist paper towels. They learn that the roots take up water and predict that, if the water were coloured blue, the daffodils would change from yellow to blue. They use computers well to support their learning and can control the mouse competently.

68. Children in the reception classes sustain this very good progress. They begin to recognise that life was different in past times. They compare photographs of classrooms in Victorian times with their own. They identify both similarities and differences to note that both classrooms have chalkboards but recognise that the tables were different in Victorian times and that some classes contained girls only. They carry out fieldwork in the nearby historical village of Washington and draw old street furniture. Early geographical skills are reinforced by the inclusion of the walking routes taken around the local area. Many pupils confidently use the computer to support their learning, developing their mouse skills to highlight choices of answers and erase the alternatives. As part of their scientific investigations, the children study the effect of water or its absence on the growth of carrot tops. However, in spite of the very good progress made in the Foundation Stage, a less than average number of children are in line to attain the expected learning outcomes by the time they are five years old.
69. Teaching is always good and often very good. Adults are always available to support children's language. This is because the nursery teacher deploys staff carefully and ensures that all activities have an adult helper to guide children and interact with them.

Physical Development.

70. Children's achievements are similar to what is typical for most young pupils when entering a nursery and they make very good progress. They use the secure outdoor play area which enables children to develop gross motor skills, showing an awareness of space and riding toys with confidence. The nursery children move round the hall confidently, clapping to instructions, travelling and following their own routes, being mindful of other children, skipping, jumping, walking and running. They develop good levels of co-ordination moving round the hall, balancing beanbags or other items of small apparatus on their head, arm or shoulder. Children in the reception class confidently travel along and round the apparatus in the hall using both hands and feet. They climb, balance and stretch responding confidently to the challenge of the teaching and the inviting apparatus. Many children are keen to volunteer to demonstrate their movement and control. This is used effectively by teachers to extend the performance of the classes. There is carefully planned provision of construction kits between the nursery and reception classes. More advanced kits in the reception classes enable pupils to use plastic tools to join components to assemble 'cameras', 'video machines', towers, furniture and a beanstalk. This means that pupils develop manipulative skills and finger eye co-ordination in a systematic way. Teaching is good and often very good. All adults understand the needs of young children in this area and enthusiastically join in the activities.

Creative Development.

71. Children's achievements are in line with what is expected of pupils of this age. In the nursery they use percussion instruments with confidence to explore sounds.

They accurately clap the rhythm of their names and make good progress to use wooden blocks, scrapers and bells to tap out the rhythm of chosen words. They confidently illustrate the events in the story of Jack and the Beanstalk by using the instruments to create high, low, soft, loud, long and short sounds. They develop their singing skills and regularly join in singing activities and are able to follow, repeat and memorise words of school rhymes. Children in both the nursery and reception classes make good use of a range of construction kits to create imaginative structures. They are actively involved in creative role-play. The children in the nursery act out the roles of cooking, sharing a meal and tidying away. In the reception classes, they organise and operate a garden centre as part of a topic on growth. They effectively work in pairs, involving themselves in imaginative play to create stories about an adventure on a mysterious island. The children sketch and paint using an interesting range of art materials. The younger children paint self-portraits, confidently applying paint to paper. They sketch everyday items, drawing shoes, faces, and figures of classmates, historical street furniture and buildings using a good range of media. Adults are skilled in linking these creative development activities to other areas of learning. For example, the identification of rhymes with words develops their early awareness of letter sounds. The role-play activities encourage their speaking, listening and personal development skills and the rhyming songs teach pupils the sequence of numbers when they are counting. By the time they are five, many pupils are achieving the expected outcomes in this area of learning.

72. Within teaching there is a good balance between learning activities which offer children a choice and play which is guided by adults.

ENGLISH

73. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are lower than average, especially in writing. In all aspects of English, standards could be higher particularly at Key Stage 2. Higher attaining pupils are not all doing as well as they should and boys are making faster progress than girls. Only a minority of pupils are attaining the standard expected for their age. Standards in reading are slightly better than those in writing.
74. Despite the good start in the nursery and reception classes, most pupils start Key Stage 1 with a limited awareness and knowledge of reading and writing. Many are only just beginning to read and write independently and their work is more typical of younger children. By the end of Key Stage 1, however, pupils have made good progress and many are achieving well, although their attainment is lower than expected for their age. The focussed teaching in the literacy hours has accelerated progress in reading and writing. Teachers cover more ground in lessons and pupils read a wider range of books. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is well on course to reach its targets for the seven year olds in both reading and writing.
75. Since the last inspection standards have risen slightly. This is most marked in the attainment of the boys who have started to catch up with the better performance of girls. Whilst several points for improvement raised in the last report have been addressed successfully, others remain concerns. The range and number of books for pupils and support materials for teachers has been much improved, particularly in the teaching of reading and to interest boys more. This has been beneficial in developing younger pupils' awareness of letters and sounds and in ensuring that older pupils, particularly boys, read a wider range of literature. Action taken to

raise the standard of spelling has been less effective especially at Key Stage 2 where pupils continue to make errors even when copying.

76. Standards in speaking and listening are below average throughout the school. This weakens the quality of pupils' work in all subjects, especially in reading and writing. Many pupils, but more especially boys, fail to respond instantly to questions and instructions and often need things to be repeated. Year 6 pupils' listening skills are generally satisfactory but their speaking skills less so. Pupils listen attentively when their interest is caught. They chat easily with one another but many lack, or are reluctant to use, the more formal language needed to explain succinctly or to justify their opinions. A small number have a ready facility with words and phrases and use this well to offer definitions and to liven up their writing.
77. Standards in reading are below average but most pupils are achieving at a steady pace. Given their low starting point, pupils achieve well, particularly at Key Stage 1 where they receive support from their families in reading daily. Most pupils enjoy reading. They talk about a few favourite authors but often say they read few books. Although many classroom displays include information books, there are few questions or tasks to guide pupils' reading. Pupils are being taught reading skills such as scanning to find particular words. Less is done to develop skills in drawing deeper meaning from what they read or comparing authors' styles.
78. Many Year 6 pupils read fluently, accurately and with a good understanding of the plot. Not all however are guided by punctuation or read aloud with good expression. In reading stories and non-fiction, such as excerpts on the first Olympic games, many pupils lack the skills to skim texts quickly for meaning and often gloss over words they do not know. Although most have basic alphabetic skills, pupils often need support in using dictionaries and thesauruses.
79. Writing standards are low at the end of Key Stage 2. In many classes, pupils sigh when writing is mentioned and few take real pride in their work. Year 6 pupils' writing varies considerably with only a very small percentage of pupils writing of the quality expected for their age. This is partly due to pupils' low awareness of how to structure their work but mainly due to their inaccurate use of punctuation, errors in spelling, inconsistent handwriting and poor presentation. Pupils often write as they speak and do not use the appropriate form of language for the task. When asked, pupils show knowledge of how to punctuate sentences but they do not apply this consistently in practice. Speech marks, commas and apostrophes are often used inappropriately. Pupils make errors even when writing out corrected work. For example, in their commentaries on food chains, pupils made unnecessary errors in "vegtables" and "preagnant" In their stories, the better writers use paragraphs and interesting words and phrases. They show a sound awareness of how to construct a plot and how to create a sense of drama. Similarly in writing a promotional leaflet, a few pupils showed an awareness of appropriate style in using phrases like "Have a rest by our ...".
80. There is evidence that pupils' writing skills are improving at Key Stage 1. Year 2 pupils are proud of the words they can spell, generally like writing and are willing to have a go. They write in sentences which are most often correctly punctuated and a few are beginning to use joined writing. In stories, some use capital letters for effect as in the voice of Father Bear in a retelling of the story of Goldilocks. In all year groups, pupils have had too little experience of word processing and planning and revising their work on screen.

81. In each class, there is a high proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs, often in literacy. These pupils make good progress when the teaching takes their specific needs and targets into account. This is best seen in Year 3 where lower attaining pupils are taught reading and writing strategies. The small group situation and focussed work is lifting their self-confidence and helping them to make good progress in identifying new words and in spelling. Pupils respond very well to the praise and encouragement given and try hard.
82. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall at both key stages. Whilst the teaching ensures pupils make satisfactory progress, it is ordinary and not of a consistently high enough quality to accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are not always high enough especially at Key Stage 2.
83. In all year groups, the teachers manage the pupils well and use a good range of techniques to keep a calm atmosphere and to focus pupils' attention on the class book or to draw them into the discussion. The teacher's miming of a nursery rhyme caught the attention of her Year 1 class and Year 4 pupils concentrated well on scanning writing about "The Great Plague" to find key words. Literacy hours, however, often lack sparkle, good pace and a sense of excitement in looking at and using language. Too often, opportunities are missed to use the chosen book to discuss word meanings, spellings and author style. Not all teachers are secure enough in their knowledge of how to teach reading and writing, particularly more difficult aspects of language with older pupils. Overall, too many errors are made in spelling when marking books or on class displays.
84. Many teachers rely too heavily on commercial materials to provide the content for their lessons and do not identify explicitly enough what pupils need to learn or what they need to do to teach it effectively. This affects pupils learning. For example, it often means that teachers do not pinpoint the key characteristics of different types of writing, such as explanatory text or stories. As a result, pupils have no models for their own work and do not know what to do to improve their writing. In better quality lessons, teachers explain carefully how different authors plan their work. In a successful Year 4 lesson, the teacher used a grid to help pupils see how the story of Cinderella was constructed. Pupils began to comment on details, went on to concentrate really hard and produced much better first paragraphs than in the previous lesson.
85. Few plans show how information technology will be used to support the pupils' learning and too many group tasks involve the completion of exercises. Occasionally pupils waste time copying work into their books. During the inspection, several teachers reflected on what had been successful or unsuccessful elements in their lessons. In some cases, they altered their planning to include more practical activities. For example, in one Year 2 lesson, pupils had not progressed as well as the teacher had hoped in learning about words containing "er", "ir" or "ur" sounds. When Year 2 pupils stuck paper strips under the sounds in the words, their work rate increased and the teacher was able to see where pupils were merely looking at letters rather than thinking about the sound.
86. The records teachers keep on pupils' strengths and weaknesses in listening, speaking, reading and writing are not accurate enough. They are often too generous in their assessments of how well pupils are doing and not clear enough about what individuals need to learn next.

87. Through observing the work of other teachers, the co-ordinator is aware of some of the weaknesses in the teaching of writing and is developing support materials to assist other staff. However, the reasons why pupils learn at a faster rate in some lessons rather than in others have not been identified clearly enough.

MATHEMATICS

88. Inspection findings indicate that standards are below average for eleven year olds and average for seven year olds.
89. Since its last inspection the school has successfully taken steps to improve mathematics, particularly computation in Key Stage 1. This has been achieved by the implementation of national guidelines for teaching mathematics which place a higher emphasis on developing pupils' skills of mental calculation. However, more challenging work still needs to be set for the higher attaining pupils in both key stages, to enable them to progress and reach their expected levels. For example, similar problems were being set for pupils in Year 3 as were being attempted in Year 6. At the time of the last inspection pupils were not using or applying their mathematical knowledge to practical situations well enough. This has now been remedied and more opportunities are provided for children to solve problems and use their knowledge of number facts more often in other lessons.
90. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils are developing satisfactory skills in numeracy and are competent with number bonds. For example, they can add and subtract mentally numbers up to 20 and know that $9 + 4 = 13$ and $13 - 9 = 4$ and $13 - 4 = 9$. They are able to count in sequences of 2, 5, 10, and recognise odd and even numbers. They have some understanding of the value of digits in the tens and units columns. Some higher attainers can work successfully with numbers up to 1000.
91. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of the properties of shapes. For example, they recognise and can name common two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and know some of their properties. They can recognise right angles and have some knowledge of simple fractions, knowing that $\frac{1}{2}$ of 20 = 10 or $\frac{1}{4}$ of 8 = 2. The majority of children can recognise o'clock or half past the hour and can convert pence to pounds.
92. By the end of Key Stage 2 higher attaining pupils have developed a secure knowledge of multiplication tables up to 12. The majority of pupils have some understanding of the value of digits in larger numbers and know what happens to a number when it is multiplied by 10 or 100. When studying shape and space, they understand perimeter and can use a simple formula to find the area of regular shapes. Pupils' mathematical vocabulary is developing well and they can define terms such as prime number, factor, digit or multiple. They have some knowledge of fractions, but are less confident in knowing the relationship between those fractions and their equivalent decimal or percentage. They can recognise different angles such as obtuse or acute and most can construct these using a protractor. Although they have some knowledge of the 24 hour clock when reading timetables, most pupils are unsure of how to convert these readings to am. or pm. times.
93. Although there are one or two unsatisfactory lessons, there is an equal proportion of very good lessons and the majority of teaching is satisfactory or good. The best quality was seen in a Year 3 class, where the teacher has considerable expertise in teaching mathematics. Lessons in this class are characterised by good questioning techniques to bring out the children's previous knowledge and reinforce number facts. Children are encouraged to explain their method of calculation. For example, in one lesson pupils spent time in the main activity going over the steps needed to solve a word problem involving money. The teacher discussed with them the type of calculation they needed to undertake and they offered their own methods. Higher attaining pupils are given work which matches

their ability. All pupils receive work which challenges them and lessons move at a fast pace.

94. Two unsatisfactory lessons were seen in Years 5 and 6. In both cases, the rate of learning was too slow because work was not matched well enough to pupils' needs and they made few gains in knowledge. Teachers tried to cover too many ideas at once and pupils were not working on the most important ones. In these instances, pupils became bored during the lesson and as their interest waned the pace of learning slowed and too little progress was made.
95. A strength of the teaching is the mental arithmetic sessions throughout the school. Children are developing improved numeracy skills when specific strategies and methods are taught and opportunities are given to reinforce number skills.
96. Children are encouraged to explain their answers and talk about different methods of calculation. However, in the more ordinary teaching, this sometimes tends to slow down the pace of the lesson. Too much time is spent discussing answers and explaining tasks and not enough time is spent on practising. For example, in a Year 2 class the children had to stop work before they had finished their written tasks because the teacher spent too much time at the start of the lesson giving out the resources and explaining the tasks.
97. Throughout the school, children with special educational needs are generally well supported by their class teachers. Classroom assistants are effectively deployed in enabling these pupils to make good progress in building their understanding and confidence.
98. The subject co-ordinator leads the subject well. Lessons are observed and teachers' planning is checked. From this information, the co-ordinator identifies aspects of teaching which require improvement. As a result of this and by using her own expertise, she guides and supports colleagues well and the quality of mathematical teaching has improved.

SCIENCE.

99. Inspection findings indicate that in Year 6 and Year 2, standards are below the national average with few pupils working at higher levels.
100. When pupils enter the school, their knowledge of scientific facts is weak. High quality teaching enables them to achieve well in the nursery and reception classes and begin to build up knowledge about scientific ideas such as growth and changes. This good pace of learning drops to a more steady rate and overall, it remains like this due to teaching which is more ordinary than good throughout the rest of the school.
101. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound understanding of many aspects of science. For example, they know that to be healthy they need to eat a balanced diet. They use accurate scientific vocabulary and know that protein helps them grow and carbohydrate gives them energy. In the dining room, they apply their knowledge to their own diets and accurately check whether they are receiving a balanced menu. Higher attaining pupils are aware of the effects of a good diet and know that milk helps make their teeth and bones form and grow.
102. Younger pupils investigate materials, sounds, flowers and food through their senses of touch, smell and hearing. They record their preferences by completing key words against their observations and develop a sound knowledge of the reasons why plants grow, how objects and water change when they are heated.

They record their successful investigations into electrical circuits using bulbs, wire and batteries.

103. Many pupils enjoy their science, concentrating to finish their work and usually taking part in discussions where they share ideas effectively. Teachers question pupils well and this helps them to gain further understanding and explain what they know. Lessons include specific introductions during which the teacher explains new ideas or goes over what has been done in the previous lesson to refresh pupils' knowledge. Teachers have secure knowledge and in this key stage, it enables them to set up challenging activities to promote investigative work. However, some lower attaining pupils take too long to record their work because tasks are too complex.
104. By the end of Key Stage 2, the levels of knowledge gained by two out of three pupils is below national averages. The curriculum covers the areas of life processes, materials and physical processes, but generally teaching is not lively enough and lessons do not provide enough opportunities to enable pupils to gain the skills and competences to investigate and experiment. This was the reason for the unsatisfactory quality of a lesson seen with a Year 6 class.
105. The oldest pupils have a sound knowledge of life and living processes. Lessons in these aspects, for example in relation to the human body are supported by a good range of large models of teeth and moulds of gums where pupils can identify molars, incisors and canine teeth and associate their shapes with their function. Teachers are good at explaining scientific principles such as the presence of acid attack and resulting tooth decay. They reinforce this work well in other aspects, for example through pupils' studies in personal, health and social education.
106. However, although they explain ideas clearly, teachers do not develop pupils' learning well enough through including opportunities for them to experiment and investigate for themselves. For example, opportunities to include investigations to model tooth decay are not realised. This is a significant weakness in the teaching in some junior classes. It is the main reason why pupils do not achieve as well as they might. In other lessons the rate of progress is slowed because teachers' expectations are too low. Many pupils already have secure knowledge of the work they are covering and by repeating it, they do not gain new knowledge.
107. In the better quality lessons, teachers have secure scientific knowledge and include probing questioning to help pupils identify what they have to do to ensure that there is a fair test. Consequently, in some junior classes, pupils develop a satisfactory knowledge of what constitutes a fair test and a sound understanding of some scientific ideas. For example, Year 4 pupils are aware that gravity is a force and that when they pull a shoe along a surface friction is created and that the force needed to overcome friction can be measured. Pupils work well together in small groups, taking time to record tables of results and analyse them using bar charts.
108. The teaching in some parts of lessons is better than other parts. Teachers are generally clear about the key facts which the class need to learn in the lesson. They give very well paced demonstrations, which include both revision and questioning to help pupils recall and organise their knowledge. For example, the youngest pupils in the junior classes investigated the stretchiness of materials. In one lesson, during the initial discussion, pupils were keen to share their knowledge with the class. Many pupils responded positively to these enthusiastic beginnings and showed sound knowledge of the qualities of materials, using terms such as 'absorbent', 'hard', 'flexible' and 'transparent'.

109. However, the lesson relied on a demonstration technique with the teacher organising the investigation to discover the stretchiness of tights. This did not enable pupils to think up their own ideas or devise their own tests.
110. Teachers' assessments of pupils' progress do not give them a clear enough picture of how well pupils, particularly higher attainers are doing. As a result, higher attaining pupils are rarely challenged and this is leading to an unnecessary degree of under-achievement among them.
111. Leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. Teachers' planning is checked regularly and this has resulted in the school realising that too little experimentation or investigation by pupils was being planned for lessons. New guidelines have been introduced to help identify opportunities for investigations and to ensure that pupils do not repeat work which they have already covered. Observations of teachers at work however, are not identifying the reason why some lessons are of better quality than others.

ART

112. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection. Evidence was also drawn from sampling pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils. Teachers' plans were also scrutinised.
113. Standards in art are typical of most schools, although they vary between classes, in line with levels of teacher confidence and expertise. Progress across the school is satisfactory overall for all groups of pupils.
114. The subject had significant weaknesses at the last inspection and considerable progress has been made in addressing these. Standards in painting are now satisfactory. For example, pupils handle brushes with more confidence and undertake work in a wider range of styles. Colour mixing is now done successfully at both key stages and pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1 are beginning to recognise styles of artists, such as Monet and Seurat.
115. Pupils' strongest achievements at both key stages are in observational drawing and in their knowledge of the work of other artists. Noteworthy pieces of work include paintings in the style of Kandinsky by Year 5, observational pastel drawings by Year 6 and some very good painting in the style of Van Gogh by Year 3. In Key Stage 1, the youngest children have produced some good drawings of plant forms, as a result of a local walk. Year 2 pupils have produced very good work in a variety of media in the style of Mondrian, including 3D versions of this painting style.
116. Teaching is satisfactory, with good attention to techniques and a ready encouragement for pupils to experiment. Explanations are well phrased, such as when a Year 5 teacher described the effect of impressionist painting as 'Just like a quick glance at a scene'. A weakness in the teaching seen was the lack of demonstration. This slowed down pupils' initial progress, as they struggled to explore what was required of them, for example, when they painted trees in impressionist styles.
117. The curriculum for art is satisfactory overall, but it is stronger in drawing and painting than in three-dimensional work. Although classes use clay, and Year 6 have made good quality tiles and vases, there is little use of sculpture or printing evident in display. Sketchbooks are not used well to develop pupils' ideas, as they do not feature experimental work or varied techniques.

118. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has supported colleagues with advice and ideas for teaching to the schools scheme of work, and has set realistic priorities for improvement.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

119. No lessons were observed during the inspection. Evidence is drawn from scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers.
120. Standards in design and technology are typical of those found in other schools and all groups of pupils make satisfactory progress across the school. This is an improvement since the first inspection, when standards varied from satisfactory to poor.
121. The main improvements include better access to tools and equipment, a more systematic programme to build pupils' skills and more effective management of the subject.
122. The introduction of a nationally recommended scheme of work has helped the staff to plan a well-balanced range of experiences for pupils. This has helped to develop their skills in designing, making and evaluating to a satisfactory level.
123. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 have designed, made and tested simple boats using a variety of joining techniques. By Year 3, pupils have made a range of photo frames having paid careful attention to the fitness for purpose of their design. These have been well constructed and pupils have considered how well they met the design brief. By Year 5, pupils have made more challenging products, For example, they work co-operatively to build bridge structures.
124. Within this broad range of experiences however, there are still some weaknesses. Design drawings do not contain enough detail about construction methods and evaluations do not refer sufficiently to how well products serve their purpose. Teachers record the type of work pupils have covered, but do not keep a close enough check on the skills they are developing. This leads to insufficient additional challenge for the oldest pupils to stretch them beyond what they have achieved in lower juniors. The rate at which they improve their skills through practice, slows in the older junior classes.
125. The subject is being well managed by a recently appointed co-ordinator. The quality of pupils' work is now being regularly checked and any issues arising are raised with staff. Current targets for the subject are being met and the co-ordinator has identified clear priorities for future attention.

GEOGRAPHY

126. No teaching of geography was seen during the inspection. Evidence has been drawn from sampling pupils' work, teachers planning and from discussion with pupils and teachers.
127. Standards in geography are similar to those found in most schools. The oldest pupils can name all the continents and oceans of the world and locate them on a globe. They understand compass direction and can find places on a map using co-ordinates. More able pupils can identify features such as the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn and lines of latitude and longitude.
128. At Key Stage 1, all pupils are learning at a satisfactory rate. However, at Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 6 do not spend enough time studying geography and developing geographical skills. This limits the progress of more able pupils, in particular.
129. Since the last inspection, there have been some improvements in the subject. Resources have been updated and a nationally recommended scheme of work

has recently been introduced. This has helped teachers to plan a more balanced programme of work for their pupils, but it is not yet being used to full effect in all classes. It is working best at Key Stage 1 and in Years 4 and 5 at Key Stage 2.

130. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 are able to talk about their own local area through work they have carried out on their own local village of Barmston and of neighbouring Washington. They can identify the countries that make up the British Isles on a map and name some key features, such as capital cities. In Year 2, good links have been made between geography and literacy through fictional stories based in Scotland. Pupils have constructed 3-D maps of a fictional Scottish island and have written accounts of life on the island in comparison with life in Barmston.
131. At Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 4 have drawn maps of their journey between home and school, showing the main routes and landmarks. They have constructed plans of the locality using ariel photographs for reference. However, some teachers do not have high enough expectations of the presentation of work and pupils give little attention to detail. In Year 5, pupils build very well on their previous skills and knowledge, through studying a village in India. They write good descriptions of daily life in the village and understand features of the landscape and climate.
132. A strength of geography provision is the work undertaken in almost all classes related to the environment. The school uses its local environment well, with pupils conducting traffic surveys, deciding how to make improvements to their school environment, recycling clothes for charity and helping the Ranger Service clean up the local pond. In order to widen this provision, the school has recently signed up to take part in the "Eco-School Project" which will enable links to be made with schools around the world.
133. The school does not make full use of information technology in geography and the oldest pupils have too few opportunities to carry out independent research using CD-ROM and the Internet.
134. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over responsibility for the subject. However, she has made a sound start in implementing and resourcing the new scheme of work and has been responsible for most of the environmental projects undertaken. She has set appropriate targets for future development.

HISTORY

135. Only one history lesson was seen during the inspection. Evidence has been drawn from samples of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussion with teachers and pupils. Standards of work are typical of those seen in most primary schools. Older pupils achieve a good understanding about how to find things out about the past. They have a sound knowledge of the periods of history they have studied and can recall major events and important facts. Much of this is due to the school's good use of educational visits and visitors to the school which helps to bring history alive for children. Year 5 children for example, studying the Victorians had the opportunity to visit educational centres where they dressed up as Victorians and sampled life as a school child in those days. Year 6 pupils were involved in work with a visiting drama group which helped them to understand more about the culture and customs of the Ancient Greeks.
136. When they start school, most pupils have only a limited knowledge of the sequence of past events. These skills of chronology are not developed well enough by teaching. The school does not keep a close enough check on the skills

pupils are developing, so it is difficult for teachers to see where there are weaknesses in learning.

137. Although the quality of teaching in the lesson observed was very good, overall it is more satisfactory throughout the rest of the school. The particular strength of this very good lesson was the teacher's strong subject knowledge and the way in which the teacher used this to help pupils develop their skills of research by drawing out information and historical facts from books and pictures. The teacher was also able to answer the questions which pupils asked.
138. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator takes samples of pupils' work to check on progress. This has led to the identification of weaknesses in learning, for example, in the way pupils develop an understanding of chronology. The school is aware of this weakness and teachers are beginning to use more visual aids such as timelines to help children develop a better understanding of the order of events.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

139. Pupils' standard of work is in line with expectations for their age at the end of both key stages. Their achievements are however stronger throughout Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1 because junior pupils have more opportunities to develop skills and knowledge in working with computers. The school has moved from an unsatisfactory position at the time of the last inspection to offer what is currently judged to be satisfactory provision. It has made great strides in using information technology to improve its own administrative systems and in preparing pupils for a life where technology plays an increasing part.
140. The changes which have had most impact on pupils' achievements have been the setting up of a computer suite and the appointment of a teacher with good subject knowledge in the area of information technology to lead developments and guide the work of staff.
141. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have an allocated session each week in the computer room. This enables them to make good progress in developing skills and knowledge about how to use computers for communicating and handling information and in exploring simulated situations. Pupils from Year 3 onwards know how to log on to the computer and most are competent users of the computer's various functions. For example, they know how to print their work off and how to save it to disk. By Year 6, pupils are able to draft pieces of work on the screen, change the size of fonts and present their work in a variety of ways.
142. Pupils achieve well in handling data. Year 6 pupils' skills were best demonstrated in a lesson where they worked on spreadsheet to build up data about the difference in weight between free range and factory-farmed pigs. The work generated high levels of interest and enjoyment and pupils were able to use and understand correct terminology related to databases. For example, they referred to 'entering numbers in the cells' and 'creating fields' within the database.
143. Weaknesses in the work at Key Stage 2 are caused because there are few computers in classrooms which are new enough to cope with more advanced programmes. Although pupils achieve well in the computer suite sessions, they have insufficient opportunities to consolidate skills or carry on practising these procedures on a day-to-day basis. The school has recently introduced new subject guidance and teachers have adjusted the programme of work for each year group to follow this pattern. As a result, some aspects of information technology are not currently tackled in great depth. For example, pupils have not

had many opportunities to use computers to control mechanical devices by programming them with instructions.

144. At Key Stage 1, pupils' achievements are more modest. Access to computers is mainly in the classroom and although they have a good understanding about the everyday uses of information technology, the range of work pupils undertake is more limited than at Key Stage 2. Pupils' strongest achievements are in communicating information and they build these skills at a steady rate. For example, children in the reception class draft simple sentences about themselves on the computer. Their skills progress and by Year 2, they are recording descriptions of food as part of their science work. Year 2 also communicate more creative ideas. For example, they use the computer to draw pictures in the style of Mondrian by adding blocks of colour within geometric shapes. Although pupils achieve at a sound pace, other aspects of the subject are given scant attention and computers are not in use often enough to accelerate pupils' learning in reading, writing or number.
145. Although new technology is being rapidly introduced, it is not used well enough to support pupils' learning in other subjects. For example, in researching facts in history, studying other locations in geography or recording results from science experiments.
146. Teaching quality is satisfactory overall but with some good lessons in Key Stage 2. All teachers are clear about what they hope pupils will learn in each lesson. They set up relevant and interesting tasks which stimulate pupils' interest. Often these are linked to other work which the class is doing. For example, a Year 3 group extended work from their English lesson by cutting and pasting suffixes onto root words. Teachers set ground rules for working in the computer suite and make sure that children follow them. This means that little time is wasted and pupils are efficient and quick to start up the machines and set about their tasks.
147. At Key Stage 1, teaching is satisfactory and although teachers' subject knowledge is good enough to plan for pupils' needs, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to explore the potential of computers or use them to support their learning in other subjects.
148. The subject is led and managed well. Issues facing the school have been clearly identified through a thorough audit of staff skills and the school's resources. The co-ordinator has already implemented a comprehensive plan of action for the next two years. His considerable expertise enables him to support staff and this has raised confidence. Teachers now have confidence to attempt more adventurous work with their class and can better support pupils with more advanced programmes and skills.

MUSIC

149. Only a limited number of music lessons were observed during the inspection. These lessons, together with further evidence provided by examination of teachers' planning files, discussions with pupils and with the subject co-ordinator, indicate that standards are typical of those found in most schools and progress is satisfactory.
150. Pupils sing melodies of hymns and songs with reasonable accuracy. They show good control of their voices to produce a pleasing sound. They enjoy singing, particularly in assembly, and all join in. In Year 2 for example, the pupils sang a two-part song with good sense of pitch and rhythm. In Year 4, pupils are able to recognise a rhythmic pattern when it is tapped out, but in the lesson observed,

were not given the opportunity to compose their own rhythms for others to recognise. They recognise quavers, crotchets and minims and know how many beats each note is worth.

151. Pupils are given the opportunity to use percussion instruments and play these with some awareness of the other performers when they start and finish together. For example, pupils in Year 1 made good progress when learning how to play in time and how to play long and short notes on percussion instruments. Their learning was enhanced by the teacher using her own instrument, the clarinet, to demonstrate to the children.
152. Teaching is mainly good. Lessons have good balance between children participating and listening. In the more ordinary teaching, the children are not given enough time to develop their musical skills as too much time is spent listening to the teacher. The children behave well, enjoy the lessons and respond well to teachers' instructions.
153. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and, through her own enthusiasm and musical expertise, is developing staff's confidence to teach the subject and ensuring that pupils' achievements build on what they already know and can do.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

154. Pupils' achievements are typical of those seen in other primary schools. By the time they leave, most, but not all pupils are able to swim 25 metres. All pupils develop a good awareness of water safety skills through specially arranged talks and demonstrations.
155. Lessons seen in the inspection mainly involved dance activities and both older and younger pupils achieve more in dance and gymnastics than in other aspects of physical education. One reason for this is that extra curricular gymnastic activities are helping pupils to develop their skills after school and practise more adventurous techniques. Although they do not achieve as well in games activities, younger pupils develop games skills, such as passing and catching at a satisfactory rate and older pupils are aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies. They develop good routines for warming up before exercise.
156. Most teaching is at least satisfactory with an equal balance of good and satisfactory lessons in both key stages. Teachers are good role models for children, wear appropriate kit and have a lively and enthusiastic approach to lessons. Some lessons however, produce better results than others and pupils' learning is more rapid at these times. In a Year 3 dance lesson for example, the teacher's high expectations coupled with good, clear instructions, moved pupils on at a fast pace. Pupils were challenged to produce an increasingly better quality of movement so that by the end of the lesson, they worked as a group and produced a high standard of work. The weaker teaching seen in a Year 6 games lesson affected pupils' progress adversely. The teacher did not coach or direct pupils well enough in practising skills and there were periods during the lesson when pupils wasted time waiting for turns. Although pupils are developing skills at a satisfactory rate, systems for keeping a check on how well they are progressing and the skills they are acquiring are weak. Consequently, teachers are not sure about which skills pupils need to extend or need to practise more.
157. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator supports other teachers well through advice and arranging training in areas where they lack confidence or need ideas for lessons. For example, new guidelines have been introduced which tell teachers what they should be teaching in each year group. However, there is

little opportunity for teachers to have their work observed and receive comments about what is working well and what they need to do to improve.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

158. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils meet the standards set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils at Key Stage 1, and in most Key Stage 2 classes make satisfactory progress. However, in one Year 6 class, pupils learn at a much slower pace because they do not spend enough time studying religious education. The standards expected of them are too low, particularly in terms of the presentation of their work.
159. In spite of this, Year 6 pupils have a secure understanding of the beliefs and customs of the followers of Christianity and some other major faiths, such as Sikhism. For example, they understand the importance of Harvest as a Christian festival, and can give reasoned explanations for its importance. Most pupils know familiar Bible stories, such as "The Prodigal Son" and can relate the concepts to their own lives.
160. Good progress is made throughout the school in developing pupils' ability to think about their own lives and the lives of others. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils were asked to reflect on how they could change their lives for the better during Lent. Pupils in Year 5 showed sensitivity to the feelings of others when studying the difficult concept of bereavement, through relating this to the story 'Grandad' and also to the Easter story.
161. Teaching is mainly satisfactory, and all pupils achieve at a steady pace. A good feature of the teaching is the teachers' skill in using stories effectively to illustrate concepts and engage their pupils' attention. A weaker feature of teaching in some lessons is that teachers introduce too many ideas at once. This results in children being unclear about the main focus of their learning.
162. Daily assemblies, visitors to the school and a strong commitment to personal and social education all have a good impact on pupils' learning in religious education, from the earliest stages.
163. The co-ordinator manages the subject well, with great commitment and enthusiasm. She is presently ensuring that the new locally agreed syllabus is properly implemented and resourced. She has checked teachers' planning and pupil work. She has also observed colleagues teaching and talked to them about the weaker and stronger aspects of their work. This is an improvement since the last inspection.