

**GREAT WOOD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Upper Tean

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124138

Headteacher: Mr D Brown

Reporting inspector: Mr C Kessell  
20695

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> March 2000

Inspection number: 192063

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: County

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Vicarage Road  
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Stoke-on-Trent  
Staffordshire

Postcode: ST10 4JY

Telephone number: 01538 722370

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Alan Sidaway

Date of previous inspection: December 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Names of team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Mr Chris Kessell Registered Inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
Mr Mike Romano Lay Inspector		Attendance Extra-curricular activities Links with the community How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
Mrs Carolyn Powell Team Inspector	Science History Music Religious education Areas of learning for children under five	Special educational needs Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs Pat Richardson Team Inspector	English Information technology Art Design and technology	Equal opportunities The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Principles of best value

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Great Wood Primary school has 183 full-time pupils aged between 4 and 11 years, with an almost equal number of boys and girls. Another 18 children attend the school's nursery class on a part-time basis. The school operates on a split site and is smaller than average in size. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is average. There are no pupils identified as speaking English as an additional language and there is a below average number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register. Attainment of the four-year olds when they start school is average.

### HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a friendly, caring school. The pupils enjoy their work and coming to school. Much of the teaching is good but there are weaknesses in curriculum planning and organisation. The most recent National Curriculum test results show standards to be above average in Key Stage 1 and average at Key Stage 2. The school is managed effectively and provides sound value for money.

#### What the school does well

- The pupils make good progress in information technology.
- Standards in mathematics are above average in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. Behaviour and relationships in the school are also very good.
- There is an effective governing body.
- Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is consistently good in nearly half of the lessons.
- The pupils' social, moral and cultural development is very good.
- There is a very dedicated and effective Parent, Teacher and Friends' Association.

#### What could be improved

- Standards in science and information technology through the school, and English at Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' progress over time in art, design and technology and geography.
- Curriculum planning and organisation.
- The use of assessment information.
- Learning resources for some subjects.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents and carers of pupils in the school.*

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

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in December 1996. The quality of teaching has improved in Years 3 and 4 and there are no longer any concerns about the management of any pupils. Pupils' learning in Key Stage 2 is now satisfactory. Although standards in information technology are still below national expectations, the pupils make good progress and the school has developed good resources for the subject. However, standards and pupils' learning in art still need improving. Subject co-ordinators are able to oversee planning and the school has produced a policy for monitoring. Some subject co-ordinators could still be more effective. The governing body is now fully involved in the management of the school. The health and safety issues identified during the last inspection have been addressed well.

## 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	A	C	C	C	well above average above average average below average well below average	
mathematics	B	C	B	C	A B C D E	
science	A	C	C	C		

Results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests, indicate that English and science were average when compared with all schools and when compared with schools of a similar nature. Results in mathematics were above average when compared with all schools. Evidence from inspection would indicate that current standards are below average in English, science and information technology and close to average in mathematics. However, there can be significant differences between year groups. For example, the current pupils in Year 5 are on target to achieve above average standards in English and mathematics. Standards in religious education are what would be expected.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are very interested in their work and keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and in the playground is very good. Pupils clearly understand what is expected of them.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. They are encouraged to be self-reliant and to think for themselves. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is well above the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching was good or better in 45 per cent of lessons, with 14 per cent of lessons judged to be very good. These lessons are well organised and the teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. Pupils work at a good pace and make good progress. The majority of the good and very good teaching was seen in Key Stage 1 and the upper part of Key Stage 2. The teaching of information technology by the subject specialist was also consistently very good. English and mathematics are taught effectively, but there are some inconsistencies. In less well-organised lessons, not all pupils made the progress of which they are capable.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum includes all of the subjects of the National Curriculum, together with religious education. However, there are weaknesses in curriculum organisation.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and is effective in ensuring that pupils make sound progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school's provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. Spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of its pupils.

The school values its partnership with parents and is always looking to develop parents' involvement in their children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school ethos is very positive. The headteacher provides sound leadership and is well supported by his teaching and non-teaching staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is effective in fulfilling its responsibilities. They are very supportive of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school understands its strengths and weaknesses and is developing a more demanding self-evaluation process.
The strategic use of resources	Staff and resources are generally used well. However, there are inconsistencies in the effective use of time in some lessons.

The school has an appropriate number of qualified teachers. The school is situated on two sites that provide adequate accommodation for the number of pupils on roll. However, where classes are large, classroom space is limited and movement restricted. There are no sinks in the Key Stage 2 classrooms. Resources are limited, for example, in books for English, and equipment for science.

Monitoring of lessons to make teaching and learning better has only limited impact. The headteacher and governors look to provide best value when considering the school's use of resources.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children are happy at the school and behaviour is good.</li><li>• The teachers know the pupils well.</li><li>• Pupils look after one another and respect each other.</li><li>• The school has high expectations.</li><li>• The pupils are praised for their successes, both academic and social.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parents are not allowed in the Key Stage 2 area of the school to collect their children.</li><li>• Parents could be better informed about their children's progress.</li></ul>

The above views are taken from the pre-inspection meeting attended by 22 parents, and the 139 responses to the parents' questionnaire. Evidence from inspection would support the majority of the parents' positive views. Expectations are consistently high regarding attitudes and behaviour but not all higher-attaining pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable. The school has sound procedures in place to inform parents about their children's progress. Access to the Key Stage 2 site is restricted for appropriate health and safety reasons.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

#### The school's results and achievements

1. The assessment of children on entry to the nursery indicates that their skills in language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development are typical for their age. The children make good progress in their personal and social development. They behave very well and work happily together. Children take turns sensibly and show independence by selecting activities that are available to them. They have a good understanding of the school routines and what is expected of them, for example, how to behave appropriately in assembly. In language and literacy, children listen to stories very attentively and enjoy singing songs and rhymes. They handle books carefully and the older children are familiar with many of the letter sounds. Children recognise their own names. Many of the children have writing skills that are well developed and, by the time they are five years old, they reach standards in language and literacy that are above the level found nationally. They make good progress in speaking and listening. Children also develop their mathematical skills well. Children count to ten, and beyond, accurately, with the older children counting in two's to 20. They identify two-dimensional shapes and recognise simple patterns. Children make steady progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world and reach expected standards for five-year-olds. Children share 'news events' and talk about yesterday, and the week before. They care well for the classroom goldfish, and plant broad bean seeds, looking after them as they grow. Children's creative and physical development reaches the levels expected for their age. For example, children use different media to create attractive displays, while older children paint sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh. They use musical instruments to accompany songs and nursery rhymes. Children use space effectively and balance and climb during physical education lessons. They all use scissors and other tools sensibly.
2. The results of the National Curriculum tests in 1999, at the end of Key Stage 1, showed that the standards achieved were well above the national average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3, or above, was well above the national average in reading and mathematics. The same results are achieved when the school results are compared with those of similar schools. Although standards in writing have dropped slightly when compared with the 1998 results, standards in reading and mathematics have improved. The targets set by the school in English and mathematics for the Year 2000 reflect the current standards in Year 6 and are appropriately challenging. However, given the standards observed in Year 5, the targets for Year 2001 need further consideration.
3. The results of the National Curriculum test results in 1999, at the end of Key Stage 2, showed that when compared with all schools, the standards achieved were average in English and science and above average in mathematics. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5, or above, was close to the national average in mathematics and science, and below the national average for English. Pupils' results in English, mathematics and science are broadly in line with the national average when compared with those from similar schools. The results in 1999 are very similar to those in 1998, although there has been an improvement in mathematics. However, as the results in both 1998 and 1999 are lower than those achieved by pupils in 1997, the trend in the school's results, for all core subjects, is below the national trend. However, evidence from inspection would indicate that the 1997 cohort of pupils were a particularly able group of pupils.
4. Currently, standards in Key Stage 1 are above average in mathematics, average in English and below average in science. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are average in mathematics, but below average in English and science. Standards in information technology are below national expectations at the end of both key stages. In religious education, pupils achieve the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the time they

are aged 7 and 11. Judgements are based on lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and displays and discussions with pupils and teachers. Although standards are lower than in 1999, particularly in Year 6, there are significant reasons for this. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above average in this cohort of pupils and 20 per cent of these pupils have joined the school relatively recently. Those pupils who were in the school in 1996 when the cohort took their Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests only achieved the national average in writing and the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 or above in reading and writing was below the national average. The school has attempted to address this issue; pupils with special educational needs are provided with good support during literacy and numeracy lessons, and other selected pupils are part of a 'booster group' that receives additional teaching support. The pupils currently in Year 5 are on target to exceed national averages in English and mathematics.

5. Standards in speaking and listening are above average in Key Stage 1. Pupils listen very carefully to their teachers, particularly when stories are being told or instructions are given out. They enjoy talking and holding discussions with their friends and adults particularly about the work that they are undertaking. Although reading standards are average by the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils read very fluently and with good expression. They understand terms such as fiction and non-fiction and use contents and the index to find information, but their knowledge of using a library for research or finding literature is very limited. In Year 2, pupils are beginning to join their writing but this skill has not been transferred effectively to their free writing. Spelling is generally good and most pupils are using simple punctuation correctly. In mathematics, pupils understand simple place value and count very accurately. They recognise common shapes and use data to construct simple graphs. Pupils have a good mental recall and use their understanding of addition and subtraction facts well. They use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems and present their work carefully. In science, pupils' investigative and experimental knowledge is underdeveloped. For example, although pupils are able to discuss the areas of science they have covered, such as plants or the human body, their scientific knowledge lacks depth. Pupils are also unable to explain how they would record their findings from an experiment.
6. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils always listen carefully to each other and their teachers. They are very capable of holding interesting and lively discussions, with each other, teachers and visitors to the school. Nearly all of the pupils are independent readers with the higher-attaining pupils reading some very challenging texts. Most pupils read with expression and understanding, and talk about their favourite books and authors. However, there are weaknesses in their research skills because of the limited Key Stage 2 library. Pupils write in different styles and for different purposes, such as letters and newspaper reports. Handwriting is joined and generally legible and they are beginning to paragraph their work. The majority of pupils have a good understanding of the rules of number and pupils appreciate the relationship between fractions, percentages and decimals. They recognise two- and three-dimensional shapes, and use square, cube and prime numbers. Pupils are provided with an appropriate range of scientific experiences, for example, animal classification, food webs and food chains, but their understanding of the subject is underdeveloped. They are given insufficient opportunities to use and apply their scientific knowledge of the subject and have limited investigative skills.
7. Although pupils' achievements are satisfactory through the school overall, there are some inconsistencies. Progress in English, mathematics, religious education is satisfactory but pupils' achievement in science is inconsistent. Progress in information technology is good in both key stages even though standards are below national expectations. In the non-core subjects of history, music and physical education, progress is sound. Progress in art and design and technology is unsatisfactory. Although pupils' learning in geography is sound and sometimes good, progress over time is unsatisfactory.
8. A number of factors contribute to this picture. Inconsistent learning and unsatisfactory progress in many of the subjects identified, for example science, is not the result of

unsatisfactory teaching, but poor curriculum organisation and support. In subjects where the curriculum planning and organisation is at least sound, for example, in literacy pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Progress in information technology is good because a specialist teacher, who is supported by a well-organised curriculum, teaches the subject from Year 2 upwards. However, there are some inconsistencies in teaching with some teachers coping with the range of ability in their classes better than others, and this impacts on pupils' learning. In some lessons, more able pupils are not being sufficiently challenged while, occasionally, less able pupils find work too hard. Where groups of pupils of the same ability are well managed, for example, in Year 6 mathematics, pupils make good progress. In good lessons where there is sufficient pace and challenge and time is used well, pupils learn effectively.

9. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress towards the targets identified on their individual education plans especially when they receive additional support. However, when pupils do not have this support, teachers do not always organise the work to meet the needs of these pupils.

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

10. The pupils' behaviour, attitudes to learning and personal development are very good. Relationships with others are also very good and are a noticeable feature and strength of the school. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when, in some classes, pupils' behaviour was unsatisfactory.
11. The younger pupils behave very well and readily form relationships with each other. They work well in different groups and share and use resources amicably. The pupils develop confidence to do things for themselves and the headteacher and the school encourage this. For example, in Year 6, some pupils organised their own disco for the younger pupils after putting together a business plan for the function.
12. Pupils' attitudes at both key stages are very good. They work keenly in the classroom and are very interested in their work. Older pupils show confidence and initiative; in discussions they offer opinions in a mature way. They talk about how supportive they are of each other and that there is no bullying or aggressive behaviour in the school. Pupils of all ages willingly take on responsibility for jobs around the school. Sports equipment is used very sensibly during the lunchtime break. Pupils take pride in their school and classroom environment.
13. Pupils' behaviour is very good. They are courteous to each other and polite to teachers and visitors to the school. Doors are opened automatically for adults, and pupils show respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. During the inspection, a number of assemblies in Key Stage 1 were focused on different religions and cultures. All pupils were attentive and interested and there was no disrespectful behaviour. Pupils work well on their own and with each other. They are quick to help each other and seek help when they need it. New pupils to the school comment on how friendly it is and how welcome they were made. There is some boisterous behaviour in the playground at break time and lunch time, but no bullying or harassment was observed during the inspection. There are no exclusions from the school.
14. The quality of relationships within the school is very good. Pupils listen very carefully to each other in class and show an interest in their learning. Pupils take advantage of the good range of extra-curricular activities and clubs. This good provision encourages pupils' personal development.
15. Attendance in the school was very good last year; it was well above the national average with unauthorised absence well below the average. Attendance levels are similar to those reported at the last inspection. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school. The high attendance level reflects this.

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

16. During the previous inspection, nearly ten per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory and, as part of the key issues for action, the school had to address the quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 and the management of pupils in Year 4. During the current inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed and this is a significant improvement on the last inspection. Teaching was good or better in 45 per cent of lessons, with 14 per cent being very good. However, very good lessons were limited to upper Key Stage 2 and the specialist information technology teaching. Overall, the teaching enables pupils to learn effectively throughout the school and across the curriculum. Given the weaknesses in curriculum planning and organisation, it is the quality of teaching that allows pupils to make progress over time.
17. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good overall and there is a higher proportion of good and very good lessons in these sessions than in other subjects, with the exception of information technology. Teachers' medium-term planning is effective and lessons usually follow the recommended structure and timing, although this is more consistent in literacy than numeracy. Teachers' subject knowledge, including the development of basic skills in both literacy and numeracy, is generally good. However, teachers are less successful at consistently planning suitable work for pupils of differing ability. This is particularly the case for higher attaining pupils who are not always challenged and do not learn as effectively as they could do.
18. The teachers are skilful at managing the pupils and this is an improvement on the previous inspection, where the management of pupils in Year 4 was criticised. The pupils respond positively to the opportunities provided and respect their teachers. They are genuinely valued in return. Although teaching is better than satisfactory overall, there are still inconsistencies through the school. For example, there was very little good teaching observed in the reception class or in lower Key Stage 2. Lessons that are purposeful, where pupils are consistently engaged in learning all of the time, are features of good and very good teaching. These lessons have pace and excitement, and there are high expectations of pupils in terms of what, and how much, they can achieve. The pupils have a good understanding of what they are learning and time limits are imposed for the completion of work. In these better lessons, teachers' good subject knowledge provides inspiration to pupils, for example, during literacy lessons in Years 1 and 2, numeracy lessons in Year 5, and the specialist information technology lessons. However, weaknesses in subject knowledge in science, design and technology, and art, sometimes result in activities which are limited in scope or type, or are inappropriate, particularly when the curriculum for these subjects does not support the teachers. The sharing of learning objectives at the beginning of lessons, and the reference to these at the end is also good practice. This ensures pupils know what to do and on what to focus. However, there are shortcomings in the pace of some lessons and the amount of work pupils are expected to do, even in lessons which are otherwise satisfactory.
19. Teachers are often good at questioning pupils to check their understanding and promote further thought, such as in a Year 6 geography lesson where pupils were studying the impact of climate on the settlements and lifestyle of the inhabitants of Baffin Island. However, the effectiveness of marking is less consistent. Some teachers do provide regular and useful feedback to pupils so they know how they can improve further, but this is not seen consistently through the school. Homework is used to support work across the curriculum although, at the pre-inspection meeting with parents, not all parents were clear about how homework is organised.

20. Pupils often acquire new knowledge and skills at a good rate. In all classes, they are interested and engage readily in lessons, becoming fully involved and being keen to complete tasks and to show their new learning during class discussions, or to visitors to the school. In many subjects, they produce much work and are always prepared and enthusiastic to participate in discussion or to explain their thinking. During lessons that are too long, pupils' concentration is less consistent but they are always well behaved.

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

21. The school's curriculum is broad and contains all of the subjects of the National Curriculum, together with the local requirements for religious education. The curriculum offers pupils a good range of learning opportunities, both within and beyond the National Curriculum requirements. However, there are weaknesses in the way that it is organised which affect its balance, and this is unsatisfactory.
22. The curriculum offers many opportunities for pupils' personal development and helps them to become confident learners. Through subjects such as dance, drama, music and information technology, pupils receive many opportunities to work co-operatively and to express themselves creatively. Pupils are offered many opportunities to take responsibility, for example when acting as monitors, and when pupils in Year 6 organise a social event for the younger pupils. Sound provision is made for health education, including personal safety and drugs awareness.
23. The school timetable places due emphasis on the core subjects of English, mathematics, information technology and religious education, but science does not enjoy a high enough priority in the curriculum and the important strand of investigative science is seriously neglected. The school's literacy strategy is implemented satisfactory and is making a sound contribution to raising standards in English. Implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is in its very early stages and there are inconsistencies in its implementation that are unsatisfactory.
24. There have been very significant improvements in the school's provision for information technology since the previous inspection, when it was made a key issue for improvement. All pupils have regular access, with particularly good provision for pupils in Years 2 to 6. These pupils receive very good quality experiences in all of the key elements of the subject, including access to the Internet and the school web site. The information technology curriculum for younger pupils is currently less well organised but meets requirements.
25. The curriculum for science and the other subjects, such as history and geography, is planned to a rolling programme of topics, which is reasonably balanced in terms of subjects. Class teachers take responsibility for their own timetables and for planning learning experiences for their pupils in subjects across the curriculum. With the exception of information technology, literacy and numeracy, which are planned to local authority and national guidelines, such fragmented planning cannot ensure that the learning experiences offered to pupils build on their previous work or that pupils will not repeat work. A whole-school curriculum plan fails to identify the programmes of study to be met within the topics, and medium-term planning is inconsistent in quality. Lack of schemes of work prevents teachers from breaking down medium-term planning into more detailed short-term planning that shows exactly how the learning objectives are to be achieved. The learning objectives themselves are often not specific to allow evaluations to be made about whether or not they have been achieved. Art lessons support the topics well, but in an unstructured way that does not take account of how the subject is developed throughout the school.
26. There is, currently, no coordinator for art, and design and technology is a neglected subject. There is no curriculum committee or named person with overall responsibility for monitoring the whole-school curriculum, and most subject coordinators are unable to track continuity and progress in their subjects within the whole school context. Consequently, it cannot be guaranteed that all pupils make systematic progress as they move through the key stages. Although good quality teaching and parental support ensures that pupils do make progress

in most subjects, curriculum planning is not sufficiently detailed to support less experienced and less confident teachers and this is unsatisfactory.

27. The curriculum for children under five is satisfactory overall. Children enter the nursery in the term after their fourth birthday and attend on a part-time basis. All children under five follow the nationally recommended guidance that covers the six areas of learning. Appropriate emphasis is placed upon language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. Children are given many opportunities to develop through balance of structured and free play activities, although these are not always sufficiently linked to the Desirable Learning Outcomes<sup>1</sup> for children under five.
28. Pupils with special educational needs receive satisfactory support within the financial constraints of the school budget. Clear procedures for identification and assessment of pupils, which closely follow the Code of Practice are in place. The school has a good commitment to providing support and a caring learning environment for all its pupils, including those with special educational needs and medical needs, and this is valued by the parents. Planning for the most able pupils is inconsistent. Many lessons require pupils to undertake the same work, which means that the most able are not sufficiently challenged. Some parents raised concerns about this at the pre-inspection meeting. Reading books are not always well matched to ability and fail to stretch the most able. Although homework spelling lists are usually well matched to ability, there are occasional examples of pupils receiving the same words to learn, regardless of ability.
29. The school makes good overall provision for equality of access and opportunity within the curriculum. This shows an improvement since the previous inspection when the school did not always provide equality for girls and boys, for example in physical education. However, in some classes there are occasional unintentional references to gender that are potentially divisive. A good range of out of school activities, which include football, netball, basketball, guitars, art and dance caters for all pupils, regardless of age or gender. These are well attended and make a positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Visits to local residential centres further enhance the curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 2 and make a positive contribution to the development of their social skills.
30. The pupils' learning experiences are enhanced by good links with the community, such as visits to the local tape mill and other places of interest, including the local Manor House where pupils in Year 6 are made very welcome. The Parent Teachers and Friends' Association makes a very significant contribution to a broad curriculum by setting up links with the industries in which they work, such as a local bank, and a good number of visitors to the school, including a local historian and an author, enhance the curriculum further.
31. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Standards have risen even further since the previous inspection when they were judged to be at least satisfactory. Provision for spiritual development is sound, with opportunities for pupils to experience wonder through subjects such as science, when they learn how an ear works or reflect upon the beauty of nature. However, opportunities for quiet reflection during collective worship are limited. This was a criticism in the previous inspection.
32. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral development. Expectations of good behaviour are a feature of the school ethos. Teachers provide good role models through their attitudes towards the pupils, and each other, and make opportunities, for example, during the literacy hour, to discuss moral issues. Good work and behaviour is rewarded with stickers and praise, and inappropriate behaviour is dealt with sensitively, but effectively.

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<sup>1</sup> The nationally agreed goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory education.

33. The curriculum promotes social development well. Pupils are offered many opportunities to work together co-operatively, for example to compile a school newspaper, create a piece of music, or solve problems in literacy and numeracy lessons. Pupils are encouraged to communicate confidently with adults, for example when their opinions are sought about how the school could improve.
34. Very good provision is made for pupils' cultural development. They learn about their own culture through visits to places of interest, visitors into school and good links with industry. They learn to appreciate the richness and diversity of their multicultural world through visits to places of worship, such as a mosque, and a visit of pupils from a multicultural school.

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

35. The school has very good procedures in place for ensuring pupils' welfare. Pastoral care is a strength of the school; parents are pleased with the care and concern their children receive from staff who know them well.
36. Pupils say they feel safe and secure in the school, and are confident in approaching teachers and all members of staff when they are upset or need support. The school follows the child protection guidelines and deals with all concerns appropriately. All staff are aware and vigilant and have copies of these guidelines. The headteacher is the designated member of staff and has excellent contact with social services, the education welfare officer, the police and other relevant statutory agencies. The school has policies for dealing with bullying and behavioural issues. Bullying is discussed with pupils in personal, social and health education lessons in Years 4, 5 and 6. Although bullying is rare, it is dealt with well when it does occur.
37. Behaviour is monitored well by teachers and mid-day staff. The headteacher keeps a record of any bullying and behavioural problems, and parents are involved at an early stage when these occur. Governors have appropriate disciplinary and appeal committees to deal with serious incidents, including exclusions, although there have been no exclusions in recent years.
38. Most staff have first-aid qualifications, and arrangements for accidents, medicine administration, fire and general health and safety are very good. There is a health and safety policy, and an effective governors' health and safety committee, which regularly audits the premises and carries out risk assessment. Risk assessment procedures are not however formally documented, although they are carried out effectively. Alarm testing, evacuations, and tests of other appliances, are carried out and recorded appropriately.
39. Pupils are taught about health and safety matters in science, swimming and design and technology. Visitors from the Police, and the Fire Service, help to enhance this knowledge and the school nurse assists with sex education.
40. Attendance is monitored effectively by class teachers. Registers are meticulously completed and checked weekly by the headteacher. The secretary follows up absence, which parents have not notified, with them directly, or by letter if necessary. Serious or persistent absence is referred to the education welfare officer who checks registers on a fortnightly visit.
41. Pupils are generally cared for by the school very well, which provides a very good, secure environment in which they can learn effectively. The last inspection highlighted nine health and safety hazards, all of which have been dealt with satisfactorily. There is one minor hazard in the upper school playground; the plastic covered mesh fence has holes in and projecting pieces at the bottom which are not fixed securely to the wall below. This is a hazard to pupils. The school, however, has recognised this and is waiting for funding to carry out remedial work. The school has made considerable improvement in health and safety procedures since the last inspection, although equipment stored in the school hall presents potential health and safety problems for pupils during physical education.

42. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance is unsatisfactory and the good standards reported in the last inspection have not been maintained. The current arrangements consist of a baseline assessment, tests at the end of the key stages and standardised assessments in between. Informal testing takes place throughout the year. Test results are carefully analysed and used to identify pupils in need of support, and for target setting. However, assessment is not used to guide the curriculum, which, in some areas, has not reflected national change. The current curriculum planning arrangements lack rigour in setting learning objectives against National Curriculum programmes of study and this makes it impossible for the school to monitor the progress of individual pupils in each subject. Pupils are encouraged to set their own targets for improvement, but there is no formal system to record and track outcomes, and teachers' marking is inconsistent in recognising pupils' achievements and identifying the next steps of learning. There are no portfolios of pupils' work to assist teachers, and some discrepancies between teachers' assessments and the results of national tests indicate further weaknesses.

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

43. Parents are generally satisfied with the education and care provided by the school. There is a very effective and dedicated Parent, Teacher and Friends' Association, which raises money for the school through social and fund-raising events.
44. Through the work of the Parent, Teacher and Friends' Association, a major bank has agreed to 'match fund' the money raised at the major events, and many other events are also organised, including disco's, quizzes and bingo nights. Recent contributions to the school include computers, curtains for the hall, wooden animals and toys for the reception play area and subsidies on coaches for school trips and sports matches.
45. The school's links with parents are satisfactory. There are regular newsletters and letters home on general and specific interest. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory in that they describe what pupils have done, but they have limited information on pupils' weaknesses and how these should be overcome. Formal discussions on pupils' progress are given at parents meetings with teachers in July each year. For pupils whose progress gives cause for concern, the school arranges an additional meeting in February. Some parents at the pre-inspection meeting indicated that they would wish also to attend a February meeting even if their child's progress was not of concern. It is clear that the school is willing to arrange a meeting in February for any parent who wishes this. Since parents are notified that they can request a meeting, the inspection findings are that the complaint is unjustified.
46. Although the school has circulated the draft home-school agreement for consultation, there are two areas where formal communication is currently inadequate. There is little advance notification of the curriculum that classes will be following in a particular year or term. The school did organise a numeracy evening with an example lesson to develop parents' knowledge and understanding of the new strategy, but this was poorly attended. Parents would welcome more specific information about curriculum to be covered in each subject, including topics. Consultation on homework policy is included in the home-school agreement, but parents responding to the questionnaire, and a number at the parents' meeting, were not clear about how much, or when, homework was expected.
47. Parents have a good impact on learning in the school. Many of them regularly help with reading, trips, art, and with transport for concerts. Assemblies for parents are well attended. The work of the Parent, Teacher and Friends' Association is well publicised through letters, and an outside notice board, and parents are invited to put their ideas forward for consideration in the school development plan.
48. The prospectus and governors' report to parents are informative and meet legal requirements. Parents make a good contribution to pupils' work at home in hearing them read. The school has an 'open door' policy for parents, who can go into school at almost at

any time to discuss concerns or suggestions. The school is very much involved in the village community, and parents give their time generously to support school events, and to decorate their school and build resources.

49. The school works hard to involve parents on a regular basis. However, the complaints about formal information provided on curriculum and homework are justified although overall, the school provides a satisfactory link with parents. The last inspection concluded that parents made a positive contribution to pupils' learning and this has been maintained.

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

50. Leadership and management are judged to be sound overall. The headteacher is a very caring leader who is well supported by his teaching and non-teaching staff. The school ethos is friendly, caring and very supportive and these values are shared by the parents, teachers and governors. The school encourages pupils to become self-reliant and particular thought is given to what pupils will become when they leave the school. The governors talk proudly about how well pupils develop when they have left the school, both in terms of academic success and personal and social development. Relationships in the school are very strong. Much of the credit for this philosophy must go to the headteacher who is very well respected in the school community. The headteacher has many strengths and many elements of the school management are continually developing and being refined. The school has developed a monitoring policy and has already monitored the teaching of literacy and the teaching of mental mathematics. This process involves members of the senior management team and the subject co-ordinator. In the case of mental mathematics a school governor was also involved. Teachers are given feedback on their lessons and general points are discussed at staff meetings. The teachers' half-termly planning is scrutinised by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators, although evidence from inspection would indicate that some planning is repeated annually and short term planning is very rarely checked. More rigour needs to be applied to curriculum monitoring, particularly as the inspection has identified weaknesses in curriculum planning and organisation. The headteacher believes in delegation and the split site encourages this. Although the deputy headteacher manages the Key Stage 1 site very effectively there are some inconsistencies amongst the subject co-ordinators. Some subject managers have a far clearer view of how their subject will develop and how it functions through the school than others. The headteacher has quite a heavy teaching commitment, but provides a very good role model. He is responsible for the good progress that pupils are making in information technology. The school and governors have also entered into a process of self evaluation, with the local education authority, and this will encourage teachers and governors to view the school more critically.
51. The previous inspection report criticised the role of the governors and the part that they played in school development. The current governing body is effective in fulfilling its responsibilities and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The governors are extremely supportive of the school and staff and are well informed as a group. They have a good understanding about the standards the school is achieving and the impact and significance of different groups of pupils as they move through the school. They are quite prepared to challenge any decisions the school makes and to ask questions about current practice. Although the school development plan is formulated by the teaching staff, it is reviewed at every governors' meeting and development plan 'milestones' are checked. The school budget is put together by the governors' finance committee and is monitored regularly. Although governors would acknowledge that they follow historical spending patterns they have a good understanding about those elements of the budget that they can change and influence.

52. The school and governors strive to obtain good value for money through both purchasing and contracting arrangements. Quality as well as the cost is considered. The governors' close involvement in the work of the school enables them to evaluate the effectiveness of spending decisions and to challenge, as well as support, curricular and other decisions made in the school. Governors compare the school's results with those of similar schools and in partnership with the Parent, Teacher and Friends' Association strive to provide the resources to enable the school to succeed in a competitive world. However, the current arrangements for curriculum planning make it impossible for governors to gain a clear understanding of what is being taught and why in many subjects. Governors consult staff at all levels, parents, and pupils, when drawing up the three-year strategic plan which includes self-review, target setting, and monitoring of the curriculum. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection when the school development plan was not formally costed and did not contain clear and measurable targets and governors were not sufficiently involved in the work of the school.
53. The level of staffing in the school is good. As was found during the previous inspection, the staff are suitably qualified to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and the age range of the pupils from the nursery to the end of Key Stage 2. Parents expressed a concern about the staffing levels in the early years. However, a new member of staff is to be appointed shortly. Teachers are deployed satisfactorily.
54. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by non-teaching assistants who provide both for pupils' educational and physical needs. Support staff are fully integrated into the life of the school and work closely with teachers. They provide valuable assistance with pupils' progress and welfare. The school has efficient administrative, lunchtime and caretaking staff who contribute to the smooth running of the school.
55. A formal management structure is in place and job descriptions define curriculum roles and responsibilities. There is a good support system for newly qualified and newly appointed staff.
56. Accommodation is satisfactory. The school is on two sites, consisting of a modern Key Stage 1 building, and a Victorian Key Stage 2 building. These provide adequate accommodation for the number of pupils on roll. However, where classes are large, classroom space is limited and free movement is restricted. There are no sinks in the Key Stage 2 classrooms but old desks, mentioned in the previous report, have now been replaced by tables and chairs. There are two generous-sized halls which provide facilities for physical education. The library provision in both key stages is unsatisfactory. The Key Stage 2 library was identified as a concern in the previous report and remains located in the upper key stage corridor. Displays around the school vary in quality but, generally, enhance the environment of both buildings. There are hard play areas for both key stages and a large field attached to the Key Stage 1 building which provides games facilities for Key Stage 2. Children under five have a designated area which is both safe and secure. Areas for planting are attractive and well maintained. The site is clean, well maintained and free of graffiti.
57. Learning resources are unsatisfactory overall. This is a similar picture to the previous inspection when they were described as barely adequate. Resources for science, design and technology, history, religious education, music at Key Stage 1, and books for English, particularly reading books at Key Stage 1, and dictionaries and reading books at Key Stage 2, are unsatisfactory. There are good resources provided for information technology in the computer suite in Key Stage 2. Some resources are class based, others are easily accessible and well stored. The locality of the school is used well as a resource for learning. Good use is made of educational visits to the immediate locality and nearby places of interest.
58. Although standards are below average in Year 6 in English, science and information technology and there are weaknesses in the curriculum, with the good teaching, positive

attitudes from the pupils, the standards observed in Year 5 and the average expenditure per pupil, the school provides sound value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. The inspection team recognises the school's desire to improve, but to raise the standards achieved and the quality of education the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- θ raise attainment in science and information technology in both key stages, and English in Key Stage 2 by:
  - producing an effective scheme of work for science that ensures continuity and progression and the development of pupils' experimental and investigative skills, (*paragraph 102*);
  - raising staff competence and confidence in science and information technology, (*paragraphs 18, 127*);
  - providing further opportunities for pupils to develop their creative writing, (*paragraph 86*);
  - improving book resources for English and resources for science, (*paragraphs 57, 88*);
- θ improve curriculum organisation and management by:
  - more focused short and medium term planning which highlights different ability groups, clearly identifies learning objectives, and links to the new National Curriculum, (*paragraphs 8, 17, 25, 26, 42, 50, 82, 88, 104*);
  - effective monitoring of the curriculum that includes an evaluation of the curriculum provision for the non-core subjects, (*paragraph 50*);
  - establishing a coordinator for curriculum and assessment and increase governors' involvement in planning and monitoring the curriculum, (*paragraph 26*);
  - producing a realistic timetable for planning and introducing the new National Curriculum, (*paragraph 116*);
- θ further develop assessment procedures to ensure the effective monitoring of pupils' progress by:
  - specifying exactly what teachers should be assessing in their pupils' work and ensuring that all teachers follow the same procedures, (*paragraphs 42, 88, 106, 110, 111, 116, 146*).

*In addition, the following less important matters should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:*

- to develop resources for design and technology, (*paragraphs 57, 111*);
- to improve the library facilities, particularly in Key Stage 2. (*paragraphs 6, 56, 88*).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	14	30	54	0	0	0

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

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

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	8	183
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		21

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		23

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	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### ***Attendance***

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.4
	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	15	11	26

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	15
	Girls	11	11	9
	Total	24	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (71)	92 (89)	92 (72)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	15
	Girls	11	11	9
	Total	24	25	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (94)	96 (94)	92 (94)
	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	12	21	33

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	11
	Girls	17	16	19
	Total	27	27	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (63)	82 (69)	91 (72)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	17	18	19
	Total	28	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (72)	88 (72)	91 (84)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

## **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	155
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

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

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

## **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.6
Average class size	25

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

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

### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

## **Financial information**

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	281,350
Total expenditure	285,350
Expenditure per pupil	1,568
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,660
Balance carried forward to next year	4,660

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	182
Number of questionnaires returned	139
Percentage of questionnaires returned	76

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	37	5	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	45	45	3	2	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	47	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	47	9	4	4
The teaching is good.	49	41	5	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	31	29	5	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	34	4	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	39	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	41	36	19	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	63	28	4	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	41	3	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	37	11	4	10

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

60. Children are admitted to the nursery in the term following their fourth birthday. They transfer to the reception class in the year they are five. At the time of the inspection there were 28 children attending full time in the reception class and 18 children in the nursery class attending part-time. Most children transfer from a local pre-school group with which there are good links. The induction programme helps children feel secure on entering school, and includes morning visits for children prior to admission as well as a meeting for parents. Early assessments of children's competencies indicate that attainment is in line with that expected for children of this age. Parents are involved in children's learning by helping in lessons, supporting children at home, and providing resources for the nursery and reception children. By the age of five, children reach standards that are above the level expected in personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematical development. Children's standards in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development, are in line with the levels expected for their age. All children, including those with special educational special needs, make satisfactory progress overall. Support staff work closely with teachers.

#### *Personal and social development*

61. Children behave very well, working happily with their friends. They take turns when riding the bikes and listen to each other when sharing their 'news time'. Children show independence in selecting an activity, and a good level of responsibility when tidying up at the end of a session. All children have the opportunity to select from prepared activities that are planned around separate themes for nursery and reception children. Children dress and undress in their physical education lessons and when dressing up in the role play activities. Snack time is used well to extend children's vocabulary and encourage social skills. By the age of five, children reach standards in personal development that are above those expected for their age and are making good progress.
62. The teaching of personal and social development is sound and promotes good levels of behaviour both in and out of the classroom. Children are able to concentrate on their work and are eager to learn.

#### *Language and literacy*

63. Children are encouraged to develop their language in both small and large groups when sharing their weekend news with their friends. In literacy groups, children listen attentively to stories and rhymes. The role-play and garden 'playhouse' also make an important contribution to extending children's speaking and listening skills.
64. Children enjoy books and handle them with care. Most children have opportunities to enjoy books in the nursery book corner, and in the quiet room used by the reception children. Children in the reception class enjoy learning the letters of the alphabet using 'Letterland' and are familiar with many letter sounds, using them to build their own words. Children recognise familiar words and some are able to read confidently and understand the early levels of their reading books. Children talk about the stories and retell them to each other.
65. Children's writing is well developed. In the nursery, they trace and draw, making books and cards of their own choice. In the reception class, children write their own names and many children are able to write simple words in their writing books without support. Good attention is paid to letter shapes being formed correctly.

66. By the age of five, children reach standards in language and literacy that are above the level found nationally and make good progress, especially in speaking and listening and writing skills.
67. The teaching of language and literacy is satisfactory. There is planned involvement of support and teaching staff in children's learning, especially for the younger children. Teachers ask questions and talk about what they are seeing and doing. Staff take part in role-play activities, encouraging the development of language. Stories, poems, songs and rhymes play a significant part in the good development of children's language and literacy.

#### *Mathematics*

68. Children in the nursery play games to extend their mathematical understanding. They identify and name shapes by feel, and use them to create shape pictures. They print patterns with shapes using a cut potato and identify the colours of paint accurately. Children count to ten and beyond when counting the 'dinner children'. In mental maths lessons, older children in the reception class count in two's to 20 and use number fans to calculate addition and subtraction of numbers, learning the meaning of 'more' and 'less' with the help of a number line. Children practice weighing everyday objects in their lesson, focusing on balance, and understanding the words heavy and light. Children sing number songs and rhymes to make mathematics fun, enjoying songs such as 'Five little monkeys bouncing on the bed'. By the age of five children reach standards that are above those expected nationally and they make good progress.
69. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory. Children are taught as a class or in small groups. All staff ask questions which encourage children to build upon their previous experiences and develop their mathematical concepts.

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

70. Younger children look at the passing of time when displaying large paintings of themselves, together with a picture of a small baby saying, 'Look how you have grown'. Older children bring different toys to school to illustrate old and new. They talk about yesterday and last week as they share their 'news' and events at the beginning of the day.
71. All children care for Robbie and Bubble, the two class goldfish. They plant and care for their broad bean seeds. Children in the nursery learn about the life cycle of a butterfly, in their topic on growth, and watch as white carnations change colour as they absorb coloured water. In reception, children take a Spring walk to look for, and collect, signs of seasonal change. In design and technology children make 'Tedgies' with moveable arms and legs, using them to make an attractive display. The computer and 'listening laboratory' are used to support the children's learning in mathematics and literacy. Children make sound progress and, by the age of five, they reach the expected standards for five-year-olds in knowledge and understanding of the world.
72. The teaching in all areas of knowledge and understanding of the world is sound. Lessons are well integrated into other areas of learning and parents and support staff play an important role in the delivery of this area of learning. Children are encouraged to bring objects from home to show to others.

#### *Creative development*

73. In the nursery and reception areas, children use different media to create attractive displays. In the nursery, children make foot and hand prints, using paint in their favourite colours and cardboard boxes to produce houses. They enjoy black play dough and clay, describing it as squidgy and sticky. In reception, children use black paper and pastels to draw daffodils, and a variety of materials to compose a collage picture of Spring. Older children paint attractive sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh. Children use musical instruments freely in an imaginative way accompanying songs and nursery rhymes.

Children reach standards by the age of five that are similar to those found nationally and they make sound progress.

74. The teaching of creative development is satisfactory overall. Planning for the involvement of support staff in creative activities is effective and enhances the curriculum for children under five.

*Physical development*

75. Children in the nursery and reception have access to a new outdoor area which is small but safe and secure, offering opportunities for them to play with wheeled toys. This area is under development at the present time. In the nursery, children use this area on a regular basis. In reception, children generally play in the infants' playground and use the outside area during the summer months. All children have opportunities to use the apparatus in the hall to practise balancing and climbing during their physical education lessons. All children use scissors sensibly to practise cutting and tools such as a hole punch for joining and folding card, for example when making the 'Hungry Caterpillar's leaf.
76. Children under five make sound progress in this area of learning and attainment for the majority of children is not significantly different from that found nationally.
77. The teaching of children's physical development is sound. Children are given clear instructions in lessons and teachers have a clear awareness of children's needs. The Parent, Teacher and Friends' Association have helped in the development of a specially designated area for children to play and explore.

**ENGLISH**

78. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests, at the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading were well above average and those for writing were above average when compared nationally. These levels of attainment were also the same when compared with similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards were broadly average when compared with all schools, and with similar schools. Performance over time shows fluctuations from year to year, and a decline in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in 1999. The findings of the inspection show that the percentage of pupils likely to reach expected standards at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly in line with national standards and, by the end of Key Stage 2, below average. This does not represent a drop in standards over time, but rather reflects significant differences in ability of the groups of pupils taking the tests. At Key Stage 1, the number of pupils taking the tests is smaller this year, which affects the statistics and, at Key Stage 2, an above-average proportion of pupils with special educational needs has a negative impact on overall standards. In addition to this, a fifth of the pupils who will take the tests this term have only recently joined the school. Standards in Year 5 are currently above average, with an above-average proportion of pupils expected to achieve Level 4, or above, by the time the pupils leave school.
79. Speaking and listening skills are above average by the end of both key stages. At both key stages, pupils listen attentively to their teachers and show by their responses, a good understanding of what they have heard. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 respond well to the many opportunities offered to them to talk about their work and explain what they have been doing to the rest of the class. In Year 1, pupils answer questions about a story, and ask questions of their own, using a good range of vocabulary to articulate what they liked best. By Year 6, pupils are very capable of holding interesting and lively discussions, explaining their ideas and opinions confidently and competently.
80. Standards in reading are average overall by the end of Key Stage 1 but many pupils read very fluently and with expression. Even the lower-attaining pupils cope quite confidently and have a good sight vocabulary. The more able pupils read books from the graded reading scheme, with understanding, and talk about their wider interests in literature. They

understand terms such as fiction and non-fiction, table of contents and index and use their knowledge of the alphabet to find information. However, they have no experience of using a library to find reference books. Although most pupils are reading at the expected level, many pupils are capable of reading from a wider range of better quality literature. The reading material is not always well matched to the pupils' ability. For example, during the inspection, a pupil identified as 'average' read fluently from the more able pupils' reading book. Above-average readers in lower Key Stage 2 do not articulate their reading preferences well and appear to make slower progress than that made previously in Key Stage 1. In Year 5, pupils are able to search for meaning beyond the literal and, by Year 6, most pupils are independent readers, with brighter pupils coping with some very challenging texts. Most read with expression and understanding, with due regard to punctuation. They talk about their favourite books and authors with enthusiasm, explaining what they like about them. In lessons, they compare books of different types and show by their comments a good level of understanding including an ability to 'read between the lines'. Most scan quickly for information and are developing their research skills well, using reference books and the computer to find information. However, the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs reduces overall standards. There is a weakness in research skills because most pupils' understanding of how a library is organised is very limited. Pupils of below average ability have good attitudes to reading. They enjoy good quality literature, and some come to school early to share books with support teachers.

81. Standards in writing are broadly average at Key Stage 1. In Year 2, pupils are beginning to join their letters in handwriting but most have not yet transferred this skill to their free writing. Some do not differentiate between the size of upper and lower case and capital letters are often used within sentences. The higher-attaining pupils produce quite long pieces of writing in proper sentences, with due attention to capital letters and full stops and a few more able pupils structure their writing very well, using long sentences, interesting vocabulary, commas, exclamation marks and speech marks. Spelling is generally good and, where pupils do make mistakes, the misspelling is easily recognisable. Many pupils are beginning to use simple punctuation correctly. They know that names require capital letters. By Year 6, pupils write in different formats and for different purposes including stories, letters and newspaper reports. They are beginning to paragraph their work and understand the need to capture the reader's attention as early as possible when writing stories. Their handwriting is joined and generally legible. The writing of a few higher-attaining pupils is very neat and evenly spaced. Pupils show a good knowledge of parts of speech, including verbs and adjectives and use them in exercises competently. Written work is generally spelled correctly and includes correct punctuation. The use of speech marks is usually accurate.
82. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and is good overall, although there are some inconsistencies in planning and delivery. Teachers have good subject knowledge and the lessons are well organised, with most teachers following the National Literacy Strategy closely. Planning is generally sound, but not entirely consistent. The pace of lessons is generally brisk. The teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to listen to stories and poems and use good intonation in their voices to maintain interest. They make good use of questioning to encourage the pupils to speak. The pupils respond well to these sessions. Their attitudes and behaviour are usually good and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their speaking and listening skills.
83. The teachers keep careful records of books read and the pupils are regularly provided with new ones. Some records identify areas for development, but some are more cursory. Reading books are not always well matched to the pupils' abilities and fail to stretch the more able readers. All pupils make satisfactory gains in their reading skills. Most are keen to read and to explain what they have read. Some pupils find the exercise difficult but they are still prepared to 'have a go'. In Year 6, some pupils voluntarily arrive in school early for extra reading practice with support assistants and teachers who are happy to help them.

84. The teachers provide a good range of writing activities, encouraging pupils to use adjectives and figurative language to make their writing more interesting. All pupils are taught to use punctuation correctly and the outcome of this is evident in the progress pupils make as they move through the key stages. However, insufficient attention is paid to presentation and many pupils in Year 4, and beyond, fail to join their writing. Letter formation, size and spacing is often poor and many pupils place capital letters in the middle of sentences in Key Stage 2. Higher teacher expectations in Year 6 are reflected in a significant improvement. The teachers spend appropriate parts of the lessons, helping to develop pupils' spelling ability, both through learning new words, and through increasing their phonic skills. Good teaching in Year 2 helps pupils to understand how non-fiction books are organised and to find information in books, using their knowledge of the alphabet. The teachers mark pupils' work regularly, providing many appropriate words of encouragement, but there is little written comment to help pupils to move forward, particularly with regard to presentation. Where marking is helpful, there is evidence of improvement. Very occasionally, marking is inappropriate. Homework makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning, although some parents are concerned about the amount of homework their children are expected to complete.
85. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by classroom assistants, within the financial constraints of the budget. Teachers use strategies such as 'reading with a friend' to help the least confident pupils. Most activities are well matched to individual ability, although there are inconsistencies in this. The most able pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
86. Some opportunities are lost for pupils to practise their writing in other areas of the curriculum. The school has recognised this weakness and is beginning to address it. For example, information technology is used well in some classes for drafting work and extending writing skills; pupils in Year 5 make a class magazine, and those in Year 6 produce a school newspaper. However, lack of teacher expertise in many classes results in missed opportunities for pupils to develop and extend their writing skills in this way.
87. Particularly good teaching is seen in Years 5 and 6, where the teachers' own enjoyment of literature is infectious and motivates pupils to read for themselves. Very good strategies and teaching methods help pupils to understand and enjoy quite complex texts. In such lessons very good relationships give pupils the confidence to contribute successfully to the lesson. Pupils learn quickly in such lessons and take a pride in their work, for example when pupils in Year 5 rearrange stanzas from *The Highwayman*. They work co-operatively, discussing whether or not the meaning has been preserved, and where to put the rhyming couplets before reading their finished work with excellent expression, convinced that their version is an improvement on Alfred Noyes' original! This learning is reinforced and extended in Year 6 when pupils compare and contrast two novels that deal with dream sequences, referring to clauses and phrases in the text to support their ideas and opinions. In such lessons, pupils are highly motivated and make very good gains in their understanding of literature and their general reading skills. Where teaching is rather weaker, careful planning and pupils' good attitudes to their work still ensure a satisfactory standard of learning. In these lessons, explanations lack clarity, time is used less well and opportunities are missed to engage the reader in the richness of the text. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, partly intended to demonstrate to pupils how, in traditional tales, the author often speaks aside to the reader, pupils were unsure of what they were supposed to have learned and showed a marked lack of confidence when asked to find examples. Most teachers plan carefully to ensure that activities are well matched to ability, but scrutiny of pupils' work shows that this practice is not consistent. Sometimes, pupils of different ability are given the same work to do, for example the same list of spellings to learn, and this is unsatisfactory. Some parents expressed concern about this at the pre-inspection meeting.
88. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy document as its scheme of work, but the school policy is out of date and there are some inconsistencies in the way in which the subject is delivered throughout the school. The coordinator receives plans of the work to be

covered and she, in partnership with the headteacher, has monitored teaching and learning throughout the school. This has enabled her to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work and to identify targets for improvement. However, she is unaware of some of the inconsistencies in medium and short term planning and there is room for improvement. A sound range of assessment procedures is in place and the information is put to good effect in planning targets for individual pupils. There is less evidence of assessment being used to inform planning for future work for the pupils. The resources for the subject are barely adequate. There is a need for more group reading books, and good quality literature, in Key Stage 1. The library facility in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory and has not improved since the previous inspection. Many books, both fiction and non-fiction, are old and in poor condition. Lack of a library is of particular significance because there is no public library nearby and the great majority of pupils has no understanding of how a library is organised.

## MATHEMATICS

89. The results of National Curriculum tests in 1999, at the end of Key Stage 1, show that pupils were achieving standards that were above the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards were also above average. There was a similar picture at the end of Key Stage 2 where the test results for 1999 showed that the pupils were above the national average when compared to all schools. However, when compared to similar schools results were broadly in line with the national average. Over the past four years, there has been a steady improvement in mathematics standards in Key Stage 1, however, there is a different picture in Key Stage 2. Although during the four years, from 1996 to 1999, pupils' performance in mathematics was above the national average overall, standards did drop from 1996 to 1998, before rising again in 1999. Whilst there are no differences in attainment, over those four years, between boys and girls at Key Stage 2, there is a difference in performance between the boys and girls in Key Stage 1 during the same period of time.
90. Evidence from inspection indicates that standards in Year 2 are above average and reflect the findings of the previous inspection. The pupils count objects very accurately, well beyond ten, and measure in centimetres. They recognise simple fractions and are able to identify number patterns. Data is recorded in simple block graphs, and pupils are able to sort different objects and classify them, for example, colours and shape, as they learn about Venn diagrams. The pupils have a good mental recall and use their knowledge of addition and subtraction facts well. They understand simple place value and record results and findings accurately. Pupils talk confidently about their work and are able to offer appropriate answers to questions they are asked using mathematical language. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress.
91. Pupils in Year 6 are currently working at levels that are close to the national average and this is a similar picture to the previous inspection, where attainment was in line with national expectations. The school has recognised that this year's group of pupils may not be as successful in the end of year National Curriculum tests, compared with 1999, where the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4, or above, was above the national average. A challenging target has been set for their attainment, although this may not be achieved as the year group contains a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs. Nevertheless, demanding work is being set for the higher-attaining pupils, and some of these pupils will achieve Level 5 or above. Because of the good teaching in Year 6, pupils are making good progress overall. Pupils, generally, have a secure understanding of the four rules of number and are able to find different ways of undertaking pencil and paper calculations, although lower-attaining pupils are not so confident. The majority understand place value and appreciate the relationship between fractions, percentages and decimals. Pupils recognise two- and three-dimensional shapes and, during their mental mathematics, talk confidently about square, cube and prime numbers. Many of the pupils present their work in a clear and organised way, although this is more difficult for the less able pupils. Although standards are close to the national average in Year 6, evidence from

inspection indicates that in Year 5, standards are above average. Pupils throughout the key stage are making sound progress overall, including those with special educational needs. However, progress is not always consistent with pupils making better progress in Years 5 and 6.

92. During the previous inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed in mathematics and this was maintained during the current inspection. Half the lessons seen were good or very good. A feature of the good and very good lessons is the ability of teachers to motivate pupils so that they develop a fascination and interest in the subject of mathematics and are keen to solve and answer problems for themselves. They do this by conveying their own enthusiasm, by taking lessons at a brisk pace and by having high expectations that pupils can cope with challenging work. For example, in a good Year 6 lesson, pupils of all abilities wanted to break the class record for finishing a timed number loop. It is this kind of enthusiasm that inspires the pupils to do well. In the majority of good lessons, the lesson objective is shared with the pupils and, in some instances, the pupils write it down. This enables the teacher to return to it in the whole-class discussion, to assess whether it has been achieved. This practice is, however, inconsistent and opportunities are lost to inform pupils about what they are learning and to assess their achievements. The basic skills of number are taught appropriately by all teachers and the structure of the numeracy hour is used to deliver the lesson. However, there are inconsistencies in this approach and the school would acknowledge this. Although the mental mathematics session of the lesson are taught consistently well, the remaining time is not always used effectively. Some numeracy lessons are too long, which impacts on the pace of the lesson and, consequently, pupils' learning. Whole-class sessions are not always used effectively and this prevents teachers assessing pupils' understanding, and all pupils sharing the outcomes and findings of a lesson. Although half-term plans are based on the National Numeracy Strategy, teachers' short term planning is less consistent. This means that, in some lessons, the range of work provided is not necessarily appropriate for all of the different ability groups. Higher-attaining pupils are not always extended and, conversely, less able pupils can find some work too difficult. This is seen very clearly when looking at pupils' books across all year groups.
93. Homework, particularly in Key Stage 2, is regularly set and is used to reinforce what is learned in the classroom. Teachers mark work regularly and, although positive comments are used to encourage pupils, there is little evidence of this process being used to help pupils move on to the next stage of learning. Teachers have good control of their classes, and relationships are very positive. In lessons where time is used well, there is pace to the teaching and work is set for the different ability groups, therefore pupils' learning is good. The Year 5 teacher feels that it is important to make mathematics fun, and his pupils respond warmly to this approach.
94. Pupils respond well in all lessons. They behave sensibly, concentrate on their work, and produce a reasonable volume of work. Presentation is often good and the pupils are very keen to answer questions or talk about their work. Sometimes, when mathematics lessons are too long their interest wanes. Relationships are consistently good and along with the pupils' enthusiasm for the subject, has a positive effect on their learning.
95. The subject co-ordinator is very enthusiastic about the subject and has attended a number of in-service courses to support the development of the National Numeracy Strategy. The daily numeracy hour is now established in the school, although there are some weaknesses that relate to inconsistencies in practice. For example, some classes exceed the times recommended for the year groups. This leads to lessons that are too long, which impacts overall on pupils' learning. The school has adopted a cautious approach to initiating the strategy and has started by ensuring that mental mathematics is taught well. This has been well monitored by the headteacher, subject co-ordinator and a governor with responsibility for mathematics. However, the school does not benefit from using weekly plans based on the numeracy strategy that would encourage thorough and detailed planning. Pupils are assessed regularly, and this provides teachers with information that can be used to

organise future planning. Resources are satisfactory overall although some areas require development, for example, measuring equipment.

## SCIENCE

96. Results from the 1999 teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, showed that pupils were reaching standards in line with the national average. At the end of Key Stage 2, the 1999 National Curriculum test results were average when compared nationally, and when compared with similar schools. Results over the past four years follow national trends.
97. Inspection evidence, including classroom observations, discussions with pupils, and scrutiny of past work, indicates that pupils in Year 6 are, currently, not meeting these standards. This suggests that standards have fallen since the last inspection, when attainment was judged to be in line with the national average at Key Stage 2. However the group of pupils currently in Year 6, has a relatively high proportion of pupils with special educational needs.
98. The development of pupils' investigative and experimental knowledge is unsatisfactory at both key stages. Although there are examples of investigations taking place, pupils are not developing these skills in a progressive way as they move through the school. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are unable to say how they would record their findings, nor can they explain a 'fair test', by the end of Key Stage 2. This indicates little progress in this area of science since the previous inspection.
99. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn about plants and the human body, the skeleton, and how to keep healthy. However, they are unable to name parts of a plant or say what a plant needs to survive. Pupils know that seeds are needed to make more plants, but are unable to explain the term 'habitat'. As part of their topics, pupils in Key Stage 2 study survival and animal classification, food webs and food chains. By the end of the key stage, pupils know what is common to all plants and can discuss a habitat but have no understanding of micro-organisms.
100. Pupils' knowledge of materials is very limited. By the end of both key stages pupils are unable to talk about any materials or their properties, how they can be changed or whether such changes are reversible. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know what is needed to make an electrical device work, but are unable to explain the meaning of translucent, transparent or opaque.
101. At the end of both key stages, pupils show limited knowledge of physical forces. Younger pupils name some sources of light and know that electricity is needed to make a bulb light up. However, they are unable to say what is the difference between loudness and pitch or what causes an object to move or slow down. Older pupils know that a force causes an object to move but are unable to discuss friction, or explain what causes night and day.
102. Learning, while satisfactory overall, is inconsistent. For a minority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, it is less than satisfactory. At both key stages, the curriculum is not sufficiently well planned to guarantee that all the programmes of study are covered at an appropriate depth and revisited frequently enough in order to extend and consolidate pupils' learning. Investigative skills, and scientific vocabulary, are not taught in a systematic way as pupils move through the school, in order to build on what pupils already know. There is no scheme of work to guide the teaching and learning in science, with the exception of a list of areas to teach within a year group. More able pupils do not have work that is specifically planned to challenge and extend their abilities. Learning is good, however, when investigative skills are used, and pupils are encouraged to plan and investigate, for example in Year 5, when pupils use books to conduct an investigation into why habitats are different. This is a different picture to the previous inspection when progress was found to be good at Key Stage 1 and unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. Literacy skills are developed well when pupils are encouraged to debate an issue such as why there are different habitats.

103. Pupils' response in science is generally good and very good in the better lessons. Pupils enjoy their science lessons and have positive relationships with their teachers, showing a good level of respect. Pupils listen well to their teachers, some making significant and thoughtful contributions. They work effectively at their given tasks, whether individually, in pairs, or in groups. Pupils concentrate and persevere, some being sorry when the lesson is over.
104. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with an example of good teaching in Year 5. However, at times, lesson planning lacks clear objectives and does not provide for different groups of abilities. Teachers are committed and enthusiastic. They control their pupils well, and have secure subject knowledge within the topic framework. Teachers work with limited and inappropriate resources, necessitating large groups, for example, in an experiment concerning the use of a power source. In the best lessons, where teaching is good, the teacher provides a good level of pace and challenge. All pupils' contributions are valued and the teacher has high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour.
105. The science policy has been reviewed by the science co-ordinator who has been in post for less than a year. The present curriculum does not cover all the programmes of study sufficiently, in order to provide the necessary scientific knowledge in the four areas of science. The existing 'list of coverage' is to be replaced by the government guidelines for science, to be implemented in September of this year. Science resources have been reviewed, and the necessary resources required to deliver the new curriculum have been identified. There is insufficient use of information technology to support pupils' learning in science.
106. Assessment is undertaken by individual teachers at the completion of a topic. These assessments are inconsistent and are not used to aid future planning in terms of identifying what the pupils know. The co-ordinator has identified the need to implement a structured approach in the assessments undertaken in science in order to raise standards.

## **ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

107. Although few lessons were seen during the inspection, evidence from observation of these lessons together with discussions with teachers and pupils and scrutiny of pupils' work, and teachers' planning, shows that pupils make unsatisfactory progress in art, and in design and technology, throughout the school. The school currently links the two subjects in planning.
108. Some interesting work was seen during the inspection, such as 'faces from around the world', where pupils in Year 2 have attempted to paint masks in the style of Aborigine and Kenyan face paintings. Sketches of the school and attractive collage work by pupils in Key Stage 1, using natural materials, show a developing understanding of some of the elements of line, colour and texture. In Year 6, pupils study the work of William Morris and make a good attempt to reproduce the designs, debating where on the page to start, how to achieve the desired symmetry, and which media and colours to use. These pupils develop their observational drawing skills satisfactorily, learn about the life and work of another artist and make informed choices based on previous experiences. Similar examples of good work can be found throughout the school. Pupils in Year 3 know that ink was made from mixing soot and honey in Saxon times and express their own ideas when writing with a 'quill' pen. Where the weakness lies, is in the fragmented whole-school planning, which result in gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding, which prevent them from drawing on previous experience when solving problems and attempting to work creatively. For example, pupils in Year 4 were unable to say what colours would result from mixing yellow and blue or yellow and red paint. When making a net for a Tudor house, these pupils cut into large sheets of card with no sketches to refer to, or pre-formed ideas about how they will join the component parts. Their models are largely unsuccessful because their understanding of shape is limited and no measurements are made. Sketchbooks are made available for pupils to develop their ideas in both subjects, but the work they contain is of a

low quality and shows no evidence of either experimentation or progress in areas such as observational drawing.

109. No teaching was observed in Key Stage 1 and the quality of teaching in the lessons observed in Key Stage 2 ranged from good to satisfactory. Weaknesses in subject knowledge and planning, particularly for design and technology, too rigid methods, and barely satisfactory organisation, were the main features of the least successful lessons. In these lessons, although the teachers worked hard to compensate for pupils' lack of prior skills and knowledge, the pace of learning was slow and gains barely satisfactory. For example, adult helpers were observed cutting out shapes for pupils, in advance of a design and technology lesson in Year 3, and inappropriate intervention was observed in other lessons. There is little distinction in some lessons between art and design and technology, and pupils are not always sure of the difference.
110. Learning objectives are often too broad. For example, 'to look in more detail' provides insufficient focus for assessment in a combined science and design and technology lesson. In this lesson, pupils were given opportunities to design and make choices, but in many lessons choice is very limited and few opportunities are made for pupils to develop individual flair. Many class displays show almost identical pieces of work, for example windmills in Year 1, Roman shields and wheels in Year 3, and pictures based on Van Gogh's painting of his bedroom in Year 5. Teachers display the work imaginatively and well to show that it is valued and special. Good artwork is also presented in public displays such as fairs, festivals and competitions.
111. There are no policies for the subjects and no schemes of work to support teachers in their planning for pupils to make systematic progress. The subjects of art and design and technology are planned within the school's rolling programme of topics and there is no indication in the planning of how pupils will make progress in the different elements of the subjects as they move through the school. Occasionally, pupils are encouraged to make and decorate individually designed objects, such as musical instruments, from a limited range of materials. However, the outcomes lack finish and quality because pupils have few prior skills and knowledge to call on. For example, for pupils in Year 4, joining methods have not developed beyond sticky tape and glue. Pupils are unable to consider economy of materials when designing and making and there is no evidence of measuring. Fragmented whole-school planning cannot ensure that pupils ever meet some of the elements of the subjects, and inadequate resources prevent some of the aspects of design and technology, such as the use of tools, from being developed systematically. There are no assessment or record-keeping procedures for the subjects and, although assessment is identified in short term planning, it is not clear how this will be used. Learning objectives are often too broad for teachers to judge whether or not they have been achieved.
112. For the past three years there has been no-one to co-ordinate the subject of art, owing to changes in staffing and, consequently, the subject has not moved forward since the previous inspection and standards have not been maintained. The deputy headteacher is, currently, supporting the subject by looking after resources, and offering advice where appropriate. A new co-ordinator will take up post in September. The school recognises that there is a need for a more cohesive curriculum for art and has already sought advice from the local authority advisor. The coordinator for design and technology has many other duties to perform and, as the subject is not currently a priority in the school, there has been no development since the previous inspection and standards have not been maintained. Resources for art are reasonably adequate and the Parent, Teacher and Friends' Association has made a significant contribution, for example, by purchasing picture frames and materials. Resources are unsatisfactory for design and technology. Materials are limited and tools inadequate to teach the National Curriculum programmes of study satisfactorily.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

113. It was only possible to observe two geography lessons during the period of the inspection, therefore, judgements are based on these lessons as well as scrutiny of work and planning, and discussions with pupils and teachers. The subject co-ordinator would acknowledge that there has been very little development in geography over the past few years because of the priorities given to literacy and numeracy, and other areas of the curriculum. This means that pupils have not consistently acquired the appropriate geographical skills, knowledge and understanding. In both key stages, pupils' standards are below those expected for their age.
114. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have some understanding of maps and a sound knowledge of weather. They are able to use geographical terms, such as hill and river, in relation to their surroundings and, in Year 1, pupils undertook fieldwork activities in the locality of the school. However, pupils have limited experience in using secondary sources to obtain geographical information and have a limited understanding of the world that extends beyond their own locality. Pupils in Year 6 are beginning to understand that different climatic conditions affect the lives and activities of people. For example, while watching a BBC video about the people of Baffin Island, the pupils offered good ideas about the impact of extreme weather on the price of food. In good links with literacy, the pupils made notes from the video and then use an index to locate the island in an atlas. In Year 5, pupils use the correct vocabulary to describe the geographical features of volcanoes and the geological plates that make up the earth's surface. Using maps and atlases, they begin to understand the link between these two features. Although standards in both of the lessons observed in Key Stage 2 were appropriate, overall, pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in geography are underdeveloped by the time they reach Year 6.
115. the quality of teaching was sound overall, although some good teaching was observed. In the good lesson, the teacher showed good subject knowledge and the lesson was presented in an interesting manner, which generated excitement and enthusiasm amongst the pupils. Pupils of all abilities concentrated fully and no time was wasted. A dynamic brainstorming session started the lesson and provided all of the pupils an opportunity to share and develop their subject knowledge. Clear learning objectives were shared with the pupils so that everyone knew what they were expected to learn and discover. Once the pupils began to work together at activities the teacher effectively supported the less able pupils. Continual challenging questions to all pupils helped develop their understanding and thinking.
116. Although the school's long-term plan for geography shows an appropriate balance of activities to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding, in reality, much of the curriculum is covered inconsistently. During the next term, the subject co-ordinator will evaluate how the school topics can be integrated into the new curriculum that all primary school will have to offer from September 2000. However, it is unclear how the school will be able to offer statutory coverage without an appropriate and rigorous scheme of work that ensures continuity and progression through the subject. There are no formal procedures for assessment in the subject, and the procedures for monitoring pupils' progress in the subject are unsatisfactory.
117. Resources are satisfactory. Materials such as atlases are stored in classrooms making them readily available for pupils. This is good practice.

## **HISTORY**

118. Overall, as was found during the previous inspection, pupils' standards in history are in line with expectations for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in developing their skills and understanding across both key stages.
119. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, appropriately identify 'old' and 'new' and understand the terms 'then' and 'now'. In Year 1, they comment on the evidence that helps them to decide the reasons for the use of paper and slate and understand the differences between 100 years

ago and now. They develop good observational skills as they look closely at a school photograph from the 'olden days', a school dress and a wooden pen, identifying the differences between 'then' and now'. Pupils in Year 2 collect evidence from their families when looking at the differences and changes in childhood. Pupils have a good understanding of how their own lives differ from other peoples' and they show a good sense of chronology as they successfully order objects.

120. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils are researching and collecting historical information concerning different periods. In Year 4, pupils look at Tudor houses, making observations about materials used and similarities and differences to their own houses. Pupils' research skills and scientific enquiry are further developed in Year 5 when investigating the beliefs and attitudes of Egyptians and their religious experiences. They extend their historical vocabulary as the methods of mummification are discussed. Older pupils talk about their local study concerning the Victorians, identifying the changes that the Industrial Revolution brought about and discussing how the local mill has affected the village and the surrounding area. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils develop some independent research skills, for example when collecting evidence to prepare a talk to give to the class on the history of Tean. Pupils literacy skills are developed through them asking and answering questions.
121. Pupils in Key Stage 1 enjoy talking about how things have changed since their grandparents were children. They are very enthusiastic and detailed in their explanations of school a hundred years ago, showing thorough knowledge of outside toilets! In Key Stage 2, pupils show a good sense of humour when investigating the details of an Egyptian mummification. Pupils enjoy being Egyptologists. They want to learn and are inspired by the topic. Older pupils maintain their interest and share ideas sensibly when undertaking group research, particularly when looking at their own cultural heritage.
122. Teaching is good at both key stages and, in upper Key Stage 2, very good. Where teaching is good, teachers plan carefully and use a wide range of primary and secondary sources as evidence. They use good active methods, which involve pupils in their own learning and generate interest and enthusiasm. They have high expectations that pupils will respond to challenges and think through more complex issues. In the best lessons, the lively presentation shows good, secure knowledge and the teacher's enthusiasm is transferred to the pupils.
123. As was found during the previous inspection, there is no comprehensive scheme of work. There is a policy with curriculum guidance and a plan, to identify what is to be taught. Consideration is being given to the government guidelines for history in order to establish a framework for the systematic teaching of the subject and the development of the skills of enquiry. This would provide more structured opportunities for the assessment of pupils' understanding.
124. There has been little change in resources since the previous inspection. There are few artefacts in school but 'loans' are available. There is a wealth of local resources within their own environment to serve the topic on Victorians very well, together with visits from a local historian.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

125. Although standards are below national expectations at the end of both key stages, pupils make good and often very good progress in all elements of information technology. Recently introduced high quality resources, together with very good teaching, which is planned to a well-designed scheme of work, ensure that pupils make systematic progress throughout the school. The best progress is made in Years 2 to 6, where pupils are taught by the specialist teacher.

126. Pupils in Year 2 use the keyboard and mouse to successfully create pictures, and drag and drop images on the screen. They use a word processor to create lists and poems, changing the size and colour of the fonts and using the arrows and delete keys to correct their work. By Year 6 pupils are creating and using databases and spreadsheets with increasing competence to sort and sift information, and to calculate outcomes. They 'cut and paste' to transfer information from one file to another, and explore tables and graphs before discussing with a partner the appropriateness of each for displaying given information. They are keen to develop these skills further by creating a questionnaire to enable them to collect and interpret data both at home and also abroad, using information and communications technology. They use the computer software to create pictures and, successfully, import these into text boxes. They communicate with other pupils in Northern Ireland and America by e-mail and download information to support their topics from the Internet. All pupils have an opportunity to contribute to the school web site. Pupils have not yet developed independence in their use of such software but they are learning at a good pace. Some elements of information technology have not yet been covered in either key stage and consequently pupils have no experience of controlling a floor robot or using sensors, but these skills are securely rooted in planning for next term. In Year 6, pupils will, starting from a low base, have some knowledge, understanding and experience of the basics of all of the required aspects by the time they leave the school. There are indications that the attainment of the pupils currently in Year 5 will be above expectations, by the time they are eleven.
127. The quality of teaching is very good. The specialist teacher has very good subject knowledge and is extremely clear about what pupils are expected to learn and how they will learn it. Lessons are very well organised. The teacher's enthusiasm for the subject is contagious and is successful in creating a learning environment in which pupils can flourish. Challenging tasks keep pupils working at full stretch, but very good relationships create a calm supportive learning environment that gives pupils the confidence to ask for help when it is needed. Explanations are clear and concise, using correct technical vocabulary, and no time is wasted. Relevant content motivates pupils well and helps their understanding. For example, pupils interrogate data related to a theatre production with which they are familiar; they collect information relating to their own tastes and preferences, and use paint software to create pictures relating to their current topic. Although current attainment levels necessitate step-by-step guidance, the teacher's flexible approach, and ability to solve technical problems, allows pupils to explore and experiment and, thus, take some responsibility for their own learning. Energetic monitoring of pupils' progress allows individuals to work at a good pace with appropriate support. Although other teachers do provide opportunities for pupils to develop and extend their information technology skills in the classroom, inconsistencies in teachers' subject knowledge results in an uneven balance. In Year 1, pupils do not, currently, have the same planned access to computers. The school recognises the need for more professional development for class teachers, and the school development plan identifies how and when this will be addressed.
128. The subject co-ordinator, well supported by governors, and the Parent, Teacher and Friends' Association, has worked very hard to improve standards since the previous inspection. He is aware that further improvements could be made in Key Stage 1 and has a vision for the future of making the school a centre of excellence for information and communications technology. Assessment and recording of pupils' work is simple, but effective, and provides useful information for teachers as pupils move through the school.
129. The subject is well resourced, with a purpose-designed room containing a suite of computers and good quality chairs and desks. Further computers support the subject in classrooms. The school is shortly to be included in the National Grid for Learning project, which will further enhance provision and create better opportunities for professional development. The Parent, Teacher and Friends' Association has made a very significant contribution to the improvement in resources since the previous inspection, and takes a great pride in its achievements. Courses are now being arranged for parents to help them to support their children's learning at home.

## **MUSIC**

130. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, both in Key Stage 1. Judgements are therefore based on these lessons, together with discussions with the co-ordinator, specialist teacher and pupils. Video and cassette tapes were also examined together with the scheme of work and planning documents. The teaching of music is the responsibility of the class teachers in Key Stage 1 and the specialist visiting teacher in Key Stage 2.
131. In both key stages, pupils' standards are in line with those expected of their age group. The progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory overall. This represents a reduction from the standards of the previous inspection. Music contributes to numeracy in the counting of beats and clapping rhythms.
132. In Key Stage 1, pupils are developing a basic understanding of dynamics and pitch. For instance, when listening to music by Strauss, pupils recognise the changing elements and interpret the mood of the music with the help of percussion instruments. They use vocabulary, such as loud and soft, and play a range of instruments accurately to portray the dynamics in the music. Pupils sing tunefully in assembly, mostly unaccompanied but on occasions with a guitar accompaniment.
133. In Key Stage 2, pupils' singing in assembly is less tuneful and lacks enthusiasm. There is no obvious enjoyment in their rendition of well known hymns. In discussion with pupils, they understand the meaning of the terms pitch, tempo and dynamics, but cannot not explain duration. Pupils can name Beethoven and Bob Marley as two famous composers. They have composed and played their own music for others to listen to.
134. At both key stages pupils develop their skills of appreciation by listening to a range of music in both lessons and assemblies. Within their music lessons, music appreciation is linked to their history topics.
135. All pupils have the opportunity to play the recorder, beginning in Year 2 and culminating in Year 6, where the recorder group represents the school at a local recorder festival. Pupils are offered the opportunity to pay for tuition in a variety of orchestral instruments in school time. Visiting musicians include an orchestra and a member of a famous folk band. Pupils experience a wide range of multi-cultural music in lessons and assemblies at both key stages. Pupils have opportunities to perform in their 'Talent Show' and annual end of term production each Easter.
136. Pupils enjoy music and work well in both large and small groups. Younger pupils concentrate and persevere in lessons as they interpret the music, using their instruments with obvious enjoyment. They sing tunefully in their lesson, enjoying the interpretation of the 'spider story' through music.
137. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Teachers make their expectations clear so that the pupils know what is expected of them. They provide good opportunities for pupils to contribute in the lessons and encourage pupils to improve, for example when singing to achieve a bright and clear tone. Teachers control their pupils very well and have good relationships that are reflected in the pupils' desire to achieve. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 2.
138. The scheme of work is a framework of the areas of music to be covered. This offers insufficient help to teachers who may lack confidence or knowledge in the subject. Resources have been purchased for Key Stage 2, which now include sufficient tuned, untuned and multi-cultural instruments. Resources in Key Stage 1, however, are not sufficient in quality, quantity or range. The specialist music teacher provides effectively for music in Key Stage 2, within the limited time allowed.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

139. A limited number of physical education lessons were observed during the inspection, therefore, judgements are based on these lessons, as well as discussions with pupils and teachers, and scrutiny of teachers' planning. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and this was the judgement of the previous inspection. The pupils reach appropriate levels in their physical development in the reception class and this is continued into Key Stage 1 and 2. Pupils in Year 1 undertake a rigorous warm-up before their educational gymnastics lesson and are able to identify the changes in their body brought about by exercise. Pupils discuss the increase in their heart rate and breathing and notice that some of them have red faces. The pupils develop simple sequences that are related to travelling and these become more complex as the lesson develops. Simple judgements are made about the performances of others and how these could be improved. In Year 2, pupils interpret their teacher's instructions well as they explore ways to move, and the shapes a body can produce at different levels of height. They perform confidently in front of each other and use large apparatus safely. In a very good Year 3 dance lesson, pupils expressed their ideas enthusiastically in response to music and suggestions from the teacher. They produced quite complex movements based on the theme of 'cats', showing good control. Pupils made sensible and mature judgements about their own performances and then repeated and developed their movements. In Year 5, pupils worked safely in pairs as part of a badminton lesson. The skills required for this game developed as the lesson progressed, and the pupils also learned about working as members of a team. By the time pupils have left the school, the majority are able to swim unaided, competently, and safely, for 25 metres, which is the nationally recommended distance for pupils of this age. All pupils have an opportunity to take part in outdoor and adventurous activities as part of their physical education programme at the end of Key Stage 2.
140. Pupils respond with great enthusiasm to physical education lessons. They are very well behaved, have positive attitudes and work well together. In the limited number of lessons seen, the quality of teaching was satisfactory overall, although some good and very good teaching was observed. Lessons are well planned in principle, and show an appropriate progression and development of skills and techniques. The important elements of physical education, such as warming-up and cooling down are encouraged. However, pupils are not always kept active and this affects the quality of learning. Sometimes, the balance between giving instructions and allowing pupils to get on with the proposed activity is not quite right. Too much time is spent talking, getting out apparatus, or waiting 'to have a turn' rather than undertaking sustained energetic activity. Control and discipline are always good and appropriate attention is paid to health and safety, although there are some weaknesses in that area. However, lessons do have many good features, for example, the rigorous and original warm-up sessions, observed in Key Stage 1, or the clear, quick and concise instructions given in the Year 3 dance lesson that meant no time was wasted.
141. The school provides an appropriate balance of activities for physical education. The school's curriculum plan ensures all aspects are covered satisfactorily. Resources for physical education are satisfactory overall, although some elements are good. For example, as a split site school, there are two reasonably large halls for gymnastics, dance, and indoor games. Both of these are clean and well maintained, although aspects of their use and organisation could be improved. Large apparatus is not stored efficiently in the Key Stage 1 hall. This impacts on pupils' learning, as too much time is spent moving this apparatus for gymnastics lessons. Equipment stored in the Key Stage 2 hall presents potential health and safety problems. For example, the school piano was in an inappropriate place during an indoor games lesson. The playing fields and hard areas are appropriate for outdoor activities, and equipment and resources are suitably stored so there is ease of access for both staff and pupils. Physical education is very much part of the culture of the school and there is a good range of extra-curricular activities and competitive sport provided for the pupils who talk proudly about these activities. Visits to professional football grounds are arranged and Port Vale Football Club works with pupils in Years 5 and

6 during the summer term. The school has recently received a Football Association Charter Mark.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

142. By the end of both key stages, pupils' standards are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. Pupils in both key stages show an interest in different faiths. They have a sound understanding of the moral content of stories and can relate it to their own experience and behaviour. The subject makes a contribution to literacy through discussion and written work. This represents a similar picture to that found by the previous inspection.
143. In Key Stage 1, pupils have a basic knowledge of Bible stories and the life of Jesus. They show knowledge of the Jewish faith, knowing that the holy book is called the 'Torah'. They are able to name Christian artefacts when visiting the local church. Pupils in Key Stage 2 develop their knowledge and understanding of the different beliefs of world religions. They are beginning to understand how a strong faith can influence a person's life, and understand the concept of forgiveness as illustrated by the parable of the 'Prodigal Son'. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 investigate the features of key religious festivals such as the events leading up to Easter. In Year 6, pupils use first-hand experiences when researching the beliefs and culture of Islam through a visit by Muslim pupils and teachers from a local high school.
144. Pupils' response to religious education is very good. They listen carefully to their teacher's explanations and are keen to ask and answer questions and present their own point of view. Pupils show respect for other religions and cultures. They have good relationships with their teachers and fellow pupils.
145. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers show good subject knowledge, using effective question and answer sessions to promote learning. They respect pupils' contributions, placing value on their ideas and suggestions. Work in religious education supports pupils' moral, social and cultural development, whilst making a more limited contribution to their spiritual development.
146. Planning follows the locally agreed syllabus, ensuring appropriate coverage of the subject. There is no planned assessment, other than comments in pupils' annual reports: this is a similar picture to that found by the previous inspection. The subject is well co-ordinated and, although the school holds insufficient resources, they are supplemented by loans from the local high school, and resource centre, together with visits to the local church and a synagogue. The co-ordinator has plans to purchase religious objects to promote the understanding of multi-cultural beliefs.