

# INSPECTION REPORT

**LINCHFIELD COMMUNITY PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Deeping St James

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120499

Headteacher: Mr K M Bunch

Reporting inspector: Mr P H Cole  
2616

Dates of inspection: 22 – 26 May 2000

Inspection number: 192093

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Community
School category:	Primary
Age range of pupils:	5 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Crowson Way Deeping St James Peterborough
Postcode:	PE6 8EY
Telephone number:	01778 347450
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J B Anderson
Date of previous inspection:	20 January 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
P H Cole	Registered inspector	Science Information technology Music Equality of opportunity	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
D L Lloyd	Lay inspector		Pupil's attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
J A Sharpe	Team inspector	English Under fives	
M Morton-Thorpe	Team inspector	Geography History	
N Hardy	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
A McGregor	Team inspector	Art Physical education Religious education Special educational needs English as an additional language	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Linchfield primary school serves the needs of a modern private housing estate, in the village of Deeping St James. With 415 pupils on roll it is larger than most primary schools. As there is no nursery pupils enter the school in the September of the year in which they become five. Most pupils have benefited from pre-school education before they join the reception classes. At the time of the inspection there were noticeably more girls in the school than boys. Although three pupils speak English as an additional language they all speak English well. Two pupils have recently been classed as traveller children. They are not currently in the school and arrangements are being made with the local education authority to provide education for them.

None of the pupils currently in school are entitled to free school meals. This is very low compared to schools nationally and reflects the high levels of employment in the area. 59 pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and four of them have statements. The proportion of pupils with special needs is below the average for schools nationally. The local community has a relatively mobile population and there is more movement in and out of the school than usual. The attainment on entry represents a wide range but, overall, is above average and reflects the relatively advantaged backgrounds that most pupils come from.

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

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils, who are well taught and achieve appropriately. The school is effectively led and managed and given its very low costs provides good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve above national standards in English, mathematics and science and standards are good in art, design and technology, music and swimming.
- Teaching is good in all key stages.
- Pupils are very well behaved, work hard and get on well with each other. They enjoy school and their attendance is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy a good range of after school clubs and benefit from the effective links developed with the community and local schools.
- The school promotes well pupils' moral and cultural development and their social development very well.
- Pupils are well cared for and benefit from the effective partnership the school has forged with parents.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide positive and enthusiastic leadership.

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

- Standards achieved in information technology (IT) are currently poor.
- There are imbalances in the curriculum and few opportunities to teach IT.
- There has been insufficient monitoring and evaluation of the standards pupils achieve in order to raise them further.

- There has also been little monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching to identify any weaknesses and to ensure that policies, such as for the marking of pupils' work, are consistently implemented.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Over the last three years, results at Key Stage 2 in science have showed steady and sustained improvement and last year were above those found in schools with similar levels of free school meals. In contrast, the results in English have deteriorated and last year were well below those in similar schools. Results in mathematics were also not as good as those in similar schools. Evidence from the inspection is that this trend is being reversed with pupils currently in Year 6 comfortably achieving above national expectations and appropriately for their prior attainment. The good standards at Key Stage 1 have been maintained. Weaknesses in religious education and design and technology have been addressed and pupils now achieve well in design and technology. Teaching continues to be good, but weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum remain with too little time being provided for some foundation subjects. Better provision is made for pupils' cultural development, which is now good. Assessments of pupils' learning are more informative but too little use is made of this information to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. The headteacher continues to provide good leadership, the school retains a strong positive ethos and the planning of school development is now more effective. Teachers' roles as coordinators still need developing. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress in addressing issues from the last inspection.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	A	A	C	E	well above A average above B average C below average D well below E average
mathematics	B	B	B	D	
science	C	A	A	B	

In 1999, results in the tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, in particular, and also in mathematics were too low compared to those in similar schools. However, when compared with what these particular pupils achieved at the end of Key Stage 1 the results in mathematics were appropriate. Over the last four years there has been a downward trend in results in English. In mathematics, after a dip in 1997 results have shown a small improvement. In science, they have improved significantly and in 1999 were above those in similar schools. Girls have mostly achieved better than boys in the tests. The inspection found that current

standards, at the end of Key Stage 2, are much better in both English and mathematics than they have been and that pupils are now achieving appropriately in all of the core subjects. The school comfortably achieved its targets last year. Results at Key Stage 1 have been well above national averages and also above the average for similar schools. The inspection also found standards that were well above national expectations in English and mathematics and above expectations in science. Good standards are being achieved in art, design and technology and music (particularly by the large number of pupils who benefit from additional musical tuition and join in the extra curricular activities). The school invests considerable time and effort in swimming and this results in very high standards in this aspect of physical education. Standards in information technology are poor because there is insufficient teaching of the subject in most classes across the school. Where IT is taught pupils make very good progress and achieve appropriate standards. The achievement of pupils who are under five is above average

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good, both in lessons and during break times.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils relate well to each other and to adults and readily accept responsibility and show initiative.
Attendance	Good.

This is generally a strong area in the life of the school. Pupils are keen and interested and eagerly join in lessons. Their very good behaviour creates a calm and civilised environment that actively supports learning. Pupils want to help and they organise as well as support fund raising activities.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching across the school is good. Nearly three quarters of the 73 lessons observed were well taught and very good (and sometimes excellent teaching) was seen in Years 2, 4 and 5. Weaknesses in the only two unsatisfactory lessons were insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils, not ensuring that the lesson effectively built on what pupils already knew and not ensuring pupils understood what they had to do. Although both of these lessons were in mathematics, the teaching of numeracy was good overall, as was the teaching of literacy. A relative weakness in some literacy lessons was providing activities that did not reflect sufficiently the range of attainment in the class. This reduced the progress that some pupils made. The best lessons were taught at a challenging pace by teachers who had high expectations, were well prepared, used resources very effectively and questioned pupils closely to extend their thinking. In all lessons teachers managed pupils well and ensured that they were on task and worked hard. Lessons were generally planned effectively and classroom helpers were used appropriately. When pupils with special educational needs were withdrawn for additional support they were taught well and made good progress. In class, teachers occasionally modified tasks for these pupils and provided individual help as required and this enabled them to make at least satisfactory progress. They would have done even better if more account had been taken of their individual education plans.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory range, but curriculum lacks balance and does not meet the requirements for IT. Learning is enhanced by visits and links with the community. Good range of well attended extra-curricular clubs and activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall and particularly effective when they are provided with planned programmes of support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The three pupils with English as an additional language speak English well and have full access to the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall, very good for social, good for moral and cultural and satisfactory for spiritual development. Pupils are withdrawn from collective worship for extra special needs support and music tuition.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are well looked after.

The curriculum for the children who are under five is appropriate and prepares them well for the National Curriculum. The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 is broadly based but a disproportionate amount of time is spent on English and on physical education (because of the generous time for swimming). This results in below average allocations of time being available for other foundation subjects. This limits opportunities for pupils to engage in extended work

in subjects, such as history, but more importantly reduces the opportunities for pupils to learn IT. This is compounded by there being no consistent approach to delivering the IT curriculum. Standards in this key skill are therefore far too low. The school is aware of this and has a satisfactory plan to address the problem.

The school shows genuine concern for children's safety and welfare as reflected for example, in the guidance on safe practice in physical education. While the assessment of all pupils' learning is satisfactory and gives a sound picture of what they know, understand and can do, insufficient use is made of evaluations of assessment information to plan and fine tune pupils' learning.

The school's partnership with parents is good. It is underpinned by very good information on events and pupils' progress and involves consultation on school developments. Parents are keen to contribute by regularly helping in class and organising and supporting very successful fund raising activities.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher successfully promotes a positive ethos in the school. He has a clear sense of purpose and is very well supported by the recently appointed deputy headteacher. Teachers lead their areas of responsibility effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses but need to develop their roles as "critical friends" to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This an area of weakness. There is too little analysis of assessment information and monitoring of teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. Good use of resources in most subjects. The school's budget and other sources of income are used effectively to support learning.

There is a clear commitment to improve standards and to provide high quality learning in the school. Staff work well together to achieve the priorities they have agreed with governors. Developments are carefully planned. However, there is insufficient analysis of test results or monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in order to provide information that could be used as a basis for planning improvements. Governors have recently become involved in the early stages of planning developments in school. They do not closely monitor the implementation of the development plan or, for example, question variations in the achievement of pupils in different subjects. Overall, the school has good resources for learning. The well maintained and cleaned buildings provide satisfactory accommodation, although there is no fenced outdoor area for the children under five. Aspects of the principles of "best value" are beginning to inform the work of the school, for example consulting with parents, but this is an area that needs development.

## 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>• Good teaching and the progress their children make.</li> <li>• The good behaviour of the children.</li> <li>• The school listens to them and keeps them well informed of events and developments.</li> <li>• The school is well led.</li> <li>• The school encourages their children to develop independence and confidence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on their children's progress.</li> <li>• The work their children are expected to do at home.</li> <li>• The range of out of class activities and clubs.</li> </ul>

A large majority of parents are very supportive of the school. The inspectors agree with the strengths identified by the parents and would wish to reassure the few parents who identified weaknesses. The annual reports on progress were judged to be informative and detailed and together with open evenings and other opportunities to talk with the headteacher and teachers provided more information of better quality than is often found in schools. The quantity and appropriateness of homework is satisfactory and the homework diaries are working well. As

in most schools there are few out of class activities for the children in Key Stage 1, however, the opportunities to be involved in (mainly) sport and musical activities is good at Key Stage 2.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 In 1999, results in English, at the end of Key Stage 2, were in line with the average for all schools and in mathematics they were above the average but were too low when compared to those in similar schools. In contrast the results in science were well above the national average and were above the average in similar schools. Analysis of the results that the same pupils achieved at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that most made sound progress and achieved results that were appropriate. The trend in test results over the last four years has been downwards in English. With the exception of a dip for all the core subjects in 1997, results in mathematics have shown a small improvement, while those in science have improved at a faster rate than they has been the case nationally. The inspection findings, and the school's own assessments of the current Year 6 pupils, are that they achieve noticeably above national expectations in all three subjects and that standards are appropriate given the pupils' prior attainment.

2 In last year's tests for Year 2 pupils, the results achieved were well above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics and, when compared with the results in similar schools, they were well above in writing and above in both reading and mathematics. This was a very positive picture and consolidated a trend over the last four years of improvement in writing and mathematics. Standards in reading have remained well above national averages over this period. The inspection found similarly high standards in English and mathematics and above average achievement in science, which is not tested at Key Stage 1.

3 Pupils who are under five in the reception class achieve above expectations in the development of their language and literacy skills, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical development. Their personal, social and emotional development is very good. Creative development is average and reflects over direction in the activities pupils are given to do, which limits their development.

4 At Key Stage 1, pupils achieve well in all aspects of English and this is an improvement over the findings of the last inspection. At Key Stage 2, achievement is equally well balanced across speaking and listening, reading and writing but is not as strong as at Key Stage 1. A weakness in pupils' reading development at Key Stage 2 is their ability to use a library effectively. This is because they do not use the library to support research and enquiry in other the subjects of the curriculum.

5 The implementation of the numeracy strategy has had a positive impact on improving pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in mathematics and at Key Stage 2 and is leading to standards across the different aspects of mathematics, such as number, shape and problem solving, that are now comfortably above expectations and appropriate for pupils given their prior attainment. Many pupils in Year 2 not only have a good understanding of concepts such as "odd and even" they also understand negative numbers, which points to attainment well above average. The last inspection found in both English and mathematics that higher attaining pupils were not achieving high enough. In some literacy lessons and numeracy lessons this is still the case, but mostly their achievement is now appropriate.

6 Pupils' attainment in science is also well balanced across the different strands of the subject. Pupils have good observational skills in Key Stage 1 and by the end of Key Stage 2 most understand the need to control variables in order to make scientific tests fair. Pupils in both key stage have appropriate understanding and knowledge of living things, materials and their properties and of physical processes, such as electricity. Standards at Key Stage 1 have shown improvement since the last inspection where they were judged to be in line with expectations.

7 There have been clear improvements made in the standards achieved by pupils at Key Stage 2 in religious education and design and technology, which were judged to be below expectations in the last inspection. Standards in design and technology are now above expectations and in religious education they are in line, although weaknesses still remain in Key Stage 2 pupils' knowledge of major world faiths. Standards in art remain above expectations at both key stages. Many pupils continue to achieve well in music and swimming. Achievement in history and geography are now in line with expectations, whereas before they were above and this reflects the reduction in the time available to teach them. Standards in IT are poor. At present IT is hardly being taught in several classes and pupils therefore have little opportunity to learn and practice the required skills. When confident teachers were seen delivering IT through specific lessons pupils quickly acquire new skills and demonstrate achievement in line with the expectations for their age. The achievement of pupils is almost entirely in communicating information through the use of wordprocessing and art programs.

8 Pupils with special educational needs who are withdrawn for additional support, mainly for literacy, and those who benefit from regular additional support in class make good progress towards achieving the targets in their individual education plans (IEPs). Other pupils on the school's register of special educational needs make steady progress in most lessons. Teachers take care to ensure they understand new learning, the tasks they are expected to do and that those with behavioural problems are involved in lessons. The progress many of these pupils make would be greater if teachers took more account of IEPs when planning work for the different groups in the class. The three pupils with English as an additional language have good skills in all aspects of English and require no additional support. They make the same progress as other pupils in their classes.

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

9 Pupils are very enthusiastic learners, who are eager to come to school and take clear pleasure in their activities. They have many positive things to say about their school. They believe they are making good progress and that they are well cared for. They enjoy coming to school because learning is fun and there are lots of exciting things to do. Kind teachers and good friends are other important aspects of school life. Attendance figures that are above the national average and no unauthorised absences are good indicators of the way pupils feel.

10 All children have positive attitudes to learning. In lessons, they listen carefully to the teacher, confidently answer questions or contribute ideas and concentrate well on their activities. Their eagerness to learn and commitment to the life of the school is clearly shown by the numbers who take part in the extensive range of extra-curricular activities offered to

them. They are justifiably proud of their achievements in sport, music, science and technology.

11 Behaviour in lessons and around the school is unfailingly good. Pupils understand and observe the school's code of conduct. They settle to academic work quietly and sensibly and are often trusted to work without direct supervision. Movement around the building is orderly and behaviour in the dining room is civilised and controlled. Outside, they play happily together, and were exceptionally well behaved on days when wet weather confined them to classrooms at break times. There has never been any form of behaviour that has warranted the use of exclusion as a sanction.

12 Children form good relationships with one another and with adults. They co-operate well when working in pairs or groups, taking turns fairly and listening respectfully to views that differ from their own. Friendship is a very important aspect of school life. There is no evidence of racism or sexism and both staff and pupils agree that bullying is very rare. Pupils are careful to see that no one feels left out and there are good examples of how easily those who are new to the school make friends. Children with special educational needs are well integrated into the life of the school. Pupils are quick to celebrate the achievements of their classmates, for example, in a Year 5 group there was spontaneous applause when a boy summarised the main points of a maths lesson in the same way as the teacher had initially demonstrated them. Pupils are polite and courteous to adults and are happy to discuss their work with visitors.

13 When opportunities arise, pupils readily show initiative and take responsibility, for example, team captains help choose their teams and look after equipment, some older pupils have organised a highly successful talent show to raise money for new software and a "bring and buy" sale to support the Blue Peter appeal. In classrooms, pupils take good care of equipment and even the youngest ones tidy up sensibly after lessons.

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

14 Teaching was found to be good in the last inspection. This positive picture has further improved with a higher proportions of satisfactory and better lessons and lessons that were well taught, very well taught or excellent. During the inspection 97% of lessons were satisfactory or better and nearly three quarters were good or better and one in five were judged to very good or excellent. The quality of teaching was good in all key stages with the highest proportion of good and better lessons being found in Key Stage 1, most noticeably in Year 2. In Key Stage 2 teaching in a large proportion of lessons in Years 4 and 5 was also good or better.

There were only two unsatisfactory lessons. Both were in mathematics, with one in Key Stage 1 and one in Key Stage 2. In one lesson the teacher did not take sufficient account of what the pupils already knew and as a result higher attaining pupils learnt little that was new and they were given tasks that were too easy for them. In the other lesson ineffective organisation of a number game and not making sufficiently clear to pupils what they had to do resulted in too little progress being made.

15 Virtually all lessons were carefully planned to deliver the schemes of work for each subject. They mostly had clear objectives that focussed the work of teachers and were well

prepared. Teachers took care, whenever possible, to use well chosen resources that effectively supported teaching and learning. This was the case in many literacy, numeracy, science and geography lessons, for example. In a well taught science lesson in Year 2, the teacher made very effective use of a wide range of minibeasts that had been collected, to successfully encourage pupils to observe closely, using magnifiers and to record what they had found with care and accuracy. Use of good resources such as this was seen to stimulate pupils' interest and excitement and ensured that they were engrossed in the learning process.

16 In many of the most effective lessons teachers had high expectations of pupils. In reception classes, for example, teachers have high expectations of how pupils should behave and what they should be able to do independently and this helps to ensure that they make very good progress in their personal and social education. Similarly, in Year 5 a mathematics lesson was taught at a consistently challenging pace that stimulated and maintained high levels of interest. The teacher also valued and built on pupils' contributions, which extended and enhanced their self-belief and confidence. A weakness in some otherwise satisfactory lessons, in literacy in Key Stage 2, was the lack of differentiation in the tasks given to groups of different attainment. This resulted in too little challenge for some higher attaining pupils and occasionally work that was too difficult for lower attaining pupils. In most lessons teachers made good use of questioning to challenge pupils to think. In an excellent IT lesson in Year 4 the teacher's skilful questioning enabled pupils to work out for themselves solutions to challenging problems using an art program. Through this the pupils successfully refined and developed their understanding of how the program could be used to create different graphical effects.

17 In almost all lessons teachers demonstrated secure subject knowledge and this enabled them to teach with confidence and to provide clear explanations and to ask well focussed questions. This was seen in most literacy and numeracy lessons and ensured that the basic skills were effectively taught. IT is a subject where many teachers do not have sufficient subject knowledge and as a result several are reluctant to teach it. This leads to very patchy coverage and overall pupils make little progress in acquiring basic IT skills.

18 All teachers managed pupils behaviour well and ensured that pupils were on task and working hard through out lessons. In a Key Stage 1, for example, a teacher consistently and sensitively encouraged a child with behavioural problems to maintain her concentration and to become aware of the impact her behaviour on others. This enabled other pupils to work effectively without being unduly distracted. Time was used effectively in almost all lessons with a good balance being maintained between explanation, discussion and individual and group activities. When teachers had the benefit of additional support in their class, from classroom assistants or volunteer helpers, they used it well ensuring that the other adults had a clear understanding of what they needed to do. This led to individual pupils and groups being effectively supported, particularly those with special educational needs. In a Year 3 numeracy lesson, for example, the classroom assistant was able to adapt and match the work provided to the specific needs of a supported pupil and a group of lower attaining pupils in the class and this enabled them to comfortably achieve the lesson's objectives.

19 Those pupils with special educational needs who were withdrawn for additional support were well taught. The short sessions had clear objectives that were well matched to the targets in the pupils IEPs and these were skilfully taught ensuring that pupils made good progress. When pupils with special needs were taught in class they also often made good

progress when helped by classroom assistants. At other times teachers provided support whenever they could and sometimes modified tasks for individual pupils and the progress that was made was usually satisfactory. Teachers daily planning rarely took specific account of targets in IEPs and lessons therefore did not consistently contribute to the achievement of these targets.

20 Although pupils' work was regularly marked the quality of the marking varied from subject to subject and from teacher to teacher. In mathematics, for example, helpful comments were often made that enabled pupils to improve but there were few development points included in most pupils' science work. The school's marking policy provides useful guidance to teachers but is not yet being consistently followed.

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

21 A suitable curriculum is provided for the children under five, planned effectively to cover the nationally recommended areas of learning for the age group and this prepares them well for the National Curriculum. The curriculum provided for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad covering all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. However the balance of time between each subject is unevenly proportioned resulting in significant elements of the school day being devoted to English and physical education with other subjects suffering as a result. This, together with a short fall in the recommended time for the Key Stage 2 day limits the depth of study in other subjects. Evidence of information technology taking place either as a discrete subject or as part of studies in other areas of the curriculum is very limited. There is also inappropriate content in some subjects, such as pupils learning about dinosaurs in history. These factors result in a curriculum that has an unsatisfactory balance and relevance.

22 The National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategies are both having positive effects on standards. The Additional Literacy Strategy is also making a valuable contribution to targeted pupils learning. However, the format of the literacy hour in the school takes insufficient account of elements, such as guided reading, which are being covered outside the literacy hour. This puts additional strain on timetabling and time allocations for other subjects. Despite this, teachers deliver these strategies well and this enables pupils to make appropriate progress and achieve appropriately.

23 Overall, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they are fully integrated into the life of the school. Support, where needed, is mostly provided within the classroom situation and the support teacher and support assistants are well informed and dedicated to improving the learning of these pupils. Some additional support is provided during assembly times thus removing pupils from an essential part of their learning experience and an important part of school life.

24 Extra curricular provision is good and enhances pupils' learning opportunities. They enjoy a wide range of visits both locally and further a field. These include visits to the theatre, to museums and a residential visit for year six pupils. A suitable range of musical and sporting activities enables pupils to extend their interests, while a science club and a thriving design and

technology club help to raise academic skills. Pupils have entered national design and technology competition and achieved significant success.

25 The school promotes pupils' personal development well. There is a welcoming environment and classrooms are bright and attractive. Relationships between teachers and pupils are usually very positive, teachers know the pupils very well and are aware of the problems they sometimes face. Children are encouraged to care for and respect the environment, a point very well illustrated when Year 2 studied a variety of mini-beasts in science before releasing them back into the wild. School assemblies celebrate the achievement both within the school situation and from outside. Appropriate arrangements are made for sex and drugs education and parents are consulted prior to the commencement of the programmes. Weekly themes throughout the school on topics such as perseverance, honesty, listening to the opinions of others all add to the positive development of social and interpersonal skills.

26 A good contribution to pupils wider education is made through contact with the wider community. Visitors to the school have included artists, authors and a team of engineers who worked with pupils on design and technology projects. Sports are enhanced through visits from local football, hockey and cricket teams.

27 Provision for pupils to develop spiritual awareness is satisfactory. Assemblies make a positive contribution to school life, offering opportunities in both key stages for pupils to reflect, for example on issues such selfishness, the dangers of procrastination and the virtue of perseverance. In one assembly there was good, sustained consideration of what makes a painting effective through consideration of artistic creativity and beauty. Pupils have opportunities to sing Christian hymns and to share in prayer. Pupils are given opportunities to experience awe and wonder through activities such as the science lesson on minibeads. In Year 5, pupils studying Indian music experienced the pleasure of making music together, while in Year 6 pupils spoke spontaneously about inequality, injustice and exploitation when studying the Victorians. .

28 The school continues to promote pupils' moral development well. The high quality of their behaviour clearly reflects well developed understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils are trusted to work on their own, take good care of equipment and tidy up at the end of lessons and they are willing to accept responsibility when given the opportunity. The programme for developing citizenship in Year 6 supports both their understanding of moral issues and also their social development.

29 Provision for pupils' social development is a very good feature of the school. They are regularly involved in fundraising to support charities such as Children in Need and to provide aid for Mozambique. Their involvement with the local Rotary Club is also a good feature that has provided purposeful contact with the local community. Lessons and involvement in extra-curricular activities provide many opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and opportunities to address groups outside of school, for example the science club's presentation to the local Heritage Society, and to perform in the concerts and other performances further enhance pupils' social skills. The various educational visits and particularly the residential week at the end of Key Stage 2 provide pupils with valuable social experiences beyond those usually found in school.

30 The school encourages all pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions and is now encouraging greater study of the diversity and riches of other cultures both in Britain and the world. The links with the local community, visits to places of interest and visitors to school such as musical quartets, a professional illustrator all contribute well to pupils' cultural development. They have celebrated local events and are currently working on a Millennium Project, which involves all pupils and staff. Subjects such as art and music make useful contributions to pupils' understanding of their own and other cultures. Examples include studying the work of Lowry and Van Gogh and listening to and appraising Indian music. Pupils' work on major world faiths in religious education helps to provide insights into the beliefs and ways of life of people in cultures different to their own. Opportunities to sample Indian food have further enriched these experiences. Overall, the school promotes pupils' cultural development well but there is scope to further improve their understanding of cultural diversity.

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

31 The school's arrangements for pastoral care are good. Staff know the children very well and show genuine concern for their welfare, for example, a class teacher made a point of approaching two parents in the playground to check on a child with a bad cough and one who showed signs of tiredness. Pupils feel confident that they can approach any member of staff with problems of any kind and know that appropriate help will be given. There are good, well-documented arrangements for dealing with routine medical care: most staff are trained in first aid and school nurses regularly check children's health.

32 There is a detailed Health and Safety policy, appropriately adapted from an LEA model, which ensures that all necessary precautions are taken to ensure that children are safe in school. Pupils are well supervised at breaks, with additional staff brought in to help with wet playtimes. A high proportion of adults accompanies children on outside visits and staff are careful to observe safe practices in lessons such as PE and science. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place.

33 Personal development and attendance are routinely monitored and reported to parents, both informally and through the end of year reports. The school's code of conduct is well publicised and its behaviour policy effectively implemented by staff. Pupils understand that they should work hard and behave well and they do their best to live up to the school's expectations. The award of stars and house points serves as additional motivation. The school's promotion of good attendance is very successful in ensuring that no valuable learning time is missed unnecessarily.

34 Methods used by the school to monitor the attainment of pupils are satisfactory overall. Records are kept of pupils' performance in English and mathematics based on regular assessment and the optional national testing conducted with pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5. Regular end of topic assessments in science provide useful information which could be used in the planning of pupils' learning. Recording of pupils' knowledge and understanding in information technology, religious education and the other subjects in the curriculum is informal and, while most teachers keep some form of record to measure pupils' progress, it is not uniform across the school.

35 Although assessments of pupils' abilities are carried out when pupils first enter school and at regular intervals thereafter this information does not sufficiently influence what is taught. Analyses of assessments are carried out, often in appropriate detail, but the use of this information is limited. An example of this is the analysis of science results at Key Stage 2 where areas of weaknesses in the curriculum have been identified but have not been discussed sufficiently widely and have therefore not influenced the curriculum across the school. Improvements to this process would help the school to raise standards still further.

36 The monitoring of the progress made by pupils with special educational needs is usually good. Teachers know their pupils abilities well and make use of appropriate information to monitor effectively the progress made by these pupils. This influences the individual education programmes designed for these pupils, which are usually produced in sufficient detail. Teacher's knowledge of the content of these plans does not always influence their planning of lessons and the tasks provided for pupils are not always well matched to their needs. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs who receive additional focussed support is thorough and is used well to inform their subsequent learning in specific programmes.

37 The monitoring of pupils' personal development is informal but works well and supports the good levels of pastoral care described above.

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

38 The majority of parents are very satisfied with what the school provides and with the standards their children achieve. This is reflected in the fact that the school is full and has a waiting list for future admissions. Most parents who returned the inspection questionnaire or attended the meeting agree that children enjoy coming to school. They believe that children are making good progress, are expected to work hard and behave well and are developing into mature, responsible young people. They find the staff approachable and feel that teaching is good. A small number had concerns about the information they receive on pupils' progress, about the extent to which the school works closely with parents and about the amount of homework set.

39 The inspection team does not share the concerns expressed by some parents. It found the quality and range of information provided for parents very good. Written information is well presented and helpful, covering both the curriculum and pastoral matters. School reports are detailed and informative: they tell parents what pupils know, understand and can do, and what they need to do to improve. Regular newsletters keep parents up-to-date with events and developments in school and there are three formal parents' evenings when discussions can be held with teachers, in addition to the daily opportunities for informal contacts. The school makes every effort to arrange suitable times for parents to meet staff and they are strongly encouraged to make personal visits to see what their children are learning and to become involved in their activities. There are many opportunities for parents to make their views on the school's provision known, and these are taken into account when changes are proposed, such as the introduction of the home-school agreement. Homework is appropriately set according to the school's written policy, formulated after consultation with parents, and takes into consideration the fact that children may wish to take part in other activities outside school. Opportunities are provided for parents to make comments to teachers in the booklets that go home.

40 Many parents take advantage of the school's invitations to play an active part in children's education. They regularly help in classrooms with practical activities, accompany children on visits in the locality, assist with after-school sport and operate the Cycling Proficiency scheme. The school provides very useful guidelines for helpers, which ensure that their contributions are as effective as possible. Some parents give their support to the school by organising and taking part in a wide range of fund raising activities, alongside the staff and children, so that a substantial amount of money can be added to the school's allocated budget for the purchase of additional resources, such as the newly established Information Technology suite. A measure of parental commitment is the fact that elections had to be held for the recent parent governor vacancy, because there were a number of volunteers.

41 Many parents help their children at home by listening to them read or by helping them to learn spellings or tables. Parents of children with special educational needs are closely involved in their education. They work together with staff to provide a good level of support.

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

42 Overall, the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory with some noticeable strengths but also one or two weaknesses that will need to be addressed if the school is to fulfil its potential. The headteacher provides clear direction to the work of the school based on a desire to promote equality of opportunity and individual pupil's achievement. He successfully promotes strong teamwork, a supportive working environment for all and ensures that the schools aims and values are consistently promoted. He is supported very well in this by the recently appointed deputy headteacher who sets a very good example through her own work in the classroom and the high expectations she has for pupils' achievement. Teachers provide positive leadership in their areas of responsibility but are not as effective as they could be because they do not undertake sufficient monitoring or evaluation of what pupils achieve or the quality of the experiences that are offered to them. Within this sound picture special educational needs are well managed by the coordinator.

43 Monitoring and evaluation are general weaknesses. The headteacher has not promoted the analysis of pupils' test results to identify strengths and weaknesses in their learning, which could then be used to fine tune what is taught to them in order to further raise standards. When individual teachers have done this, as with the Year 6 science results the valuable information gained has not been shared with other staff, which is a missed opportunity. Coordinators of subjects do not monitor teachers' planning or analyse pupils' completed work to ensure that the curriculum is being effectively covered. Governors meet their statutory requirements and have a sound general understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and positively support the work of the school. However, they do not look closely enough at standards that are achieved or monitor the progress that is being made in implementing the priorities identified in their development plan. They have yet to develop their roles as "critical friends" to the school by, for example, exploring trends in test results and comparisons with the results achieved in similar schools.

44 The school plans development well and this is an area that has improved since the last inspection. Clear priorities are identified through consultation between staff and governors. Persons responsible for each priority, sensible timescales for their completion and criteria for

measuring their achievement are provided. There are also good links made with the budget that support the effective use and management of all the funds available to the school.

45 The senior managers and governors make good use of the school's budget and of the considerable funds that are raised. Although income overall is low compared to schools nationally there are good levels of resources available for all subjects and internal decoration of the school is maintained at a high standard. The routine administration and financial control are effective.

46 Teachers are well matched on the basis of their expertise or experience to their areas of responsibility and are supported by appropriate professional development opportunities. There are good induction arrangements for new teachers. The school's diverse range of buildings is very well maintained and cleaned and provides a stimulating environment for all pupils. There are good facilities for disabled pupils but currently there is no appropriate area where children under five can develop their physical skills through outdoor play activities.

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

47 In order to raise standards and improve the quality of pupils learning the governors, headteacher, and staff should:

- 1 Raise standards in IT by:
  - a. Ensuring that all teachers teach IT each week;
  - b. Providing training for teachers to improve their understanding of IT and to raise their confidence in teaching it.
  - c. Ensuring planned lessons are based on the school's agreed scheme of work and provide balance and progression in pupils' learning;
  - d. Monitoring the appropriateness of teachers' planning and the effectiveness of their teaching to ensure that IT skills are consistently developed across the school.
- 2 Review the time spent directly teaching English and physical education to make more time available for the foundation subjects. This should make it easier to provide opportunities for pupils to apply and practise basic skills in English, such as using a library to aid research and writing extended pieces within the context of other subjects.
- 3 Systematically analyse the results from key stage and year-end assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. Use this information to modify what is then taught to pupils in order to further raise the standards they achieve.
- 4 Develop a programme for monitoring teaching. This could, for example involve:
  - a. Checking to ensure that teachers' planning adequately covers the curriculum requirements for each subject and that the needs of different groups of pupils are being identified and addressed, for example in literacy lessons;

- b. Systematically observing lessons in key subjects, such as literacy, numeracy and IT, in order to help teachers further improve their practice;
- c. Scrutinising pupils' completed work in different subjects to see if school policies, such as that for marking, are being consistently implemented. This exercise will also provide information on the progression and balance in pupils' learning and indications of how well the work given has been matched to different pupils' needs.

In addition to the above, the school should also:

1. Devise a way of providing children who are under five with an appropriate outdoor curriculum that meets the requirements of the forthcoming Foundation Stage.
2. Teach pupils to use a library to access information and ensure that they have access to the school's library whenever they need to undertake research work.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	73
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	13	57	22	3	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)	NA	415
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	NA	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	Na	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	NA	58

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	25	26	51

<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	23	25	24
	Girls	25	26	26
	Total	48	51	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (94)	100 (97)	98 (96)
	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	25	24	25
	Girls	25	26	26
	Total	50	50	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (96)	98 (98)	100 (100)
	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	35	23	58

<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	25	25	33
	Girls	18	18	22
	Total	43	43	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (82)	74 (67)	95 (92)
	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	23	23	30
	Girls	19	19	22
	Total	42	42	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (82)	72 (92)	90 ((92)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	351
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.4
Average class size	29.6

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y[6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	554,770
Total expenditure	559,270
Expenditure per pupil	1,371
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	-4,500

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

408

Number of questionnaires returned

201

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	30	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	40	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	48	2	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	52	12	2	1
The teaching is good.	59	38	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	50	10	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	38	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	36	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	39	44	11	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	58	37	2	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	44	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	31	20	7	11

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

48 When children start school at the beginning of the year in which they are five, their attainment, although variable, is overall above average. By the end of the reception year, they attain standards that are above expectation for their age. This shows that children, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress and achieve as well as expected by the time they transfer to Key Stage 1. The good standards and good teaching that were reported following the last inspection have been maintained.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

48 Children's personal, social and emotional development is well above average by the end of the foundation stage, and this gives them a head start to their education. The very good provision found at the time of the last inspection has been maintained. Teachers are consistently good role models and their teaching is very good. They understand the importance of helping children to follow and settle into school routines, such as eating sandwiches, getting changed for physical education lessons and joining in with saying prayers in assemblies. They do this sensitively and gradually. Teachers set high expectations of the children's behaviour through their positive relationships with them and through working closely with their parents. They give children plenty of opportunities to practise their personal and social skills. Consequently, children enjoy coming to school, work confidently and happily with different adults and other children, behave very well and understand that they come to school to learn. They can work independently when their teacher is helping other children and they can make choices about what they will do next. They treat each other and school equipment with care and respect. Children's response to their lessons in all areas of their work is always at least good.

#### **Language and literacy**

49 Good teaching helps children to attain above average standards. Teachers and supporting adults provide plenty of opportunities for children to practise their speaking, listening and literacy skills in lessons and in activities, such as role play. Supporting adults make an effective contribution to improving children's speaking and listening skills because they are particularly skilled at questioning children. Teachers teach early reading and writing skills very well, and children quickly learn that print has meaning in reading and writing. Teachers, wisely, wait until the last term in the school year before adopting the teaching methods of the National Literacy Strategy. This ensures that children have time to enjoy sharing books with adults and to experiment with writing before preparing for the more formal literacy lessons of Key Stage 1. They learn to use different methods of reading new words, including looking closely at individual letters and the sounds they represent. They learn to write letters and words correctly. By the end of the reception year, most children have started to read and write by themselves. They enjoy talking about books and stories, and they recognise and name full stops, capital letters and sentences. Children listen well and answer questions thoughtfully, as when comparing the model boats they have made. The support of parents is particularly valuable in helping the children to learn to read, and the level of communication between parents and teachers is very good.

## **Mathematical development**

50 Children attain above average standards by the end of the reception year. Teaching is good because teachers plan many different practical activities that help children to understand numbers and mathematical patterns and ideas. An example is where children learn to solve problems by counting the people upstairs and downstairs on a bus. Teachers also give a lot of attention to helping children to learn the words associated with mathematics, such as “more than” and “less than”, and to asking questions that make children think and solve problems. Consequently, children enjoy mathematics and talk with enthusiasm about their work. They can count forwards and backwards, often involving numbers greater than ten, recognise and write numbers, record their work in a wide variety of ways and use mathematical equipment, such as threading beads and interlocking cubes. The good teaching ensures that children make a successful start to work in mathematics in Key Stage 1.

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

51 Teaching is good overall, and children attain above average standards. Teachers take full advantage of their own time and the additional help provided by support staff and parents to make sure that children have opportunities to learn to question how and why things happen. They understand the importance of helping children to observe and talk about practical and interesting situations. During the inspection, children worked with adults to make and test model boats in order to find out which shapes held water for the longest time. They showed that they can investigate materials, answer searching questions and talk about their findings. Although they have a few opportunities to learn to use computers, they do not use programmable toys, and their use of everyday technology is not as good as it should be, given their enthusiasm and thirst for new ideas.

## **Physical development**

52 There has been an improvement since the last inspection and standards are now above average. Teaching is good both in physical education lessons and as part of day-to-day classroom activities. Children have many opportunities to learn to use space and equipment sensibly and safely. They handle materials, such as modelling dough, and tools, such as scissors and brushes, with control. In physical education lessons, they move around the school and the hall and work with apparatus confidently showing good co-ordination. Physical education lessons prepare children very well for future work in Key Stage 1. Due to how lessons in the hall are organised, however, children do not learn how to get out and put away equipment. Too little is expected of children when adults do not involve them at all in this.

## **Creative development**

53 Children do not do quite as well in creative development as they do in other areas of their work. Although teaching is satisfactory, teachers sometimes limit children’s own imagination and creativity by giving too much direction with their art work. Much of the children’s work on display involves painting, colouring or sticking things on shapes, using materials dictated by teachers. Sometimes the finished pieces are almost identical for all children. Children enjoy music lessons and sing action songs together, often accompanying with percussion instruments as directed by the teacher. The lesson provides little opportunity

for children to explore music and to express their own creativity, as they show that they can do well when they make up their own stories in the role play areas. Teachers do not always expect enough of the children, who are capable of responding to greater creative challenges than they sometimes have.

54 Teachers have made a positive start with preparing to introduce the revised curriculum for children in the foundation stage from September 2000. Lesson planning is being developed to match this, but it is still between stages, and it is better in language and literacy and mathematics than it is in the other four areas. This is because teachers do not yet identify clearly enough what they want children to learn in order to assess whether or not lessons have achieved the desired results. Additionally, the school has yet to show how it intends to make sure that the detail of the new curriculum will be covered across the reception year. Teachers carry out the required assessments of children when they start school. They are aware of the differing prior attainment of individual children, and take some account of this when working with them. They have not yet started to group children according to their assessed learning needs, however, and this sometimes means their work is either too hard or too easy. Children with special educational needs have good support and are helped to make progress at the same pace as others in their class. Due to the lack of an outdoor fenced area and full range of outdoor equipment, the school does not provide a regular planned outdoor curriculum. Teachers do, however, provide some outdoor activities, especially in the summer months.

## **ENGLISH**

55 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds were broadly in line with the national average but well below the results in similar schools. Since the last inspection, test results have fallen considerably, and although the pupils tested in 1999 were not a typical year group, too few pupils reached a level higher than expected nationally for their age. When taking test results for the last four years together, however, the overall performance of both girls and boys is well above average. The school anticipates that this year's results will be better than last year's, and that pupils' performance will be closer to what it should be when compared the performance of pupils in similar schools.

56 The inspection finds that standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing are above average by the end of Key Stage 2. This represents a level of achievement that is about as expected given pupils' prior attainment. Any differences between inspection findings and the 1999 test results arise because the inspection covers a much wider range of work than is tested, such as speaking and listening, and because of the variation between year groups in the school. Governors have set targets for this year's test results, but these were not very challenging and they have since been revised to represent more realistic results. Although standards are high enough, they could have been even higher. The headteacher and staff have started to look more closely at test results and teachers' assessments of their pupils in order to find out where teaching and the curriculum need to be improved, but this has not so far been a strong feature of their work. Pupils do not do as well in English as they do in mathematics, and not enough has been done to try to find out why and to put this right.

57 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in reading and writing were well above average. They were well above results in similar schools in reading

and above similar schools in writing. Since the last inspection, test results have fluctuated slightly, but taking the last four years together, the performance of both girls and boys has been well above average, and the performance of boys in reading has been very high. The inspection finds that standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing are well above average by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils achieve better than expected given their attainment on entry to the key stage. Standards have improved since the last inspection report, which found that standards in English were good; they are now very good.

58 Most pupils in both key stages become very attentive listeners and articulate speakers. They do particularly well with learning and using the new words they learn in literacy lessons and in other subjects. Pupils in Year 6 formulate their own questions to ask others about an extract from a book, and use advanced terminology, such as “persuasive” and “blurb”, when discussing their work. Similarly, pupils in Year 2 express mature ideas with clarity, confidence and expression when sharing their ideas in a class discussion about descriptive language in stories. They suggest words, such as “pesky” and “misty” when discussing an imaginary letter to a giant. Pupils do well because teachers set high expectations of them to listen well and to join in discussions, and also because they place strong emphasis on this important area of the curriculum.

59 The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy and teachers have made a sound start with putting this into practice. With the help of knowledgeable subject leaders, teachers are reviewing and refining their work. The school gives proper priority to literacy as an integral part of the curriculum, but there is further work to be done with making sure that the unusually large amount of time set aside for teaching literacy is all used to greatest advantage. There are times, particularly in Key Stage 2, where teachers set aside additional time for working with groups of pupils, but do not use literacy lessons as intended for this purpose. This means that there is less time available within the whole curriculum for pupils to enhance their skills in English as part of their work in other subjects.

60 Most pupils in both key stages practise and improve their reading skills on a regular basis. They read a variety of texts in lessons and at home. Pupils learn to read fluently by using a variety of methods of reading new words, including looking at the sounds represented by individual letters and groups of letters. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils can read at least to the level expected for their age, and many read more complex books and other texts. By the end of Key Stage 2, almost all pupils are accurate, fluent and expressive readers who can discuss what they have read with understanding. In literacy lessons, they study a wide range of texts, and have a good knowledge of the terminology of books. Their knowledge of fiction, poetry and authors is not yet good enough, however, and their ability to use the library for reference and research is under-developed. This is because pupils do not use the school library on a planned and regular enough basis and because they have not been taught the skills they need to be able to do this confidently.

61 Since the last inspection, teachers have widened considerably the range of styles of writing they ask pupils to do, and this has had a good effect on the standards they achieve. Most teachers still plan too few opportunities for pupils to write using computers, however, and this is because they are not sufficiently confident themselves. In Year 2, the subject leader sets a good example for other teachers by asking pupils to draft and re-draft their stories using the computers in the classroom, but during the inspection, this was not seen in other classes. Overall, the rate of improvement in English since the last inspection has been satisfactory, but

the school is now well placed to continue to improve due to the strong expertise and example set by subject leaders.

62 Most pupils in both key stages write in many different styles and in most subjects. The standard of handwriting and presentation is very good throughout the school, and this is because of the high expectations set by teachers in all subjects. Pupils in Year 2 plan to write stories from another person's viewpoint, and enjoy putting their own ideas down on paper. The standard of their spelling, grammar and punctuation is very good, and pupils use words imaginatively to add interest to their finished pieces. Pupils in Year 6 make attractive leaflets about safety in cycling, and present their writing in a variety of ways for effect. They write thoughtful letters, newspaper reports and biographies, as well as pieces in subjects such as history, as when they compare the lives of rich and poor people in Victorian times. The standard of their spelling, punctuation, grammar and use of interesting words is good.

63 Teaching and learning are good overall in both key stages. All teachers have a good level of expertise and help pupils to learn the basic skills they need to be successful in all subjects. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when they have additional teaching support. In some literacy lessons, however, pupils' individual education plans are not followed closely enough by class teachers, and pupils struggle to complete the same work as others in their class. This is because teachers do not yet take full account of the differing levels of attainment of the pupils in their class in order to plan well-matched work for them. This also means that higher attaining pupils could sometimes learn at an even faster pace. There are no unsatisfactory lessons, although teaching is clearly stronger in some classes than in others, and the school does not do enough to check the consistency of the quality of teaching and learning. In some lessons in Key Stage 2, for example, the pace of pupils' learning slows down when the teaching method used by the teacher leads to an inefficient use of time and where lessons lack a sense of enjoyment and urgency. The best example of teaching and learning is seen in Year 2, where the subject leader has an excellent understanding of how pupils learn most effectively and of how to use the National Literacy Strategy to raise standards. A particular strength of most lessons is teachers' ability to manage and control pupils through positive relationships and high expectations. Consequently, pupils' behaviour is very good and they usually apply themselves to work readily and happily, both alone and with others. Pupils' response to lessons is always good and it is often very good. This is because there is a clear sense of purpose in most lessons and because teachers want their pupils to succeed.

64 The school is moving forward well with teaching literacy. Initiatives such as the Additional Literacy Strategy, 'OWLS' and a reading project for pupils in Year 1 that is due to start shortly, demonstrate the strong commitment to raising standards.

## **MATHEMATICS**

65 National curriculum tests held in 1999 show that attainment in Key Stage 1 was noticeably above the national average when measured against all schools but fell a little but remained above average levels when measured against similar schools. Key Stage 2 results were also above average when taking all schools into account but were below the average for similar schools.

66 Mathematics results, taken over a four year period, show a significant fall from a peak in 1996 and then a gradual improvement to those achieved in 1999. This improvement was slower than the national rate. The current Year 6 pupils have benefited from the introduction of the tight structure provided by the National Numeracy Strategy and standards found during the inspection are comfortably above national expectations and are appropriate for the ability of these pupils. Teachers' assessments of pupils point to results that should confirm this. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and the difference between the attainment of girls and boys is similar to that found nationally.

67 Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and can apply this knowledge in problem solving situations. Many pupils have a secure understanding of percentages and appreciate the link to fractions. Pupils understand how to calculate the radius, diameter and circumference of circles and are sufficiently skilled in determining the degrees in angles. Knowledge of area and perimeter are good and pupils are able to apply appropriate formulae to their work. After identifying probability as an area of weakness the school has developed successful strategies to improve pupils understanding of the concept. In Year 5 pupils demonstrate a thorough understanding of co-ordinates and their work in developing a knowledge of symmetry is good. Pupils use and apply skills successfully when interpreting, testing and calculating answers and have a sound understanding of mathematical vocabulary

68 By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a very good and secure understanding of number and are able to apply these skills to solving problems in everyday contexts, for example, being able to calculate change given when buying from the "shop". They understand time and are confident in their knowledge of months, days and hours. More able pupils record time with accuracy to within five minutes. Children across the age range are able to collect data and to record it in a variety of ways using differing types of graphs. Skills in addition and subtraction are very secure for most pupils and many are beginning to multiply and divide with accuracy. Pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of odd and even and recognise the value of simple fractions. In one class many pupils had developed a good understanding of the concept of negative numbers. Skills and knowledge such as this indicate levels of attainment well above the average.

69 The school has adapted and appropriately implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and uses it well to provide guidance on areas of pupils' learning. Pupils now make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2 and good progress in Key Stage 1 based on their prior attainment. Most lessons were planned well with good levels of detail on what was to be learned and the tasks set to achieve this. As a result most teachers were well prepared and resources were used effectively. This was the case, for example, in an excellent lesson seen in Year 2. Following a well planned, brisk and purposeful mental/oral session pupils acted out a shopping scenario. The teacher used demonstration skilfully and other pupils watched attentively to check the change being given. Learning was reinforced through very good use of praise, pupils persevered with difficult challenges and skilful questioning was used to extend learning even further. Because clear targets for learning were set and the teachers' expectations were high pupils responded very positively to the challenges set. A very effective lesson in Year 5 invited pupils to concentrate ideas and develop strategies to multiply large numbers without the aid of calculators. Through well phrased and challenging questioning the teacher enabled pupils to develop methods and find solutions before checking answers using the calculators provided. In the best lesson pupils are interested, very well motivated and

confidently contribute ideas in the knowledge that their answers will be valued and used to reinforce learning. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and built on mutual respect. Two lessons were unsatisfactory. In one the pace of the lesson was slow, the challenge set for higher attaining pupils was limited and planning took insufficient account of what pupils already knew. In the other lesson the teacher did not explain clearly enough what she wanted pupils to do and as a result too little progress was made. Overall, the quality of teaching across both key stages is good. The unsatisfactory lessons were more than off set by the good, sometimes very good and occasionally excellent lessons. The quality of teaching mathematics is insufficiently monitored by co-ordinators and senior staff. Rigorous examination of the quality of planning and the quality of teaching would help to raise standards of all teachers towards those of the best teachers.

70 Although marking is regularly and conscientiously completed it does not yet play its full part in raising standards. Comments are often made in pupils books designed to help them improve the quality of their work. However, these are not always consistently followed up and there are insufficient examples where corrections of work have been completed. A further area identified for development relates to the initial mental oral session. Where these are used effectively they are well planned, move with a brisk pace and set the purposeful tone for the rest of the lesson. This is not always the case.

71 In most lessons pupils behave very sensibly and maturely reflecting teachers' positive and effective management of behaviour. Most are very interested, eager to answer questions and sustain their concentration throughout the lesson. Pupils co-operate well when required, appreciate the efforts of others and answer questions thoughtfully.

72 The joint mathematics co-ordinators have received appropriate training that has been shared with colleagues through staff meetings and training days. Significant progress has been made in the introduction of the Numeracy Strategy especially in Key Stage 1 where standards have risen appreciably. Standards are improving in Key Stage 2 but the full benefits of the strategy have still to be felt in this area. Assessment of pupils' work and analysis to identify areas of comparative weakness in the curriculum and in pupils' learning are undertaken but need to be completed with more rigour and be made available to a wider audience if standards are to be improved still further.

## **SCIENCE**

73 Over recent years pupils at Key Stage 2 have achieved good results in the national tests for 11 year olds. Results have been improving at a faster rate than nationally and in 1999 were well above the national average and were above those found in similar schools. Similarly, high standards were identified in the teacher assessments made in Year 2. The difference in standards achieved by boys and girls has varied from year to year and overall has not shown any significant trend. Analysis of pupils' work, discussions with them about what they have been doing and observations of them working in class show that appropriately high standards are being maintained in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils' achievement is clearly related to the good teaching of science that is found across the school.

74 Pupils in Year 6 have well balanced knowledge, understanding and skills across the different aspects of science. They have benefited from the many opportunities they have been given to develop understanding and skills related to practical and investigative work as they

have moved through the school. When studying the human body, for example, they measured pulse rate changes following exercise and plotted what they had found on line graphs. Teachers' planning ensures that higher attaining pupils regularly access levels above those normally expected for pupils' ages, which supports the achievement of the higher levels in the national tests. For example, when finding out about the human body, many pupils in Year 6 were successfully encouraged to develop their understanding of the functions of different organs. In Year 6, teachers are able to build on the strong foundations that are laid earlier. In challenging lessons in Year 4, for example, the teachers' high expectations, careful questioning and emphasis on practical work successfully developed pupils' understanding of the influence of environmental conditions on the habitats in which different animals are found, in this case the preference that woodlice have for damp and dark conditions. In Year 2, the strong emphasis placed on practical scientific activities ensures that pupils develop not only good skills in observing and predicting but also develops their understanding and knowledge well. During the inspection, the pupils in Year 2 classes were continuing their work on habitats and the conditions need for seeds to germinate and for plants to grow. Following an earlier minibeast "hunt", pupils were provided with a wide range of different minibeast to observe and draw and were successfully encouraged to deepen their knowledge of where these creatures lived by using a good range of appropriate reference books collected by the teacher. In another lesson they were being encouraged to predict what would happen to the seeds they had planted under different conditions and to form hypotheses as to what conditions were needed to ensure healthy growth.

75 All these examples are from the strand of the science curriculum related to life processes and living things. Equally rich experiences are provided for them in the other areas of science that are studied: materials and their properties and physical processes. In Year 3, for example, pupils' understanding of permeability was successfully developed through comparing the effects of water on sandstone and slate. Pupils were challenged to think of appropriate uses for these materials given their different properties and most were able to suggest that slate would make a better roofing material than sandstone because it was impervious to water.

76 The practical approach that the school employs to teach science has benefits other than deepening pupils' understanding. It also stimulates their interest and enthusiasm for the subject and led to lessons that were characterised by high levels of involvement and pupils who were excited by what they were finding out. In all the lessons seen, teachers were very well organised and made effective use of the good quality resources they had provided. When they had help in the classroom it was used well to support the learning of groups of pupils and ensured that all, including those with special educational needs, made at least satisfactory and almost always good progress in acquiring new learning. A particular feature of the good teaching in science was the consistent use of technical language in teachers explanations, descriptions and questioning. This supported high expectations and challenge. The teachers in parallel classes carefully plan lessons together. This ensures there is consistency in what is taught to pupils across each age group, supports well-prepared lessons and enables teachers to share their expertise to the benefit of the pupils. An area of relative weakness in teaching is the under developed use of marking. Scrutiny of pupils work indicates that although their work is marked regularly it is relatively rare for teachers to make developmental points and to then follow them up. This is a missed opportunity to enhance pupils' learning.

77 The curriculum offered to pupils, which is based on the national model scheme of work, provides learning opportunities that are well balanced and which build effectively on what has been taught before. Teachers record what they have covered and the coordinator keeps a record of what may have been missed so that gaps can be filled. Although teachers have a clear record of what they have taught and of the current level of individual pupils' achievement they do not maintain records that would give an ongoing picture of each pupil's progress and of any differences that may be developing in pupils' learning across the class.

78 The coordinator provides good support to her colleagues but has not yet developed strategies for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Similarly, she has yet to undertake any detailed analysis of test results to identify areas of strength and weakness in pupils' learning. A Year 6 teacher has undertaken this type of analysis but has not shared the outcomes with the coordinator or the other teachers so that modifications could be made to the curriculum to address the relative weaknesses that had been identified.

## **ART**

79 During the inspection four lessons were seen in art and evidence is also drawn from a range of other sources including, pupils' work, teachers' planning, displays of work and through talking to pupils. In both key stages, good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop in art and the quality of learning is consistently good; on occasions it is very good, as seen in the work on the study of Rangoli patterns and printing skills in Year 5. Pupils throughout the school achieve levels of attainment above national expectations. The vast majority of pupils are able to work competently with a variety of appropriate tools and materials. They can express their ideas and feelings with confidence through painting, collage, drawing and a range of other work. Bold paintings, pastel and other drawings of pupils, artefacts and natural materials are to be seen in abundance in classrooms and around the school, including an extensive range of high quality work derived from the study of well known artists; in the detailed studies on Lowry in Year 4, pupils explored through their own work how he simplified selected figures, used perspective, colour and other aspects in his painting and looked at the work of many other artists such as Monet, Hockney, Nolde, Coward, Duffy and others; in Year 1, pupils used layers of paint very well to represent their close and detailed observations of flowers in a vase. Building on these experiences, in Year 2, pupils produced collages and high quality paintings, for example, those of sunflowers based on Van Gogh's work, together with pupils' detailed observations of poppies and irises. Observational drawings and paintings are often effectively linked to work in other subjects, such as history, geography and religious education; high quality portraits and models in Year 5 were produced after the style of the Tudors, which underlined the nature and importance of portraits and other artistic representations in earlier times.

80 Pupils have very good attitudes to art, frequently relishing the tasks they are given, working hard and showing sustained levels of concentration. Pupils take pride in the presentation of their work and the quality of their artistic results.

81 The quality of teaching is consistently good and sometimes very good. Careful attention is given to the planning and organisation of individual lessons and joint planning between teachers of parallel classes is a real strength, including that between the previous and new co-ordinators for the subject. All the staff see the subject as important, work hard at it with their pupils and build effectively on pupils' previous learning and experience as they progress through the school; ample evidence of this development is to be seen in the numerous displays of pupils' art work in each classroom and central areas of the school. A significant number of teachers are very knowledgeable about the subject and in the best lessons and work seen, this feature is very apparent, together with high expectations, good or very good quality direct teaching and well matched tasks to the age, ability and previous learning of the pupils.

82 Valuable use is made of visits and visitors, including high quality contributions from a local illustrator, who has proved to be a real asset to the school in extending important aspects of art work. It is recognised by the school that the documentation now needs to be updated in the light of recent national advice and also to reflect the current good levels of work taking place. The school is well resourced for the subject with a generous but effectively used budget. Although a few aspects of monitoring have been usefully introduced, monitoring and evaluation is, as yet, insufficiently developed.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

83 Since the last inspection the school has systematically identified areas for improvement so as to raise standards. In this it has been successful. Photographic evidence of pupils' work in design and technology and retained examples of work show that pupils have a wide range of experience in using a variety of different materials. They now have a thorough understanding of the design process and use skills learned in other subject areas competently. Observations in lessons indicate that most pupils have a good technical vocabulary and use this accurately to describe what they are doing and the skills and materials they need to use to accomplish the task set. By the end of Key Stage 2 the standard of work and understanding is above the national expectation and in line with what these pupils are capable of achieving.

84 In Key Stage 1, pupils develop their designing and making skills and their knowledge and understanding of materials satisfactorily. They were able to make informed choices on the types of materials suitable to make insects legs when they created models of mini-beasts. Pupils had first produced careful drawings of their chosen insect and using hand held magnifiers, discovered exactly what they looked like. Further research was conducted in information books so that pupils had a clear idea of what it was they were going to recreate. This, along with a suitable range of materials to choose from, enabled pupils to make informed choices about shape, strength and finish of their models. Simple evaluations were made as to the success of the models, pupils offering sensible suggestions as to how they could be improved. Classroom routines are well known and carried out responsibly and maturely.

85 In Key Stage 2, pupils design and technology folders show that a good range of challenges and projects have been carried out and often reflect the high expectations set by the teachers. This was well illustrated in a lesson in Year 4 in which pupils were investigating drinks cartons. Pupils first investigated the colour and taste of their products and devised package contents panels for their cartons. Pupils developed their speaking and listening skills very well because the teacher insisted on the use of correct technical vocabulary when pupils described what they were doing. The exterior of their drinks cartons were carefully designed and colourfully developed. Measurements were accurately made to ensure good fit and a high quality finish. Consideration was given to the use of information technology to improve the finish but this is not yet a significant part of the design making process.

86 Discussions with pupils indicate that across the school they have a wide experience and good understanding of design and technology. Projects they have undertaken include constructing lighthouses using skills taken from science to fit electrical circuits, making of Viking jewellery is a good link with history projects and producing cookies, which required pupils to design packaging, make the biscuits and to cost the product. The cookies were sold to raise money for a charity. The school runs a "Design and Technology Club" which is well attended and supported by parent helpers and successfully extends pupils skills in construction. Pupils from the school have recently entered a national design competition and the quality of their work is reflected in them reaching the regional final.

87 Pupils' attitudes to design and technology are very positive and they demonstrate a good recall of earlier work. Technical vocabulary is well used and pupils share ideas willingly. Links with industry are very good and lead to raising standards appreciably. A very good example of this was the challenge to build a bridge from straws to be of a given length and able to carry a set weight. Pupils were able to discover the strongest shapes to use in

construction and developed good techniques of cutting and fixing. Pupils take pride in the quality of their own work and that of others.

88 Although the number of lessons seen was limited it is possible to say that the quality of teaching is good based on pupils' responses and the quality of their work. Pupils are clearly challenged especially towards the end of Key Stage 2, which was a criticism in the last inspection. Staff are confident teaching design and technology, have a secure understanding and knowledge of the subject and their management of pupils is good. There is an appropriate balance between direct teaching and practical tasks where pupils plan their own work. A particularly positive aspect of the teaching is the often very good, perceptive questioning, which challenges pupils' thinking. Assessment of the quality of pupils' work is at an early stage of development and is not completed systematically. The schools policy for design and technology is in need of review to take account of the most current practice. The co-ordinator is very well informed and supports her colleagues very well. However, monitoring of the quality of provision is underdeveloped.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

89 During the period of the inspection it was only possible to observe a limited number of lessons in both key stages. However it was possible to scrutinise samples of pupils' work from both key stages, examine the Policy statement and co-ordinator's file, talk to the co-ordinator, other teachers, and Year 6 pupils and some of last years Year 6 pupils, now at the local secondary school.

90 At the end of both key stages attainment in geography is in line with national expectations, and pupils are making satisfactory progress, especially with mapping skills. The requirements of the National Curriculum are being met.

91 In Key Stage 1, Year 1 pupils understand how simple map references work and can relate this to their own experiences such as visiting local shops. They can use a street atlas of the UK. Year 2 pupils have investigated the school and its locality. They can make simple plans and maps, follow a route, identify key features and devise their own key with appropriate symbols. They speak confidently about their work and can answer questions clearly about buildings, their uses, and identify correctly changes in the area visited. During a science lesson, Year 2 pupils applied geographical skills, using photographs to identify features in the school grounds and then locating them on a map.

92 By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have had opportunities to carry out enquiries, for example of rain forests and the impact of human activities on the environment, to use weather instruments to keep a diary of changing weather patterns and to analyse data from other parts of the world, and investigated aspects of life in India. The latter work is linked appropriately to other subjects such as music, dance and RE. Pupils in both key stages have many opportunities to carry out fieldwork locally and further a field. There is an opportunity for residential experience when Year 6 pupils spend a week in Whitby, making comparisons of the area with their own, carrying out surveys and collecting a variety of data. These visits make significant contributions to pupils' social and cultural development as well as to their learning in geography..

93 During the course of the two key stages pupils are acquiring a satisfactory knowledge of geographical terms and vocabulary. They communicate ideas and information in a variety of ways, including short and some extended writing. However, no examples of analysis of statistical data were seen in pupils' work and there is no evidence of the use of IT.

94 Pupils' attitudes to geography are good. By the end of Key Stage 2 they are well aware of the relevance of geographical skills and knowledge for understanding the modern world and global issues. Year 2 pupils speak with confidence, show a good level of recall of a recent visit, and keep on task when working independently. Year 5 pupils listened very carefully to a video, making their own notes, and worked co-operatively afterwards whilst using various reference materials to supplement their learning. Year 7 pupils interviewed whilst visiting the school showed very good recall of the visit to Whitby, recalling with enthusiasm details of the sites visited and the work carried out. Clearly it had made a vivid impact on them which they had retained. Pupils are attentive in lessons. They listen to each and are articulate and confident speakers, demonstrating a good standard of oracy. SEN pupils are well-supported and participate well.

95 Teaching in the lessons seen was good. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of the subject and confident when teaching. Lessons are carefully planned with appropriate geographical learning objectives that focus teaching effectively. Resources are well used in lessons and include a range of reference materials, photographs, maps, atlases and globes. There is some use of differentiation by provision of slightly different worksheets. However scrutiny of a sample of written work indicates abler pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. This needs to be monitored. Pupils are encouraged to plan and produce drafts of work before completing tasks. Pupils are well managed and supported. Some good examples of support for pupils with SEN were observed, for example in Year 5 lessons. Teachers have positive and friendly relationships with pupils and clearly know them well. Pupils' ideas and opinions are valued and used. Pupils are being successfully encouraged to work independently.

96 The co-ordinator is a subject specialist with a degree in geography and manages the subject well. She has revised the policy statement and plans to develop a new scheme of work. The co-ordinator has possession of copies of teachers' planning but there is no time available for monitoring either teaching or pupils' work. Assessment is ongoing and done informally and there are no formal records kept of pupils' attainment.

## **HISTORY**

97 During the period of the inspection it was only possible to observe one lesson in key stage 2, and none in key stage 1. However samples of pupils' work were scrutinised, planning analysed and staff and pupils interviewed, including a group of ex-pupils now in Year 7 at the local secondary school.

98 Attainment in both key stages is in line with national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils understand the difference between past and present, can use everyday words to describe time and the past, and can make simple timelines. They can identify similarities and differences between the past and present by investigating and commenting on objects, artefacts, pictures, stories, books and buildings. They also understand the contribution of

archaeology to our understanding of life in the past. Their understanding has been extended by a very useful visit to Stibbington where the importance of evidence and interpretation of a range of sources reinforced the practical application the skills acquired in the classroom.

99 In Key Stage 2 pupils build on this foundation as they study the topics required by the National Curriculum. Year 6 pupils have secure chronological understanding, identifying periods by their names and allocating them to the correct centuries. They show confidence and competence when discussing primary and secondary sources, and understand the advantages and disadvantages of both for historical investigations. They are able to produce extended writing, which includes imaginative writing rooted in evidence. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows sound coverage of the National Curriculum in terms of knowledge of aspects of the different periods studied. Pupils interviewed revealed a secure knowledge of the topics they had covered and were able to identify negative aspects of life in Victorian times for the poor and could give reasons to support their ideas. The number of well-chosen and well organised visits in both key stages extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils have visited the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge as part of their study of ancient civilizations, and West Stow as part of an Anglo-Saxon topic. A Tudor Day offered workshops and opportunities for role-play.

100 Pupils show that they have positive attitudes towards the subject and realise that it helps them to understand the present.

101 Teaching in the one lesson observed was satisfactory. The lesson had been carefully planned and was confidently delivered by a knowledgeable teacher. Pupils' work is regularly marked although written comments are general rather than subject-specific. Teachers feel that this is made up for by regular oral feedback at the start of lessons, and examples of helpful feedback were observed in the lesson seen.

102 There are two co-ordinators, both of whom are subject specialists. Between them they have a good knowledge of the subject and the requirements of the National Curriculum. They provide effective management of the subject and offer good support to their colleagues. There is a policy for history and a new scheme of work is planned. Resources are at least adequate and good use is made of loans from the Library Service and a local museum to supplement them. There is no time allowed for monitoring planning, teaching and pupils' work. Assessment is ongoing and informal and no formal records are kept although reports to parents show consistent reference to pupils' development of skills over the year.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

103 Standards achieved by pupils in information technology are poor overall. This is an apparent deterioration since the last inspection when they were judged to be sound. This is because in most classes pupils are provided with few opportunities to develop their understanding and skills in using computers or to apply these skills through their work in other subjects. This is reflected in the lack of evidence of achievement in IT in their completed work and the few lessons that are planned for IT in most classes. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils have only limited skills in using word processing and drawing programs to communicate their ideas and some are able to access information on CDROMs. Their understanding and skills in using computers to store, retrieve, sort and search information are very weak. They have been given few opportunities to learn how to use IT to control devices, for example

models that move. They have no understanding of how computers can be used monitor and record events, such as changes in the temperature outside the classroom over 24 hours, or the speed of buggy as it runs down a ramp.

104 Pupils in individual classes do make very rapid progress when they are taught by confident and knowledgeable teachers. This was the case in Year 4 when in an excellent lesson, one in a well planned series, they very quickly acquired many new skills and demonstrated above average achievement in using a wide range of drawing and painting tools in an art program. They were able to produce imaginative effects and very detailed and accurate pictures in response to the teacher's very high expectations, clear explanations and well focussed questions. In other isolated examples in the school, pupils also demonstrate attainment in line with or above expectations in their completed work. The Year 1 pupils' own versions of famous stories, such as Snow White and Peter Pan, have been word processed and show that they can choose their own fonts and make use of formatting to set out their work effectively. The quality of this work demonstrates achievement above expectations for their age. Pupils make clear gains in the learning in the classes where teachers are confident and skilled themselves in the use of IT. However, in too many classes teachers lack confidence and have underdeveloped skills and understanding of IT. They therefore rarely plan or teach lessons in this key skill and this results in the overall attainment of pupils being so low.

105 The weaknesses are fully understood by the IT coordinator, whose short time in the post despite has been reduced further by her maternity leave. Despite this she has produced a clear plan to move the subject forward and has been able to enhance the resources available for teaching by establishing a new computer network. She fully understands the need to increase teachers' skills in IT and to support them with a clear curriculum structure. A start has been made on providing professional development opportunities and the national model scheme of work has recently been adopted. However, if standards are to improve sufficiently there is a need to raise teachers' expectations and to ensure that they all contribute to developing pupils' learning of IT. At present teachers' planning is not monitored effectively. This results in missed opportunities to address weakness, for example IT planned in one class was watching videos in another subject. It is important that all teachers plan regular IT lessons that are firmly based on the National Curriculum requirements and the adopted scheme of work.

106 The school has sufficient resources to support learning in IT and these are to be improved further when the school receives its funding from the National Grid for Learning initiative. There are appropriate plans for using this grant. Currently the school's resources are not used effectively to support learning.

## **MUSIC**

107 Overall, the standards achieved in music are above national expectations by the time pupils come to leave the school. Most pupils comfortably attain the national expectations and the large number who benefit from additional music tuition or participate in extra school activities, such as the choir and the school orchestra achieve well. Teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress.

108 By Year 6, where all the pupils are taught by a specialist, pupils are familiar with notation and can identify the pattern of beats that are used in recorded music. They sing

tunefully and can take good account of rhythm and emphasis when performing. The teacher's confidence and specialist knowledge has clearly enabled her to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding effectively through her well paced lessons, which encourage pupils to appraise, perform and develop their technical understanding of music. In an equally well paced lesson in Year 5, the teacher was careful to provide a balance between appraising and performance and her consistent use of technical language reinforced pupils' knowledge and understanding. This particular lesson made a valuable contribution to pupils' knowledge of cultures other than their own as the focus was on Indian music as part of the year group topic on India. Good skills in performance and emerging understanding of composition were carefully nurtured in Year 2 through a well prepared and enthusiastically taught lesson. The teacher ensured, as in other lessons seen, that all pupils were able to join in the performance elements by providing sufficient instruments for all pupils. Her management of pupils based on good relationships, high expectations and a stimulating context, related to the topic on plants, was very effective in maintaining their purposeful involvement. Skilful use was made of pictorial representation to develop pupils' understanding of notation, composition pitch and dynamics. An indication of Y2 pupils' above average attainment is demonstrated in their ability to explain that 8 quavers equal 4 crotchets and to sustain different rhythms when clapping. Pupils' learning in Year 2 builds effectively on their experiences in Year 1 where they are successfully encouraged, for example to match the sounds of instruments to different characters in songs and to clap in time.

109 In Key Stage assemblies, pupils sing enthusiastically and tunefully and pay good attention to rhythm. The well balanced number of boys and girls who attend the popular extra curricular choir have built on these qualities and added improved dynamics and diction in response to skilful coaching provided by the teachers who lead the activity. The well established school orchestra is coached effectively by a specialist who is paid for by the school. It provides a very valuable context for the higher attaining pupils, who benefit from private tuition, both in and out of school, to develop their performance skills.

110 The coordinator manages the subject effectively by supporting less confident teachers, providing them with an effective commercial scheme to support their teaching and by ensuring they have access to sufficient good quality equipment.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

111 Standards of attainment, overall, are in line with national expectations and in some aspects, such as gymnastics and games they are often above; in swimming, standards across the school are very high, reflecting the high quality of teaching and learning in swimming and the importance attached to this area by the school and its community, in a region where there are large areas of potentially dangerous open water. Younger pupils show appropriate body awareness and agility in gymnastic activities, movement and games. They demonstrate the ability to use a variety of different ways of travelling, such as rolling, jumping, running, turning and show an appropriate range of games skills for their age, and sometimes better. Older pupils often refine and improve sequences of movement, previously performed, as seen very effectively, for example, in a Year 6 gymnastics lesson where several pupils worked to a very

good level. Most pupils show good use of space and work well with partners. Pupils generally follow instructions accurately and often show their ability to plan and evaluate their work although, on some occasions, these aspects could be developed further.

112 Pupils work hard in lessons and the wide range of extra-curricular activities to practise a range of striking, catching and other games skills and effectively follow rules in team games. Strong and appropriate emphasis is placed on equal opportunities aspects for all pupils across the range of activities. Overall, pupils make good progress in both key stages; they are often highly motivated, well behaved, listen intently and work hard in lessons. Pupils often look forward to lessons, take a pride in their achievements and those of others. The majority work quietly with sustained levels of concentration, co-operate well together and show good awareness of health and safety issues.

113 The quality of teaching and learning, overall, is good across the school. In the best lessons, the teacher has a detailed knowledge of the subject, has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and progress and through high quality direct teaching makes real demands on the pupils. In such lessons, there are clear and well-matched learning objectives, organisation and planning are good and the teaching has structure and pace so that much is achieved in the course of a single lesson. On very rare occasions, the demands made on pupils in relation to the development of skills are insufficiently rigorous. The co-ordinator provides a strong and informed lead in the subject. It is recognised that a few areas have the potential for further improvement, such as aspects of dance, monitoring of teaching and learning, and aspects of assessment, although there are some positive elements in each. Considerable overall teaching time is given to swimming, especially in Key Stage 1. This time is very effectively used and the school's commitment to swimming is exemplary. However, in the interests of pupils' development in other vital areas of the statutory National Curriculum, the school is aware of the need to reappraise the time given to swimming, especially in Key Stage 1, perhaps using principles of organisation very effectively developed in Key Stage 2, with the application of blocks of time. Resources for the subject are good, including excellent links with the local swimming facilities adjacent to the secondary school.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

114 Attainment at the end of both key stages is broadly in line with expectations related to the locally Agreed Syllabus. Younger pupils are beginning to have some knowledge of a number of important aspects about Christianity, including the meanings of major festivals and celebrations. They know the Bible is a special book and are beginning to understand many of the stories and their meanings and are developing skills related to empathy. Older pupils have a generally sound knowledge about Christianity and some aspects of other world faiths. Many understand the concept of fairness and justice and relate this work to detailed studies in religious education and other subjects such as history and geography. Good studies are being carried out by older juniors about different buildings as places of worship, notably, some studies related to Mosques. The majority of pupils are developing caring skills and understanding of people in less fortunate situations.

116 Pupils' learning across the school is broadly sound and on occasions it is good, particularly where it is linked to good quality teaching; in one lesson seen in a Year 6 class, which included detailed and very well informed discussions by groups of pupils about significant characteristics and features of Mosques as places of worship, teaching and learning

were very good indeed. On a few occasions elsewhere, pupils' progress was impeded where the pace and match of work was less rigorous and failed to build effectively on pupils' previous learning in the subject. Pupils generally enjoy listening to stories in religious education and are attentive and responsive. They confidently offer ideas, suggestions, answers and often show an appreciation of the views of others. Teaching is generally sound and sometimes better, however, is sometimes restricted by the availability and effective use of long term planning to guide teachers' lesson planning; a new Agreed Syllabus is due to be published shortly which together with other recent national advice on the subject will provide invaluable help for the school in this direction.

117 The school has carefully considered issues related to the subject in the last inspection report. Whilst significant progress has been made in one or two areas, generally progress has been more modest. However, a new co-ordinator for the subject has now been appointed who is well informed, experienced and is already beginning to lay the foundations for valuable developments, actively supported by the headteacher. Resources are generally adequate with good provision in one or two areas linked with themes, although it is recognised that more artefacts and materials are needed, particularly in the light of the new planning, documentation and other developments which are being arranged.