

INSPECTION REPORT

BARKWAY VA FIRST SCHOOL

Barkway, Royston

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117422

Headteacher: Mrs J Heinzelmann

Reporting inspector: Phil Mann
23219

Dates of inspection: 11-13 January 2000

Inspection number: 192265

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3-9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	High Street Barkway Royston Herts
Postcode:	SG8 8EF
Telephone number:	01763 848283
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr T Luckock
Date of previous inspection:	14-16 January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Inspector	Subject responsibility	Aspect responsibility
Phil Mann	Children under five English Information technology Design and technology Music	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How good are curricular and other opportunities?
Diane Willson (Lay inspector)		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
Cliff Farthing	Mathematics Science Art Geography History Physical education	Special educational needs How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Barkway VA First School has 43 pupils on roll, aged 3 to 9, and serves the village of Barkway and surrounding area of the Hertfordshire town of Royston. The original Victorian building dates from 1840 and includes a hall, a newly built library and is surrounded by a playground and access to a grassed area.

Number of full-time pupils	43	(well below average)
Pupils with English as an additional language	2%	(below average)
Pupils entitled to free school meals	0%	(well below average)
Pupils on the special educational needs register	4	(well below average)
Average class size	17	

The attainment of pupils at the start of statutory schooling is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Barkway is a school that provides a caring Christian community within which its pupils can flourish and grow. There is an appropriate emphasis on raising standards and teachers satisfactorily maintain the good standards achieved by pupils in English, mathematics and science throughout the school. The headteacher provides sound leadership for the work of the school and is supported by a dedicated staff who together work as a co-ordinated team to improve the overall quality of education. They are supported by a dedicated governing body who are yet to become fully effective in working closely with the school to improve standards overall. The school continues, however, to provide satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average throughout the school.
- The provision for children under five is good and these children make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are good overall.
- The school cares for its pupils well.
- The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented effectively.
- Provision for pupils' personal and social development is good.
- The school has a very good partnership with its parents.

What could be improved

- The quality of teaching and learning in some lessons.
- Whole school development and financial planning for the medium and short term.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been some improvement on the issues identified in the last inspection. Sound progress has been made on the key issues, not all have been completed. There has been good progress on the management and provision for the early years and curriculum planning for pupils in both key stages. The governing body's ability to plan strategically for the overall development of the school, still remains a key issue. The governing body has recognised the need for improvement in its procedures and is beginning to make the necessary changes and its capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

STANDARDS

Results of the National Curriculum tests and assessments for 1999 show that attainment of seven year olds is above average in reading and well above average in writing, mathematics and science. When results are compared with those of similar schools, standards are average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. These results are based on a very small year group and variations in overall attainment exist year on year. Any objective comparison is therefore very unreliable but trends overtime indicate a steady improvement in standards. Evidence indicates that there is a significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys. For the last three years, girls have performed consistently better than boys, but again small numbers of pupils in each year group make objective comparisons unreliable. Inspection evidence indicates that the behaviour of some boys impedes the overall effectiveness of some lessons.

The school has demonstrated satisfactory improvement in standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4 when compared with the findings of the previous inspection. Attainment at Year 4 is good overall in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above national expectations for seven and nine year olds. Attainment in reading is broadly in line with that expected for these age groups. In writing, attainment is in line with national expectations for seven year olds but above expected levels for pupils aged nine. Attainment in mathematics and science is above national expectations. Pupils are clearly achieving new knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy as a result of effective implementation of the national strategies. Standards in information technology are broadly in line with that expected of seven and nine year olds. Pupil achievement is at least satisfactory for all other subjects, with some good progress being made in aspects of music.

Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of many children at the start of nursery schooling is in line with that expected for children of this age. All children under five make good progress in all areas of learning, and progress in their creative and personal and social development is particularly good. These children are achieving at a fast rate, as a result of good teaching by the nursery staff and a well-planned curriculum. By the time they enter statutory schooling their overall attainment is above that expected of five year olds in all areas of learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attitudes to learning are good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The behaviour of many pupils is consistently good but some older boys dominate class discussions and sometimes behave inappropriately in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are positive around the school and pupils respond well to opportunities for personal development.
Attendance	Good.

Children under five have positive attitudes to learning. They are keen, try hard to improve and respond well to good provision for personal and social development. The pupils in both key stages are continuing to develop good attitudes to learning. Behaviour is good overall and pupils are trustworthy, very polite and have a sense of pride in their school. Sometimes, however, the responses of some pupils are over-enthusiastic and the more dominant behaviour of some boys can limit the full involvement of all pupils in class discussions. The pupils' response to provision for personal development is very good. Many are clearly able to show some initiative in the undertaking of various jobs around the school and through their participation in the School Council. Pupils like coming to school and their attendance is good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory overall and good for children under five. In 44 per cent of lessons it is good, in 45 per cent satisfactory, and in 11 per cent it is unsatisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2. This is a broadly similar picture to that of the last inspection.

Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. They plan clear learning objectives in the vast majority of lessons to enable pupils' to build steadily on past work.

Teaching in literacy lessons is good and in most numeracy lessons. In the good lessons, pupils are expected to work to their capacity and they respond well to this challenge. Often in numeracy lessons

teachers make numbers come alive for their pupils. Appropriate challenges are provided for all ages and levels of ability within the mixed age classes. Teaching becomes unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 in numeracy and in physical education in Key Stage 2 when there are weaknesses in controlling the class. This leads to pupils not knowing what they are doing, they show little interest and thus their progress is hindered. Sometimes, teachers do not use time consistently well to ensure that the lesson is used efficiently to promote optimum progress. This is a weakness in some lessons in both key stages. The teaching of basic skills is, however, good across both key stages.

Teachers provide inconsistent opportunities for pupils with special educational needs. The school agrees learning objectives for these pupils, but these are not fully translated into precise and measurable learning targets.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced. There is good provision for investigative work and personal and social development.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Individual education plans are insufficiently precise.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory but currently not applicable.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good and the well established School Council is a very positive feature.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good arrangements for the care and guidance of its pupils. These arrangements have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

The school offers a broad range of opportunities for its pupils and the curriculum provision is satisfactory at both key stages. The curriculum for children under five is good and there is a strong emphasis on providing opportunities for child initiated activity and personal and social development. Provision for personal, social and health education for pupils at both key stages is satisfactory with a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. Spiritual, moral and social development is good but there are few planned opportunities for pupils to learn about the rich diversity of the wider world around them.

Overall, the school has good arrangements for the care and guidance of its pupils. These have a positive impact on pupils' attainment and pupils' attitudes to learning. The school creates an atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and very happy, and there is a conscious effort to raise pupils' self esteem.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall, but there are some weaknesses. There is satisfactory educational direction for the work of the school with an emphasis on building good relationships and providing a caring environment. There is a vision to raise standards but the school is not always clear how this will be achieved. The monitoring of teaching and learning is satisfactory but outcomes are not used systematically to have an impact on what is taught. The governing body is supportive on a day-to-day basis and all governors now have clearly defined roles. School development planning is generally sound but there is a lack of long term planning for future improvement of the school. The governors do not meet their statutory requirements fully in providing the necessary information in their annual report to parents.

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. Roles and responsibilities have been delegated well in the context of a small school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Although the governors support the work of the school well on a day-to-day basis, procedures for shaping the future direction of the school are at an early stage of development
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has made a satisfactory start in monitoring standards.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes satisfactory use of its current resources.

Teachers and support staff are experienced and show a high degree of commitment to the school, and the pupils in their care. All staff work well together and make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school. There is adequate accommodation for the curriculum to be taught effectively. The new library provides pupils with an excellent facility. Overall, the resources for learning in the school are good. However, although there are sufficient computers, the quality of them is unsatisfactory as some of them are in need of renewal.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their child likes school. • That staff are easy to talk to. • That the behaviour of the pupils is good. • That the school helps their child to be mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality and consistency of homework. • The range of activities outside lessons. • The information they receive about their child's progress.

Only nine parents returned a questionnaire and seven attended the meeting with inspectors. The inspection team found that many parents are very happy with the quality of education that their children receive at the school. Parents are kept well informed through regular newsletters and feel that they have sufficient curricular information at the beginning of each term to enable them to support their children's learning. Information about homework is sufficient but some working parents would appreciate details in written format in order that they can fully support their child's learning at home. The quality and consistency of homework is appropriate for pupils of this age. Parents receive good information through the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents, but some information about special educational needs and the rates of absence are missing. Inspectors found that the information contained within the pupils' annual reports is satisfactory overall but that it is unsatisfactory where core subjects are grouped together with non-core subjects. Information about how pupils can improve their work is not consistent and parents do not receive a record of their children's attendance.

Some parents also felt that the school offers a narrow range of activities outside lessons. The inspection team judges that those activities offered are appropriate for pupils of this age and the size of school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Results of the National Curriculum tests for 1999 show that attainment of seven year olds is above average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science show that attainment is well above average when compared with all schools nationally. When results are compared with those of similar schools, standards are average in reading, well above average in writing and average in mathematics. These results are based on a very small year group and variations in overall attainment exist year on year. Any objective comparison is, therefore, very unreliable but trends overtime indicate a steady improvement in standards. Analysis of available data indicates that there is a significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys. For the last three years, girls have performed consistently better than boys but again small numbers of pupils in each year group make objective comparisons unreliable. Inspection evidence indicates that the behaviour of some boys impedes the overall effectiveness of some lessons. Analysis of data also indicates that the attainment of boys currently in Year 2 is generally below that of the girls but no different to that found nationally.
2. Inspection findings indicate satisfactory improvement at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4 when compared with the findings of the previous inspection. Attainment at Year 4 is above that expected of nine year olds nationally in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above national expectations for seven and nine year olds. Attainment in reading is broadly in line with that expected for these age groups. In writing, attainment is in line with national expectations for seven year olds but above expected levels for pupils aged nine. Attainment in mathematics and science is above national expectations. Pupils are clearly achieving new knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy as a result of effective implementation of the national strategies for the areas of learning. Standards in information technology are broadly in line with that expected of seven and nine year olds. Pupils' achievements are at least satisfactory for all other subjects, with some good progress being made in aspects of music.
3. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of many children at the start of nursery schooling is in line with that expected for children of this age. All children under five make good progress in all areas of learning, and progress in their creative and personal and social development is particularly good. These children are achieving at a fast rate, as a result of good teaching by the nursery staff and a well-planned curriculum. By the time they enter statutory schooling their overall attainment is above that expected of five year olds in all areas of learning.
4. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall throughout the school with good progress being made in Key Stage 2 in writing and mathematics. Progress is satisfactory in all other aspects of English at both key stages. Progress in Key Stage 1 is enhanced by the support of the learning support assistant who helps raise the level of pupils' achievements, and especially that of pupils with special educational needs. In Key Stage 2, the breadth of the curriculum, especially in writing, has a positive impact on progress. Progress in reading is satisfactory in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in acquiring the skills of letter and word recognition through the good teaching of phonics. The Year 1 pupils have built on the good work undertaken in the nursery and reception and now know many sounds, letters and simple words. Higher and average attaining pupils in Year 4 read confidently and with expression, breaking down words into syllables, and self-correcting any mistakes they make. Staff and pupils have developed

positive attitudes towards the Literacy Hour, and literacy is encouraged across the curriculum. Consequently pupils are achieving good standards in literacy; for example, specific vocabulary is used well in other subjects.

5. Progress in mathematics is satisfactory overall but best in Key Stage 2. Good progress is being made in developing pupils' numeracy skills and attainment is high. Pupil achievement is best where the teachers engage the interest of pupils from the beginning of the lessons as seen in a Key Stage 2 lesson to develop the pupils' ability to investigate numbers through practical activity. Where tasks are not so well taught, as seen in a Key Stage 1 lesson on tens and units, the rate of progress is slow and tasks lack challenge for pupils of all abilities.
6. High standards of attainment are maintained across the school in science from the above average levels of attainment with which pupils enter Key Stage 1. A strength of the school is the way pupils' scientific knowledge is enhanced by their investigations. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 used their prediction skills and developed a good understanding of a fair test when they experimented with magnetic and non-magnetic materials.
7. Information and communication technology has been identified as a subject for improvement by the school. Pupils are attaining the expected standards across the school. They have regular computer experience in the classroom and by the age of nine, most pupils have developed confidence in using the mouse to control operations on the screen and can produce work in a variety of formats. Higher attaining pupils display confidence in being able to log on to the programs they are going to use.
8. The pupils make sound progress in the expressive arts. Teachers give art and music appropriate emphasis in the curriculum. Pupils are achieving the expected levels at seven and nine and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. In art, many pupils in Key Stage 1 draw well with good levels of detail and they show confidence in the use of materials. Year 2 pupils use tone well, as seen in their paintings following a trip to the National Gallery. Pupils in Key Stage 2 show good levels of detail in their close observational drawings. In music, pupils at both key stages can sing songs clearly in assemblies and teachers provide satisfactory opportunities for them to listen to music of the famous composers. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are beginning to make good progress in recording their own compositions in the form of a simple graphic score.
9. Progress is also sound in design and technology, history, geography and physical education. Good examples of work include a visit to a local pizza restaurant as part of a unit on food technology, and studies of the local village in geography. The pupils in both key stages are developing a satisfactory knowledge of famous people and events of the past in history. Standards in physical education are in line with those normally expected. Swimming is a strength, as many pupils achieve the standards expected of 11 year olds by the end of Year 4.
10. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and consistent with their overall attainment. They make sound progress in literacy and numeracy skills but their individual education plans contain targets that are not specific enough to accelerate their rate of progress across the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Children under five have positive attitudes to learning, and they respond well to the good provision for personal and social development. They are enthusiastic and persevere with their tasks. Children are attentive to adults and most raise their hands when they wish to

make a positive contribution to class and small group discussions. Some children, new to the class, find it difficult to take turns during discussions and consequently call out while others are talking. They do, however, wait patiently for their turn in a circle game, when musical instruments are handed out. All children sustain concentration in self-chosen activities, such as role-play, and co-operate effectively with others in practical activities.

12. The pupils in both key stages have good attitudes to learning. This finding is consistent with that of the previous inspection. Pupils are keen and eager to come to school. All parents express a satisfaction with the pupils' response to work and activities within the school. Many pupils are very interested and involved in school activities. Most pupils listen carefully and sustain concentration during lessons in both key stages. At times, the responses of some pupils are over-enthusiastic and the more dominant behaviour of some boys can limit the full involvement of all pupils in class discussions when this behaviour is not fully checked by staff. The pupils in both classes do, however, reflect on what they learn, generate good ideas and enjoy solving problems. They apply themselves well, and when given opportunities to manage their own tasks, do so very successfully. For example, the Key Stage 2 pupils organised themselves and managed their tasks with a degree of independence in a mathematics lesson on solving number problems using tens and units. When tasks are less challenging and lack time constraints, such as when Key Stage 2 pupils wrote their own e-mails to a friend, the pupils' interest does wane and their commitment to their tasks is less strong. Pupils take a pride in their work and presentation skills are satisfactory and their handwriting is neat.
13. The pupils' behaviour is good overall. They are trustworthy and very polite and have a sense of pride in their school. Pupils show a satisfactory understanding and respect for others' beliefs and values. There were no incidents of bullying observed during the inspection. The relationships within the school reflect a happy working environment where pupils work together with a good level of co-operation. Pupils work well in pairs and small groups, as when three Year 2 girls wrote a poem on their computer as part of a literacy lesson. Behaviour does, however, deteriorate slightly in some lessons in Key Stage 2 when some boys hold their own conversations whilst the teacher is talking and misbehave, as seen in a country dancing lesson. There has only been one incident of temporary exclusion over the previous years.
14. The pupils' response to provision for personal development is very good. Many are clearly able to show some initiative in the undertaking of various jobs around the school and through their participation in the School Council. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 respond well to a range of responsibilities around the school. For example, pupils in Year 4 prepare the school hall and operate the overhead projector for singing sessions in assemblies. The pupils raise money for charity, take part in school concerts and participate in community events organised at the church by the school.
15. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the levels of support provided for them. For example, they are gaining in self-confidence and in their ability to spell a wider range of words. They value the individual attention they receive in literacy support sessions. Their behaviour is good, but sometimes they become inattentive in class if activities are too difficult or the teacher talks for too long.
16. Attendance is good and has improved since the last inspection. The attendance rate is above the national average and unauthorised absence is below the national average. Registers are completed each morning and afternoon, but the totalling of sessions and absences is inconsistent. The great majority of pupils arrive at school on time, leading to a prompt start to the school day. The good attendance and punctuality of pupils contribute positively towards their standards of attainment, since they can make regular, uninterrupted progress in their work.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory overall and good for children under five. In 44 per cent of lessons it is good, in 45 per cent it is satisfactory and in 11 per cent it is unsatisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2. This is a similar picture to that of the last inspection.
18. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. This enables them to plan clear learning objectives in the vast majority of lessons. An analysis of pupils' past work indicates that teachers build steadily on pupils' past knowledge and skills.
19. Teaching in literacy lessons is good and in most numeracy lessons in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage one it is satisfactory overall, but there are some weaknesses. In the good lessons pupils are expected to do their best and they respond well to this challenge and make good progress. Teachers ensure that pupils understand routines and get through their work in the time available. Appropriate challenges are provided for all ages and levels of ability within the mixed age classes. Learning is good in these lessons. Teaching is sometimes unsatisfactory in numeracy in Key Stage 1 and in physical education in Key Stage 2. In these lessons there are weaknesses in controlling the class. This leads to pupils not knowing what they are doing, they show little interest and thus their progress is hindered. The teaching of basic skills is, however, good across both key stages. Often in numeracy lessons, teachers make numbers come alive for their pupils giving them enthusiasm for new learning.
20. In many lessons, teachers use appropriate questions to challenge pupils' thinking and probe their understanding. Pupils' interest and concentration are often good. Explanations are usually interesting and demonstrations are well matched to the age and interests of pupils. For example, in a Years 3 and 4 literacy lesson to develop the pupils' recognition of adjectives within printed text, the teacher read the story of "The Death of Achilles" with expression and she asked questions which challenged the pupils' ability to identify a wide range of adjectives. In this lesson, pupils were clearly well motivated, the work was challenging, the pace brisk and resources were used well to enable pupils to increase their understanding. Teachers support pupils well when they are working in groups and often ask for explanations about what they are doing and reasons for their answers. This is a particular strength in numeracy lessons at Key Stage 2. The allocation of time at the end of lessons for pupils to check on what they have learnt is inconsistent between classes. Consequently, teachers are not always able to assess what pupils have learnt and use the information in future lessons. So pupils are not always set work which takes their knowledge or skills further. Marking of pupils' work in Key Stage 2 is often good, with clear indications of how pupils can improve. In Key Stage 1, marking is very largely an acknowledgement of pupils' completion of work and the expectations of what they can achieve are not always sufficiently high enough.
21. The teachers' learning targets for pupils who have special educational needs are not precise enough, measurable or easy to understand. Parents and their children are, therefore, sometimes held back from becoming fully involved in their learning.
22. The relationships between pupils and staff are mostly good. This means that lessons have a calm atmosphere that is conducive to learning. All staff often use praise well to motivate and encourage pupils to do their best. However, in a minority of lessons staff allow pupils to call out answers to their questions and this small number of vociferous pupils dominate the lesson to the detriment of other pupils.

23. Teachers do not use time consistently well to ensure that the lesson is used efficiently to promote optimum progress. This is often a weakness in some lessons in both key stages. For example, in an information and communication technology lesson for Key Stage 2 pupils, too much time was given to writing a draft e-mail message on paper without giving pupils the opportunity to develop their skills on the computer. Classroom displays are attractive in Key Stage 2, but displays of pupils' work are more limited in Key Stage 1. Teaching assistants have a sound knowledge of their roles and are given satisfactory briefing by teachers.
24. The use of homework is satisfactory across the school. Most pupils take home reading books, but homework diaries in Key Stage 2 provide a limited dialogue between home and school as they are not used consistently to enable parents to support their children's learning.

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

25. The school offers a broad range of opportunities for its pupils and the curriculum provision is satisfactory overall at both key stages. At the previous inspection it was reported that the school should:
 - improve its curriculum planning and especially in the foundation subjects;
 - publish policies and schemes of work for all National Curriculum subjects.
26. Both issues have now been fully addressed and there is a marked improvement in the quality of curriculum planning throughout the school. For example, there are now policies for all subjects and the schemes of work for English and information and communication technology are under review.
27. The curriculum for children under five is good and there is a strong emphasis on providing opportunities for child initiated activity and personal and social development. The nursery class has established effective links with the local playgroup and several jointly planned events are undertaken throughout the school year for both sets of children. There is appropriate provision for outdoor play but the school has recognised that a dedicated play area for children under five would provide greater curricular opportunities for children's physical development. Curriculum planning is good and the recommended six areas of learning are followed. It prepares the children effectively for the National Curriculum in Year 1. Relevant aspects of the literacy and numeracy strategy are sensitively introduced and implemented.
28. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils receive sound support from the special needs co-ordinator, teachers and learning support assistants. Individual education plans identify programmes for action but targets are far too general to have a significant impact on the overall progress of these pupils.
29. The curriculum in both key stages is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Its aims and policies show a commitment to promoting pupils' intellectual, personal and physical development. The school has made appropriate modifications to the coverage of foundation subjects. A good feature of the curriculum is the emphasis on investigative work within mathematics and science. The school has effectively introduced the literacy and numeracy strategies and this is impacting positively on the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills to pupils.
30. The school has given much consideration to how pupils' learning progresses in mixed age classes and, overall, the curriculum caters well for this. The school has thought

through its two-year rolling programme carefully, and the match of pupil to task is generally good. Planning takes into account the specific expectations for each age group and ability. The higher attaining pupils are well catered for, especially in Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science.

31. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Health education and sex education are addressed mainly through the teaching of science topics. Provision for raising pupils' awareness of drug misuse is appropriate for pupils of this age and dealt with sensitively in specific units of work.
32. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities is provided. There is a recorder club and some football coaching. These activities are enthusiastically attended by the pupils and enrich the curriculum. The school further enhances pupils' learning by using the village centre for geographical study, trips to Cambridge and a residential trip for Key Stage 2 pupils. The involvement of visiting speakers to enhance the curricular opportunities offered is, however, underdeveloped. The school has developed satisfactory links with other schools and older pupils make a visit to the local middle school before they transfer.
33. The governing body has addressed the issues raised within the last report regarding equal opportunities. Pupils are given equality of opportunity in the curricular opportunities provided within the school.
34. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Spiritual development is satisfactory and opportunities are planned in maths and science lessons for pupils to reflect on the wonders of the world around them.
35. Provision for moral education is good and the school has developed good procedures for the promotion of positive attitudes and an understanding of what is right and wrong. For example, good behaviour is recognised by staff through the awarding of stickers and certificates.
36. The school provides good opportunities for the personal and social development of pupils. Older pupils are allowed to display initiative and a sense of responsibility when they arrange the hall for assemblies and operate the overhead projector. The well-established School Council is a very positive feature. All pupils are able to positively contribute to it through regular meetings. They are able to exercise skills of citizenship by making suggestions to improve the quality of their school; for example, playground rules have been modified and money has been raised for a new litter-bin.
37. Cultural development is satisfactory overall. The school provides good opportunities for pupils' to learn about their own cultural heritage through trips to Cambridge and studies of the village high street. However, the development of their understanding of other cultures is more limited as there are few planned opportunities for pupils to learn about the rich diversity of the wider world around them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. Overall, the school has good arrangements for the care and guidance of its pupils. They have a positive impact on pupils' attainment and their attitudes to learning. The school creates an atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and very happy, and there is a conscious effort to raise pupils' self-esteem. The school has good procedures for child protection and has due concern for the health, safety and well-being of pupils, both within the school environment and beyond. Each morning the school monitors the collection arrangements for pupils, and children in the nursery, and records are kept in the 'Morning Book'. The school promotes good behaviour and attendance through a well-established system of rewards. Two members of the village community have supported the school in its

endeavours to promote good work and behaviour; a cup is awarded each half term to a pupil from each year group in rotation. However, the management of pupils' behaviour is not always consistent, when teachers allow pupils to call out. Any incidents of bullying or inappropriate behaviour are taken seriously and dealt with swiftly.

39. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, including those who are under five. The school has collated portfolios of examples of pupils' work, matched to National Curriculum levels, in order to make consistent judgements about pupils' attainment. The 'baseline assessment' of children's attainment on entry is effectively used to ensure that children are provided with appropriate experiences from the earliest stage. Other tests, such as reading tests, end of key stage assessments and end of year tests in Years 3 and 4 are used well throughout the school and provide good quality information. The school makes satisfactory use of this information to plan future work and to inform curriculum development.
40. Monitoring of personal development is based on the good knowledge that all staff have of the pupils, recognising their individual needs and responding to them. The school has good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress. Individual records are kept and pupils' performance is monitored consistently across the school. At parents' consultation evenings, targets are set which are shared with pupil and parent; these are recorded and maintained in the pupil's 'blue folder'.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The school has established very good links with parents. Parents are very happy with standards achieved at the school and feel that the school cares for and supports their children very well. They find that the school is easy to approach with any problems they may have and feel that these are dealt with quickly. Parents were fully consulted about the home-school agreement and homework policy, and were invited to make any contributions to them. Parents are kept well informed through regular newsletters and feel that they have sufficient curricular information at the beginning of each term to enable them to support their children's learning. There is good information about homework displayed on the library window for those parents with children in Key Stage 1. However, parents who are unable to come to school to meet their children would appreciate this information in written form. There is good communication with parents through the home-school reading record book in Key Stage 1 but this is not so consistently used in Key Stage 2.
42. Parents receive good information through the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents. However, the latter does not meet statutory requirements in that it does not contain: a report on progress made on the previous OFSTED action plan; sufficient information about special educational needs; and the rates of absence are given as figures rather than a percentage. Parents have the opportunity to consult with teachers about their children's progress three times a year and are encouraged to talk to teachers at any other time should they have the need to do so. At these consultation evenings, parents are involved, with their children, in setting targets for further improvement. Annually, parents receive satisfactory information about their children's progress in English and mathematics, but it is unsatisfactory where core subjects are grouped together with non-core subjects. Information about how pupils can improve their work is not consistent and parents do not receive a record of their children's attendance.
43. A very active 'Friends of Barkway School' association organises a wide range of well-supported events to raise valuable funds to improve the quality of education. These events make a valuable contribution to the life and work of the school. The involvement of pupils in these activities offers opportunities to further their personal development and

citizenship. A good example is the annual 'Street Market' where the school and the village community work closely together. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to the work of their children both at home and school. They are very supportive and offer their help at events such as the Christmas production, with swimming and school trips. However, despite repeated encouragement by the school, very few parents help in school on a regular basis.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, but there are some weaknesses. No clear judgement was made on the quality of leadership and management at the time of the last inspection. Sound progress has been made on the key issues, but not all have been completed. There has been good progress on provision for the early years and curriculum planning. Strategic planning and meeting statutory requirements still remain key issues.
45. The headteacher provides satisfactory educational direction for the work of the school. Emphasis is placed on building good relationships and providing a caring environment. Parents are pleased with the attitudes and values the school teaches. There is a vision to raise standards, but the school is not always clear how this will be achieved. Job descriptions are currently being reviewed by the school. The headteacher has been monitoring the curriculum and teaching. This monitoring is satisfactory in practice. Strengths and weaknesses are shared with staff, but the outcomes are not used systematically to have an impact on what is taught. For example, the management of pupils and teachers' expectations are not consistent across the school. Co-ordinators analyse test data to monitor pupils' performance but do not use this information to set individual targets in order to raise standards further.
46. The governing body is supportive on a day-to-day basis. Governors, as well as those with individual responsibilities for literacy and numeracy, visit the school and report back to the full governing body. Governors, therefore, have a good basis from which to ask pertinent questions in these areas and hold the school to account for the standards it achieves. Recent practice has improved and all governors now have clearly defined roles. This is in the early stages of development, however, and it is too soon to judge its impact.
47. The current school's development plan is generally sound for the short term future improvement of the school. The targets are appropriate with key personnel, time-scales and costs identified. Success criteria are not always specific enough to allow the school to measure its own performance precisely. For example, a new library has been developed. This is now being used on a regular basis but there are no criteria in place for governors to judge its value for money. Consequently they are not able to effectively measure the library's impact on school improvement. There is minimal strategic planning showing a clear programme of action for the future direction of the work of the school. This was a key issue at the last inspection and still remains so.
48. The governors do not meet their statutory requirements fully as reporting to parents is incomplete in a number of areas. Their annual report does not include information on progress made on the post-inspection plan. The information on pupils with special educational needs still remains an issue from the last report.
49. The appraisal process is satisfactory and a strategy for performance management is in place. Induction of staff new to the school is satisfactory. There are no formal arrangements for the induction of new staff, but the staff handbook gives clear and useful information. Efforts are made to enable staff to spend time in school prior to taking up

their post.

50. The standard of long term financial planning is unsatisfactory. The school development plan details the allocation of funds against agreed educational priorities but budgeting is largely based on historical precedent and maintaining the previous year's spending. The governing body is not planning sufficiently for the strategic use of resources and does not as yet have procedures for monitoring the effects of spending on educational standards. The day-to-day financial control and administration are good and allow the school to run smoothly and effectively. The recent audit report found the financial administration of the school to be of a very high standard overall. The majority of the recommendations identified in the report have been addressed.
51. Teachers are suitably trained and qualified to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum, and show a high degree of commitment to the school and the pupils in their care. The level of staffing in Key Stage 2 is generous, enabling good contact between pupil and teacher. Support staff are suitably qualified and experienced. Teachers with curriculum responsibilities make a satisfactory contribution to overall management. All members of staff work well together and make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school.
52. There is adequate accommodation for the curriculum to be taught effectively. The classrooms are bright and airy, and attractive displays make a good contribution to pupils' learning. The recent addition of a purpose-built library, with a listening centre and a good range of books, provides pupils with an excellent facility. This is an improvement on the finding of the previous inspection. There is an adequate hard playing surface and the school has use of an adjoining paddock for outdoor games and for play in the summer months. Overall, the resources for learning in the school are good. They are of good quality, easily accessible and well used. Information technology is used well to support the management of the school. However, although there are sufficient computers in the classrooms and around school, the quality of them is unsatisfactory as some of them are in need of renewal.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. To further develop the effectiveness of the school and continue to raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
 - improve the quality of teaching overall by:
 - raising the expectations of what pupils can do;
 - using time more effectively;
 - ensuring the dominant behaviour of some pupils is managed effectively;
(paragraphs 19, 20, 22, 23)
 - improve school development planning by:
 - publishing a school development plan that includes long term plans for improvement that are clearly costed;
 - ensuring financial planning caters sufficiently for the medium and long term development of the school.
(paragraphs 44, 47, 50)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs 21, 28, 42 and 48.

- improve the quality of individual education plans by ensuring they are specific to the needs of pupils with special educational needs;
- ensuring that information for parents meets statutory requirements.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	18
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	44	89	11	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–Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	5	34
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR–Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	4

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.10
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	1	3	4

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	1	1	1
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	4	4	4
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (91)	100 (100)	100 (91)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (83)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	1	1	1
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	4	4	4
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	33
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13.2:1
Average class size	16.5

Education support staff: YR– Y4

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.25

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	4:1

Total number of education support staff	0.6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	16.25

Number of pupils per FTE adult	4:1
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	143,973
Total expenditure	140,299
Expenditure per pupil	3,262.77
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,304
Balance carried forward to next year	17,978

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	36
Number of questionnaires returned	9

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	22	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	56	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	44	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	23	22	22	0
The teaching is good.	44	56	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	56	11	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	22	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	56	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	56	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	22	78	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	44	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	23	22	11	0

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Only nine parents returned a questionnaire and seven attended the meeting. Most of these parents felt that their child likes coming to school and that staff are easy to talk to. All parents agree that the behaviour of the pupils is good and that the school helps their child to be mature and responsible. Some parents would prefer more activities outside lessons and greater consistency in the quality and use of homework to support their child's learning.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

54. Children are admitted part-time into the nursery class at the start of the term of their fourth birthday. They are subsequently admitted as reception children into the Key Stage 1 class at the start of the term of their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection, there were nine children in the nursery and two children under five in the Key Stage 1 class. Their attainment on entry into the nursery class in language and literacy and in knowledge and understanding of the world is in line, and in mathematics, creative and personal and social development is above that expected for children in this age group. All children under five make good progress in all areas of learning, and progress in their creative and personal and social development is particularly good. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of many children at the start of statutory schooling is above that expected nationally for children of this age.
55. The curriculum for children in the nursery is planned effectively by the nursery nurse in charge and overseen by the Key Stage 1 class teacher. The staff work closely as a team and the management of the overall provision for children under five is good. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection, when roles and responsibilities were found to be unclear.

Language and literacy

56. A broad range of activities is provided in the nursery and reception class. Members of the nursery staff place a good emphasis on developing children's language and literacy skills. Children make satisfactory progress in their early reading development. They listen carefully, respond well to questions, take part in role-play imaginatively and talk confidently about their experiences in class activities. For example, they responded enthusiastically to the story about a hungry bear and excitedly held supportive artefacts to the story. The children enjoy books and join in enthusiastically with stories and rhymes. All children understand that print carries meaning, and that text goes from left to right and from the top to bottom of the page. Most are able to predict what will happen next in a story. Higher attaining children begin to read some simple words. Reception children in the Key Stage 1 class are developing their literacy skills progressively and, by the time they are five, most children can write their own name and some are beginning to spell familiar words and write simple sentences.
57. The quality of teaching is good in both classes. Staff in the nursery contribute effectively to the children's language development and comprehensive records are maintained of each child's progress. Reception children are taught as part of the Key Stage 1 literacy class in the morning sessions, where their needs are catered for and work is planned according to their ability. Phonic development is good and follow-up activities are appropriate. Planning provides good opportunities for developing language and literacy skills, with the support of the teacher or the classroom assistant.

Mathematical development

58. Good attention is paid to mathematical development in the nursery. For example, the nursery nurse and classroom assistant work with children effectively to advance mathematical skills of counting using mathematical dice games. These resources are used well to enable children to count up to five with confidence and determine numbers that are greater or less than their chosen number up to six. Higher attaining children can count up to 12 when totalling the number of ladybirds on their cards won in the game.

Children concentrate and persevere with the game and share the equipment naturally. Some children can confidently name several common two-dimensional shapes. All children are learning to use appropriate mathematical language. Children in the reception class continue to make good progress in their numeracy skills as part of the Key Stage 1 numeracy lessons.

59. The teaching of mathematical skills is good. Children in both classes have regular opportunities to develop their mathematical skills through a range of interesting activities. These are planned to provide challenge and there is a good emphasis on investigative activity. Children are attentive in the introductions to lessons and most respond well to the teacher's questions.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

60. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good overall. They develop an awareness of the world around them through a range of topics. Design and technology skills are developed effectively through activities such as building models, using construction kits and the use of simple tools such as scissors. Children can manipulate simple shapes with confidence on the computer using the mouse and with minimum adult support. Staff support children in their application of skills with a good balance of child-initiated activity and adult intervention.

Creative development

61. Good opportunities are provided for imaginative and exploratory play in the nursery and progress is good. Musical activities occur regularly, and children join in with the singing of familiar songs with enjoyment and many can name several percussion instruments. They use their imagination well in role-play in the 'café'. Children can use a range of materials purposefully to create pictures using brushes and paint. Effective displays of completed work in the classrooms reflect the broad range of tasks undertaken during the year.

Physical development

62. There is a satisfactory range of activities to enable children to develop good co-ordination and body control. Most children display satisfactory control in running and jumping, with a good awareness of space. Activities such as painting, modelling, cutting and sticking effectively assist the children in developing their manipulative skills.
63. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The nursery children have regular access to the school hall for lessons and the playground for physical activity at break times and during fine weather. However, opportunities for outdoor play are restricted and there is insufficient provision for children to use tricycles and other large toys in a dedicated enclosed outdoor area as part of the planned curricular opportunities. The school has recognised this deficiency and has plans in hand to provide a suitable small outdoor play area with access through the recently installed double doors in the nursery. Reception children are taught a range of physical skills in the physical education lessons for Key Stage 1 pupils. Staff clearly differentiate activities to suit the age of these children.

Personal and social development

64. Provision is good in the nursery class and all children have positive attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic and persevere with their tasks. Most are attentive to adults and raise their hands to make a positive contribution to class discussions. Some children are over enthusiastic in these sessions and their ability to take turns within these sessions is underdeveloped. Children co-operate very effectively with others in practical activities

and in the role-play area.

65. The nursery nurse provides a very effective environment for child initiated learning in the nursery through a wide range of activities. Detailed records are maintained of the activities chosen by each child and every opportunity is taken to develop the children's personal and social skills in readiness for their transition into the Key Stage 1 class.
66. The partnership between the school, local playgroup and parents is very good. Jointly planned activities between the nursery class and local playgroup provide good opportunities for continuity of learning. Examples include a "Teddy Bears' Picnic" and the making and sharing of books. Parents are encouraged to work with their children at home; for example, reading books are taken home regularly and some help in the classrooms. Resources for children under five are good overall and are effectively organised within the classroom and teaching areas.

ENGLISH

67. The end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum statutory assessments for 1999 show attainment was very high and well above average. Standards are also very high when comparisons are made with schools with similar circumstances. This is an improvement on the last inspection, where standards were found to be average overall. These results are, however, based on a very small group of pupils and, therefore, these comparisons are unreliable. They do, however, reflect a trend of improvement over time and a raising of standards, especially in writing.
68. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment in speaking and listening is above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and for nine year olds. Pupils' attainment in reading is in line with that expected nationally for these groups of pupils. Attainment in writing is in line for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and above nationally expected levels of performance for pupils aged nine. All pupils make sound advances in learning in all aspects of English and progress in writing is particularly good for pupils in Key Stage 2. Pupils' attainment in literacy is good at both key stages due to the effective implementation of the National Strategy for Literacy
69. The pupils are developing good speaking and listening skills and standards are above average across the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils offer good ideas in literacy lessons and they contribute effectively to whole class sessions when work is reviewed. At aged nine they speak clearly and confidently in class discussions and in assemblies. Their listening skills are, however, unsatisfactory overall and several boys often interrupt while others are talking. This is consequently limiting the overall progress made by the class.
70. Progress in speaking and listening is, however, satisfactory in both key stages. Pupils in Year 1 speak confidently in literacy lessons as seen when they took part in a game to test the pupils' knowledge of the alphabet and the spelling of several common words on the board at the front of the class. Those in Year 3 are making sufficient advances in learning, but sometimes the dominance of older boys in class discussions limits the opportunities for these pupils to make meaningful contributions to the activities.
71. Attainment in reading is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and at age nine. Pupils in Year 2 know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and average and above average pupils read fluently. Phonic knowledge is good and many pupils have developed strategies for effectively reading unfamiliar words. Their knowledge of different authors is limited and their skills in being able to locate books in the new library are underdeveloped. At age nine, higher attaining and average pupils

identify a wider range of authors and state preferences for different types of books. The majority of pupils read fluently and with good understanding. They understand and use the term 'glossary' and the contents and index pages of books to find out information. Their ability to use the classification system in the library is, however, underdeveloped.

72. Progress in reading is satisfactory in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in acquiring the skills of letter and word recognition through the good teaching of phonics. The Year 1 pupils have built on the good work undertaken in the nursery and reception and now know many sounds, letters and simple words. Most Year 2 pupils recognise simple word patterns and can identify new ones. Year 3 pupils are developing the higher order reading skills and can locate words by scanning. Higher attaining and average pupils read confidently and with expression, breaking down words into syllables and self-correcting any mistakes they make.
73. Attainment in writing is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and above at age nine. Attention is paid to developing sentence construction and spelling during the Literacy Hour and in writing linked to other subject areas, such as science and history. By the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils begin sentences with capital letters and they are beginning to use question marks in their writing. Most pupils can write in a neat cursive style in their handwriting books. The higher attaining pupils are beginning to use a pen and most can use a pencil effectively. The structured spelling programme is effective and simple words are spelt correctly. At age nine, pupils know many subject-specific words, such as simile and synonym. They understand the functions of nouns, verbs and adjectives, identifying them correctly within printed text. Most have a good vocabulary and can suggest good examples of adjectives to include in their writing.
74. Progress in writing is good overall due to good teaching in Key Stage 2 and effective implementation of the literacy strategy. It is sound throughout Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Pupils' work and displays around the school show that they enjoy the challenge of writing for many purposes, including poetry. Handwriting is well developed in Key Stage 2 and all pupils are using a neat cursive style in handwriting and exercise books. Most pupils in Year 3 are writing reasonably complex sentences that are appropriately punctuated. Higher attaining pupils are able to use more complex punctuation such as inverted commas; for example in using direct speech in the re-telling of the Christmas story. Progress in Key Stage 1 is enhanced by the support of the learning support assistant who helps raise the level of pupils' work, and especially that of pupils with special educational needs. In Key Stage 2 the breadth of the curriculum, especially in writing, has a positive impact on progress.
75. The pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall in this subject but individual education plans do not identify pupils' needs with sufficient precision and provision is not evaluated effectively. Throughout the school, other subjects make a good contribution to the English curriculum and have a positive impact on the progress in English.
76. Pupils respond well in lessons and their attitudes are good. Many pupils listen attentively, tackle work promptly and maintain their concentration but a small minority dominate class discussions in Key Stage 2, but respond well to teachers when this behaviour is consistently challenged. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are eager to answer questions and work well together in small groups, as seen when three girls co-operated effectively to draft a poem on the computer as part of their literacy lesson.
77. Teaching is good across the school. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and implement the Literacy Hour well. Teachers plan carefully. There are clear learning objectives and activities are clearly matched to the needs of pupils of differing abilities,

including those with special needs. Challenging tasks are set for higher attaining pupils, especially in Key Stage 2. Subject specific language is used confidently and teachers use time well to maintain good pace to the lessons. A strong feature of lessons is the use of visual aids and resources. For example, in the Key Stage 1 the teacher used magnetic letters effectively to illustrate teaching points and develop pupils' spelling. Ongoing assessment of pupils' progress is good and teachers use the information appropriately to plan for the next stages of learning. Marking is used well to inform pupils of what they should do to improve.

78. The curriculum is satisfactory and is supported by appropriate guidance for staff. Leadership is satisfactory and the co-ordinator has a clear view of what is to be further improved. Teaching and learning has been monitored within the school and the literacy governor has made observations of lessons demonstrating satisfactory monitoring by governors.
79. Good assessment and record keeping arrangements are in place. Reading records are updated regularly and the reading record book provides a useful link between home and school. There is a detailed portfolio of examples of pupils' work but it currently contains few recent examples of pupils' work.
80. The quality and range of resources are good. The new library is attractively laid out but is currently underused for individual research. Many books are new and attractively displayed and an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Visiting authors and "book weeks" enhance the English curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

81. In 1999, the results of National Curriculum Tests at the age of seven indicated that attainment was well above the national average and broadly in line with the average for similar schools. Results over the past four years have fluctuated, so no discernible trends are apparent. Girls perform a little better than boys than is found nationally. However, no significant differences in the way that the school treats the genders to give unfair advantages were found. Variations in results and differences between these and inspection findings are not necessarily significant because of the very small cohort sizes. Inspection findings indicate that standards in mathematics in Year 2 and by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4 are above the national average. This is an improvement from the last inspection when attainment was 'generally commensurate with national averages'.
82. Attainment in the school is better than normally expected in all areas of mathematics. In Year 2 pupils usually have a good understanding of place value up to 100. They use their knowledge well to mentally calculate money sums up to 100p=£1. They confidently name shapes and measure accurately, using both standard and non-standard units. Pupils in Year 4 are on course to exceed what is expected nationally by the time they leave the school. Nearly all pupils have a good understanding of their multiplication tables. Most are able to use these to solve number problems mentally. Nearly all pupils are able to collect information to present tables and charts, but they are less secure in interpreting the information. Pupils at both key stages are attaining good standards in numeracy. The school has made a good start to the National Numeracy Strategy, and opportunities are taken to develop pupils' skills across the curriculum; for example, counting groups of pupils in physical education lessons and measuring in design and technology. For their ages, pupils have a good sense of the relative sizes of numbers and they understand the need for accurate measurements.

83. Pupils make sound progress overall across Key Stage 1. In the class for seven to nine year olds, learning speeds up and progress is good. This relates closely to the quality of teaching. Progress in lessons in Key Stage 1 varies from good to unsatisfactory. It is better where the teacher engages the interest of pupils from the beginning of the lesson and she makes her expectations clear to them. Progress becomes unsatisfactory when the teacher allows pupils to call out and tasks are not closely matched to pupils' prior attainment. In the Key Stage 2 class, pupils thrive on teachers' careful and thorough approaches that are based on probing questions. It challenges pupils at an appropriate level for their present knowledge whilst it allows the teachers to assess whether understanding is sufficiently well developed for them to move on. Tasks are generally well chosen to match the needs of different groups within the Key Stage 2 class, but this is not always the case at Key Stage 1. Also pupils with special educational needs sometimes barely make satisfactory progress because their individual education plans are not sufficiently precise and measurable, thus tasks are not always matched to their prior attainment.
84. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics in Key Stage 1 vary from good to unsatisfactory. They often work steadily and use equipment well, looking after it sensibly. In some lessons they call out and do not listen to their teacher or their classmates' answers. This means that time is lost from their tasks. Pupils' pride in their work is also variable, there are many examples of untidy presentation. Behaviour in lessons also follows a similar variable pattern.
85. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics in Key Stage 2 are good, for some it is their favourite subject. Occasionally older boys try to dominate activities, but respond well to their teachers' strategies. Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils persevere to complete tasks to a good standard. They work well in groups when not directly supervised by staff. They enjoy talking about their work and confidently explain how they calculate their results.
86. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. It is better when the teacher has clear expectations of what she wants pupils to learn and makes a prompt start to the lesson. Lessons have clear learning objectives but teaching becomes unsatisfactory when pupils are not managed well and their behaviour becomes challenging. This is because activities are always fully matched to the ability of the pupils. Teachers' marking does not always ensure that pupils know what to do to improve their work and at times tasks are not completed.
87. In Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is good. Lessons have precise learning objectives firmly based on the National Numeracy Strategy. Sometimes they are shared with pupils so that they know what they are expected to learn. The pace of these lessons is brisk and, with the well timed activities, they hold pupils' enthusiasm and ensure they make good progress. Marking of pupils' work aids learning because it often indicates how they can improve.
88. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership for the development of mathematics. Opportunities for monitoring the teaching and curriculum across the school are planned for this term. Investigative approaches have been encouraged in mathematics and resources have been improved. The governor for numeracy gives enthusiastic support and she has begun to monitor the development of the National Numeracy Strategy.

SCIENCE

89. Standards in science are above those usually expected in Year 2 and Year 4. At the time of the last report, standards in Year 2 were at or slightly above the national average and in Year 4 pupils were reported to be 'achieving at a range of levels'. In the 1999 statutory teacher assessments for seven year olds attainment were very high compared to the national average and above the average of similar schools. Differences with inspection findings are not necessarily significant because of the very small cohorts of pupils.
90. The quality of teaching in science in both key stages is satisfactory. Standards are above average because teachers have clear learning intentions, so the pupils know what they are to do. There is an appropriate balance between instructions and questioning at the start of lessons. Teachers give clear explanations based on their knowledge of the subject, which challenge, check and develop pupils' understanding. Therefore, learning is good. By the time they are seven years old, the proportion of pupils who understand that plants undergo changes as they grow from seed to bud to flower and then back to seed pod is greater than is usually found. They use their measuring skills to check the rate of growth. Nearly all pupils know the names of the main parts of flowering plants. Pupils have a good understanding of science in everyday life. For example, they recognise the dangers of touching electrical switches with wet hands. Teachers' marking is an acknowledgement that pupils have completed work, but the pupils are not often encouraged to improve, by helpful comments for example.
91. Pupils in Year 4 are on course to achieve standards above those normally expected, by the time they leave the school. They have a good knowledge of the human skeleton and compare their bone structures with those of other living creatures. They know that diet affects their health. Marking of pupils' work is better at Key Stage 2, where it shows what pupils need to do to improve, which helps pupils to learn better.
92. From the above average levels of attainment with which they enter Key Stage 1, nearly all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress across both key stages. A strength of the school is the way pupils' scientific knowledge is enhanced by their investigations. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 used their prediction skills and developed a good understanding of a fair test when they experimented with magnetic and non-magnetic materials. There are no significant differences between the progress of boys and girls.
93. In both key stages pupils' attitudes to their learning are satisfactory. They show interest in their lessons and are especially engaged when the teachers plan for them to carry out practical tasks. The teachers' relationships and class control are good which ensures that pupils behave well in lessons, and little time is lost in correcting silliness and inattention. There are good relationships between pupils. They share resources fairly and co-operate well when working in small groups. This enables them to learn well. Presentation levels at Key Stage 1 are variable, some is good but much is untidy. At Key Stage 2 pupils take a pride in their finished work, and the teachers encourage them to use a good variety of ways of presenting their findings from experiments.
94. The recently designated science co-ordinator has sound ideas for its future development. There is an awareness that an analysis of assessments in science identifying weaknesses needs to be translated into identifying targets for individual pupils to show their strengths and areas for development.

ART

95. At the time of the last inspection, standards in art were found to be in line with national expectations. Pupils still achieve standards typical for their age. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress across both key stages. It was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection, judgements are based on discussions with teachers and pupils, an analysis of pupils' past work and displays.
96. Many Year 1 pupils draw well with good levels of detail and they show confidence in the use of materials. In Year 2, pupils experiment successfully with tone in their paintings. They were particularly successful with their paintings after a visit to the National Gallery and studying Rousseau's painting, 'Surprise'. In Years 3 and 4, pupils show good levels of detail in their close observational drawings and in painting pictures using tints and shades of blue and green.
97. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning. They take a pride in their work and enjoy showing their sketch books to visitors, discussing their achievements and are equally proud of those of their classmates. For many pupils art is their favourite subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. No lessons were seen during the inspection. Judgements are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, observation of some teaching, a review of curriculum planning and discussion with staff and pupils.
99. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in this subject in both key stages. Standards were judged to be good in the previous inspection. A change in staffing has resulted in a loss of subject expertise within the school. The newly appointed co-ordinator has gained considerable confidence in the subject by attending specific training with the result that improvements have recently been made to the storage of tools and equipment. Photographic evidence indicates that pupils enjoy the practical nature of the subject. The subject is planned as units through a topic web approach, taking due account of the National Curriculum programmes of study. A good example of this is the unit of work that Key Stage 1 pupils completed during the autumn term on food. Good links were established with a local pizza restaurant that resulted in a trip to the kitchens and close observation of making pizzas.
100. Resources are satisfactory and the curriculum is enhanced through work on textiles and structures and by links to other subjects such as science.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

101. It was only possible to see one lesson in history during the inspection. Evidence from teachers' planning, photographs, analysis of pupils' past work and discussions with staff and pupils indicates that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Years 2 and 4 achieve standards normally expected of pupils of similar ages. No judgement was given at the time of the last inspection about standards in history and geography.
102. In Key Stage 1, pupils draw maps of their route from home to school and know their addresses. As they move through Key Stage 2 pupils develop their mapping skills through drawing and the identification of countries they will be studying. They use key symbols to identify features on their maps. Pupils are developing a good knowledge of their locality across both key stages through walks around their own village and visitors to

the school. Older pupils have a more limited knowledge of distant places because of the limited amount of time devoted to this area of geography.

103. In history pupils recognise the difference between past and present. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have a good knowledge of famous people and their lives. Their understanding of chronology is promoted through arranging photographs about Florence Nightingale. They are also developing knowledge of how the past is represented. In Key Stage 2 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of life in Victorian times. They are able to compare lives of children at the time with their own.
104. Pupils' attitudes towards learning are satisfactory. They enjoy talking about their work. Behaviour in the one lesson observed was just satisfactory. Pupils were enthusiastic about looking at their photographs. However, they often called out and became too noisy, thus interrupting the work of others. This was because the teacher did not make her expectations clear. Pupils' pride in their completed work across both key stages is unsatisfactory. Work is often untidy, there are many crossings out and maps are carelessly drawn.
105. The school is in the process of updating its curriculum for history and geography, based on nationally recommended policies. Opportunities are missed to develop literacy and numeracy skills.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

106. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. Judgements are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, observation of some teaching, a review of curriculum planning and discussions with staff and pupils. Attainment in information technology at the end of both key stages is in line with national expectations. The provision for information technology in the school is satisfactory and pupils are making sound progress in a range of skills. Standards have been maintained and built on since the last inspection. The installation of a dedicated computer area adjacent to the library has been a positive move to further enhance pupils' skills and improve the quality of learning overall.
107. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 use a simple word processor to type simple text as part of their literacy work. Higher attaining pupils can draft simple poems on the computer to obtain a finished printed result. Their knowledge of the keyboard is appropriate for pupils of similar age. At age nine, pupils use the correct terminology and their competence in a range of information technology skills is sound. Pupils show average attainment in the way they manipulate text and graphics to produce attractive and informative work in their writing. They can talk about using a simple floor robot and they explain what they are doing and can demonstrate their explanations at the computer competently.
108. Progress is satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils have regular computer experience in the classroom, and by the age of nine most pupils have developed confidence in using the mouse to control operations on the screen and can produce work in a variety of formats. These pupils have developed sufficient skill to enable them to save and retrieve their own work from the hard drive. They display confidence in being able to log on to the programs that they are going to use. Pupils with special educational needs attain skills appropriately and are making satisfactory progress.
109. Pupils' response to information technology is good. They are enthusiastic and show enjoyment while they are working. Pupils are good at explaining what they are doing and they are eager to show their results to others. They work well in pairs when at the computer by sharing and discussing the tasks. Pupils are also good at helping one another when difficulties arise. They are showing a developing independence and

responsibility for their own learning and ask the teacher for help only after trying to solve any problems themselves.

110. Very little direct teaching was observed during the inspection, therefore no overall judgement can be made. In the lessons seen, teachers have confidence and competence to demonstrate skills and solve problems. Their knowledge of the subject is satisfactory and they are enthusiastic in what they do. Teachers at both key stages make satisfactory use of time and resources for pupils to use computers and good opportunities are provided for older pupils to use the computers at lunchtimes to complete their work. In the one lesson observed at Key Stage 2, the teacher introduced the concept of sending an e-mail. Opportunities were missed to demonstrate the potential of sending a message on the computer. The pupils, however, completed a message in their books ready for sending it in the following lesson.
111. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. All areas of the curriculum are addressed, and pupils are given sufficient experience in control technology, both in school and at a residential computer centre. There is a satisfactory policy and scheme of work to guide weekly planning although it is in need of review. Planning is appropriate for the ages of the pupils but there is no clear progression in the development of important skills across the school. Procedures for assessing the progress of pupils are underdeveloped. Pupils in Key Stage 2, however, record the units of work that they have completed in a class log book.
112. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory but the monitoring of standards is at an early stage of development. Resources are good overall but some computers are old and in need of renewal. This has been recognised by the school which is in the process of seeking the best value for money option for the future. The recent connection with the Internet is having a positive effect on the overall curriculum at Key Stage 2.

MUSIC

113. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. Judgements are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, observation of some teaching and discussions with staff and pupils. Progress is satisfactory overall and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils at both key stages can sing songs clearly in assemblies. Singing is satisfactory and the maintenance of rhythm and pitch is appropriate when singing high and low notes. Satisfactory opportunities are provided in assemblies for pupils to listen to music. In Key Stage 2 pupils are making better progress. This is particularly so in composition where music recorded on a tape shows that pupils can play a range of pitched and non-pitched percussion instruments effectively. These pupils can also effectively record these compositions as a simple graphic score. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is at least satisfactory.
114. The response of pupils to music is good. Pupils enjoy making music and they are attentive in lessons and singing practices. They persevere with their singing and playing of instruments. Pupils throughout the school enjoy singing hymns and songs in assemblies.
115. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, therefore no overall judgement can be made on the standard of teaching. In the one lesson seen on using a computer program to compose music, planning was satisfactory. Due to technical problems with the equipment, the lesson was not as successful as it could have been, but it was brought to a satisfactory conclusion and pupils' behaviour was managed well.

116. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. There is an appropriate policy statement providing useful guidance to staff and the allocation of teaching time is satisfactory. Management and co-ordination of the subject are satisfactory and the quality of resources is good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. Standards in physical education are in line with those normally expected. This is a similar picture to that reported at the last inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress across both key stages. Swimming is a strength as many pupils achieve the standards expected in Year 6, before they leave the school at the end of Year 4.
118. Pupils respond quickly to their teachers' instructions. They work safely as individuals, in pairs and small groups. Pupils in Year 1 show confidence and satisfactory levels of control when running, jumping and balancing on the floor and on apparatus. In Year 2, pupils move in a variety of ways. They balance, swing and turn, but are less confident when performing sequences and patterns of movements. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 plan and carry out activities in dance with sound levels of control. They are successfully learning traditional dances from the British Isles. Pupils make inconsistent progress across both key stages in commenting on their own performances and making simple judgements on those of classmates because teachers do not give sufficient opportunities for this.
119. Pupils' attitudes to their learning of physical education are satisfactory overall, but become unsatisfactory at times in Key Stage 2. Behaviour shows the same variation patterns. In Key Stage 2 boys dominated the lesson where attitudes were unsatisfactory, and disrupted the learning of others. At their best pupils listen carefully to their teachers to follow instructions. They wear appropriate clothing and are mindful of health and safety issues.
120. The quality of teaching in physical education varies from satisfactory to unsatisfactory. Teachers have a sound understanding of the requirements for physical education. However, pupils are not always given opportunities to make judgements in their performance or that of classmates and this limits the progress they can make in lessons. This also means opportunities are lost for pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills. The pace is satisfactory in most lessons, but at times is not sufficiently brisk for pupils to become out of breath and keep their interest. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils. They use warm up activities well but do not use subject specific vocabulary consistently to enhance pupils' skills.