

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **COXLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Coxley, Wells

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123641

Headteacher: Miss Karen Holmes

Reporting inspector: Barbara Crane  
21227

Dates of inspection: 2 – 4 July 2001

Inspection number: 192327

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Harters Hill Lane  
Coxley  
Wells  
Somerset

Postcode: BA5 1RD

Telephone number: 01749 672719

Fax number: 01749 679582

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Ann Martin

Date of previous inspection: 24 February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21227	Mrs Barbara Crane	Registered inspector	English, art and design, history and geography, music, religious education, foundation stage.	The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
	Mrs Rosie Burgess	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
	Mr Bamber Loizou	Team inspector	Mathematics, science, design and technology, information and communication technology, physical education, special educational needs, equal opportunities.	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Sandfield Educational Consultants Ltd  
16 Wychwood Drive  
Trowell Park  
Nottingham  
NG93RB

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House

33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

# REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>22</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a very small school, with thirty-nine boys and girls, aged between four and eleven. Almost a third of the school's population changes each year. There is one class for the Reception and infant pupils and another for the junior aged pupils. All of the pupils are white and speak English as their first language. Fifteen per cent of the pupils come from Traveller families. Forty-one per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is well above average. One child has a Statement of Special Educational Need. A very small number of pupils, well below the national average, are entitled to free school meals but this varies greatly from year to year. The school's staffing has been very unstable over recent years. The Year 2 pupils, for example, have so far been taught by five teachers, and there were two acting headteachers prior to the present headteacher's appointment last year. The infant teacher started at the school in January of this year. The headteacher takes the junior class for three and a half days each week. There is a broad range of attainment but, overall, when they start the school, the pupils' attainment is below average.

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

This is a good school and the pupils achieve well to reach average standards by the time they leave. The teaching is good, overall, and the more able pupils in the juniors achieve very well. The school helps pupils to become very confident and responsible and there is a good climate for learning. The leadership and management of the school are very good and all of the staff are committed to improvement. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The pupils achieve well to reach average standards in reading, mathematics and science and the more able pupils are very well catered for in the juniors.
- The teaching for the youngest pupils and in the junior class is good.
- The pupils have very positive attitudes towards learning, behave very well and their relationships are excellent.
- The school provides very effectively for the pupils' personal development and there is a very good range of activities for them outside lessons.
- The leadership and management of the school are very good and directed at raising standards.
- The parents have a high level of confidence in the school and provide good support for their children's learning through the effective partnership with the school.

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

- Standards in writing should be higher.
- There are occasions when the more able pupils in the infants could achieve more.
- The pupils' attendance is too low.

*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 a good rate of improvement since the school was inspected in 1997. Standards and teaching have improved. The school has addressed all of the issues from the previous inspection. Standards are now satisfactory in information and communication technology and design and technology. The curriculum for mathematics, science and physical education is better. The school's provision for the youngest children has improved. There has been very good improvement in the

leadership and management of the school and the way in which a good standard of behaviour is promoted. The school is in a good position to bring about further improvements.



## STANDARDS \*

A very small number of pupils, typically four or five, take the tests for seven and eleven year olds each year. The school's results indicate wide swings in performance over the last three years; these reflect the varying nature of the small cohorts. The trend over the last five years, however, has kept pace with the national improvement in standards. About a third of the school population changes each year and so it is not helpful to compare the results at age seven and eleven. The number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals varies greatly from year to year and so comparisons with schools in similar circumstances is unreliable. In the tests and assessments for seven year olds in 2000, fewer pupils achieved the higher level 3 in reading, writing, mathematics or science than in most schools. The results of the tests for eleven year olds in 2000 were better than in the previous two years and were above average in English and average in mathematics and science. The school sets challenging targets and reviews these as children join or leave the school. It met its targets last year and is on track again this year.

The children in the Reception year make good progress and reach the standards expected for their ages in all of the areas of learning by the time they start Year 1. On the basis of the work seen now, seven year olds are attaining average standards in reading, mathematics and science. The pupils are making satisfactory progress, overall, and have made good progress over the last two terms. The more able infant pupils, however, could be achieving more. All of the Year 1 and 2 pupils have gaps in some basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics and, although the school has worked hard to identify and address these in the past two terms, the more able pupils are still underachieving. The oldest pupils in the school are attaining average standards in reading, mathematics and science. This represents good achievement for these pupils and the more able pupils are making good progress. Both the infant and the junior pupils could be doing better in writing. The standard of their work is below average; it is marred by careless mistakes in spelling and punctuation, mainly because the pupils do not check their work or receive guidance on how to improve it through the teachers' marking. In all other subjects, the pupils are making at least satisfactory progress and reaching the standards expected for their ages. The pupils with special educational needs, accounting for a high proportion of the school, make good progress because the work is closely planned to meet their needs. Pupils from Traveller families make similar progress to their peers.

\* The table showing the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests is omitted as a small number of pupils took the tests in 2000.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils enjoy the work and are eager to please the teachers. They concentrate very well in lessons and are keen to improve.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The pupils show a strong sense of self-discipline. They understand the school's rules and keep to them.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. The pupils develop a high level of confidence and display a very good level of maturity. They willingly take responsibility.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The rate of absence is higher than in most schools, mainly due to family holidays taken during term time.

The pupils take full advantage of what the school has to offer and take pride in being part of the school community. They show a very mature respect for others' feelings and values. Pupils from all types of background and all ages relate very well to each other. They express their ideas and feelings openly because they know that their views will be

respected and taken into account. The pupils are encouraged to use their initiative and accept support from others.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

All of the lessons seen were satisfactory or better. Sixty-nine per cent of the lessons were good or better and fifteen per cent were very good. There is good teaching in both classes and some very good teaching in the juniors. Teaching for children in the Reception year is good. The teaching of mathematics and English is satisfactory in the infant class. Teaching is very good in mathematics and good in English in the junior class. The basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught well. The support for pupils with special educational needs and those from Traveller families is effective.

The strengths in teaching and learning are: high expectations of behaviour, excellent relationships and very good management of pupils in both classes so that pupils learn in a calm, well-ordered atmosphere; good planning to meet the needs of the Reception children of all abilities; good use of time, support staff and resources in both classes so that pupils are interested and involved in practical activities; very good subject knowledge in the junior class which leads to high expectations of what the pupils will achieve. The weaknesses in teaching are: the teachers do not sufficiently encourage the pupils to check through their writing to correct careless mistakes or point out what needs to improve when they mark the pupils' writing; the expectations of what the more able infant pupils can achieve are sometimes too low and there are some occasions when the work is too easy for them.

The teachers work well together as a team and are open to suggestions about how to improve their teaching. The learning by the oldest pupils in the infants shows a rapid improvement over the last two terms. The teacher has worked hard to identify the gaps in the Year 2 pupils' learning and address the weaknesses in basic skills. This has partly been responsible for the lack of focus on the needs of the more able pupils, as the teacher has concentrated her efforts on bringing pupils' attainment up to an average level.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the youngest children and the juniors is good. The needs of the different abilities are well catered for in these age groups. There are times when the curriculum is not sufficiently adapted for the more able infant pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The pupils' needs are quickly identified and the teachers' good planning to meet the pupils' needs ensures that good progress is made.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school provides plenty of opportunities for the pupils to think about how they feel, understand what is right and wrong and reflect on how their actions affect others. The pupils are encouraged to work on problems together and offer help to others in lessons. They have good opportunities to learn about

development	their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A good level of care is provided. The school knows the pupils well and provides good support and guidance.

The school offers a lively curriculum that ensures that the pupils are interested in learning. Good links are made in lessons so that pupils use the knowledge gained in one subject well in others. A very good range of activities outside lessons supports the pupils' personal and social development. The school has established a very good partnership with parents and provides them with good information about its work and their child's progress.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides a strong lead in the school's efforts to raise standards and she sets a very good example in her teaching. All of the staff work well as a team and they understand the part they play in taking the school forward.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors fulfil all of their responsibilities efficiently and work hard to support the school's planning for improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school looks closely at its performance, identifies strengths and weaknesses and plans well to overcome any shortcomings. The school has identified the weaknesses in writing and occasional lack of challenge for the more able pupils in the infants, through the monitoring of teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school's priorities for improvement are supported by careful financial planning and the school seeks the best value in its expenditure.

The headteacher has quickly established a climate in which the review of teaching and learning is part of the school's everyday work. The staff share their expertise willingly. Extra training, to fill gaps in knowledge or expertise, is planned swiftly when weaknesses are identified. For example, further training in planning to meet the needs of different abilities in mixed age classes is in hand. The staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and they make good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good and children become more mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard.</li> <li>• Staff are approachable.</li> <li>• The school keeps them well informed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A small number of parents do not feel that their children get the right amount of homework, or that the school works closely with them.</li> </ul>

about their child's progress.

- The school is well led and managed.

The parents express very strong support for the school. They feel that it has improved greatly since the previous inspection. The inspection findings support all of the parents' positive views, but not their concerns. On the evidence from the inspection, homework is well organised and appropriate for the pupils' ages and the school involves parents closely in all aspects of its work.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

The school's results:

1. A very small number of pupils, typically four or five, take the tests for seven and eleven year olds each year. The school's results indicate wide swings in performance over the last three years; these reflect the varying nature of the small cohorts. The trend over the last five years, however, has kept pace with the national improvement in standards. About a third of the school population changes each year and so it is not helpful to compare the results at age seven and eleven. The number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals varies greatly from year to year and is currently very low, but has been above average in the last two years and so comparisons with schools in similar circumstances is unreliable.
2. In the tests and assessments for seven year olds in 2000, fewer pupils achieved the higher level 3 in reading, writing, mathematics or science than in most schools. The results of the tests for eleven year olds in 2000 were better than in the previous two years and were above average in English and average in mathematics and science. The school sets challenging targets and reviews these as children join or leave the school. It met its targets last year and is on track again this year.

The pupils' achievements:

3. Standards have improved since the previous inspection. In English, pupils' reading has improved and the pupils now use good expression when they read. Their handwriting has improved but standards in spelling and punctuation are still too low. In mathematics, the pupils' ability to apply their knowledge of numbers and methods of calculation to solve problems has improved. Standards in design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT) have improved.
4. The children in the Reception year make good progress and reach the standards expected for their ages in all of the areas of learning by the time they start Year 1. These children learn at a good rate because the work is carefully planned to meet the needs of all abilities. The clear guidelines for behaviour and sensible routines promote the children's independence and help them to concentrate and develop good attitudes to work. They make good progress in learning the basic skills in numeracy and literacy and extending their understanding of the world.
5. On the basis of the work seen now, seven year olds are attaining average standards in reading, mathematics and science. The pupils are making satisfactory progress, overall, and most have made good progress over the last two terms. The more able infant pupils, however, could be achieving more. All of the Year 1 and 2 pupils have gaps in some basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics and although the school has worked hard to identify and address these in the past

two terms, the more able pupils are still underachieving because some of the work lacks challenge for them.

6. The oldest pupils in the school are attaining average standards in reading, mathematics and science. This represents good achievement for these pupils and the more able pupils are making good progress. The pupils read from a wide range of books and show a good understanding of what they read. They are quick to find out information for themselves from reference books. Both the infant and the junior pupils could be doing better in writing. The standard of their work is below average; it is marred by careless mistakes in spelling and punctuation, mainly because the pupils do not check their work or receive guidance on how to improve it through the teachers' marking. In all other subjects, the pupils are making at least satisfactory progress and reaching the standards expected for their ages. The older pupils express themselves fully and willingly; the more able pupils use a very good vocabulary. All of the pupils listen carefully to the teacher and each other.
7. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress, particularly in reading and mathematics, as a result of the teachers' good planning to meet their needs. The pupils from Traveller families make similar progress to their peers because of the good support they receive. There is no difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
8. In all other subjects of the curriculum, the pupils' work reaches the standard expected for their age. There is some good work in art by the junior pupils, who explore media very effectively to create individual and well composed pieces in painting and collage. The pupils use ICT to support their learning in several subjects, for example, they create graphs and charts in mathematics. They word process work competently, use a program to compose music, find information on the Internet and use a drawing program in art.

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

9. The school has improved the quality of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development since the last inspection. Pupils from different backgrounds and abilities mix well together and the school is a welcoming place that values individuality.
10. The pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They enjoy school and this is reflected in the way that they are attentive in lessons and eager to please the teachers. They persevere with their work and show a high level of interest. They cooperate well with others when working in groups or with a partner. For example, in a junior mathematics lesson, the pupils worked well in their groups, cooperating and helping each other when calculating time using world time charts. The pupils are very keen to answer questions during class discussions. In an infant science lesson, for instance, they were eager to answer a variety of questions about animals and plants to sort out differences and similarities between living and non-living things in the natural world. The pupils concentrate well in lessons and at other times. At break-times and during extra-curricular clubs, the pupils work together happily, encouraging and supporting others. During the rehearsal for the end of term dramatic production, for example, both boys and girls performed and sang with genuine enjoyment and involvement. When asked to suggest how the performers could improve their use of gesture and movements, the pupils were full of ideas and these were gratefully accepted by those who were performing the scene.
11. The pupils show very good levels of interest and enthusiasm in the many extra-curricular activities and school trips. The children in the Reception year are developing positive habits in their learning. For example, they get changed quickly and quietly to take part in physical education session outdoors. They organise their own resources in lessons and then tidy away with care and efficiency.

12. The pupils' behaviour is very good. This makes a considerable contribution to pupils' progress and to the effectiveness of the teaching. The school is a friendly, happy and orderly community. Pupils behave sensibly in classrooms and around the school. Behaviour in assemblies and at playtimes is also very good. Lunchtime is a very pleasant social occasion where pupils mix very well together and enjoy each other's company. All the pupils are courteous and show respect for staff and visiting adults. They are very well mannered towards visitors and enjoy being asked about their school. The staff take the time to explain why certain conduct is unacceptable, giving clear messages about their high expectations. Through this, pupils have a good and clear understanding of the impact of their actions on others. There were no exclusions in the last school year.
13. Relationships are excellent. The pupils value each other's contributions and achievements in lessons. A good example of this was seen when a group of pupils worked in the new computer area. They were busy working in groups to compose tunes using a new music program. They demonstrated genuine pleasure when other pupils successfully played back their compositions to the rest of the group. The pupils also show good levels of respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. They patiently listen to others during class discussions. Older pupils look after the younger ones and are sensitive to their feelings. This was demonstrated when a very young pupil was being comforted by others after losing a card from a game and an older boy offered to replace it from his collection.
14. The pupils' personal development is excellent; they become more mature and self-sufficient. The staff are very good at encouraging the pupils to show independence and individuality, for example, the junior pupils have produced a delightful display of art work showing every pupils' initials in calligraphic styles. The pupils are able to select their own learning resources independently in lessons. They show initiative and independence and work without fuss or direct intervention by adults. For example, the junior pupils' science work shows that they plan, conduct and record investigations. During reading sessions they can choose from a range of fiction books and persevere with their reading showing enjoyment and understanding of the text. Pupils of all ages accept responsibilities very well and are quick to see what needs doing and readily offer help.
15. Attendance is well below the average for primary schools and this is unsatisfactory. Overall the levels of attendance have fallen over the past three years, due mainly to the number of sessions missed because parents take their children out of school during term time for family holidays. However the number of unauthorised absences has fallen, and is now below the national average. A quarter of the children achieved good records, attending over 95% of the sessions during the current school year. Pupils are punctual and the school day and lessons start promptly.

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

16. The teachers have worked together for only a short time but they work very well as a team and are committed to improving their practice by analysing what works well and what needs to improve in teaching and learning. All of the lessons seen during the inspection were at least satisfactory and 69 per cent were good or better. Fifteen per cent of the lessons were very good. There is good teaching in both classes and some very good teaching in the juniors.
17. The teachers are enthusiastic and share their expertise willingly. They know the pupils very well as individuals and have excellent relationships with them. There is a clear expectation that the pupils will work hard and behave well. The atmosphere in

classrooms is lively and the work is interesting and so the pupils enjoy lessons and are keen to learn and please the teachers. This was evident in a good lesson in the infant class, when the pupils were creating breakfasts for fictional characters from different cultures. The teacher's good use of resources resulted in a busy and productive atmosphere where pupils made good gains in their learning and used their initiative to decide which were the most appropriate foods to include.

18. Teaching for children in the Reception year is good. The teacher has a good understanding of what these children need to develop socially and emotionally and there is good teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The needs of children of different abilities are well met in the Reception year and the activities that are available for the children to choose are carefully structured so that they use the skills they have learned. For example, following work on farms in different parts of the world, a group of children chose to work with toy figures, farm animals and other small world resources and played out a scene of a farmer gathering and transporting crops. Their conversation during their play closely reflected that used in the introductory session by the teacher.
19. The teaching of mathematics and English is satisfactory for the infant pupils and the learning by the oldest pupils in the infants shows a rapid improvement over the last two terms. The infant teacher has organised the routines for reading very effectively and involves the parents very well in their children's learning through the use of the home and school diary. The teacher has worked hard to identify the gaps that these pupils have in knowledge and basic skills and has planned work effectively to remedy shortcomings in their previous learning in reading, writing and mathematics. This has partly been responsible for the lack of focus on the needs of the more able pupils, as the teacher has concentrated her efforts on bringing pupils' attainment up to an average level. Teaching is very good in mathematics and good in English in the junior class. The basic skills in numeracy and in most aspects of literacy and are taught well and the needs of the more able pupils are met. In a very good mathematics lesson, for example, the teacher had carefully planned activities at several different levels that built upon the introductory session on time. As a result of the very good planning, the more able pupils made very good progress in learning about world time zones, calculating the time it would take to reach holiday destinations and what time it would be in the country when they arrived.
20. Overall, the strengths in teaching and learning are:
  - high expectations of behaviour, excellent relationships and very good management of pupils in both classes so that pupils learn in a calm, well-ordered atmosphere;
  - good planning to meet the needs of the Reception children of all abilities;
  - good use of time, support staff and resources in both classes so that pupils are interested and involved in practical activities;
  - very good subject knowledge in the junior class which leads to high expectations of what the pupils will achieve.
21. Overall, the weaknesses in teaching are:
  - the teachers do not sufficiently encourage the pupils to check through their writing to correct careless mistakes or point out what needs to improve when they mark the pupils' writing;
  - the expectations of what the more able infant pupils can achieve are sometimes too low and there are some occasions when the work is too easy for them in writing, mathematics and science.

22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is consistently good. As a result the pupils achieve well and make good progress. The teachers and classroom assistants provide effective additional support in lessons and are mindful of the targets in pupils' individual education plans. These are precise and measurable and provide a good focus for the work. Teachers ask questions so that all the pupils can succeed and participate in class discussions. The support for pupils from Traveller families is well planned and enables these pupils to make similar progress to their peers.

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

23. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection and now provides a broad, balanced and well-planned curriculum, which fully meets statutory requirements. The curriculum is socially inclusive and all pupils have equality of access and opportunity. The progress of pupils of all ages is effectively promoted resulting in their good achievement in most aspects of their work. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is good because the planning meets their needs in all of the areas of learning for children this age. However, the work provided for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 is not always as closely matched to the abilities of the more able pupils and so their progress is slower.
24. Both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented although more could be done to develop more consistency across the school in writing, particularly spelling and punctuation. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects of the curriculum and there is an appropriate range of activities for children in the Reception year who work with Years 1 and Year 2 pupils. The physical education curriculum is affected by the lack of suitable indoor facilities for gymnastics but there is a good range of outdoor work using the good facilities which include the school's field and outdoor climbing apparatus. Planning for all subjects is good and includes long term, medium term and weekly plans. The school makes good use of teaching time to deliver foundation subjects and religious education with learning experiences that are of good quality.
25. There is good provision for the pupils to learn about how to keep safe and healthy. Health education and sex education, including attention to the dangers and effects of drug abuse are planned for as part of the school's science and health education programme. The pupils are provided with good opportunities in class discussions and assemblies to share their views and express their feelings.
26. The pupils with special educational needs are well catered for. There is a larger than average proportion of pupils on the register and they are identified quickly. Appropriate steps are taken to assess their needs, write individual education plans and provide appropriate support. These plans are reviewed regularly and provide the necessary detail to enable teachers to plan relevant learning experiences. Appropriate emphasis is given to improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils with special educational needs have equality of access to the planned curriculum and the range of extra-curricular activities.
27. The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, overall. Assemblies are well planned and the messages given through stories are picked up in lessons later in the day. In one assembly, for example, the pupils were taught about the importance of team work and sharing responsibilities and this was referred to in a geography lesson later in the day, when junior pupils were required to work in groups to decide how to organise and present their findings after researching a topic. The pupils have time to reflect on situations and relate these to their own experience. In one assembly, for example, the pupils could relate to the experience of a boy who is good at football but is not a team player and so the team



loses the match because he does not pass the ball. Work in religious education and in personal and social education provides the pupils with some opportunities to reflect on the spiritual and cultural dimensions of the world and the way people live. For example, the pupils learn about spirituality and cultures other than those experienced by the pupils in some world faiths other than Christianity. The work being done in the Key Stage 2 class about the Caribbean is making a very good contribution the pupils' understanding of cultures other than their own. The topic is very well linked to a range of subjects, for example, in design and technology the pupils are designing special banana boxes which are 'spider proof'.

28. The school provides well for the pupils' social and moral development. The pupils are given many opportunities to contribute to the life of the school. The school encourages the pupils to help others less fortunate than they are by supporting local and international charities. It arranges a good number of educational visits to places of interest such as the Millennium Dome in London, theatre trips, educational visits linked to history and geography topics to places such as Bristol and Cheddar. The junior pupils recently participated in a residential visit to Bude where the pupils experienced a wide range of adventurous outdoor activities and challenging team building tasks. The staff are very good role models and reinforce good values every day. The school functions as a caring and supportive community where every pupil is valued and relationships are excellent as a result.
29. Extra-curricular activities are very good and benefit the pupils' personal development significantly. They are very well attended by pupils of all ages. The pupils help to organise the resources and are very keen to get started on activities at the end of the school day. In addition to a range of inter-school sports activities, there are weekly games and music clubs.
30. Transfer arrangements into secondary school are good and the school benefits from the mutually supportive links with its local cluster of primary schools. The school has established good links with the local community to enrich the curriculum for all pupils. For example, there are good links with the local leisure centre and local sporting clubs. These are in addition to the parents and ex-parents who come into the school regularly to assist in class, in swimming and with extra-curricular activities. Good use is made of the local environment to improve pupils' enquiry and investigative skills in history, geography and science lessons.

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

31. The school has adopted satisfactory procedures to deal with issues of child protection and to ensure the health and safety of its pupils. All health and safety issues identified at the last inspection have been satisfactorily addressed. Outstanding issues, including a review of risk assessments following the completion of building work and the re-organisation of teaching spaces, are well in hand. All staff have undertaken appropriate first aid training. The care shown by staff, at the end of the day when pupils leave the school, is exemplary.
32. The monitoring of the pupils' progress in their work and in their personal development is good and underpinned by appropriate written records. The educational and personal support provided for pupils is very good. Teachers and other staff know the pupils and their families well, enabling relevant personal guidance to be given. The school provides a safe and secure working and learning environment for the pupils and they comfortably approach adults to discuss any difficulties or concerns.
33. Good procedures are clearly established to monitor attendance and a good improvement has been made in the rate of unauthorised absences, by ensuring that

explanations are always made for absences. However, attendance overall has not improved and is particularly affected by the number of children whose parents take their family holiday during term time.

34. There are very effective procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour and ensure that there is no oppressive behaviour. Since the last inspection the school's behaviour policy has been reviewed and the alterations to the playground have greatly improved its safety. A clear system of rewards and sanctions is consistently applied by all staff and well understood by pupils.
35. Good procedures are in place to monitor and support pupils' academic progress and their personal development is very well supported. Registration periods are used to good effect, not only for monitoring attendance, but to provide good opportunities for staff and pupils to talk about any concerns or to share achievements. Good assessments of the pupils' attainment and progress are made in reading and mathematics. These help the teachers to set specific targets for the pupils. The assessment of the pupils' progress in writing is at an earlier stage of development. Teachers have started to keep samples of writing for each pupil, but their analysis of what needs to be improved is not as sharp as in reading or mathematics. The teachers' assessment of writing is not yet used as effectively to pinpoint targets for individuals or groups of pupils. Pupils' progress in all subjects is monitored against National Curriculum levels and reported to parents as appropriate.

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

36. Since the last inspection a more effective partnership has been created with parents. Parents expressed very positive views about the school at the meeting with inspectors and also in the questionnaires returned.
37. All parents who responded to the questionnaire consider that the school expects their child to work hard and achieve his or her best, that the teaching is good and that their child makes good progress at school. Most parents said they feel happy about approaching the school if problems or questions arise. They consider that the school is well led and managed and that their child is helped to become mature and responsible. Parents recognise the strengths of this small school and believe that it 'brings on individuals, builds confidence and recognises when children have concerns or difficulties because the staff know the children so well'.
38. No parent disagreed strongly with any of the statements in the questionnaire. Two or three parents expressed some disagreement, or were uncertain, as to whether the school worked closely enough with them, or whether their child receives the right amount of work to do at home. The inspection team agreed with all the positive comments made by parents and found no evidence to support any concerns.
39. The school has worked hard to involve the parents in its daily life and in their children's learning. Parents are very supportive of the school. The Friends of Coxley School raise substantial funds in a variety of social events, an Autumn Fair, Market stall and a combined school and church fete. Learning resources such as a new television and video, library books and play mats have been provided and the Friends also provide the transport costs of some out of school visits. They show their appreciation of the school's efforts every year by cooking a Christmas dinner for all the children and staff which was served in the village hall. Staff are available at the start and end of the school day should parents wish to ask questions. The infant teacher has made a priority of the improvement of communication with parents through the use of a home and school reading diary and this has established a valuable dialogue with parents.

40. The quality of information provided to parents is good. Regular newsletters are produced and supplement the information given to parents in the prospectus and Governors Annual Report. Annual reports on pupils' progress are very good. They give a clear idea of what pupils know, understand and can do in each of the subject areas, and provide realistic targets to improve in literacy and numeracy. Appropriate formal opportunities are provided to discuss progress.
41. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good, both through the Friends and by individual support. Meetings and events are well attended. Parents make a good contribution to children's learning at school and at home. A number of parents provide valuable, regular help in school, for example with the rugby club and art and craft work, whilst others help in classrooms in a variety of ways. Some help the younger children change for swimming at the local leisure centre or accompany trips.

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

42. The leadership and management of the school have improved greatly since the last inspection. The headteacher provides energetic and purposeful leadership that is firmly focussed on improving teaching and learning and raising standards. She provides a very strong lead for the school and sets a very good example in her teaching. The school has a clear view of what needs to be done and how to achieve its targets. Because the headteacher is careful to include everyone in important decisions, she has built a strong team with a clear commitment to raising standards and bringing about improvement. This has been achieved in challenging circumstances, with many changes of staff due to circumstances beyond the school's control. The teachers have worked steadily to overcome the shortcomings in the pupils' basic skills in English and mathematics and it has met with success in mathematics and reading. The weaknesses in writing have yet to be overcome, but the school knows what it has to do.
43. The management of the curriculum by such a small number of teachers places a heavy burden on each of them but they accept this cheerfully and work hard to ensure that each subject is given due attention. The management of subjects is good and the co-ordinators have a clear understanding of the subject's strengths and weaknesses through monitoring teaching and learning and the pupils' work. This good management has led, for example, to the identification of some weaknesses in planning to meet the needs of the more able pupils in the infant class.
44. The objective review of its performance is very much part of the school's everyday work. All of the teachers have observed each other and offered feedback on what works well and what needs to improve. The headteacher gives a good lead in monitoring teaching and learning. The effectiveness of the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses and subsequent action is exemplified in the very good progress made by the Year 2 pupils since January of this year, when a detailed analysis of the gaps in their learning was undertaken by the headteacher and new infant teacher. Another example of the impact of the school's very good leadership is the effective way in which the improvements in resources and teaching for information and communication technology were planned and implemented. Their impact on the standards achieved by the pupils is now being evaluated.
45. Everyone in the school is clear about the part they play in taking the school forward. Staff who are new to the school are very well supported. The school's planning for improvement sets out the right priorities and focuses clearly on using the school's resources to raise standards. The professional development of the teachers is well planned and takes into account the school's priorities and individual needs.

46. The governors provide good support for the school. They are kept well informed by the headteacher and understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. They work hard, through their committees and visits, to check on the school's provision and to help the school improve. The school's financial planning is good and specific grants are used appropriately. The governors seek the best value in their expenditure. The school tracks its progress towards the targets it has set for improvement and considers what value it has received from the money that it has spent. The school secretary provides high quality support for the daily administration of the school and this allows the headteacher to focus on teaching. The school makes very good use of new technology to support its work.
47. The school's staffing is good and the teachers and support staff have a wide range of experience and expertise. The accommodation is good. The spacious grounds are very well used to support the pupils' personal development through play areas and sporting facilities. The resources are good and well used to support the pupils' learning.

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

### **1) Improve standards in writing by: \***

- ensuring that the teachers encourage the pupils to check through their work;
  - in marking the pupils' work, give better guidance on what they need to do to improve;
  - improving the assessment of pupils' writing and use the information gained to more effectively set targets for groups and individuals.
- ( Paragraphs 6,21,35,56,57,58,59)

**2) Improve the progress made by the more able infant pupils in English, maths and science by:**

- raising the teacher's expectations of what the pupils can achieve;
  - ensuring that the teacher plans work that is appropriately challenging for these pupils.
- (Paragraphs 5,21,23,56,58,62,66,70,73)

**3) Improve the attendance rate by stressing to parents the importance of pupils' regular attendance.**

(Paragraphs 15,33)

*In addition to the issues above, the governing body should consider the following less important issues when drawing up its action plan:*

- Improve the opportunities that the infant pupils have to decide how to record their findings in science and the opportunities for junior pupils to record work in religious education.
- (Paragraphs 71, 101,102)

*\* The school has acknowledged this issue and has included reference to it in its current school development plan.*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	13
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	15	54	31	0	0	0

*0The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		39
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		17

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.0
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

The tables giving the results of the end of key stage tests are omitted as fewer than ten pupils took the tests in 2000.

### **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	35
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17:1
Average class size	19

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

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	76

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	151953
Total expenditure	174218
Expenditure per pupil	3959
Balance brought forward from previous year	29065
Balance carried forward to next year	6800

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	39
Number of questionnaires returned	25

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	40	56	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	48	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	48	0	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	48	12	0	0
The teaching is good.	60	40	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	48	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	16	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	80	20	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	40	44	12	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	68	24	8	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	40	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	52	4	0	0



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

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

48. The children join the older pupils in the Key Stage 1 class in the September of the year in which they are five. The teacher plans activities that are appropriate to their ages and abilities and focuses either her attention, or that of the classroom assistant, very effectively to support the children's progress in all of the areas of learning. As a result, the children make good progress and reach the goals expected for their age by the time they start Year 1. There is a wide range of attainment on entry to the school but overall it is below average. At the time of the inspection there were four children of Reception age.

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

49. The teaching is good and so the children learn at a good rate. There are good opportunities for the children to take turns and share resources when they work together. They take responsibility for organising their own activities in setting up small world activities or in the role play areas. They know the routines of the classroom and adhere to the clear guidelines. There is a warm and supportive atmosphere so they readily ask for help when they need it. The consistency of approach between the class teacher and classroom assistant helps build children's confidence.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

50. The teacher's good planning ensures a quick start to reading; activities are well organised and the teacher or classroom assistant hear the children read from books frequently. They recognise familiar words and know the sounds of the letters of the alphabet. The children look at picture books and make up a story that follows the action in the pictures. They recognise that some words rhyme and can suggest others that follow the same pattern. Parents are involved from the start, through the home and school reading diaries, and this supports the children's learning well. There are plenty of good opportunities planned to develop the children's skills in speaking and listening. Teaching is good. Basic skills are well taught and the children of all abilities make good progress. The teacher introduces a subject specific vocabulary, for example, in scientific activities. The children learn to form letters correctly when they write and their books show that they have made very good progress in writing since January. They label diagrams and drawings and sequence sentences to make a short story.

#### **Mathematical development**

51. The teaching is good. There are plenty of opportunities to play games with numbers and to learn number rhymes. The teacher makes good use of everyday activities, such as taking the register, to promote the children's understanding of adding and subtracting numbers. The children know the names and properties of shapes and can sort objects by shape and colour. Their mathematical vocabulary develops well because the teacher insists that they use the correct terms. Resources are well used to promote understanding in practical activities, as when the children work in the sand or water. The classroom assistant is well deployed to support the children and has a clear idea of the skills that are being developed.

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

52. The teaching and learning good. The teacher plans a good range of interesting activities that make use of the children's own experiences and the children's curiosity is harnessed well. They observe details in natural objects such as teasels and leaves when they study these with magnifying glasses and draw conclusions from what they see. The activities are lively and practical and make good use of the local environment, for example, when the children find mini beasts in the school's grounds and draw the habitat in which they were found. They measure the growth of sunflowers and record this in a chart. The children have drawn their own route to school and put the significant features onto the map. They keep a weather chart and can explain how conditions have varied over the week. The children know, through their study of a farm in Nicaragua, that coffee does not grow in this country because the climate is too cold. They also explain that Nicaragua is so far away that it would take a long time to get there, even on an aeroplane.

## **Physical development**

53. The teacher plans for appropriate activities in lessons outside, when the children take part in physical education lessons with the others from the infant class. The classroom assistant is used effectively to support the children's learning. In the lesson seen, the teaching was good and the children learned how to throw a ball with increasing accuracy due to the good support from the adults. They had more difficulty in striking the ball. The children's learning in controlling tools for writing, art work and modelling is good. They use brushes carefully when they paint and apply glue accurately when making collages.

## **Creative development**

54. The children have satisfactory opportunities to explore their ideas in paint, collage and modelling. Teaching is satisfactory, although there are occasions when the children have a limited choice over the materials that they use. Their role play in the 'coffee shop' is very well resourced and here there is more encouragement for the children to use their initiative and imagination. They use the vocabulary that they have learned in other lessons when they act out parts as customer, farmer or shopkeeper. The children learn a good repertoire of songs and sing tunefully.

## **ENGLISH**

55. As a very small number of pupils take the tests at the end of the key stages, the results vary considerably between the years. The standard of reading has improved and the standard of writing has at least been maintained since the last inspection, but the pupils could be doing better at writing.
56. On the basis of the work seen now, seven year olds are attaining average standards in speaking and listening and reading. The pupils are making satisfactory progress, overall, and have made good progress over the last two terms. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in reading and writing because of the good quality planning to meet their individual needs. The more able infant pupils, however, could be achieving more in both reading and writing. All of the Year 1 and 2 pupils have gaps in some basic skills in reading and writing and although the school has worked hard to identify and address these in the past two terms, the more able pupils are still underachieving. The oldest pupils in the school are attaining average standards in speaking and listening and reading. This represents good achievement for these pupils and the more able pupils are making good progress. Both the infant and the junior pupils, however, could be doing better in writing. The standard of their work is below average; they make frequent mistakes in spelling and punctuation,

mainly because the pupils do not check their work or receive guidance on how to improve it through the teachers' marking.

57. The Year 1 and 2 pupils have made good progress in writing in the last two terms. Their progress prior to this was poor, which is evident from their previous work. Spelling and handwriting picked up from a low point in January, since when the teaching has been directed at filling gaps in basic skills. However, the shortcomings in basic skills in spelling that are evident in the infants are still apparent in the older pupils' work. They spell some common words incorrectly, although the quality of the structure and the vocabulary used is often good. The junior pupils have worked with a poet and show a good understanding of how language is used to elicit a response. A Year 6 pupil, for example, writes a poem about a fog shrouded beach and includes 'thick silver cloth draping the cliffside'. The pupils write letters to children in a Zambian school and set out the letters correctly. An older junior pupil reviewed a poem and wrote an explanation of why she prefers other poems by Benjamin Zephaniah to 'Vegan Delights'. The pupils' writing on the character of Miss Honey from the book *Matilda* indicates that they have grasped the character's essential traits and how she is used by the author to develop the plot of the story. There is a good range of writing for different purposes in English lessons and some other subjects, such as geography, but the pupils do not check through what they have written to correct spelling and punctuation. They do not use these correctly, as a matter of habit but they can find mistakes when asked to read through their work. By the time they leave the school, the pupils' handwriting reaches a good standard.
58. The junior pupils of all abilities make good progress in reading. In the infants, the average ability pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress but the more able pupils could do more. The basic skills in reading are taught well and infant pupils use a good range of strategies to work out unfamiliar words. Pupils of all ages enjoy reading from a wide range of texts and quickly find information for themselves. They know how to use the library and use the contents and index to locate what they need. The more able pupils in the infants do not always have sufficient opportunities to use these skills. The teachers' reading provides a good model for them to follow and so the pupils use good expression when they read. When the pupils read together in groups, the teachers pick out points for improvement and extend the pupils' understanding through careful questions. The teacher's assessment in reading is thorough and so they know what pupils need to do next to improve. Assessment in writing is not as effectively planned or used; although the school has made a good start on keeping samples of pupils' writing, these are not yet used to draw out common points for improvement.
59. The teaching is satisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors and reading is well taught in both classes. The teachers plan good opportunities for the pupils to develop skills in speaking and listening. The excellent relationships ensure that the pupils express their ideas and opinions confidently. In a junior lesson, for example, the pupils created settings for a story with a moral dilemma because they had listened carefully to the teacher's introduction to the lesson and each other's contributions. The pupils worked out what a moral dilemma entailed because of the teacher's very good questions that probed their understanding. The infant teacher has worked hard to bring infant pupils' writing up to an average level, but there has been too much to do in a short time. The expectations of what the more able infant pupils can achieve in writing are sometimes too low and pupils of all abilities are sometimes given the same work. In the junior and infant class, the teachers do not sufficiently encourage pupils to check through the work for spelling and punctuation errors. The teachers' marking does not always give the pupils sufficient guidance on what needs to improve. Although the teachers assess the pupils' writing, the information that is gained is not yet used effectively to pinpoint what needs to be done next and to set more specific targets.

60. The analysis of the pupils' past performance is good and is well used to identify areas for improvement. The Literacy Strategy has been well implemented and teachers have a clear understanding of the areas of weakness in writing, which are identified as priorities in the school's planning for development.

## **MATHEMATICS**

61. Very small numbers of pupils take the tests each year and so the reliability of comparing results between years is limited, however, standards in mathematics have improved over the last three years and the pupils' ability to solve problems is better than at the last inspection. Standards now are in line with what is expected of pupils aged 7 and 11. Overall, standards are rising in line with the national trend. The teaching has improved and the school has successfully adopted the National Numeracy Strategy in both classes. The main difference between the results of seven and eleven year olds in 2000 was that the more able junior pupils did better than the more able infant pupils.
62. Attainment by the age of seven is average and almost all the pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving appropriately but the more able pupils could be doing better. Infant pupils are confident in number work where they can identify sequences and patterns, for example counting forwards and backwards in ones, twos and tens. They all understand addition and subtraction well, using secure mental recall and practical equipment, for example, 'quick maths cards' and small white boards and markers for quick calculations during mental arithmetic tests. More able pupils are beginning to use their understanding of tens and units to develop an increasing understanding of how to transfer numbers from units to tens and tens to hundreds. Pupils can recognise and name the common two and three-dimensional shapes. They can tell the time and make money calculations, although there are some gaps in their understanding of how to use and scale the size simple block graphs so that the number of items can be easily represented in each block on centimetre squared paper. Judging from the pupils' recorded work there is clear evidence of unsatisfactory progress at the start of the year. Since the appointment of the current class teacher, their workbooks show satisfactory progress and the pupils are beginning to catch up on the work missed before January.
63. By the age of eleven, pupils have made very good progress in all areas of mathematics and standards are in line with those expected for their age. A real strength in the junior class is the enthusiasm almost all the pupils show in tackling challenging work, for example, when calculating different times using world time zones and charts. This is a result of the teacher's enthusiasm, promoting confidence that wrong answers are a natural part of learning through trial and error. Consequently, the pupils develop a good knowledge of fractions, number patterns, for example, recognising that square numbers are related to counting numbers and triangular numbers. The pupils identify simple patterns in arithmetic progressions. They use a good number of strategies to add, subtract, multiply and divide. The teacher allows them opportunities to explain their methods. The pupils' workbooks show that they understand fractions and decimals but a significant number of pupils with special educational needs, amounting to higher than average for the class, are working at levels below their age related standard but have made good progress. Understanding of shape, space and measures and handling data develop well in the junior class.
64. Throughout the school pupils sustain positive attitudes to the subject. Boys and girls are equally enthusiastic and involved in lessons. This is reflected in the test results over time. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Individual education plans identify mathematical needs and targets for learning.

65. Pupils use numeracy skills well in other subjects. For example in science, understanding about graphs is applied well to investigations. In all classes, work is presented well, so that pupils learn to be careful and logical in their calculations. The computer is increasingly used to support mathematical learning, for example, in the Key Stage 1 class the pupils made good progress in matching numbers to different calculations using addition facts.
66. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the infant class and there is very good teaching in the junior class, leading to some very good progress by the pupils, from a low starting point. The school makes good use of the National Numeracy Strategy to structure mathematics lessons in three linked parts as well as matching the needs of all age groups in mixed age classes. Mental mathematics sessions are challenging and well resourced so that all pupils learn to think quickly. A notable strength is the way that the work matches the needs of everyone in the junior class. Because there are mixed age classes, care is taken to identify what is to be covered by each year group and in both classes, groups are set up according to their attainment levels and appropriate work provided. In the best teaching, in the junior class, questions are pitched skilfully at different pupils in the class so that everyone is kept on their toes. However, in the infant class, the higher attaining pupils could, at times, achieve more and the teacher's expectations of their capability and work rate are sometimes too low. In the junior class, the teaching sets time limited tasks which have the effect of creating more challenge for the pupils and an expectation that they will complete their tasks on time.
67. The final plenary sessions provide opportunities for the pupils to present what they have done to other groups and share ideas. These are effective in enabling the pupils to explain what they have done and provide an opportunity of the teachers to reinforce the key objectives of the lessons. The teachers praise pupils' success and check that the lesson objectives have been achieved. In the infant class open-ended work is too often set only as an extension activity for pupils who have finished the main task and extension activities are not sufficiently challenging for more capable pupils. This reduces the opportunities for problem solving, for example with pupils who work more slowly and with higher attaining pupils who do not always need to spend so much time on relatively easy tasks.
68. Resources are chosen and used very well, resulting in good support for learning. For example, pupils use individual white boards well to show their work. Assessment systems are used well, including tracking sheets that predict and record the levels that individual pupils are capable of through the school.
69. The subject benefits from good leadership. The school as a whole shares a commitment to improving standards in mathematics and the coordinator is both knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Good monitoring systems have been established, although not yet fully implemented, to identify strengths and weaknesses as a basis for further development and training. The curriculum is well structured to ensure progression and challenge for pupils of different ages and abilities. Assessment is regular, thorough and used very well to adjust the teaching and the curriculum.

## **SCIENCE**

70. Overall, the attainment of pupils in the national tests last year was in line with the national average. Inspection findings confirm that standards in science are in line with those expected at the age of seven and 11. For the oldest pupils, this represents good achievement. There has been satisfactory improvement in all aspects of the subject since the inspection in 1997, and good improvement in the planning of the curriculum and the use of a science scheme of work. The school is using the national guidance for

science work and this has been modified so that it is linked to half-termly topics. The work is planned so that it is relevant to every age group in both the infant and junior classes. However, in lessons, tasks are often too similar for all abilities and age groups in the infants and while the pupils make satisfactory progress, overall, the more able pupils could achieve more. There is a good emphasis on practical work. Effective support is provided by classroom assistants who work with pupils who have special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. For example, in an infant lesson, the classroom assistant helped the pupils organise pictures and illustrations of different objects, plants and animals to help sort living and non-living things. The teaching in this lesson set appropriate objectives for most of the class, but from the evidence of their previous work, the more able infant pupils have too often completed a similar task to the other groups.

71. By the age of seven, infant pupils develop their skills in carrying out simple investigations but much of the recording of work is similar and the teacher's planning does not always provide different tasks or opportunities for the pupils to decide how to record their findings. Too often the format for recording is provided by the teacher and this does not extend their understanding of the relative merits of using charts, tables or pictures. The work seen in the pupils' books shows that they are able to identify what is likely to happen, based on their increasing knowledge, and can carry out simple tests with support from the teacher. The pupils make predictions about how ice melts and what happens to the ice. They show understanding and skill in carrying out investigations, for example, Year 2 pupils have identified and recorded different food groups and their work shows well labelled diagrams of the human body which they studied a part of a 'healthy living topic' and 'living things'.
72. The junior pupils' previous work and discussions with them indicate that the pupils' understanding of how to organise a fair test and investigate similarities and differences is secure. The pupils have good opportunities to decide on how to record their findings. The pupils investigated air resistance, in the lesson seen, drawing different pictures to represent efficient or 'streamlined' shapes of someone riding a bicycle. The oldest pupils' work shows that they understand the different effects produced by light sources, knowing for example, that the moon shines because it reflects the sunlight. The pupils know that plants grow from seeds and need light, water and soil to grow successfully. They can explain how an electrical circuit can be constructed. They have a growing knowledge of the properties of a variety of materials such as plastic, metal and wood. The pupils are introduced to an appropriate range of experimental work, enabling them to construct and carry out fair tests. The pupils' work shows good use of mathematics skills. Good use is made of computers to produce illustrations Internet searches, for example, about the solar system.
73. The quality of teaching in the two lessons seen was good. The teachers plan lessons carefully with an appropriate balance of practical activities, discussion and recording of the work done. There was good discussion between the teacher and pupils in both lessons, which challenged the pupils to think about their suggestions and check their results. Scientific terms are used correctly and ensure that these are reflected in the pupils' explanations of what they see and deduce. Teachers test what the pupils know every term and this helps to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject. Science lessons are usually planned for all the age groups in each class but there is insufficient attention given to providing work that is always matched to the needs of the more able pupils in the infant class.
74. There is a clear view of what needs to be done to raise standards, and the school has identified ways in which this can be carried out by extending the monitoring of pupils' recorded work so that work is planned that is matched to their progress and abilities. Overall, the resources for science are sufficient to allow the teachers to develop the planned work and they are well organised and stored.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

75. Standards are broadly average at both seven and eleven and there is some high quality work in the juniors. This is a similar picture to the last inspection. The pupils work in an appropriate range of media and the teacher's planning follows the national guidelines. The infant pupils illustrate their poems about how summer makes them feel and include some lively detail in the landscape and figures. Their observational drawings of musical instruments show appropriate attention to the use of line to create form. They have made salt-dough plaques of nursery rhyme characters and taken care in the modelling of features.
76. The junior pupils' work reaches a good standard when they paint with watercolours. They know how to create a wash of colour as a background and in their decorated initials there is a delicate, striking use of motif and symbols and very careful use of colour. Work on paintings based on photographs of St Lucia show a good sense of composition. The pupils' seed collages based on Rangoli patterns are carefully planned and executed, showing a thoughtful approach to using different textures and colours within a formal design. Their work on portraits, using mixed media, shows a very individual response in the use of different materials to represent facial features. There are good opportunities to collaborate on larger pieces of collage work and the pupils explain clearly how they went about planning the work and delegating tasks.
77. Only one lesson was seen in the infant class and the teaching was satisfactory. The pupils learned about the proportions of the human figure and had some choice over the colours of the fabric they used to create their own figure, but not enough choice over texture or scale of the work. This degree of autonomy is much more marked in the junior pupils' work and because it is more individual, the pupils have better opportunities to explore their own ideas and experiment with the media.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

78. Only one design and technology lesson was observed during the inspection in the infant class. Evidence is also drawn from the scrutiny of the pupils' previous work, some of which is displayed around the school or recorded in books or folders, and from discussions with staff and pupils. Standards are in line with those expected. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The teaching is much more effective and standards have improved. Planning has improved so that teachers prepare lessons that enable the pupils to evaluate simple designs, exploring ideas and improving finished products. Design and technology is also linked to other subjects or topics well.
79. In the infant lesson, the pupils made good progress, organising and making a breakfast for three characters from different parts of the world. The pupils used salt dough to shape and prepare different types of food arranged on a paper plate. They are beginning to understand that different continents produce different types of food. The pupils also know that food products are manufactured in different ways according to the cultural needs of the country concerned. Good multicultural education linked to a relevant and practical theme enabled the pupils to appreciate the diversity of cultural tastes across the world. This has been achieved over a series of lessons and the pupils' work shows good development and progress because the teaching is good and well planned. Previous work also shows that the pupils have designed and made moving toys, for example, a 'dragon puppet'. They explore simple mechanisms to produce movement, for example pop up toys using lollipop sticks.

80. The pupils' previous work in the juniors also shows that topics are carefully linked to a range of subjects. For example, as part of the juniors' geography topic, the pupils have designed banana boxes that are 'spider proof'. This complements their work on the Caribbean in a study of St. Lucia and also enhances the pupils' understanding of different cultures around the world.
81. The teaching is good. It has enabled the pupils to follow a structured programme through the exploration of ideas and sketches. They investigate and experiment with the effects of different mechanisms. The teaching observed was good. It included the contribution of the classroom assistant who worked with groups of pupils, providing them with very good focused support while they made their breakfasts for three different characters, each representing Britain, Europe and a non-European society.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

82. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and remain average at the ages of seven and eleven. The pupils make good progress in both subjects.
83. The infant pupils know about how they have changed since they were babies and that some things happened before living memory. They explain that Florence Nightingale was a nurse from 'over a hundred years ago' who helped to improve conditions in hospitals for soldiers. Through their study of farming, they know that mechanisation has altered the way in which farmers work the land in this country and that in less developed countries horses are still used to work the land. The pupils draw a map of their route to school and provide a key to identify significant features. They can find Coxley, Poland and Nicaragua on maps of different scales. They compare farms in Coxley, Poland and Nicaragua and know that the weather affects what the farmers grow.
84. The junior pupils quickly find information from atlases and text books when they look at differences in world climate, patterns of weather and climatic zones. They use computers to research these in groups and present their findings to the class. In their study of St Lucia they have looked at how the economy of the island relies on tourism and a limited range of crops. The pupils interpret maps that show land use and understand the importance of transport systems. The pupils have a good understanding of the legacy of Ancient Greece in architecture, sport and government. There are some good opportunities for writing in history, when the pupils put themselves in the place of people from the past or make notes when they undertake personal research about how writing has developed from early times.
85. One lesson was seen in geography, in the junior class. The teaching was very good, with clear planning for the different age groups and abilities. Very good questions were well directed at different groups of pupils and individuals. This ensured that all pupils were actively involved in contributing to the whole class session. The teacher's use of geographical vocabulary was reflected in the pupils' answers and she probed and extended their understanding of a continuous crop and the concept of supply and demand very effectively. By the end of the lesson, the pupils had made good gains in their learning about the conditions of workers on a banana plantation in St Lucia and how the island's dependence on this crop. The pupils were keen to learn and used what they already knew to help them suggest what might be happening in the slides and photographs. A Year 5 pupil, for example, examined an aerial photograph of the plantation and deduced that a particular building was likely to be a store as it was similar to the grain store in Wells. The teachers in both classes ensure that lessons are well resourced and this makes them more interesting for the pupils.



## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

86. The inspection in 1997 found standards to be below those expected for seven and eleven year olds. Resources were very limited and staff lacked experience in working with computers. Standards have risen and are now in line with expectations, predominantly because the provision of computers is now good and teachers are more confident and systematic in planning for the subject. The school's aim is to promote the use of information and communications technology (ICT) as a tool for learning across the curriculum. Good progress is being made in this and the school is very well placed to improve standards further. The recent refurbishment, which has established a new ICT suite in the school hall, is a very good addition to the school's resources and is well used to support pupils' learning.
87. By the age of seven pupils use the keyboard and mouse to control the computer. They can key in and alter text and most use the return and enter key to set their work out. They delete and add text or drag icons and pictures across the screen. They control the cursor in a drawing program, for instance, producing and printing out patterns and pictures.
88. The pupils in the junior class choose from a range of fonts to make their word processing more interesting and are beginning to combine pictures and text. Their use of punctuation, such as speech marks, is improving and the pupils draft, edit and improve their writing on the computer. By Year 6, most pupils enter data to make a block graph and can use new technology such as the Internet and electronic-mailing. The pupils enjoy using computers to create pictures and images. They use a program to create shapes and save their pictures on to a file then load it up again at another time for refinement or improvement. The school has recently introduced a music program that provides the pupils with opportunities to compose a pattern of sounds. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress using a spell check program. They try to beat their previous score each time they use the program. This has the effect of motivating and improving their literacy work as well as giving them opportunities to work unaided in the computer suite.
89. By the age of eleven, pupils have begun to experience the use of the Internet and compact discs to access information, for example gathering information about the solar system or the working of the heart in science lessons. At the time of the inspection, the new computers and the suite had only just been used for the first time so there was little evidence of pupils' work displayed. A valuable start has been made in teaching pupils to log and evaluate the special school web site on the Internet. They save and print their own work and some more able pupils are beginning to 'trouble shoot' when something goes wrong. Generally, pupils' skills in control technology are less well developed, although the older pupils have some experience in controlling the 'screen turtle'. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve appropriately across a range of different and relevant programs. Good use is made of programs specifically designed to meet pupils' special educational needs.
90. Too little direct teaching of ICT was seen during the inspection to judge the quality of teaching. Teachers, encouraged by the subject coordinator, make good use of the opportunities in planning for ICT to enhance the teaching and learning in different subjects. For instance in the junior class, the pupils have searched for information about the solar system using the electronic encyclopaedia (CD-ROM). The teachers' subject knowledge is improving, but the school now needs to complete an audit of individual professional development needs as a basis for further training.
91. The school has met the need to develop the subject with appropriate urgency and the leadership is clear that there is still some way to go. The decision to upgrade resources and allocate a specific area for computers is a good one. Planning and

management of special funding through the National Grid for Learning is good. At the time of the inspection, staff training through the New Opportunities Fund is ongoing. Agreement is now needed on the detail of the scheme of work and the ways the subject will be taught, assessed and monitored through the school if the improvement in standards is to continue.

## **MUSIC**

92. No lessons were seen during the inspection but from the evidence of recordings, teachers' planning, singing in assembly and the performance of the choir, in which three quarters of the pupils participate, standards are average at the ages of seven and eleven. This is a similar picture to the last inspection. The pupils' singing is good; it is tuneful, well phrased and lively. The pupils in the choir can suggest how they can improve their performance and pay close attention to their posture and breathing when they perform. The headteacher provides good accompaniment for the choir on the piano and her enthusiasm and insistence on accuracy and expression leads to an enjoyable performance that improves with practise.
93. The junior pupils understand how to record compositions and identify which instruments are playing when they listen to music by Shostokovich and Perez Prado. The pupils listen to a good range of music in lessons and assemblies.
94. The teachers' planning is based on the national guidelines and there are appropriate resources to support the pupils' learning. The pupils speak warmly of the opportunities that they have to take part in school performances and gain a great deal of satisfaction and confidence from performing.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

95. Only one physical education (PE) lesson was observed and consequently no overall judgements about standards and teaching can be made. However, the school has made significant progress in its provision for the subject since it was last inspected. As a result, pupils now benefit from a full PE programme, in line with National Curriculum requirements. The school's hall is too small for a whole class to be taught gymnastics or indoor PE activities. However, the staff make best use of the very good outdoor facilities and provide an adequate programme for all pupils.
96. The pupils have access to dance, games and gymnastics throughout the year. The junior curriculum is appropriately supplemented with swimming, athletics and outdoor games. Good provision is made for outdoor and adventurous activities through the residential visit for junior pupils. They have recently visited Bude and photographic evidence shows that the pupils were provided with opportunities to work together in challenging team building activities.
97. In the outdoor infant lesson, the pupils made good progress because of enthusiastic, well-informed teaching. Pupils were given clear instructions and demonstrations at levels appropriate to their abilities and confidence to improve their cricket skills. Less confident pupils were supported well but the youngest pupils struggled when attempting to strike the ball. By the age of 11 the majority can swim at least 25 metres and have a secure understanding of survival techniques and water safety.
98. The PE curriculum is substantially enhanced by extra-curricular sporting activities, open on an equal basis to boys and girls. Teachers' planning is appropriately supported by a commercially produced scheme of work. The accommodation for

indoor PE continues to be limited, in spite of the school's efforts to compensate for the limitations.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

99. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and remain average at both key stages. The teachers use a scheme of work based on locally agreed syllabus and the pupils make good progress in developing their understanding of different faiths. Only one lesson was observed, in the junior class.
100. The infant pupils know about a range of different celebrations such as New Year, Easter and Christmas. They can re-tell the Nativity story, and other stories from the Bible. They record what makes them happy or sad. They have visited the local church. There is some recorded work, but most of the lessons focus on discussion or circle time activities.
101. The older pupils extend their knowledge of different faiths and identify that there are similarities between them, and also important differences. They have a sound understanding of the significance of the symbols, rituals and artefacts in the worship of different faiths. The junior pupils know that Hinduism involves the worship of many gods and that prayer is an important part of the believer's daily life. Their knowledge of the precise terms or names for these is limited. Often, pupils can explain what they mean, for example, when talking about a topic such as puja, but cannot remember the word. There is very little recording of work and so they cannot refer back to check what the terms are.
102. In the lesson seen, the teaching was satisfactory. There were very good opportunities for the pupils to consider how they felt when they were the one to forgive and being the one forgiven. The teacher introduced the session sensitively and had high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and concentration. As a result, the pupils listened intently to each other's ideas and opinions and offered helpful advice and support to those who had gone through upsetting experiences. At one point in the lesson, the younger pupils struggled to understand the terms guilt and shame because there was insufficient explanation of the differences between the two feelings by the teacher. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development, but there are missed opportunities for the pupils to use their literacy skills in recording work in the junior class.