

INSPECTION REPORT

BENTLEY HEATH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bentley Heath, Solihull

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104088

Headteacher: Mr. Malcolm Evans

Reporting inspector: Joyce Taylor
4275

Dates of inspection: 17 –20 January 2000

Inspection number: 192366

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary and Nursery
School category:	Church of England
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Widney Close Bentley Heath Solihull West Midlands
Postcode:	B93 9AS
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Derrington
Date of previous inspection:	10 – 13 February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Jane Chesterfield	Lay inspector		The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Community links The partnership with parents and carers The school's care for the children The leadership and management
Mike Brogden	Team inspector	English Music	The curriculum
David Dodds	Team inspector	Information technology Religious education History	The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Ian Chearman	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Special educational needs	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Steve Hall	Team inspector	Science Geography Design technology Equal opportunities	

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Bentley Heath Primary School caters for nursery, infant and junior age children. There are 401 pupils which makes the school larger than average. The school has increased in size by around 40 pupils during the past two years and has changed from mixed ages to single ages in classes. Now there are two classes for each year group from Reception to Year 6, with two part-time nursery groups.

In the past year there has been extensive rebuilding of the school. All of the classrooms have been affected during this process and some classes have moved into an entirely new wing of the school. Several mobile classrooms that were previously used are now awaiting removal from the site. The new school buildings are spacious and attractive but at the time of the inspection the teachers and children were still becoming used to the new environment having moved in only very recently. The school has strong links with the Church of England. During the rebuilding the school hall was extended and part of it has been dedicated to be used as a Church by the local community.

The school is situated in the south part of Solihull and it takes children from the nearby areas of Knowle and Packwood. The 1991 census showed these to be advantaged areas that have twice the national average of high social class households and almost twice the national average of adults with higher education. Only 3.04% of the children claim free school meals compared with 20.3% nationally and although a few children come from minority ethnic backgrounds, they speak and understand English very well. 12.7% of the children are identified as having special educational needs and this includes one child with a statement for special needs. These figures are below the national averages. When the children start in the Reception classes most of them are attaining at above average levels.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. Most of the pupils are eager to learn. The national test results at the end of Key Stage 1 show that the standards are extremely high for literacy and very high for mathematics. In Key Stage 2 the standards are very high for English and mathematics and are average when compared with similar schools for science. The standards in religious education are above average overall but in information technology the standards for the infants are below average and for the juniors are well below average. The standards in the other subjects are variable. More than half of the teaching is good or better and there is very little unsatisfactory teaching. The children make good progress in English and mathematics and sound progress in almost all the other subjects. There are sound arrangements to support the children and care for them. The governors work hard for the school and the headteacher demonstrates a high level of care for the well-being of the adults and children. He has a clear picture of what needs to be done for further improvement. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and it provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The children achieve very high standards in their national tests in English and mathematics at the end of Years 2 and 6. The children in Year 2 also achieve high standards in science.
- More than half of the teaching (52%) is good, very good or excellent.
- The teachers know how to teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy very well.
- The moral and social development of the children is good.
- The children's behaviour is good.
- The children's attitudes to their learning are very good and this supports their work in lessons.
- The headteacher's pastoral care of the children and other adults in the school is very good.
- The headteacher has a clear view of the areas the school urgently needs to develop.
- The parents feel the school is approachable if they have concerns or questions.
- The children like coming to school.

What could be improved

- The headteacher needs to improve his leadership by influencing staff and implementing change to improve the school.

- The headteacher needs to improve the management and leadership structures in the school to ensure that key teachers have the delegated authority and clarity of roles to enable them to influence the work of the school.
- Monitoring and evaluation strategies need to be established to ensure that the school's policies are implemented and that senior staff and governors are better informed.
- The newly qualified teachers must be supported appropriately.
- The standards are too low in music and much too low in information technology.
- Some curriculum resources are poor; this is particularly so for music and art and in the provision of fiction and non-fiction books.
- Assessment procedures do not identify areas for development for individuals or groups of children.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection three years ago the number of classes has increased by three and there has been a building extension programme. These changes have inhibited the implementation of developments in the past year. The school was last inspected in February 1997 and five issues were identified as key aspects for improvement. One target was to raise standards further by making lessons more challenging for all pupils. This has been achieved for most areas of the curriculum and in most classes. There was a need to review the range of policies and several of these have been updated. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy instead of reviewing the English policy; this is a sensible decision overall but there is still a need for policies for handwriting and speaking and listening. The parents are informed more clearly about the progress their children are making and a consistent policy for homework has been implemented. The job descriptions still have not been revised and staff do not have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. Curriculum coordinators still have no strategies to find out about the children's achievements in their subjects and the support they give colleagues is incidental rather than structured.

There have been several other areas of development that the school has implemented successfully. These were not identified as the key issues in the last inspection but their development has improved the school. The early years coordinator has written a policy and scheme of work as a means of introducing the foundation stage and this has already improved the curriculum planning. The quality of teaching has improved and there are more very good lessons and fewer unsatisfactory ones. The standards in English and mathematics have improved in Key Stages 1 and 2, particularly in writing in Key Stage 1. The religious education curriculum and aspects of the children's moral and social development are now good. The aims and values of the school, which relate to the children learning in a secure and caring environment, are clearly evident in the life of the school. Since the last inspection satisfactory improvement has been made.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	A	A	A*
Mathematics	A	A	A	A

Key	
Within the top 5% nationally	A*
well above average	A
average	B
average	C
below average	D

Science	A	B	B	C
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well below average	E
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This table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	A	A	A*	A*
Writing	A	A	A*	A*
Mathematics	A	A	A*	A

Key	
Within the top5% nationally	A*
well above average	A
average above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The school's results are very good overall with some excellent results in literacy where the school's performance is among the highest 5% nationally. In Key Stage 1 these results have been maintained close to this high level over several years. In Key Stage 2 the results for English and mathematics are improving but the results for science have been higher and two years ago they slipped to the current level and have remained there. The difference in level of the science results indicates that very literate and numerate children are failing to sustain these achievements into the science curriculum. The school has set appropriate targets to maintain the already high standards in English and mathematics and to raise attainment in science in Key Stage 2. The targets are being met well for English and mathematics and met to a satisfactory level in science. The work seen during the inspection was of a good standard in English, mathematics and science in Key Stages 1 and 2 and in the areas of learning for the children under five years old. Reading was of a very high standard and a significant minority of the children are reaching very high standards in much of their core curriculum work. In some of the foundation subjects standards are not high enough.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The children are enthusiastic and are involved in the lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in classrooms and around the school. Good behaviour in the playground although some play is boisterous.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The children show care and concern for each other and collaborate well when given the opportunity.
Attendance	Very good.

The children have very good attitudes to school, they concentrate well in lessons and persevere with tasks even when they are difficult. Their behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. They work quietly and stay on task when unsupervised. Some noisy and boisterous playtime behaviour was observed but nothing naughty occurred. The children's personal development is very good. They relate very well to each other, showing concern for the feelings and health of children they may not know well. They listen to each other with interest and show respect for the views of others. Attendance is very good and children arrive punctually.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Good' means that the teaching is above average.

The quality of teaching is good overall. During the inspection almost all of the lessons were of at least satisfactory quality: less than 2%, two lessons, proved to be unsatisfactory. Just over half of the lessons observed showed good quality and about 11% showed very good or excellent quality. Examples of good practice were seen in all year groups although there was rather more in the Early Years, Year 1 and Year 5 than in the other years. In English and mathematics the teaching is good or better overall and the teachers show a very good understanding of how to teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. There are particular strengths in the teaching linked to forming good relationships with the children and in the best lessons the teachers challenged the children's thinking and inspired them to work creatively and confidently. Where the teaching is sound the teachers' subject knowledge is less secure and the children are not expected to make such rapid progress. The school meets the needs of the pupils appropriately but the most able are not always sufficiently challenged.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. English, mathematics and religious education are good. Information technology and music show weaknesses
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. The children work in small withdrawal groups for literacy and numeracy.

Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Moral and social development are good with some very strong features and spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Health, care and safety sound overall but no staff handbook to ensure consistency. Monitoring and evaluating of the teaching and learning unsatisfactory. Monitoring attendance is good. Child protection is sound.

The school provides an appropriate range of learning opportunities for the children. In the Nursery and Reception classes the activities are very stimulating and the children learn through many good first-hand experiences. The infant and junior children experience good learning opportunities in English, mathematics, science and religious education. The provision for information technology is poor although the school is about to open a computer suite that could make up for the missed opportunities. The provision for music is unsatisfactory. The teachers do not know enough about the subject and the resources are thin. The instrumental tuition is good. The school works well in partnership with parents who are well satisfied with the work of the school and the way the school responds to their enquiries and concerns. The parents are encouraged to support the school and they make good contributions to their children's learning. The school's care for its pupils is sound. The teachers monitor behaviour and attendance well and bullying is not a problem in the school. The procedures for child protection are sound but there is no staff handbook to guide the staff in procedures. Assessment and evaluation of the children's attainment and progress are not undertaken systematically.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Unsatisfactory. The headteacher has a clear view of what needs to be done and gives good pastoral support to the adults and children. However, several important features are missing.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Sound. The governors are strongly committed to the school and implement most of the statutory requirements. As yet they do not consider the accountability or direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. Monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school is not systematically undertaken by the headteacher or senior staff. While the quality of teaching is good overall, the teachers do not receive advice on how to improve.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. There have been shortages in the school budget over recent years. Now financial planning and the administration of the budget are good. Resources are used appropriately overall.

The headteacher has led the school successfully through serious budget deficiencies and the rebuilding works. He has a clear perception of the areas of weakness that need improvement. Some direction is lacking, for example, there is no mechanism for identifying priorities and implementing them through a structured programme. There are no job descriptions to define the role and expectations of teachers with responsibilities. Delegation is unsatisfactory. The staffing is generous. It includes the teacher for special educational needs who works effectively with small groups of children. The accommodation is good. The school has been almost rebuilt and most of the classrooms are spacious. The hall is partitioned as part is used by the Church. Outside areas include playgrounds for the nursery, infant and junior children and generous grassed areas. Most resources are satisfactory although they are insufficient for art and music and, at the moment, they are unsatisfactory for information

technology. The school applies the principles of best value appropriately.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents feel the school is helping their children to become more mature and responsible.• The children like school.• The children make good progress at school.• Behaviour in the school is good.• Children get the right amount of homework.• They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many parents would like a wider range of extra-curricular activities.• They would like to be better informed about how their children are getting on.• Some parents feel the school could work more closely with them.• Some feel the school is not well led and managed.

This information is based on the returned questionnaires and the information given at the meeting for parents. The points identified by the parents for improvement were noted by up to 10% of the parents apart from extra-curricular activities which was 33%. The points which please parents were noted by 90% or more.

Inspection judgements support the parents' positive views and support the views relating to information about how the children are getting on and about leadership and management. Inspection findings show that the extra-curricular activities have been reduced during the building works but still offer a reasonable range and are of good quality. Additionally, findings show that there are satisfactory opportunities for the parents to work with the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The children in the Nursery and Reception classes reach standards which, when compared with the nationally expected outcomes, are well above average in personal and social development. They reach above average standards in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. In creative development they achieve average standards.
2. In the 1999 end of Reception assessments the children reached above average attainment in mathematics, and writing. In reading their attainment was well above average. By the age of seven the results are very high in reading, writing and mathematics when compared with national averages. When the standards are compared with those from similar schools they are still very high in reading and writing and in mathematics are well above the average. Over the past three years the picture has been similar but in 1999 the standards were even higher than usual in reading and writing. By the age of eleven the standards are very high in English, high in mathematics and above average in science. When compared with similar schools the children's standards in English and mathematics are high and in science they are average. Over the past three years the standards have improved in English, remained well above average in mathematics and in 1998 slipped from well above average to above average in science and have remained at that level in 1999. The school has sought to improve the relative weakness in science without success. The children are very capable at discussing and analysing scientific issues but have little independence in recording their findings or writing analytical scientific statements. Throughout the school the basic skills of phonics, spelling, punctuation, grammar and numeracy are taught very well. The school implemented the National Literacy Strategy in the autumn of 1998 and this has helped the teachers plan and provide a consistent and progressive curriculum for all the children. In the autumn of 1999 the school implemented the National Numeracy Strategy which has similarly strengthened the teaching and provided continuity for the children.
3. In all three key stages there is a larger than usual proportion of children reaching higher than average standards. About half of the Reception children reached National Curriculum Level 1 in writing and mathematics and a larger proportion reached Level 1 in reading, exceeding the recommended curriculum for five year olds. Almost 40% of the seven year olds reached Level 3 in writing and almost 70% reached Level 3 in reading. These percentages are very high in comparison with the national averages. In mathematics about 40% reached Level 3, which is well above the national average. In Key Stage 2 half of the eleven year olds reached Level 5 in English which is very high in comparison with the national average and about half reached Level 5 in mathematics, which is well above the national figure. In science about 30% reached Level 5, which is close to the national average.
4. In Key Stage 1 over the past four years the girls have usually achieved higher standards than the boys and this is in line with the picture nationally. In 1999 the boys' standards rose above the girls in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly in reading. The school has not analysed this change but inspection findings indicate that the group of higher-attaining boys is larger than the number of high attaining girls in the present Year 3. In Key Stage 2 over the past four years the girls have achieved higher standards than the boys in English and mathematics until 1999 when the boys' standards of attainment significantly improved and they reached considerably higher levels than the girls. In science the boys' standards have drifted down to the girls' which have generally remained the same over the past four years. The school has set appropriate targets to maintain the high standards in English and mathematics and is making sound progress in achieving the targets.
5. Inspection judgements are based on a broader spread of evidence than test results and relate to different groups of children. These judgements show standards for the current Year 2 and Year 6 children to be well above average in reading and above average in writing, mathematics, science and religious education. In physical education and design technology the children's work in Key Stage 1 exceeds the level usual for children of this age and in Key Stage 2 the work matches what is typical. In history, geography and art the children's work matches the levels that are typical for their age in both key stages. In music the standards are below average in both key stages and in information technology they are below average in Key Stage 1 and well below in Key Stage 2.

6. In English in Reception and in Years 2 and 6 the children show skills in speaking and listening which are well above the levels expected for their ages. They listen very carefully and with understanding and their speaking is clear and confident. In Reception children are able to describe accurately, for example, their own hair and eye colour when painting self-portraits. A wide and interesting vocabulary is used confidently. For example, in Year 1 in art, the children described the processes of block printing using the terminology recently introduced by their teacher. Their comments show a deep understanding, for example, in religious education in Year 6, they discussed the need to value the beliefs of others. These skills strongly support the pupils' learning across the curriculum. Standards of fluency and accuracy in reading are very high and enable the children to access written information rapidly. This strongly supports the work in other subjects, for example, in design technology in Year 5 when the children reread their instructions for the task and worked unaided while the teacher was focused elsewhere. There is poor book and information technology provision in the school and the children are unable to use their information retrieval skills as widely as they should. In writing most of the children show a very good level of accuracy in the grammatical construction of their sentences and have good skills in punctuation and in choosing interesting words. The proportion of children in Key Stage 1 producing writing which exceeds the quality expected for their age is much higher than in the average school. In many classes in both key stages handwriting is not of this high standard and the teaching of handwriting is inconsistent. In Key Stage 2 the children rarely write extended texts based on their own views, imagination or analysis. Teachers and children confirmed that this aspect of writing is increased in the Summer term to prepare the children for their national tests and is not the regular part of the curriculum that it should be.

7. In mathematics the vast majority of the children develop a very good grasp for their age of the basic number skills and other aspects of mathematics. They use these skills to support their learning successfully in other subjects. In design technology, for example, they accurately measure and cut card to make pop-up pictures. Mathematics skills are not used sufficiently to order information in charts and graphs to support the work in geography or science.

8. In English and mathematics almost all of the children start in Year 1 with attainment that is average or above average and for many children their attainment is well above average in reading in relation to the national standards and similar schools. The Nursery and Reception classes provide a good beginning to the school. When the children take the national tests at seven years old these high standards have been maintained or increased and the standards in science are also well above the average for similar schools. When the children take the tests at eleven years old the standards in English and mathematics have been maintained at the same high level. The evidence from English and mathematics lessons observed and from the examination of past work, supports the judgement that most of the children in both key stages make good progress. In science in 1999 the standard slipped to an average level which indicates that progress for the children in science was unsatisfactory overall in Key Stage 2. In the science lessons seen during the inspection the children made satisfactory progress and their standards of achievement were good. This indicates that the level of attainment in science is improving. A greater than average proportion of the children achieve a higher level than is typical. In most cases the progress of the potentially higher-attaining children is good although in some lessons where all of the children work at the same level, their progress is hindered.

9. The progress made by the children in information technology is poor in all key stages and their attainments at the end of Key Stage 1 are unsatisfactory and at the end of Key Stage 2 are poor. The children are very familiar with computers and other technological resources from their experiences at home but there are very few opportunities for this work at school and there is no strategy for the systematic teaching of information technology skills.

10. In physical education, history and art the children in both key stages make satisfactory progress overall. In Key Stage 1 the children make good progress in design technology and in Key Stage 2 their progress is satisfactory. In both key stages the children's progress is unsatisfactory in music. In 13% of the lessons observed the children's learning was very good or excellent. This usually occurred where the teachers showed good subject knowledge or used an effective scheme of work to support their teaching, for example, in English, mathematics, physical education and religious education.

11. The children with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their past attainment. The range of good provision ensures that the children's work is carefully monitored and evaluated as a means to

providing well-matched tasks and speeding progress. Those children who show slightly below average attainment are supported effectively in withdrawal groups in literacy and numeracy alongside the children with special educational needs and their progress is good.

12. Comparing the present inspection judgements with those made at the time of the previous inspection, it is apparent that standards have been maintained at the same high level in Key Stage 1, apart from writing which is very much improved, and have risen slightly in Key Stage 2 in English. In mathematics there is a higher number of children reaching above average levels of attainment and in science the standards have risen overall but fewer children reach the higher level. The children in the Reception classes are achieving higher standards than in 1997 in all the areas of learning. In the foundation subjects of history, art and geography standards are the same. Standards have improved in design technology in both key stages and in physical education they have improved in Key Stage 1 and remained the same in Key Stage 2. In music and information technology standards have dropped since the last inspection.

13. Less demand is placed on the children in some of the foundation subjects where all work to the same expectations. The children who are able to achieve very high standards in some of their English and mathematics work are not reaching the same high standards in several other areas of the curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. The school's standards in these areas of its work have improved since the last inspection. The pupil's attitudes to the school are now very good. They are eager to come to school and take advantage enthusiastically of all the opportunities the school offers throughout the day and at the end of it. In lessons they are very interested in their work and attentive to their teachers. They devote themselves whole-heartedly to their tasks and concentrate with determination until they have finished. Their attitudes help them to achieve high standards of attainment. In the Nursery and Reception classes the children respond well and they are eager to learn and enjoy new experiences. They are confident and establish good relationships with each other and the staff.

15. The children's behaviour too is now very good, both in class and around the school. They are polite and respectful to adults and quickly do as they are told. As a result, very little time is lost maintaining discipline and teachers are able to get on with their lessons without interruptions. The pupils move around the building sensibly and most display consideration for others in the playground. Sometimes behaviour in the Key Stage 2 playground is boisterous but this is caused by lack of space for the number of pupils involved and lack of organisation of the area for different activities. This playground only came back into use after building works during the week of the inspection and the children are still unfamiliar with the available space. The pupils show respect for their surroundings and handle resources with care. Exclusions are rare and no child has been excluded from the school for two years. There is no evidence of oppressive or intimidating behaviour.

16. The pupils respond well to the opportunities they are given for personal development. They adopt a mature and responsible attitude to this. Older children help prepare the hall for assembly, for example, and throughout the school pupils are happy to do things for their class. Some pupils in a Year 4 class, for example, came in early from lunch to prepare fabrics for a textile lesson. Many are able to take the initiative for their own well-being, for example, moving nearer to the board without fuss and without needing to be asked, in order to see the work better.

17. The pupils' relationships with one another and with adults are very good. Throughout the school they work well together in class, sharing resources amicably and discussing each others' ideas with interest. They are very supportive of others and treat one another well. In a Year 6 religious education lesson, for example, more able pupils sensitively helped those who were less skilled in reading to present their work to the class. The pupils are aware of the feelings of others and even the youngest have a good understanding of how their actions can affect others. In a Year 1 class, for example, they listened to a story about taking turns and were able to say why this was important.

18. The level of attendance at the school has remained consistently high since the last inspection. Attendance and punctuality are very good. The pupils and their families value education and are keen to miss as little as possible.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching is good overall. During the inspection almost all of the lessons were of at least satisfactory quality: less than 2% proved to be unsatisfactory. Just over half of the lessons show good quality and about 11% show very good or excellent quality. Examples of good practice were seen in all year groups, although there was rather more in the Early Years, Years 1 and 5 than in the other years. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when 10% was found to be unsatisfactory.

20. The most consistently effective features of the teaching in the school are the good relationships established between the teachers and the pupils. Almost all lessons show the teachers managing the pupils' behaviour with high expectations of very good attitudes and conduct. The children are very responsive and eager to learn and, as a result, the lessons progress in an extremely cooperative and purposeful atmosphere, providing a very good environment in which learning may proceed. This good start is developed in an effective and satisfactory manner in almost all lessons. While all the teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and show good quality in some of their lessons, the teaching which shows very good or excellent quality stimulates the children with exciting and challenging, open-ended tasks. The teachers ask wide-ranging and probing questions to gain an understanding of how much all of the children have understood and to help the children judge how successful their work is. They have a good understanding of the subject and know exactly what the children need to learn next. For example, in an art activity in the Nursery, precise and accurate assessment and feedback to the children enabled them to improve the standard of their drawing. Additionally, in a religious education lesson in Year 5, the teacher's questioning led to a mature and sensitive response from the children.

21. The good teaching is supported by clear and thorough planning. This enables the teachers to build effectively on previous learning within and across year groups. This was evident in Reception where the work of the Nursery was clearly understood and developed. The teachers have a good understanding of the subject and set a rapid pace for the lesson, asking rigorous questions and choosing work that challenges the children, yet is achievable. A science lesson in Year 6 set high expectations of the children's thinking by directing them to advanced problems linked to combustion and gasses. A design technology lesson in Year 4 extended the children's understanding by the clarity of the teacher's information and the expectation that they would work together solving the problems they encountered. A history lesson in Year 3 extended the children's thinking when the teacher asked them to justify their opinions with facts they had learned earlier. The pupils' good responses in these lessons reflected their concentration and perseverance with a challenging task.

22. Where the teaching is satisfactory the teachers plan and organise the lessons effectively but without the clarity and awareness of earlier learning that was seen in the good lessons. The teachers' own knowledge of the curriculum subjects, for example, in music, sometimes reveals uncertainties that result in tasks that do not stretch the children enough. All the teachers show a good level of care and concern for the children. Some lessons lack good pace and time is not always used well, which leads to lessons finishing early or running out of time. A small proportion of lessons suffer from the weakness that teachers do not keep a close enough check on the progress individual pupils are making. This is reflected in the range of tasks provided which sometimes provide insufficient challenge for the more capable children for example, in history and geography. The teachers' marking often gives no advice to the children on how to improve their work.

23. In the important areas of literacy and numeracy the teaching is good overall with some very good and excellent teaching, particularly in English. In these lessons the teachers show a very good understanding of the basic skills of reading, spelling, punctuation and grammar. As a result, the children learn these skills very effectively and use them successfully in other curriculum areas. This was particularly noticeable in a literacy lesson in Year 1 where the teacher praised and encouraged the children to help them remember earlier lessons as a means of extending the new learning. In mathematics all classes give time to challenging and enjoyable discussions of mental calculation strategies which provide the children with the skills to work well at unaided computation tasks. In Year 2 the teacher's good knowledge of what the children already understood enabled her to provide very appropriate new learning. The potentially higher-attaining children are given more advanced tasks and their understanding is extended appropriately. The pupils' progress in individual lessons is often good and in the long term there is evidence of standards rising steadily for the vast majority of the children in Key Stage 2 and being maintained at a consistently high level in Key Stage 1 and in the Early Years.

24. The quality of the teachers' planning is generally good and in most cases reflects clear and thorough knowledge of the subjects. In the best lessons the teachers identify exactly what the children are to learn and make this clear at the beginning of lessons. This level of detail does not feature in the weekly or termly planning and sometimes the teachers' record of what the children are to learn is only found in the plans for individual lessons. Sometimes the short-term planning confuses the lesson targets with the activities the children will do. Not many of the teachers check to see which children have achieved the learning targets and some closing sessions of lessons are used for the children to show what they have done rather than what they have learned. The teachers plan together in year groups and this ensures appropriate consistency. Good planning is found for each subject but the best planning is usually in English and mathematics and is almost always linked with more effective learning.

25. The lessons prepared for the children with special educational needs are very clear and thorough and give good support. The children are withdrawn for lessons in literacy and numeracy and the support is good. Intensive small group teaching by a support teacher or assistant promotes good progress. Sometimes the pressure to complete programmes of work causes these lessons to be too rushed and the adults complete tasks which should be done by the children.

26. The setting of homework is generally a sound feature of the teaching and the pupils are given encouragement and support in extending their ability to read at home. Other tasks include spellings and the extension of work. Most parents are content with homework arrangements although some are unclear about the school's expectations.

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

27. The school meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and for religious education and the acts of worship. The statutory requirements for information technology, which is currently unsatisfactory, are not met in full. A new computer suite is about to be equipped under the National Grid for Learning programme and this should enable the school to meet its obligations for information technology. The remaining subjects are taught for broadly appropriate amounts of time and in reasonable balance but not to the high standards that are evident in English and mathematics. In music the standards are unsatisfactory. The school's curriculum aims, as set out in its prospectus, are not fully met because of the weaknesses in music. The curriculum offered to pupils with special educational needs is appropriate but with the same weaknesses as for other pupils. Higher-attaining pupils are better challenged than when the school was previously inspected but the most capable pupils are still sometimes insufficiently stretched.

28. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well and the pupils attain good standards. In the Nursery and Reception classes, the pupils under five years of age are taught from the recommended curriculum (the Desirable Outcomes for Children under Five) and many pupils exceed the expectations of this curriculum. In English in Key Stage 2 in particular, there is some imbalance in curriculum provision because insufficient time is provided for the pupils to work in depth. The children's factual and story writing is often too short to allow for a sustained argument or plot. Also, the practising of handwriting is given insufficient attention in some Key Stage 2 classes. In other subjects, for example, in history and religious education, opportunities are provided for extended writing. In mathematics and science, the current curriculum requirements for investigative and problem solving work are not developed well.

29. The curriculum as a whole is not well managed. There is no overall policy to ensure breadth, balance, continuity and progression. The higher standards and better quality curricula are in subjects with clear and up-to-date guidance, for example, the National Literacy and Numeracy handbooks and the school's own policy for religious education. The weakest work is in subjects with little or no guidance, for example, music. There is no strategy to evaluate or regularise the curriculum decisions of individual teachers.

30. The curriculum in music is much enhanced by a larger than average programme of instrumental tuition but there are no other extra-curricular activities in this subject area. Some extra-curricular activities have had to be curtailed during recent building works and the school intends to re-instate them. Currently there are clubs for Key Stage 2 pupils for chess, environmental issues and physical education. This programme is less good than was reported by the previous inspection but is satisfactory overall.

31. There is a school homework policy, setting out what homework is to be done by each year group. This is implemented by the staff, but because the parents have not been sent a copy of the policy, some report confusion because of the differences between classes.

32. The school meets the statutory requirements in its provision for special educational needs. Contacts with external agencies are good and key staff are well informed about pupils' particular needs. Documentation shows that annual and transitional reviews of the pupils' statements meet the requirements. The parents are well informed about their children's progress and the provision that the school makes. They contribute to assessments and reviews of statements. The pupils reach good standards of attainment against the learning targets set for them in their individual education plans and their progress is good.

33. The children have appropriate individual education plans for identified special needs. Work is set to meet the targets in the plans and teachers regularly consult with the coordinator to evaluate progress towards the targets. Class teachers make good provision for pupils with statements of special educational need by differentiating work to match abilities and monitoring their progress towards targets for learning. This ensures that statements are implemented. They contribute to half-termly reviews. They have yet to keep objective, on going, records of attainment and progress for pupils who are at Stage 1 of the special needs register and have modified tasks. The most able pupils do not always receive sufficient provision in several subjects. Whilst they make sound progress, they were not challenged with extended opportunities for open-ended problem solving.

34. The school's provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Informal opportunities for promoting their personal and social development are taken up by staff in assemblies and registration sessions and health education is dealt with through the science curriculum. Appropriate arrangements are made for sex education and for teaching the children about drugs misuse, with the involvement of outside agencies. The school is currently working to improve the consistency and progression of its personal, social and health education provision across the key stages through the introduction of a whole school policy.

35. The range of links with the community is sound, as it was at the time of the last inspection. These links help to enhance the pupils' personal development and enrich areas of the curriculum. The strong relationship with the Church forms the cornerstone of the school's work and its place in the community. The children have the chance to participate and demonstrate their skills in local musical and sporting events and visitors from the community talk about their experiences, for example, during the war, to bring aspects of pupils' studies to life. Since the last inspection the school has opened its Nursery and so links with playgroups have diminished. Close links and good transfer procedures with the main receiving secondary schools remain so that the pupils are reported to be able to settle quickly into the next stage of their education.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

36. Overall the standards of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the school are satisfactory. The spiritual dimension is satisfactory with some good features. The moral and social aspects are good. The cultural aspect is sound for the pupils' experience of their own culture but needs further development of their experience of other cultures.

37. Most aspects identified for improvement in the previous report have received appropriate attention. The school's aims and values now permeate the whole school day, pupils' attitudes to adults are good and respectful at all times and opportunities for reflection and moments of wonder have increased. Pupils are still not given sufficient opportunities to exercise responsibility for their making choices within their work and their knowledge and understanding of cultures other than their own have not been extended or developed sufficiently.

38. The children's spiritual development is effectively promoted through the daily act of collective worship. The majority of assemblies is Christian in character and emphasise values such as belief, caring, sharing and respect. Visitors to the assembly, such as the vicar, enable pupils to see how faith influences people's lives. The children are provided with opportunities to reflect on their values and beliefs and to apply them to their daily lives. Time for reflection is being developed in the assembly and acts of worship in lessons. This occurs through readings of literature and events such as the contribution a child made to a Year 6 lesson on values by giving an instance of bravery. The strong and effective links which the school has developed with the Church make a

positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. The inclusion of a Church within the school building is further developing the spiritual dimension of the school.

39. A moral code is fostered well throughout the school by an effective behaviour code that is promoted and reinforced consistently. The rewards and punishments are fairly and consistently applied and the emphasis is upon positive reinforcement of good behaviour. The pupils enjoy having good work and acts acknowledged by their teachers and their peers. The religious education and the personal and social education programmes are structured well to teach the children about moral issues, fairness and justice. Within the context of religious education lessons, the children are given many opportunities to reflect upon good behaviour and to apply Christian principles to their daily lives.

40. The pupils' behaviour and their relationships with each other and adults are a strength of the school. Through their behaviour in class and about the school, as well as in discussion of moral issues, the children show that they understand the differences between right and wrong. They treat each other and adults with courtesy and respect and cooperate well together. There are instances of able pupils helping less able children spontaneously and many other acts of kindness. The children respect the fabric of the school. The staff foster this caring behaviour and their relationships with the pupils are good. The school is a community where all children are valued and the staff work hard to build positive self-images and to give pupils a high self-esteem. Their work is supported by effective policies for behaviour and anti-bullying which are implemented consistently.

41. The pupils' social development is promoted and developed through a broad range of school activities. They are given opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as helping in assembly, jobs around school and helping new pupils to become accustomed to the school through a buddy system. This could be developed further as the children respond well when given opportunities to take on responsibility. The pupils have the opportunity of participating in residential visits in Year 4 and Year 6. A suitable range of before- and after-school clubs is popular and well supported. The school runs various seasonal sports teams. The broad groupings employed by teachers in the classroom are used successfully to promote social and cooperative skills. The school has developed sound links with the community and pupils visit senior citizens in the neighbourhood and invite them into school. Environmental awareness has been well fostered through the school's pond project, where older pupils have developed a pond and use it for environmental education. Each year the children are actively involved in supporting charitable organisations through activities to raise money.

42. The school has made sound provision for the children to develop their experience of their own cultural traditions through visits to the theatre and visits from peripatetic actors. Visits to locations for learning are included in the curriculum, such as museums, galleries, historical locations and geographical field trips. Some opportunities are provided for the pupils to examine works of famous artists and to appreciate the works of famous composers. The school is developing the provision for other cultural traditions. The school includes the celebration of some of the festivals from other world religions and cultures in the assemblies. Effective displays have been created in public areas to illustrate the beliefs, traditions and religious artefacts from other faiths. The school's resources for multicultural education and world religions are of good quality and are being extended. Some opportunities are provided for the pupils' cultural development through aspects of religious education where other world religions are studied, in geography through the study of an Indian village in the upper junior classes and through art lessons associated with this study. The children's awareness of the range of cultures represented in our society is under-developed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school makes satisfactory provision for its pupils' welfare and health and safety. Local authority policies are followed for child protection and for health and safety. Whilst these provide sound basic guidance for staff, the absence of school policies for these areas means that the school lacks structures to underpin its procedures. The staff are aware that they should alert the headteacher about child protection concerns but there are no consistent arrangements for training the staff on detection or teaching children about keeping safe. The staff are also alert to health and safety issues but systems for monitoring, reporting and dealing with problems have not yet been re-established.

44. The assessment and monitoring of the children's academic performance are unsatisfactory overall. There is no policy to support assessment. The school collects the data from baseline and national tests each year for seven and eleven year olds. The baseline results are supplemented by scores from tests taken at the end of the children's time in Reception. Additionally, all the children in Key Stages 1 and 2 take annual literacy and mathematics tests and this data is also collected. As a result, the school has a considerable amount of information about the children and can identify their attainments at the end of each year. The school examines the data for general features but does not undertake a detailed scrutiny to identify the strengths or weaknesses of each group of children so as to influence the details of the work provided for them. There are no indications of the targets for each yearly cohort of children and there is no intervention by the teachers to improve areas of weakness identified in the assessment data.

45. The National Curriculum levels reached by the children are unclear to some teachers and the next steps needed to move children to the next level do not feature as targets for individual or small groups of children. Some of the teachers identify targets for each lesson and share these with the children but this is not common practice. Marking is used diligently to check completion of work but there are few diagnostic comments designed to clarify what the children need to improve in order to move on.

46. The school is successful in promoting good behaviour. Since the time of the last inspection the school has produced a behaviour policy which is consistently applied by all the staff. The behaviour in the school has improved and is now very good. Any instances of bullying are taken seriously and dealt with firmly. Attendance too is well monitored and promoted. The teachers and office staff keep registers up to date and check for repeated or patterns of absence.

47. The school provides sound pastoral care for its pupils. Daily routines run smoothly and the staff are attentive to the children's needs in class and around the school. Some teachers use registration times and similar opportunities very well to support and reinforce aspects of the pupils' personal development. They reflect on lunchtime incidents, for example, and encourage the children to think of the implications of their actions. Appropriate records of any problems the pupils have experienced are kept in their personal files.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The parents' views of the school are very positive. They are especially pleased with the progress their children make and the expectations the school has of them. The parents feel that the school is well run and easy to approach if they have any queries. A sizeable percentage is unhappy about the reduction in the range of extra-curricular activities available recently but this has been caused by the extensive building works the school has undergone. Some parents have concerns about the information they receive about how their children are doing and how closely the school works with parents.

49. The school's links with parents are satisfactory. It welcomes parents and encourages them to help in class but parents are not widely consulted or informed about school policies and procedures. Although the school has introduced a clear homework policy, which was a concern at the time of the last inspection, the new policy has not been circulated to parents and there is still confusion about its implementation.

50. Information for parents is generally satisfactory. The prospectus and governors' report contain all the details required by law and regular newsletters and other correspondence are sent out as needed. The parents' concerns at the time of the last inspection about curriculum information and reports have not yet been fully resolved. Practice is inconsistent across the school. Some teachers send out details of the work their pupils will be covering each term while others send nothing. Reports are satisfactory but do not comply with the requirement to report separately on each subject covered because comments on information technology and design technology are grouped together. The quality of comments is also inconsistent. Whilst some teachers indicate clearly how well their pupils are doing in relation to national standards, others do not, leaving parents unsure of what their children have achieved.

51. The parents' involvement with the school is very good and they make a good contribution to their children's learning. The school association works tirelessly to raise high levels of funds to supplement the school's income and many parents give up their time to help in class where they support teachers well. School meetings are

well attended and almost all parents come to teacher consultation evenings. Most parents hear their children read at home regularly and ensure that homework is completed on time, helping their children to develop good work habits and make good progress with their learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The headteacher and governing body have successfully steered the school through a difficult period of financial uncertainty and building expansion. Now that the building works are complete they have a good opportunity to set up the structures they know are necessary for future development. The headteacher has a clear and appropriate view of how the children should be supported through the work of the school. The school currently lacks strategies for prioritising its areas for improvement, for monitoring its progress towards its targets and for evaluating the impact they are having on the school's work. The previous post-inspection action plan, the school development plan and the recent school improvement plan have not been fully implemented. As a result the school is not being given clear and satisfactory direction to enable it to move forward and there are no formal means of focusing on improving standards of attainment and the quality of teaching.

53. The delegation of responsibility to senior staff and subject coordinators is not satisfactory. This has meant that they are not able to play a full part in shaping the direction of the school's development. They still lack job descriptions to define their roles to themselves and to others, to provide them with achievable and prioritised targets and to empower them to carry these out. The senior staff and coordinators have not had time away from their classes to evaluate their subjects elsewhere in the school. Consequently they have not been enabled to lead their subjects adequately as a means of improving standards and increasing the rate of progress.

54. The lack of structures for staff appraisal and performance management means that the school does not have satisfactory strategies for recognising teachers' strengths or assessing their weaknesses so that their professional development needs can be accurately targeted. In addition, the newly qualified teachers have not received the release time to which they are entitled to enable them to complete their induction period successfully. In these issues the governing body does not meet its statutory obligations.

55. The headteacher and senior staff have established a good ethos within the school. Its aims and values, underpinned by Christian principles, are reflected in the school's daily life and work. They are apparent in the very positive attitudes and behaviour of the pupils and the supportive and protective relationships that exist throughout the school community. The governors make a sound contribution to the running of the school. They are committed to the good of the school and very keen to set up and work on systems for school improvement. Although the school did not deal with all the issues from its previous inspection in the two years before the building work started, the majority of its staff recognise the need to implement change and share a commitment to improve. The school has a sound capacity to do so.

56. Procedures for financial planning are sound. The school has effectively managed its budget over the last few years to cope with increases in pupil numbers coupled with delays in funding from the local education authority and has now cleared its deficit. Financial administration is good. Expenditure is efficiently tracked and good quality information is produced for the headteacher and governors. School administration is also good and office staff facilitate the daily running of the school. Sound use is made of information technology to support them in their work. The school generally spends money from specific grants as it should. The standards fund, for example, has been mainly targeted appropriately at literacy and numeracy but the component destined for newly qualified teacher induction has not been used for this purpose. The school development plan identifies costings and time scales appropriately. The school gives satisfactory consideration to the principles of best value in the use of its resources.

57. There are sufficient appropriately qualified and experienced staff to meet the needs of pupils and to teach all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The provision for special educational needs is generous and the special needs coordinator works closely with other staff to the benefit of pupils. The staffing provision for the under-fives is good. The numbers and qualifications of support staff are good.

58. The overall provision for teachers' in-service training is satisfactory. The Local Education Authority provides most of the courses used for this purpose. All teaching staff have attended a wide range of courses,

especially for subject leadership and numeracy. However, other than literacy and numeracy, there has been little opportunity for staff to use this training for whole school improvement and the decisions about courses have not taken the school's development needs sufficiently into account.

59. The accommodation is adequate to teach the curriculum. Classrooms are large enough and furniture and fittings sufficient for pupils to work individually or in their groups. The new buildings and extensions are now complete and the Church building that is integral with the school hall provides a very good facility for assemblies and special functions. The site manager and staff ensure that the building is very clean and the site free from litter. Prior to the building works the site was regularly checked for safety or maintenance that may be required, this has lapsed and there have been no checks for some time. The staff ensure that the environment is made pleasant with lively and attractive wall displays. In classrooms interesting displays of pupils' work give status and value to their efforts and help to promote learning.

60. There is no dedicated safe area for children under five in the Reception classes for them to develop physical skills with large outdoor equipment. However, there is an adjacent, fenced area available to the Nursery children for this purpose. Hard and grassed areas are otherwise adequate for pupils' play and learning. Re-seeding of grassed areas after building work and the removal of redundant mobile classrooms temporarily restricts full use of the external space. There is adequate provision for pupils who have limited mobility. The well-maintained environmental area with a pond in the grounds is a valuable resource for pupils' learning.

61. Resources are adequate for all subjects except those for music, art and information technology where the shortage limits the opportunities available to the children. Both fiction and non-fiction books are in very short supply.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62 In order to maintain and improve the good standards already achieved by the school the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Improve the quality of the management and leadership of the school by:**
 - ensuring that all of the staff are committed to the needs for continued important change;(paragraph 52, 55)
 - involving the staff and governors in identifying priorities and time-scales for development and systematically implementing them; (paragraph 52, 53)
 - identifying, through specific job descriptions, the roles and duties of the headteacher, deputy head, other senior staff and curriculum coordinators and giving them delegated authority; (paragraph 53)
 - clarifying through the school improvement plan, the priorities for development with explicit time-scales and costings and strategies for ensuring success; (paragraph 52)
 - establishing systematic monitoring and evaluating procedures, linked to the school improvement plan, and focusing upon the quality of teaching and learning, by direct classroom observations and scrutiny of the pupils' work; (paragraph 52, 65, 99, 106, 113, 126)
 - holding regular meetings with staff and the senior management team and governors to review progress; (paragraph 54)
- (2) Raise the level of attainment and progress in information technology by implementing the information communication technology plan;**
- (3) Raise the standards in music by:**
 - appointing a coordinator;
 - improving the subject knowledge of the staff; (paragraph 144)
 - improving resources; (paragraph 147)
- (4) Improve assessment strategies by:**
 - strengthening the role of the coordinator;
 - providing staff with the skills needed to identify National Curriculum levels in the children's work; (paragraph 108, 112)
 - evaluating the assessment data to identify the needs of individuals, small groups and year cohorts of the children as a means of speeding progress and recognising the standards the children are achieving. (paragraph 66, 97)
- (5) Ensure that the newly qualified teachers receive the support to which they are entitled;**
- (6) Improve the resources for art and increase the book provision as indicated in the school development plan.**

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- ensure the use of learning objectives in the teachers' curriculum planning; (paragraph 24)
- continue to raise the attainment of the more able children in the foundation subjects; (paragraph 27, 3)
- continue to improve the children's cultural development; (paragraph 42)
- extend the developments to the early years curriculum. (paragraph 66, 82)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	94
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	11	41	46	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	401
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	48

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	48
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	32	31	63

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	32	32
	Girls	29	29	29
	Total	61	61	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (91)	97(91)	97 (98)
	National	82 (80)	83 (80)	97 (83)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	32	32
	Girls	29	29	29
	Total	61	61	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97(93)	97(98)	97(100)
	National	82(80)	86(82)	87(85)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	25	30	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	23	23
	Girls	26	25	25
	Total	50	48	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91(90)	87(90)	87(88)
	National	70(74)	69(72)	78(77)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	24	24
	Girls	25	26	27
	Total	49	50	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89(92)	91(94)	93(94)
	National	68(72)	69 (75)	75(75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	319
Any other minority ethnic group	4

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: YN–Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.8
Average class size	23.6

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	137

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	593526
Total expenditure	584350
Expenditure per pupil	1530
Balance brought forward from previous year	-12974
Balance carried forward to next year	-3794

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	421
Number of questionnaires returned	220

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	40	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	43	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	51	3	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	54	8	0	0
The teaching is good.	44	35	3	0	18
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	58	9	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	27	5	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	34	1	0	14
The school works closely with parents.	34	55	9	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	51	36	5	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	45	2	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	25	20	13	26

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

63. The provision is good overall. The children are already achieving the standards in the recommended curriculum (the Desirable Learning Outcomes for Children Under Five) in the Reception classes and some are beginning to work within the early stages of the National Curriculum. At the time of the inspection the children in both the Nursery and Reception classes had experienced just over one term with their current teachers. The children enter the Nursery in the September of the year in which they are four years old and move to the Reception classes when they are one year older. Most of the children attend the Nursery before moving to the Reception classes and there are good induction procedures to make sure the children settle happily into their new classes.

64. While the children are in the Nursery an assessment profile is compiled which shows how much the children have learned. This process is continued in the Reception classes until the Desirable Learning Outcomes are achieved. For several years the school has also administered a baseline assessment programme soon after the children arrive in the Reception classes. At the end of their time in Reception the children are assessed again as a means of monitoring their progress in the key aspects of literacy and numeracy. The results of the first assessment reveal that over the past four years the children have arrived in the Reception classes with above average attainment in literacy and numeracy. Some years show a higher level of attainment and one shows an average level of attainment overall. At the end of their time in the Reception classes the profiles show that the children are making steady progress at a higher than average level of attainment in writing and mathematics and good progress in reading where their attainment has become very good.

65. The curriculum is taught effectively through a balance of direct teaching designed to develop specific skills and a range of structured and free play activities. The two Reception classes give different emphases to the value of play used to support literacy and numeracy and this leads to some children wasting time colouring in outlines rather than learning productively on some occasions. Curriculum planning is thorough. It is based entirely on the Desirable Learning Outcomes in the Nursery and introduces appropriate aspects of the National Curriculum in Reception. The planning procedures ensure that opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy are provided. This is having a positive impact on the children's progress especially in reading in the Reception classes. Equal access and opportunity are provided for all the children.

66. Policy documents and a scheme of work support the teaching are not consistently applied. The documents give good guidance on how the curriculum is to be planned and include appropriate aims and objectives for the learning. Specific learning objectives do not always include enough detail on the smaller developmental steps. The document gives little information on how the curriculum will be taught and how play will be used to extend the children's opportunities throughout the curriculum. The teachers have good knowledge of the desirable outcomes and assessments are used appropriately to monitor coverage of the curriculum; the information gained through assessment, including the baseline assessments, is not used effectively to identify specific areas for development for individuals or small groups of children. Additionally, the short-term planning does not often include specific objectives for the lessons.

67. By the time they are five years old, the personal and social development of the children is very good and they make good progress. The children in the Nursery take turns when talking in a group with an adult and are keen to be included in activities. In the Reception class they listen to each other in discussions and are eager to offer opinions and answer questions. All of the children respond well to each other and play together or alongside each other in a friendly manner. They can take turns in games and share resources although the Nursery children find this more difficult on occasions. Almost all of the children are confident and establish good relationships with each other and the staff.

68. They respond well to encouragement and listen closely when their teacher reminds them of expectations. Most of the children are able to play and work by themselves for a short time although one or two frequently seek the support of their teacher. They welcome new learning and become quite excited when involved with new experiences, for example, during a Nursery physical education lesson. They are able to make choices and decisions

when the opportunities are offered. All the children are independent in their personal hygiene and in the Reception class they can dress themselves.

69. The teaching of personal and social education is good overall. The teachers explain clearly so that the children understand their tasks and they help the children recall previous learning. The children are expected to cooperate and take turns and the teachers support them in managing these situations. Staff work hard to raise children's confidence. The opportunities provided for the children to develop independence, initiate learning and solve simple practical problems through investigative and explorative activities are inconsistent. The staff demonstrate a good level of care and guidance. This is particularly noticeable in the Nursery.

70. In language and literacy, the vast majority of children already attain standards that are in line with those expected when they are five years old and some are exceeding this level. Their progress is sound in speaking and listening and writing and good in reading. In the Nursery the children speak clearly and use a good selection of words in their conversations. They often speak in short sentences or give single word answers in teaching situations but when they are playing together their speech is extended. In the Reception classes the children talk confidently about what they are doing. They explain what they are making in design technology and what they would like to paint. They listen attentively to instructions and questions and volunteer responses about stories and events. All of the children enjoy counting together and singing and chat to each other using interesting vocabulary and conventional sentence structure.

71. In the Nursery the children enjoy handling books and use care when turning the pages. They enjoy listening to stories and can identify their favourites. Each has a library book to take home. They are familiar with text and know that it is different from the pictures and that it carries meaning. Almost all of the children can recognise and find their own name cards among a selection of others. In the Reception classes most of the children are able to read at a level usually found in Year 1. They can read fairly fluently and confidently from the early stages in the reading scheme and from class story books. They use a good range of strategies to tackle new words including sounding out words and putting in words that make sense. The children's attainment in writing is good. In the Nursery they use pencils, paintbrushes and other writing resources confidently and firmly. They have a go at writing their name and are beginning to organise their play writing to represent real writing more closely. In the Reception classes most of the children can form many letters correctly and recognise the sounds and names. They are able, with help, to write a simple sentence, spelling occasional words from memory. Much of their writing is linked to word recognition exercises and there is not enough writing which is a personal attempt to communicate their own information.

72. The teaching in language and literacy is good overall. The staff are well organised and most lessons are planned well with clear and appropriate learning objectives. Speaking and listening are taught soundly in all of the classes although sometimes the children do not have enough opportunity to speak at length. Reading is taught well in all the classes. The children learn how to recognise that the text carries meaning and they quickly learn to recognise some words. The children are taught how to sound words and letters and how to look at the pictures for clues. In the Nursery good support is given to help the children use writing implements correctly and make marks which represent writing. In the Reception classes appropriate questioning strategies are used to identify words and work out how to spell them. The staff talk to the children as they work, supporting their ability to recall and stay on task. The teachers effectively help the children to examine words and look at parts of words, for example, when they rhyme. The two Reception classes organise their literacy lessons differently. In one class structured play is used to provide opportunities for development in literacy when the children are not working at a supervised task. In the other class the children who are not working with the teacher are given writing tasks which are quickly followed by colouring in outlines on worksheets which are less productive.

73. The children's attainment in mathematics is good. In the Reception classes they are already achieving or exceeding standards expected for five year olds. The children are making sound progress. In the Nursery the children are developing a good range of mathematical understanding. For example, they know how many can play in each area and can tell if too many children are there. They are able to use sequencing when making patterns and can talk about the sequences of events linked to planting and growing beans. In the Reception classes the children are learning about numbers and shapes and when comparing objects of different shape they can use mathematical language such as triangle, square and rectangle. They can count to ten and beyond and can recognise the numbers and associate numbers accurately with quantities. Most of the children can arrange the numbers in order and

identify which number comes before or after one given by the teacher. Some children are beginning early computation in their books. Through their play activities they can, for example, match and sort objects such as the medical equipment in the role-play doctor's surgery.

74. The teaching of mathematical understanding is good. There are high expectations of the children and they are provided with a wide range of structured play and focused learning opportunities which reinforce their knowledge of numbers, counting and early measures. This is particularly successful in the Nursery where the children can play in the role-play pet shop sorting animals into their boxes and playing with the till and money. In the Reception classes there are fewer opportunities for practical mathematical problems to be solved or for the children to investigate mathematical situations through exploration and play. Lessons are planned well and set an appropriate pace.

75. In knowledge and understanding of the world the children's attainment is good and most of the children in the Reception classes are already attaining or exceeding standards which are typical for five year olds. They make good progress. A wide range of activities is provided to extend the children's understanding in science, design and technology, history, geography and religious education. The children listen to the sounds made by musical instruments and explore ways of making different percussion instruments using collage materials. They experience ways of fastening various materials together in design technology and they are learning about themselves, their food and bodies. Learning in information technology is unsatisfactory and there is insufficient provision to develop the children's understanding, knowledge and skills.

76. The teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory. Teachers work effectively to provide a range of experiences for the children and encourage good discussions. The use of new vocabulary is encouraged. In the Nursery the staff provide materials such as sand and water for the children to explore and they involve the children in practical activities such as planting seeds. In the Reception classes the children learn through structured activities, for example, when identifying instruments and finding different ways of making sounds. They are encouraged to look closely and record what they see. These experiences are taught well but there is a lack of opportunity for the children to develop their understanding and skill of information technology. There are, for example, no computers or cameras for the children to use and the tape recorders are operated by the adults not the children.

77. In physical development, the children's attainment is good and most of the children in the Reception classes are already attaining or exceeding standards which are typical for five year olds. Most of the children make good progress. In the Nursery, the children use a range of equipment and their skills are developing well, for example, they can control pouring of the sand and water. The Reception children use precision tools, such as pencils and scissors, with confidence and success. They can manipulate elastic bands to make simple musical instruments. In physical education lessons the children move with precision and increasing control. Their coordination is developing well, although the Nursery children show some lack of precision when running and jumping. The Reception children move with increasing control and coordination showing proper awareness of other children and the available space.

78. The teaching of physical development is good. The staff demonstrate how to use a variety of classroom equipment and give clear instructions. Children are given time and encouragement to complete writing tasks carefully. They are encouraged to manipulate difficult objects such as buttons and shoelaces. In physical education lessons the teachers give precise instructions which enable the children to improve their performance.

79. In aesthetic and creative development, the children's attainment is sound and most children in the Reception classes are likely to attain standards that are in line with expectations for five year olds. Most of the children make sound progress. In the Nursery, the children experience a range of appropriate resources and learn how to use them. They are able to draw well and produce, for example, good quality pictures of a flowering plant. However, many of their art experiences are limited to activities designed and controlled by the staff. In the Reception classes they can manage the medium of paint and select the colours well. They show awareness of shape and patterns and talk about the pleasing aspects of their work. The children can join in with musical activities and listen carefully to a range of music with enjoyment.

80. The teaching of creative and aesthetic development is sound overall. The children are encouraged to make some choices, although the range offered is limited. The creative and aesthetic opportunities provided for the children are satisfactory but they are told how to proceed and what their finished work should look like. There are insufficient opportunities for the children to experiment freely with, and mix media to produce outcomes designed by themselves.

81. The children in the Nursery and Reception classes make a very positive start to their full-time education. They behave very well, listen attentively and try hard to achieve the tasks they are given even when they find the work difficult. When they are allowed some free choice, they work with concentration and perseverance, often producing work of very good quality.

82. The Nursery and Reception classes work together appropriately and there is sound curriculum continuity between them. The early years coordinator has a clear view of how the curriculum should be implemented and what effective investigative and explorative learning is like. All three classes include this type of learning but there are inconsistencies in the emphasis it is given. Additionally, the scheme of work is used with greater success in the Reception classes than in the Nursery to support the medium-term curriculum planning. The coordinator has had no opportunity to monitor or evaluate the learning in the other early years classes and her role lacks definition.

ENGLISH

83. Many children enter the school's Reception classes with a well-developed knowledge of how books work, a familiarity with writing, confidence in speaking and the ability to listen to other children and to their teachers. The baseline assessments at this stage show higher than average skills, with some children at levels that are much higher than average and only a small proportion who are well below the average.

84. By the end of Key Stage 1, as measured by the 1999 standard assessment tasks, many pupils have made such good progress that they reach well above the national averages in both reading and writing. This is especially so in reading where the percentage of children reaching Level 3 (the level above the national expectation) was very high. This was also true for the boys, who reached slightly higher standards than the girls in both reading and writing, whereas nationally the girls tend to outperform the boys. By the end of Key Stage 2, the 1999 SATs show that the very good standards are maintained, with well above national averages at the higher level (Level 5) in English, both for boys and for girls. As in Key Stage 1, the boys are doing even better than the girls, which is contrary to the national picture.

85. In both key stages, the 1999 national test results show improvements since the last inspection, especially in writing in Key Stage 1. For example, in 1996 no children in Key Stage 1 reached Level 3 in writing but in 1999 37% did so. The results made particular gains in 1999 over previous years. The test results are confirmed by the inspection evidence in all aspects of the subject and in both key stages, except in writing, especially in Key Stage 2, where the pupils do insufficient sustained writing other than when they practise for the national tests.

Speaking and listening

86. The children's speaking and listening skills are very good. There are many articulate and confident speakers in both key stages who communicate very well, enjoy their conversations, listen with concentration and interest to their peers and to their teachers and contribute to both group and class discussions. Many children have a wide and expressive vocabulary and can discuss ideas at well above average levels for their ages. They are also very good listeners. When the subject matter is of particular interest, for example, in a Key Stage 2 lesson when rainforests were discussed, the children's engagement results in an even higher level of debate. In reading from playscripts or other group texts, many children, both in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2, read with expression and bring the characters to life, using their voices to good effect. These speaking and listening skills are very evident in other subjects, for example, in religious education and in history. The proportion of pupils who are not good speakers is well below average.

Reading

87. The children's progress in reading is very good. Most make rapid improvement in fluency, accuracy and understanding in Key Stage 1 and master the phonological skills and use contextual clues to enable them to read increasingly complex texts as they move through Key Stage 2. The school's system of colour-coded books ensures that the children's progress is appropriate and provides a reasonable range of books within each colour band from which the children may choose. The few lower-attaining children are given good support in their classrooms in Key Stage 1 and in their literacy sets in Key Stage 2. The school has a much lower number of children attaining in reading at below the national expected levels than is typical and these children maintain their enthusiasm and confidence and make steady progress. By Year 5 or 6, many children are encouraged to move away from the colour-banded collections and to choose freely but the dearth of choice at this stage is a serious limitation on their options. Fortunately, many children have access to collections of books at home and belong to the public library. The support that many parents give to their children's progress in reading is a very important factor. The children are heard to read very regularly at home as well as by the teachers, support staff and volunteers in school. The high priority given to this aspect of the English curriculum by parents and the school is evident.

88. Many of the children have read widely by the time they reach Year 6, are familiar with a number of authors and can give insightful reasons for their choices and their favourites. They discuss intelligently the plots and characters in their fiction books and the subtleties of the language in poetry and other texts in their literacy lessons. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, the children were able to interpret the publisher's blurb and relate it to the big book they were studying and in a Year 6 lesson they were able to make perceptive comparisons between two poems. Their very good reading skills support the children's work in other subjects.

89. The school's impoverished collection of non-fiction books, coupled with a lack of systematic teaching of information retrieval skills, results in lower than average expertise in handling non-fiction. Few children amongst those the inspectors heard to read know how libraries organise their non-fiction collections or how information books are structured. It does not help that the teachers select the non-fiction books that are to support the class history or geography topics in their classrooms. This reduces the need for children to use the library. There are no opportunities to use computers for information retrieval because the school's current machines are not suitable.

Writing

90. The standards of the children's writing are very good in both key stages, except for word-processing on computers. They make very good progress and most write with accurate use of grammar, spelling and punctuation and with a wide and interesting vocabulary. By the end of each key stage, many pupils reach well above average standards in writing and a smaller proportion are at the levels expected for their age. A very small number are below average and very few have difficulties. In Key Stage 1, those who need extra help are supported in their classrooms; in Key Stage 2, the support is given in groups by the special needs coordinator.

91. In the literacy lessons, the children are developing a good knowledge of the technical vocabulary that enables them to discuss the structure of writing and its conventions and many are very interested in this knowledge. The teachers report that this has been a major benefit of the National Literacy Strategy. The central component of the literacy lessons is used to promote the children's writing skills and work of good quality is often the result but for the most able pupils in Key Stage 2, the work is not sufficiently matched to their capabilities and they are not always stretched. This is a problem associated with the school's setting policy which does not always recognise the range of abilities within the sets. A second weakness is that the written work produced by the pupils in the literacy lessons and also in other subjects, whilst of good quality, is often not sufficiently sustained to capitalise fully upon their skills. The scrutiny of pupils' work revealed very little work of real depth in any subject, being mostly short pieces in which the argument or the plot is not well enough developed. In Key Stage 1, this problem is recognised and one literacy session per week is devoted to more sustained story writing. In Key Stage 2, there is not a discernible policy to provide this time until the national tests are approaching for Year 6. Then, it is reported, story writing is practised but the lack of opportunities at other times means that the curriculum and, therefore, the children's learning experiences are unbalanced.

92. Word banks and a range of dictionaries are provided but not consistently. Some classes are better equipped than others in Key Stage 2 and this results in some children not being supported well enough in their writing. There is also a shortage of thesauri.
93. Handwriting is taught from a publisher's scheme. This is done well and regularly in Key Stage 1 but much less well in Key Stage 2. The children's progress is erratic, depending upon the attention given to their handwriting by individual teachers. Nevertheless, by Year 6, the children write in pen in a legible hand but more should be writing in pen in earlier year groups. In some cases in Key Stage 2, the teacher's own handwriting does not serve as a good model for their pupils. Some children in Key Stage 1 have developed an inappropriate pencil grip which affects their ability to write and which needs corrective action at an earlier stage.
94. There is very little evidence that the children have much experience of word-processing in school and during the inspection, although some was planned, none was observed. At present, the English curriculum is deficient in this area.
95. The children enjoy their English lessons, particularly the discussions, and most behave impeccably. They are interested in the ideas of their peers and there are often spontaneous bursts of applause and congratulatory comments from the children. The excellent atmosphere in the lessons gives the teachers ideal opportunities for developing the quality of the work and this is done well, except for the occasions when the opening plenary sessions are too long and the writing elements too short and when the more capable pupils are not sufficiently stretched. The pleasure that many children take in conversation and debate is a good motivating factor in their successes but it takes careful time management on the part of the teachers to move lessons on from the discussion stage to writing or other activities. Similarly, the children's interest in listening intently to others sometimes encourages their teachers to talk too much and not move the lessons on.
96. In the better lessons observed by the inspectors, the teachers had a very clear plan with timings noted and followed so that the pace was maintained. Even so there was insufficient time for the pupils to write at length, especially in Key Stage 2. The teachers' subject knowledge is generally good and in several cases they were able to communicate their enthusiasm and love of the language to the children. In some cases, whilst the structure of the National Literacy Strategy enabled teachers to plan and teach effective lessons, these lacked the personal enthusiasm of the better lessons. Overall, however, the quality of teaching in English has improved since the previous inspection.
97. The teachers' day-to-day assessment is satisfactory, enabling them to make appropriate judgements about the children's progress but these are generally not focused upon National Curriculum levels. Marking of the children's work is done regularly but rarely does it help the children to understand what they need to do to improve their work. Twice-yearly, commercial tests are used to allocate or reallocate the children to their English sets in Key Stage 2 but these tests do not inform the teachers about the children's progress within the National Curriculum. Adequate records are kept, for example, of the books that the children are reading.
98. The half-termly plans produced for each year group are sound and the short-term planning based upon the Literacy Strategy's model enables the teachers to focus on the essential elements of the lessons. In some cases the Literacy Strategy is followed too rigidly, not providing for the range of capabilities in the class and not planning enough opportunities for the children to use the skills that they are learning.
98. Text books, big books and group sets of readers are adequate for the literacy lessons. The supply of books in the school's colour-coded reading scheme is also adequate but many of these books are badly worn and due for replacement. There is a severe shortage of fiction both to enhance the reading opportunities for children following the colour-coded scheme and for those who are allowed a free choice of books. Because these books are shelved in the classrooms, there is no central collection from which to top up or vary the meagre classroom collections. The non-fiction collection in the library, even allowing for the loss of some books in an accident during the recent refurbishment, is very poor both in quantity and quality. The previous inspection commented on the worn state of many of the books.
99. The coordinator for English is an excellent model for her colleagues. Her own teaching is of a very high standard. Her aspirations for the subject and for her leadership are entirely appropriate but the school does not have

a management structure that enables her to influence her colleagues. Other than leading two half-day training sessions when the Literacy Strategy was first introduced, the English coordinator has had no formal opportunities to observe colleagues' teaching or to monitor and evaluate the quality of the school's work. Teachers' planning was scrutinised for two terms (but without a feedback mechanism) but the school has allowed this to lapse. The coordinator has analysed the national test data and has a clear view of the standards in these tests but she is not in a position to judge the quality of the whole English curriculum or of the work in the year groups where test data is not available. The school's policy for the subject is out of date and whilst the National Literacy Strategy handbooks guide the teachers in most aspects of the subject, this does not include handwriting or speaking and listening. In the previous inspection, the policy document was found to be in need of revision.

100. There is a separate, very recently appointed, coordinator for the library. She is fully aware of its serious deficiencies and ambitious to promote improvements.

MATHEMATICS

101. The pupils' attainments at the end of both key stages are well above the national average. The national tests and assessments of 1999 and inspection evidence indicate that the children are currently performing at above average levels. The numbers of pupils reaching Level 3 in Key Stage 1 are high. The numbers achieving Level 5 in Key Stage 2 have increased. In comparison with similar schools the pupils achieve results well above the average. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

102. The scrutiny of the children's work, observations in the classrooms and discussions with the children indicate that the pupils' overall attainment in mathematics is good by the end of both key stages. In Key Stage 1 most of the pupils have good mental calculation skills and they can add and subtract numbers to twenty with ease. Many of them operate with higher numbers in this way using good mental strategies in solving numerical problems. In Year 1 the children are able to manipulate numbers very well, for example, when they are doubling and counting in different sized steps. They understand the relationships between numbers and can use patterns in the hundred number-square to solve problems and predict number events. Most of the Year 2 children can use formal notation in adding tens and units, demonstrating a secure knowledge of place value. The children have a good vocabulary and can, for example, classify mathematical shapes and interpret information from a bar chart. They develop a good vocabulary for, and a good understanding of measurement, time and money to build their knowledge of standard units.

103. By the end of Key Stage 2 most of the attainments in using and applying mathematics, shape, space and measures and numeracy are good. The pupils' mental calculation skills are very good and they are, for example, able to perform a range of calculations using the four arithmetic operations on numbers up to a thousand and decimal amounts with ease. They reach very good levels in mental mathematics and build a good knowledge of multiplication tables with secure automatic recall for most pupils or good strategies for finding unknown facts. Most of the children can perform long multiplication and a good number can manage long division. They have a good knowledge of fractions and percentages. For instance, lower attainers can find equivalent fractions by visual comparison; higher attainers easily equalise denominators using numerical methods with good understanding to establish equivalence to facilitate addition and subtraction. Although good work was seen in coordinate geometry, little use was seen of the use of number pairs to facilitate algebraic work at a higher level. The children have a good technical vocabulary for all mathematical areas of study seen by inspectors and a good knowledge of methods to apply their mathematical skills to solving real life problems.

104. The progress of the pupils in both key stages in lessons is good and there is good continuity and progression between year groups. For instance, in Year 1 the children are learning to double and say what number would be five more or five less. In Year 2 they are introduced to the word multiple and count forward and back in fives and tens, thus learning their tables. Similarly, in Year 3 and Year 4, the pupils are learning about reflective symmetry and bar charts. In Year 6 they are using data to draw histograms and line graphs and representing rotational symmetries of mathematical shapes on the four quadrants of the coordinate grid. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

105. The pupils have constructive relationships that promote good levels of learning. They are enthusiastic about learning, are very attentive and show high levels of concentration in lessons. The children respond very

positively when given responsibility and during these opportunities they are effective independent learners. They show a high level of care and respect for each other and for the materials and books they use.

106. In Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory and in two thirds of lessons it is good. Where it is good there is good use of questioning techniques and the pupils with different abilities are set different tasks to present a high level of challenge in their work. In Key Stage 2 all teaching is at least satisfactory, two thirds is good and one in five lessons is very good. As with Key Stage 1 the quality of questioning techniques and the setting of tasks appropriate to all abilities is a feature of the good teaching. This effective strategy enables the children to speculate and experiment, for example, about the best calculation strategy for a specific task. In the very good teaching, in addition to the elements above, the teachers use assessment well to evaluate individual pupils' attainment and progress and inform their teaching. As a result the children respond well to challenging tasks which are based on their earlier learning. The teachers plan the learning effectively for the least and most able. Learning support assistants are generally used well to support learning. There is very little use of computers to promote mathematical learning and enrich the curriculum. The pupils with special educational needs are set learning tasks that are appropriate and carefully monitored by the special needs coordinator. The individual learning plans define targets for learning and evaluation criteria. The teaching for these pupils in Years 5 and 6, where the pupils are grouped in sets, is good and work is closely matched to their special needs.

107. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy as the core element in the mathematics curriculum has strengthened the teaching and learning in the subject, particularly for mental mathematics. Although the coordinator has benefited from in-service training, he is unable to monitor teaching and learning in classrooms and thus evaluate the implementation of new strategies or identify priorities for further training. The coordinator has no job description against which developmental targets can be set for improvements in teaching and learning. His leadership, even within these constraints, has successfully launched the National Numeracy Project as a vehicle for school improvement

SCIENCE

108. Since the last report there has been an improvement in the standards of attainment of pupils in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The standards, which were previously found to be in line with the national average, are now exceeding national expectations. In the previous report, the quality of teaching was judged to be sound overall and good in Key Stage 2 classes. There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching in science in Key Stage 1 where it is now good and the good standards in Key Stage 2 classes have been maintained.

109. The standards of attainment are above the national average. This matches the teachers' statutory assessments during the 1999 end of Key Stage 1. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are attaining above the national average and this too matches pupils' results in the 1999 national tests. There was, however, a significantly higher number of pupils expected to achieve Levels 4 and 5 as identified by teacher assessments than the number achieving such levels in the tests.

110. By the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils understand simple classification techniques and the concepts of prediction and result. They demonstrate competencies in experimental and investigative science and a significant number attain above national expectations in work on electricity and light. By the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils can confidently conduct experiments and both tabulate and graph results to draw conclusions. The children in Year 4, for example, have graphed results in an experiment to test the weight that different papers will hold. By the end of the Key Stage the pupils have a secure understanding of what constitutes a fair test.

111. The pupils throughout the school make good progress, although in the later years of Key Stage 2 the rate of progress slows. This is due to the current two-year rolling programme of science topics, which has led to some repetition of work covered. The planned improvement of this structure should allow for a more consistent rate of progress in science for pupils during their final two years at the school.

112. The pupils' attitudes to science throughout the school are good. Concentration is good or better in the majority of lessons and the pupils are keen to learn and to share their knowledge and understanding with others. They cooperate well and support one another's learning.

113. The quality of teaching is good overall, although generally better in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1. Lessons are well planned although greater focus needs to be made on planning learning objectives rather than activities and these should be shared with pupils at the start of lessons. Assessment procedures designed to inform future planning have recently been introduced but are not securely in place throughout the school or effective. Some science teaching is incorporated in topic work. Where this occurs in Key Stage 2, standards of attainment by the pupils in the subject are lower. It is often worksheet based and provides only limited opportunities for the children to make progress.

114. The coordination of science is secure. The policy for the subject is new and the scheme of work has recently been reviewed in the light of the publication of a national scheme. The effectiveness of the coordinator has been restricted considerably by the lack of monitoring of both standards of teaching in science throughout the school and standards of attainment of pupils in each class. Whilst there is a willingness and enthusiasm on the part of the coordinator to fulfil his role and discharge his responsibilities, the lack of monitoring and evaluation strategies remains a weakness in the provision of science in the school's curriculum.

115. Resources are adequate and well managed. They are held centrally in the Key Stage 2 practical area and there are appropriate procedures for staff to access them for teaching and learning activities. The school benefits also from its association with the local secondary school with which the coordinator has developed effective links. It also benefits from a very good environmental studies area which is used regularly by pupils, particularly an extra-curricular pond club. This facility is also used for other areas of the curriculum and is a significant resource for the school.

ART

116. The pupils make satisfactory progress in art and the standards they reach are generally the same as in most schools. They use a range of media effectively. This is similar to the last inspection. The children in Year 1 work effectively using printing inks and blocks to make prints of familiar features. In Year 2 the children are able to arrange simple potato prints in strong symmetrical designs, and, when allowed, mix unusual and individual colours.

117. The pupils in Year 3 show a sound level of competence in their observational pencil drawings of twigs and leaves and in Year 4 they show a keen awareness of colour in their designs linked to ethnic textiles. The careful sketching and balance of colours shows a sound understanding of the visual effect of their work. In Year 5 the children show a satisfactory understanding of line, tone and pattern in their studies on still life. Drawing with a range of pencils, they blend and smudge to recreate pattern and texture. In Year 6 the children show a sound understanding of the colours and patterns in landscapes and they work collaboratively to begin large group collages.

118. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. They increase the range of media and gain greater awareness of the visual impact of their work. They increase their awareness of colour and shape and gain an understanding of how different resources can influence the final piece of work.

119. The pupils' attitudes to art are sound and they enjoy their work. They concentrate appropriately and most take great care with their work. Resources are shared amicably and in the Year 1 lessons the children showed particular interest in the procedures they were using. The pupils listen well to their teachers. Behaviour in art lessons is good and the children respond sensitively when evaluating the work of others. They become totally engrossed in their work.

120. A scrutiny of artwork indicates that the teachers' expectations are usually sound. The teaching in the lessons observed during the inspection was satisfactory overall. The teachers encourage the children to try new resources and demonstrate alongside them. In a Year 6 lesson the teacher had satisfactory expectations of the pupils to make many decisions by themselves and the children responded with enthusiasm and creativity. Support was combined with challenge so that the children were encouraged to experiment. In all lessons there was a sense of purpose and enjoyment and the children talked happily about their work. The lessons were organised appropriately, with resources prepared in advance. Activities were well selected for their purpose but on some occasions the learning objectives were unclear in the planning.

121. The coordinator is not yet involved in the direct monitoring or evaluation of the teaching of art. There are satisfactory curriculum links made with other subjects such as religious education, geography and science. These links provide an appropriate context for the pupils' art-work. No records are kept of the standards the pupils attain. The resources for art are unsatisfactory. There is an over-reliance on paint and sketching with little evidence of work in textiles or three-dimensional work using clay or structures. The range of papers is limited and much of the paper used is of poor quality. There are attractive displays of art throughout the school, which the children enjoy.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

122. Pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve standards which are better than those found in most schools and in Key Stage 2 their standards are typical for their age. This is an improvement upon the last inspection when standards were found to be below those expected nationally.

123. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils understand the design process, are able to select appropriate materials, use a variety of construction techniques and evaluate how they could improve next time. A wheeled vehicle project displayed in a Year 2 class demonstrated this clearly. In another Year 2 class English was incorporated into a project to make finger puppets. A big book was used as a stimulus for the puppet theatre project and the finger puppets on display were used to act out a play.

124. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils can develop a design and use clear annotation to identify key features and materials and sizes required. Some good examples of this were seen in Year 5 work on pneumatic toys. Design books are used well in some years to show design development, as seen in Year 4 where some very good ideas for pop-up books were expanded using modelled examples of mechanisms. This practice however is not consistently used throughout the key stage. The children's work showed evidence of an understanding of levers, pivots and both linear and rotary movement.

125. The pupils make good progress throughout both key stages, although the rate of progress slows towards the end of Key Stage 2 where there is less evidence of depth in their designs and output. The progression of skills in the design stage of the process is good throughout Key Stage 1 and the first part of Key Stage 2, where annotations and explanations of design show an increasing level of sophistication and understanding. The pupils' skills and understanding of construction techniques follow a similar pattern.

126. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and good at times. Where lessons are better, the teachers' planning identifies high levels of expectation and challenge, with progression made clear. This was evident in a Year 4 class where the pupils used linkages to produce movement in pop-up books, progressing to the use of rotary movement and more complex hinges. Good exposition, building on children's previous knowledge, together with opportunities for the children to work collaboratively were also observed in better lessons. Where the teaching was not as successful, the pace was slow and the children were not expected to evaluate their work and were not given opportunities to appreciate the work of others.

127. The coordination of the subject is sound. The coordinator observes the outcomes of children's work by visiting classrooms and by monitoring displays but this is always outside normal teaching hours. There is currently no opportunity for the coordinator to observe and monitor the quality of teaching in other classes or to share ideas gained through monitoring the work with colleagues. The resources are adequate and are being developed one topic at a time. The scheme of work has recently been reviewed against the recently published national document and, as some areas for development have been identified, it is due to be re-written in the near future.

GEOGRAPHY

128. In the last inspection standards of attainment in both key stages were found to be satisfactory and in line with national averages. Standards of attainment have been maintained in both key stages and the children's standards of work are typical for their age. Much of the work throughout the school is based on worksheets with little differences for different ability groups within year groups. The children, however, display a good knowledge of vocabulary and are keen to learn.⁴

129. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of the children can draw a map identifying their home situation in relation to roads and other landmarks and have begun to compare living in their local environment with living elsewhere. By the end of Key Stage 2 the children can use 4 and 6 figure references accurately and can identify the location of significant buildings and features on maps of varying scale using a key.

130. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good teaching, particularly in the first half of Key Stage 2. In lessons which were better, teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and children learned as a result of effective questioning, direct teaching and through working collaboratively with one another on well-planned tasks and activities. An example of this was observed in a Year 5 class where the use of different scale maps enabled the pupils to learn how to locate and identify quickly a small town on an unmarked outline map of the area. Where teaching was less effective, learning objectives were not made clear to the children and the more able pupils were not sufficiently challenged by the work. In some of the lessons, the use of a limited number of large maps proved unwieldy and restricted pupils' access to information. Information technology is not used to support or enhance the children's learning in the subject.

131. The pupils' work shows satisfactory progress over time. The rate of progress slows towards the end of Key Stage 2 where work is often not sufficiently planned to ensure that pupils of all abilities are appropriately stretched.

132. The subject is led by an enthusiastic coordinator whose effectiveness is restricted by a lack of opportunity for monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning and a lack of clarity regarding her role and responsibilities. The subject is not well resourced. There is a shortage of up to date atlases and maps for children's use, which restricts what can be taught. The scheme of work is currently under review and the nationally published scheme is being considered as a replacement.

HISTORY

133. The previous inspection reported that standards in history were in line with national averages in both key stages. On occasions, the written work was not stimulating enough to make pupils think. The findings of this inspection are the same.

134. Few history lessons were observed but reference to the scheme of work, teachers' planning, a scrutiny of previous work and talking to teachers and pupils indicate that standards of attainment are satisfactory and in line with national averages at both key stages. Pupils make sound progress throughout the school and in general there is comparable work between parallel classes. The school promotes a topic approach to history and geography. This is a satisfactory approach but the curriculum is not sufficiently monitored to ensure that balance between the subjects is achieved. This is particularly noticeable in the work of Year 1.

135. A good feature of the history curriculum is the attention given to the development of historical enquiry skills. Year 2 pupils considered questions that they would like to ask Florence Nightingale about her life and career, prior to examining accounts of her life. Year 3 pupils compare 19th and 20th century maps of the locality for evidence of continuity and change. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils examine illustrations of the Aztec civilisation for evidence of daily life and aspects of society. They drew conclusions from comparing pictures of Spanish soldiers and Aztec warriors to deduce why the Aztec civilisation was over-run. In the best lessons, tasks are planned effectively to promote enquiry. In those lessons where worksheets are used less critically, the challenge is lessened and progress less marked. Enquiry is most effective when it is supported by a range of resources and the pupils develop independent learning skills. The school does not have a sufficient range of artefacts to support the history curriculum and relies too heavily on worksheets. In Key Stage 2 insufficient attention is given to independent research to allow the pupils to follow up their own lines of enquiry. Information technology is not used to support research. The understanding of chronology and how aspects of the past are linked to each other are developed well through the appropriate use of timelines in both key stages. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of the periods studied in the units are secure.

136. The pupils' attitude to history is always good or very good. They behave well, enjoy lessons and are interested to find out more. They cooperate well and are very supportive of each other's learning. They respond particularly well to the use of source materials for evidence and to discussion or debate. Most of the children are keen to answer the teachers' questions and through this extend their thinking. The quality of presentation of work is

usually good. The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is sound and they are well supported in their learning.

137. Insufficient lessons were observed to form an overall judgement on the quality of teaching but the lessons seen ranged from good to satisfactory and the teachers' knowledge of the subject was secure. In the good lessons, the teachers' planning clearly specifies the historical skills, knowledge and understanding to be covered. All the teaching is characterised by a good pace, effective use of the resources and high expectations of the pupils. The lessons have an appropriate balance between imparting information and prompting the pupils to become active enquirers on their own account. A feature of the good lessons is the teacher building upon what pupils already know and can do. For example, in the local study undertaken by Year 3 classes, the teachers capitalised upon pupils' local knowledge and previous map reading skills to make rapid and effective gains in knowledge through good use of map interpretation. Marking is inconsistent. Where it is good, the teacher's comments relate to the learning objective and promote the development of historical knowledge and understanding.

138. History is taught within a topic framework. The policy and scheme of work focus upon this integrated approach and give insufficient guidance on the detail of the history programme of study or the specific historical skills to be developed. The policy and scheme are overdue for revision. Assessment does not inform future planning sufficiently and is not well enough developed to provide an accurate picture of attainment. There are effective links with other subjects and the good understanding of map-reading skills was used well in the local study in Year 3. There are purposeful links with literacy, through the opportunities provided to write extended accounts, and with numeracy, through the use of time lines. Sound use is made of local places of historical interest.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

139. The pupils' attainment is unsatisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2. Their progress is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 and poor in Key Stage 2. The previous inspection reported that standards in information technology were in line with national expectations and that pupils had experienced the various strands of information technology and had developed some to a considerable depth. Information technology skills and capability were being developed satisfactorily and were being employed in subjects across the curriculum, including control technology.

140. For a variety of reasons standards have fallen since the previous inspection. The teaching of information skills is rarely included in the timetable and on the one occasion when the lesson indicated that information technology would be taught, the session did not occur. The pupils are given insufficient opportunities to practise and develop their skills and apply them across the curriculum. The Nursery and Reception classes do not provide a consistent introduction to using computers or other technology equipment. Evidence of the use of information technology was sparse during the inspection and the review of the pupils' work supplemented by discussions with teachers and children confirmed that the information technology curriculum had been greatly reduced in the past year.

141. Evidence was seen of pupils in a Reception class learning some keyboard and mouse skills through the use of a language development program. A Year 2 class had created a class book with each pupil contributing a conclusion to the story of 'The Odd Job Man' which was well presented and illustrated with hand drawn pictures. Years 3 and 4 have word processed an index or introduction to their topic book. There was some word processed work from Year 5 including some images taken from a CD-ROM encyclopaedia on pollution and some Year 6 word processed work associated with a topic on bats. The other strands of the information technology orders are not taught and the full requirements of the National Curriculum are not being met.

142. The lack of evidence can in part be explained by the dislocation and inconvenience of the building programme over the past year. The school has needed to delay the completion of the National Grid for Learning provision of new computers and the information technology room for a year due to the building works. Additionally, the school has an ageing set of Acorn computers that have not been replaced because of the imminent arrival of new equipment. Nevertheless, the school makes insufficient use of its current resources, which, when used, generally prove adequate for the task. Circumstances have been difficult through the migration to temporary accommodation, the demise of the Acorn company and the delayed arrival of the new equipment and resources. But there is no evidence of a contingency plan or efforts made to sustain the information technology programme of

study during this time. The return to the completed school building has not seen a renewed sense of urgency to work to the standards reported in the previous inspection.

143. The school's action plan for the development of information communications technology is good. It indicated that regular use will be made of the information technology room for two sessions per week per class, one for skill development and one for applications. Skills have already been identified and applications are in the process of being placed within a scheme of work. The teachers' capabilities vary, but the previous report indicates that most know the generic applications; there is now the need to train staff for the new technology. The school is planning for the New Opportunity Fund training to commence in the autumn term. New hardware is planned for installation in March 2000 along with a network. The school has an appropriate range of software on order from the Local Education Authority's information technology support department. The coordinator has the knowledge and capability to lead the staff, having been a Local Education Authority information technology advisory teacher. The post is currently under-developed and the teacher does not have the opportunity to influence directly colleagues' practice. Assessment is also under developed. The school has the support of a governor with responsibility for the implementation of the National Grid for Learning.

MUSIC

144. Music lessons were observed in six classes and in assemblies and two instrumental lessons. The standards reached in the lessons are barely satisfactory and, when compared with the standards of music in schools generally, the overall quality is below average. This is because the curriculum lacks breadth and is almost entirely reliant upon tapes from schools' broadcasts. Most teachers have a very limited subject knowledge and are thus unable to take the learning forward or to build into the lessons the range of musical experiences that would promote more successful learning.

145. In the better lessons, the teachers promoted enthusiastic participation and stopped the tapes at intervals to develop the teaching points or to introduce additional ideas. The taped lessons focus, in the main, on singing and work on rhythm, with little attention given to the other aspects of music making, for example, composition. In none of the lessons observed was the expertise of the pupils who have instrumental lessons capitalised upon. In one lesson in Year 6, the teacher had recorded the pupils' rhythm work in a previous lesson, which gave a useful spur to their efforts, but the level of this work was similar to the work in earlier year groups. There is little progression in the quality, difficulty or range from one year group to the next. The singing in assembly is not very enthusiastic and many of the children do not start the verses on time.

146. The behaviour of the pupils is very good in music lessons, even when excited by the use of percussion instruments or frustrated by the short supply or unsatisfactory quality of some of them. They are very interested in the subject but their progress is limited.

147. There is no music coordinator, no policy document and no scheme of work to guide the teaching. The teachers choose their own broadcasts and their lesson planning is mostly a repeat of the notes which accompany the tapes. There are small, well-worn collections of instruments, mostly untuned percussion, in each key stage which are barely adequate for the work and insufficient to support a broader curriculum. Neither the quality of the teaching and learning nor the timetabling of the subject is monitored and evaluated. For example, a clash of four simultaneous music lessons on one afternoon places impossible pressures upon the available instruments and yet there are numerous occasions in the week when no music is timetabled.

148. Twenty-seven girls and sixteen boys receive lessons in brass, woodwind, string and keyboard instruments from visiting teachers. This is a relatively high number of participants. No other extra-curricular music clubs are available. In their responses to the inspection questionnaire, and at the parents' meeting, several parents criticised the lack of musical opportunity in the school. This is not true of the instrumental lessons but the inspectors share their concerns about the quality of the class music lessons and the lack of extra-curricular activity in the subject.

149. The previous inspection reported similar weaknesses in the teaching of music but also observed some good teaching. From the lessons observed and the information available for the re-inspection, the quality of music teaching and the standards reached by the pupils have not improved since then. The school's published aim to

develop skills and aesthetic appreciation and to encourage creativity in music is not being fulfilled for the majority of the pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

150. The attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is in line with standards normally attained by seven and eleven year old pupils.

151. In Year 1 most of the pupils show good qualities of coordination and they balance and control their movements well. In gymnastics, for instance, they can improve the basic skills of jumping, landing and stretching to coordinate their movements to achieve the complex skill of the star jump with good balance and control. They perform sequences of movements with precision to develop the skills required to perform a forward roll. In Year 2 the pupils are able to perform linked movements with balance and coordination, controlling small apparatus to a satisfactory level. They are able to follow instructions closely and use apparatus with balance and poise.

152. At the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils are confident in using large apparatus both individually and cooperatively in groups, most have sound balancing skills and are able to move with control in and out of balance. They move through, under or over apparatus to perform a sequence of linked movements individually and in group exercises. However, their ability to match and mirror movements, such as moving using different levels or speeds, jumping or turning was below average levels. They showed unsatisfactory coordination, range and balance. In Year 5 the pupils were able to interpret music in a dance lesson to show a satisfactory level of achievement. They perform safely individually, and in groups. They work imaginatively to practise and perform cooperative linked movements to represent, for example, a space journey, repeating previously practised sequences with improved interpretation and control, and use critical discussion to improve performance. Swimming attainment is in line with national expectations with many of the pupils exceeding the standard expected. They understand the importance of warming up before exercise and cooling down afterwards.

153. The pupils make satisfactory progress throughout both key stages. For example, in Key Stage 1 they develop simple movements of rocking on their backs and tucking into a forward roll. In Key Stage 2 the children increase their competency to work successfully in larger groups in dance and gymnastics. The progress of the pupils with special educational needs is good.

154. Virtually all of the pupils join in activities with considerable energy, determination and concentration. Their behaviour is at least good and mostly very good. They share apparatus sensibly and safely and take turns patiently, helping and supporting each other in their work. The pupils show considerable responsibility and some initiative when putting apparatus out or away and cooperate well.

155. The overall quality of teaching in physical education is satisfactory. In Key stage 1 it is always satisfactory and sometimes good or very good. The teachers have high expectations and lessons are well planned, having a lively pace. The teachers give clear intentions for the pupils' learning. In Year 1 the teachers have assessment strategies that monitor individual pupils' attainment and thus inform future teaching objectives and assess progress. Good use is made of the pupils' high achievement to demonstrate skills or techniques to others. In Key Stage 2 the teachers' strategies are satisfactory, although the lesson planning is generally brief. The teachers make good provision for the pupils with special educational needs by providing appropriate tasks and using the support available from non-teaching assistants well. There was one unsatisfactory lesson observed where the level of challenge presented to pupils was too low and the pace of the lesson was too slow. The pupils became bored and poor levels of learning and attainment were observed.

156. The curriculum leader gives sound support. There is a clear policy and planned guidelines that promote continuity of learning throughout the school. The subject has had shortcomings in recent months as a hall for indoor activities has not been available for teaching because of a major building programme. The new hall is now in use and resources are of an adequate standard. There is a commitment to extra-curricular activity with significant input by the coordinator and other teachers that helps to consolidate learning in games, athletics and gymnastics. Good sporting attitudes and a keen sense of fair play by the children, both as participants and as spectators, was observed.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

157. The findings of the previous inspection were that the pupils' attainment was in line with the Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages but that their progress would have been better in many classes if the written work was more challenging. Some of the teaching in Key Stage 1 was found to be too complicated. Standards and expectations have improved since the previous inspection. The children's attainment is above average for the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and their progress is generally good throughout the school.

158. By the end of Key Stage 1 the children have encountered a selection of Old and New Testament stories and stories from other major world faiths. They have celebrated Christian and other festivals and are beginning to appreciate that events of importance to a belief underpin the celebration. They have begun to investigate artefacts and symbols belonging to different faiths. A Year 2 class was fascinated by the rituals of cleansing and respect associated with the handling of the Qur'an. They are beginning to recognise that religion has a language of its own through the writing of prayers, poems and accounts. Knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and other faiths is introduced well and the pupils have the opportunity to relate their studies to their daily lives.

159. The children's progress in Key Stage 1 is sustained throughout Key Stage 2. Teachers build effectively on previous knowledge. A Year 4 class discussing the Sikh story of Guru Govind Singh recalled their previous learning on the symbols of the Sikh religion and this was then capitalised upon by their teacher. By the end of the key stage the pupils have a deeper understanding of the Christian religion, Sikhism, Islam and other faiths. They are developing an awareness of the significance of symbols to faiths, beliefs and ways of living. They have begun to develop their ability to explore different kinds of religious literature, legend, parable, poem and allegory and are using a widening variety of source material, with the exception of information technology. Discussion is developed well through both key stages and is contributing to the development of the pupils' power of empathy and their ability to reflect upon their own and others' experiences. A Year 1 class reflected upon the story of Samuel to consider the effect the event would have had upon them. Throughout the school the difference between right and wrong is taught well. There were instances where wonder and spiritual moments were well developed, in particular, in a Year 6 class where work on values and beliefs resulted in a pupil describing the need for bravery in her life. The lesson was further enhanced by the powerful use of a lit candle to focus on reflection and stillness, to which the pupils responded well.

160. The pupils have a very positive attitude to the subject. They enjoy the religious education lessons, especially when artefacts, symbols and illustrations are employed. They contribute readily to discussion and sensitively discuss issues of values and beliefs and express their own beliefs and values confidently. They are generally very supportive of each other's learning. They can relate learning in religious education to their daily lives. They respond with reflection and sensitivity to the opinions of others. They present their work carefully.

161. The teaching of religious education ranges from excellent to sound, with the majority of lessons being good. The knowledge of the Christian religion and the other major world faiths is taught well. The teachers generally have secure knowledge in these areas. Coverage is good because the long term planning is rooted in the Agreed Syllabus and is closely adhered to by all teachers. The teachers' planning is detailed and clearly identifies the knowledge and skills to be taught, with clear objectives. This informs skilful questioning where pupils' ideas and understanding are probed in discussion and intervention in the activity is effectively focused. The teachers build well on previous learning. The good relationships that exist between staff and pupils promote confident and reflective expressions of opinion. Lessons are well managed.

162. The subject is led well. The coordinator is enthusiastic about the subject and is committed to supporting her colleagues. The documentation is effective and helpful and the scheme of work promotes continuity and coverage. The coordinator has developed a good quality collection of artefacts and posters to support the subject and teachers use these well. There are sufficient bibles to create a class set but some need replacing. Books to support the religious education curriculum need extending to provide a wider range of information. The school uses its connection with the Church well and has links with other Churches in the vicinity to extend its resources. Visitors come to school to give pupils experience of faith in people's lives but this is underdeveloped. The role of the coordinator is underdeveloped to enable the monitoring of standards in the subject.

