

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SLIMBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Slimbridge

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115536

Headteacher: Mrs L Mundy

Reporting inspector: Miss S Ramnath  
21334

Dates of inspection: 31<sup>st</sup> January – 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2000

Inspection number: 192505

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St John's Road Slimbridge Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL2 7DD
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Whetherly
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Miss S Ramnath	Registered inspector	Information technology Art Design and technology Under fives Equal opportunities	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Key issues for action
Mr R Barnard	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
Mr R Hardaker	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Physical education Religious education	Leadership and management
Ms S Halley	Team inspector	English Geography History Music Special educational needs	Teaching and learning Quality and range of opportunities for learning Personal development

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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This smaller than average size primary school is situated in the village of Slimbridge in Gloucestershire. The school dates back to 1906 and currently has 102 pupils on roll aged between four and eleven years of age, organised in four classes. Seven children were under five at the time of the inspection. Since the last inspection, the number on roll has increased. The school serves mainly a rural catchment area and the pupils represent a wide range of backgrounds, which are overall average in social and economic terms.

Children are admitted to the Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. School assessments indicate that although the range of abilities on entry is wide, attainment overall is above average when compared with children of a similar age in Gloucestershire.

Nearly all pupils have cultural roots in the British Isles. There are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and none come from homes where English is not the main spoken language. The school has identified 21 pupils on its register of special educational needs. This is in line with the national average. However, the new guidance on identification of special needs supplied by the local authority is increasing these numbers. Four of these pupils are on Stages 3 or above and two have a statement of special educational needs. This is in line with the national average. The local authority does not provide school meals and as a result, the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is difficult to clearly identify.

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

Slimbridge Primary School provides a sound start for young children and by the age of five, they attain the national objectives in nearly all areas of learning except creative and physical development. They make sound progress and most exceed the standards expected of children of a similar age in language and literacy, mathematics and aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. By the time pupils leave school at eleven, standards are above national expectations in English and mathematics and in line with the national expectations in science, and information technology. Standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards of attainment in the foundation subjects are average except for some aspects of art which are below the expected level for the age and ability of pupils. The headteacher was appointed after the last inspection and has achieved rapid improvement, ably supported by a good governing body, committed staff and the whole team of adults who work in the school. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and the school provides sound value for money.

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

- Leadership in the school is good and it gives it clear direction. Strategies are in place to sustain improvement.
- The school's governing body is actively involved in decision making and makes an effective contribution to the management of the school.
- Pupils achieve good standards in mathematics.
- Almost all teaching in the school is satisfactory; a significant proportion is good.
- Teachers treat pupils with respect and set a very positive climate for learning.
- Financial planning is good and the budget is managed efficiently.
- There is a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities which is well supported.
- The partnership between school and parents is good and parents support the school enthusiastically.

### **What could be improved**

- Progress is unsatisfactory in information technology at Key Stage 1. Not all the skills which are needed for good achievement are taught.
- Older, higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.
- The curriculum does not always meet the needs of children who are under five.
- The assessment of pupils' learning is weak. There is no systematic and consistent recording of pupils' attainment and progress in the foundation subjects to help the teachers plan work which meets the needs of all pupils in a class.
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning in classrooms by subject co-ordinators in subjects other than English and mathematics.

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

This is an improving school with a considerable number of strengths. However, the weaknesses listed above are important areas for attention. The school has made substantial improvements since the appointment of the new headteacher and now has in place most of the appropriate systems to improve standards. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection will be tackled. A copy of the plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

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

The last inspection in January 1997 identified the school as having serious weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school as well as highlighting other aspects of its work requiring improvement. All of these areas have been tackled and a number of the weaknesses overcome. The new headteacher has a clear view of what is needed and has identified the school's strengths and weaknesses accurately. Communication at all levels has improved significantly. Governors have acted on the findings of the last inspection and are now aware of their responsibility to monitor standards. Financial planning is now very good, the deficit budget has been eliminated and the school makes effective use of financial information. It was reported that the governors' annual report to parents did not meet statutory requirements. This is no longer the case. The headteacher monitors the teaching but the subject co-ordinators are not fully aware of the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects as they have had very little opportunity to observe teaching in classrooms. A key issue identified in the last inspection states that the high attaining pupils were not challenged. This still remains a weakness.

However, the evidence of general improvement shows that the headteacher has had a positive impact on the school. It is in a strong position to continue to improve: it has the commitment of staff and governors and the support of parents.

## STANDARDS

The 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	B	C	D
mathematics	A*	B	A	A*
science	A	A	C	D

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The information shows that when compared with all schools, pupils achieve well above average standards in mathematics and average standards in English and science. When compared with similar schools, results are very high in mathematics but below average in English and science. Small cohort size makes comparison with all and similar schools (based on the take up of free school meals) unreliable as an individual represents a high percentage. However, the test results over the last three years indicate that pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the national trend.

Inspection evidence shows that, by the time pupils leave school at eleven, standards are above average in English and mathematics and in line with national expectations in science and information technology. However, current standards are not sufficiently high for older, higher attaining pupils in the mixed-age classes. The school has set appropriate and achievable targets for pupils' performance in tests at the end of Year 6. While the national test results indicate some variation in the performance of boys and girls, there was no indication in the school's documentation that such differences existed for pupils by the end of Year 6.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes to learning are good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are well behaved in class and around the school. They are mostly polite, friendly and well-mannered.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils share and take turns well most of the time and are courteous to one another and to adults. The quality of relationships throughout the school is good.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are satisfactory. Pupils arrive at school in time for the start of the day. However, lessons do not always begin and end promptly.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

In 92 per cent of lessons observed teaching was satisfactory or better; in 56 per cent it was good and in ten per cent of lessons it was very good or excellent and as a result, the pupils' learning was sound. Eight per cent of teaching observed was unsatisfactory and in these lessons, pupils did not make sufficient progress. Teaching was consistently good in mathematics, which is a reflection of the school's successful approach to the numeracy strategy. The literacy strategy has been adapted successfully and sufficient time is given to the subject. However, there are occasions when the length of the literacy sessions is too long for the youngest pupils. The teaching of children under five is satisfactory. Teaching in information technology in Key Stage 2 is very good.

The planning in subjects other than literacy and numeracy does not always show the provision made for pupils of different ages and abilities in the mixed-age classes. The use of assessment information to guide teachers in planning is unsatisfactory. As a result, work is not always sufficiently challenging for the older, higher attaining pupils. This is reflected in the standards achieved in subjects other than literacy and numeracy.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	A broad and relevant curriculum is provided, enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities. There is a clear emphasis on delivering literacy and numeracy and this contributes to the good standards attained by the end of Key Stage 2. However, not all aspects of information technology are currently taught in Key Stage 1. In some subjects such as art, progressive skills are not well developed.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is not always adequate and support is sometimes insufficient to help them to make progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' personal development is good. Provision for moral and social development is good: pupils are helped to know right from wrong and are encouraged to work together and take responsibility. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff know the pupils very well. Formal assessment is not used consistently to evaluate progress, but the school is addressing this.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The headteacher and staff have improved the communication with parents and this has a significant impact on pupils' learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the school is good. The headteacher provides clear, purposeful leadership and sets a very good model as a teacher. Monitoring of teaching has been carried out by the headteacher, but monitoring by co-ordinators is underdeveloped.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are supportive and well informed. They provide effective support and are involved in decision-making and evaluating aspects of the school's work. They meet their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	A rigorous analysis of national test results was carried out in the autumn of 1999 and was used effectively to evaluate performance.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's educational priorities are well supported through very good financial planning.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	Levels of staffing in the school are good. Accommodation and learning resources are adequate overall. However, there are weaknesses in outdoor provision for the under-fives, software for information technology in Key Stage 1 and large apparatus for physical education.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are encouraged to become involved in the life of the school.</li> <li>• The headteacher and staff are approachable when problems arise.</li> <li>• The children enjoy going to school.</li> <li>• They are satisfied with homework.</li> <li>• The school has a positive effect on children's values and attitudes and achieves good standards of behaviour.</li> </ul>	<p>A few parents expressed concerns over particular areas, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are not kept sufficiently informed about what is taught.</li> <li>• Incidents of bullying are not always dealt with satisfactorily.</li> <li>• Homework is inconsistent.</li> </ul>

The inspection team strongly supports the parents' positive views expressed in both the questionnaire responses and at the meeting with parents. In all instances of parents expressing a negative view, there was a contrary positive view from other parents. The inspection team considers that homework is inconsistent across the school. It did not, however, find evidence during the inspection to support the concerns of a minority of parents that incidents of bullying are not addressed promptly or that insufficient information is provided about what is taught.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The previous inspection in 1997 found that attainment and progress met or exceeded the expectations for all subjects. Although the school has maintained its performance and kept pace with national trends in English and mathematics, standards have declined in information technology at Key Stage 1. Standards at the end of Year 6 are above the national expectations in English and mathematics and average in science and information technology. In religious education, standards are in line with the locally agreed syllabus.
2. Since the last inspection, expectations have been raised and a number of initiatives have been put into place to improve standards. These include the setting of pupils in mathematics, detailed and thorough analysis of the National Curriculum results, target setting and the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies. These are having a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
3. The levels of pupils' attainments in the 1999 National Tests and teacher assessment, taken at the end of Year 2, showed that pupils attained standards which were very high in reading, writing and mathematics in comparison with schools nationally. The proportion of pupils reaching higher levels was close to the national average in reading and mathematics and below the national averages in writing. In comparison with similar schools, the results were average. Teachers' assessments in science showed that the number of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 was very high when compared with the national average while no pupil attained the higher Level 3.
4. The levels of pupils' attainments in the 1999 National Tests, taken at the end of Year 6, showed that pupils attained levels which were well above the national average in mathematics, above in English and close to the national average in science. The number of pupils attaining Level 5 was very high in mathematics, above in science and broadly in line with the national average in English. However, when compared with similar schools, the results were very high in mathematics, and below the national averages in English and science.
5. Over the four years from 1996, the school's performance was very high when compared with the national average in mathematics, and well above the national average in English and science at the end of Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 1, trends over the same period indicate above average performance in reading, writing and mathematics. Overall, the trend has been for girls to perform better than boys have, though both tend to be at least in line with the national averages. Inspection evidence shows that boys and girls achieve similar standards at the end of Year 6 although girls perform slightly better by the end of Year 2. Teachers work hard to ensure that boys and girls have an equal entitlement to teachers' time and support.
6. In interpreting these results it is important to remember the small number of pupils in the cohort and the differing number of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. These factors make comparison with both the national averages and similar schools unreliable as the small number of pupils in each year group means that an individual represents a high percentage. Further, comparison with similar schools is

based on the number of pupils taking free school meals and in this school, no hot meals are served.

7. The attainment of children on entry to the school is average and above when compared with children of a similar age in the county. Most are on course to meet the national learning objectives by age five in nearly all areas of learning except aspects of creative and physical development. This is because there are limited opportunities for imaginative play in the role-play area and children do not have regular, planned opportunities to use large-wheeled toys and apparatus. However, many exceed the standards expected in language and literacy, mathematics and aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. Overall, their progress before they reach their fifth birthday is sound and under-fives are well prepared for statutory education in Year 1 in nearly all areas of learning.
8. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, standards in English are above national expectations and progress is sound. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and to one another and willingly contribute to class discussions. Most speak clearly, using a wide vocabulary, and ask and answer questions appropriately in lessons. Progress in reading in Key Stage 1 is good and standards are above average at the end of Year 2. However, in Key Stage 2, progress is only satisfactory and standards are average at the end of Year 6. In Key Stage 1, pupils read with fluency and expression and enjoy a wide range of books. They have a sound knowledge of initial letter sounds and familiar words and use their phonic knowledge to help with the reading of unfamiliar words. Although most confidently retell stories previously heard, few make sensible predictions of 'what happens next'. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils are competent readers for both information and enjoyment. They confidently talk about the plot and characters and relate them to other books they have read. In writing, standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. Key Stage 1 pupils produce a good range of writing for different purposes and audiences. They use capital letters and full stops accurately and most are beginning to use other punctuation correctly, for example question marks, exclamation marks, and speech marks. In Key Stage 2, older pupils write at length independently and creatively, including those with prior lower attainment. Words are spelt correctly and grammar and basic punctuation are often used correctly.
9. In mathematics, standards at the end of both key stages are above national expectations and pupils make good progress. The school's focus on numeracy, the grouping of pupils according to their abilities and the high expectations of work, all have a positive impact on standards. By the end of Year 2, pupils have good mental calculation skills and quickly recall addition and subtraction facts to 20. They use a range of strategies to solve problems and explain what they do using correct mathematical vocabulary. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils are secure in the four basic rules of number and have a good understanding of fractions and percentages.
10. In science, pupils' attainment by the time they leave school is just about average and overall progress is just satisfactory. Differences between the inspection findings and the national test results reflect the school's focus on literacy and numeracy, the method of implementing teacher assessment at the end of Key Stage 1, and the upheavals caused by the discontinuity in staff in Key Stage 2. In Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of materials and some of their properties. They carry out simple experiments and record their results in a variety of ways. By the end of Year 6, pupils know that a circuit is needed to make electrical devices work and most have

some understanding of the sun's movement around the earth.

11. In information technology, standards are below the expected levels at the end of Year 2. Currently, the range of understanding and skills, and the level of confidence that the majority of pupils have in Year 2, are lower than expected for their age. This is because there is insufficient teaching of the full range of National Curriculum programmes of study, partly due to a shortage of appropriate equipment, and partly because pupils have too few opportunities to use computers. Standards at the end of Year 6 are average and well above average in some aspects of the subject. Overall, progress is sound in Key Stage 2 but is good and sometimes very good in certain areas, for example in handling and communicating information. Excellent resources and confident teaching combine to ensure that pupils remain motivated, enthusiastic and, as a result, make rapid progress in some areas of the subject. Examination of pupils' past work in both key stages shows that the use of computers is not yet an integral part of lessons across the curriculum.
12. In religious education, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is in line with the expectations defined in the locally agreed syllabus. Progress is satisfactory. Younger pupils understand the significance of symbols and know that artefacts are special things that must be looked after and handled with care. Older pupils learn to respect the beliefs of others and increasingly understand the significance of a variety of religious festivals and ceremonies such as Easter and Shabbat.
13. In the foundation subjects of art, design and technology, geography, history, and physical education, work is at the level expected of pupils by the age of eleven and satisfactory progress is made. Standards in these subjects have been maintained since the previous inspection. There was insufficient evidence in music at the end of both key stages and history at the end of Key Stage 1 to make reliable judgements about the progress that pupils made.
14. The results of statutory assessments at the end of key stages show that pupils with special educational needs attain standards which are close to the national average, although two pupils were disapplied from the National Curriculum last year and did not take the tests. In lessons, pupils do not always achieve the standards set for them although they make satisfactory progress towards the targets on their individual education plans. Overall, progress is often no better than satisfactory when work does not take full account of the wide range of abilities in the mixed-age classes. This is partly because assessment is unsatisfactory, planning is not sufficiently detailed in subjects other than literacy and numeracy and there is lack of guidance for teachers in the optional national schemes of work on how activities planned for pupils relate to the levels of attainment in the National Curriculum. As a result, many higher attaining pupils do not reach the standards they are capable of achieving because work in subjects other than in literacy and numeracy is not always sufficiently challenging.
15. The school analyses assessment results well to track attainment and makes decisions about targets and teaching programmes. A good example of this was the school decision to help pupils to work at their own level by forming groups of pupils from Years 4, and 5 and 6, based on prior attainment in English and mathematics. Test results after the initiative showed considerable improvement.
16. National test results for the past years have been analysed and the school monitors attainment and progress by gender and ability. In response to this analysis, targets for improvements have been appropriately set in English, mathematics and science.

There is every indication to suggest that the school will be successful in meeting the performance targets it sets, especially in English and mathematics.

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

17. The standards of positive and enthusiastic attitudes to work in school commented upon in the last report have been maintained overall. The good behaviour and quality of relationships have also been maintained.
18. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attitudes towards their learning are almost always good, with some exceptions. Their interest in what they are doing and the level of enthusiasm in the tasks they are set closely reflects the quality of the teaching. They tackle their work eagerly and persevere even when they find the tasks demanding. Their support for extra-curricular activities is very good; especially the after-school sports clubs, where they are very keen to improve and are proud of their performances. In a few lessons, attitudes are less than positive and pupils become bored and restless, losing their concentration when sessions are too long. Examination of past work shows that the good handwriting in practice books is not always transferred to everyday work.
19. Pupils behave well in and around the school. They are aware of the system of rewards and appreciate the emphasis on good behaviour and effort, which is noted in the weekly achievement assembly. Pupils are polite and friendly to visitors and are respectful of the property of others. The very rare incidents of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively and both boys and girls work and play together well.
20. The quality of relationships throughout the school is good. Adults set good examples for pupils to follow and pupils understand that their individual actions may have consequences for others. They have small, but increasing, opportunities for responsibility as they move through the classes, such as returning the registers, distributing milk and doing jobs for teachers. They tidy up well after their work is finished and most keep their work-spaces neat and uncluttered. They listen well to their teachers and each other, and generally show respect for the feelings and opinions of others. Occasionally however, pupils are less tolerant of one another, particularly in Year 6. Here also, there are too few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, such as choosing and collecting resources.
21. Overall, attendance is in line with the national average, and there have been no recent exclusions. Attendance recording is satisfactory.

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

22. Across the school, the quality of teaching is almost always satisfactory in all subjects of the curriculum except mathematics which is good in both key stages, and information technology which is very good in Key Stage 2 and unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1. Fifty-six per cent of the teaching observed was good or better and eight per cent of lessons seen were unsatisfactory. The remainder of teaching was satisfactory. This shows that the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when 14 per cent of the teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. The greatest concentration of good teaching was seen in mathematics, and this has had a significant effect on both attainment and progress, particularly in numeracy.

23. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory. In both key stages, teachers are following the structure recommended in the National Literacy Strategy and this is ensuring sound progression from year to year in phonics skills. However, the session is too long for the younger pupils in Key Stage 1 and teachers are not always sufficiently flexible in their use of the structure. In the introductory session, pupils sit for too long and the planned work does not match what pupils know, understand and can do. Most teachers provide a good balance between whole-class and group activities and guided reading is effective. Discussions at the end of lessons are used well to review the main points of the lesson but, on occasions, pupils are bored and restless because the lesson has lasted too long.
24. The teaching of numeracy is good. There is an effective focus on the development of mental arithmetic with regular, challenging, quick-fire questioning at the start of lessons. Most teachers encourage pupils to explain their methods of calculating solutions to problems. This is successful in helping pupils look for alternative ways of problem solving. Teachers use games well to motivate and interest pupils.
25. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of most of the subjects they teach, with the exception of art, enabling them to make effective and pertinent teaching points and providing pupils with accurate and relevant information. This is particularly evident in literacy and numeracy lessons where teachers use well-chosen resources to interest, inspire and motivate the pupils. In one literacy lesson in Key Stage 1, a puppet was used very effectively to interest the pupils and help them to learn. They use vocabulary that is easily understood and introduce and explain new words clearly. Information is imparted in lively and stimulating ways, effectively engaging pupils' interest and motivating them well. For example, in a Year 5 and 6 science lesson, information about the movement of the earth was introduced practically in a whole-class demonstration in the hall involving all pupils.
26. Overall, planning is sound. The best and most detailed planning is prepared for the literacy and numeracy sessions and information technology in Key Stage 2. However, the quality of planning in other lessons or subjects is inconsistent and not sufficiently detailed to clearly identify what pupils of different ages and abilities will know, understand and be able to do by the end of the lesson. Further, plans make no reference to the National Curriculum programme of study, attainment targets, levels, or to the school's own scheme of work. As a result, the same work is set for all pupils in the foundation subjects and high attainers are not extended. The criticism in the last report that higher attaining pupils were not sufficiently challenged is still the case in some lessons. This weakness in planning also means that it is difficult for teachers to assess pupils' attainment and progress if it is not always clear what pupils are expected to learn.
27. The quality and use of day-to-day assessment is sound. Most teachers are skilled in using questions to check and challenge pupils' thinking and understanding and most are adept at asking good follow-up questions in reply to pupils' initial responses. Good use is made of plenary sessions in literacy and numeracy to assess what pupils have learned in a lesson and further reinforce their subject knowledge and understanding. Teachers in Key Stage 1 listen and respond well to their pupils and help them to improve the quality of their work by giving helpful feedback and praise which helps to motivate and encourage them. In Key Stage 2, marking is regular and often encouraging in tone but does not always include comments to help pupils move forward to the next step in their learning.



28. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and they make sound progress relative to their prior attainments. Pupils with special educational needs are identified by the class teacher who consults with the co-ordinator (SENCO) before they are placed on the register. There are, however, flaws in the identification process which is insufficiently rigorous and does not give an accurate picture of the differences between these pupils and others. The school is aware of this and is revising the current register. There is no system of withdrawal for extra support for pupils with special educational needs and teachers are expected to adapt worksheets, tasks and vocabulary for them. This happens in literacy and numeracy but is not consistently applied across the school, so that these pupils sometimes struggle with tasks which are not appropriate to their needs and restrict the progress they make. Pupils with statements are supported in some lessons when a classroom assistant is available, but the working hours of classroom assistants are insufficient to provide the constant support required. Pupils generally have good attitudes to their work in literacy and numeracy, but become discouraged and lose interest when the work set is too demanding for them. They have the same opportunities for taking on small responsibilities as the rest of the children in the school.
29. Higher attaining pupils are not always given sufficiently challenging work in subjects other than information technology and mathematics.
30. Teachers are well organised for lessons and have suitable resources available for pupils. Classrooms are orderly and provide appropriate places for learning. During the literacy hour, teachers group pupils around them well, so that everyone can see the board or the book being read. They manage their pupils well and create a calm atmosphere, which is conducive to learning. There are well-established classroom routines to which most pupils respond positively and listen attentively without disturbance. Expectations of good behaviour are mostly high and this leads to a productive working environment where pupils feel valued and secure and this has a positive impact on learning.
31. Resources are often used well to support learning and, in the best lessons, the resources are carefully prepared and of sufficient quantity. However, in a few lessons, pupils are seated on the carpet for too long and some become restless. Throughout the school, teaching and learning are enhanced by the effective use of support staff, parents and voluntary helpers. Their work with individuals and small groups in all areas of the curriculum does much to develop the skills and confidence of the pupils, for instance in the additional support given in literacy and particularly in information technology in Key Stage 2. The use of information technology to support learning is marginal, and rarely forms a part of teaching in any subject.
32. A few parents are critical of the inconsistent way homework is provided throughout the school. Homework is not used well to support pupils' learning, particularly in reading, where home reading arrangements are unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1. Currently, the volume and variety of work set is inconsistent and hence, does little to prepare older pupils sufficiently for the expectations of secondary education.

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

33. The breadth of the curriculum has been maintained since the previous inspection. The length of the school week has been reviewed and is now well in line with the national average. The criticism of the last report that the curriculum for the under-fives does not establish clear objectives for the national Early Learning Goals has been thoroughly addressed and now meets all requirements within the context of a mixed-age class.
34. The curriculum for pupils under five is generally appropriate, although the organisation of the class means that the teacher has an almost impossible task of catering for three age groups. National Early Learning Goals are closely linked to the National Curriculum and this means that there are few planned opportunities to learn through purposeful and imaginative play which is reflected in attainment and progress in creative and physical development.
35. The school bases its lesson planning and schemes of work on national guidance and meets all statutory requirements, except for information technology where there are gaps in coverage at the end of Key Stage 1. Information technology does not meet statutory requirements at Key Stage 1 because not all aspects of the subject are taught. Religious education is taught appropriately according to the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus. There is an imbalance in provision for physical education due to the lack of sufficient resources for climbing and balancing. The school relies mostly on national guidance. This means that the National Curriculum programmes of study are not used as consistently as they should be. The planning does not always build upon what pupils know, understand and can do; hence progress for older and higher attaining pupils in the mixed age classes is sometimes limited. The use of optional national schemes of work also means that detailed guidance in teaching for non-specialists in particular subjects like music is not sufficient. Teachers work hard to ensure that there is work adapted to all ages in the mixed age classes in the core subjects of mathematics and English, but not enough is done to match work to abilities in science and foundation subjects.
36. Although the school has adopted the national literacy and numeracy hours, these are not implemented to best effect. The time-table is heavily weighted in favour of English and mathematics, but the time allocated to literacy is over-long in both key stages and best use of time is not made in the numeracy session which is split in two with morning break. The school has no structured approach to the uses of literacy and numeracy across all subjects of the curriculum and this is unsatisfactory.
37. All pupils have full and equal access to curriculum areas and opportunities. There is however, some withdrawal of groups of children for French and information technology lessons which take place during the daily act of collective worship and some morning lessons. The input which pupils miss during these times is given when they return to their classes and care is taken to ensure that groups are withdrawn in rotation with different pupils involved each time.
38. Pupils with special educational needs have equal access to the full curriculum on offer at the school. The lack of specific planning in the foundation subjects to meet their individual needs, however, means that they cannot always take advantage of the curricular opportunities offered. All extra-curricular activities, such as after-school clubs and day and residential visits, are open to pupils of all abilities.

39. There is a good range of after-school clubs for pupils in Key Stage 2, which are enthusiastically supported. The curriculum is enhanced by a programme of visits to places of interest connected with topics or particular areas of the curriculum, for example the Millennium Dome and The Wilderness. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given the opportunity of making a residential visit each year to support their learning in many areas of the curriculum. The school arranges visits to and from theatre groups and there is an annual Book Week.
40. The school provides for personal and social education through an informal programme which is effective. Sex education and drugs awareness education are covered through studies in science and health education, and the parental right of withdrawal from sex education, religious education and the act of collective worship is appropriately noted in the prospectus.
41. The school is establishing and improving links with the Slimbridge Wildfowl Trust, for example carol singing and exhibiting artwork. It also has constructive links with the local Tyndale cluster of small schools which offers greater access to resources and materials.
42. Judgements on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils remain as good as those reports in the previous report, although there has been some improvement.
43. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Whole-school assemblies meet statutory requirements with appropriate moments for reflection and prayer. The record of themes for the daily act of collective worship shows that this is broadly Christian over a period of time, whilst taking note of festivals in other major religions, for example Diwali. Pupils are encouraged to explore their thoughts and feelings in discussions in class and in personal and social education lessons, when they generally respect the values and opinions of others. They learn to understand the beliefs Judaism when they visit a synagogue in connection with their studies. Opportunities for reflective writing, including poetry, are limited in Key Stage 2, and those for independent and imaginative writing at Key Stage 1 are very restricted. Pupils listen to music at assemblies and during music lessons and generally respond with pleasure. The contribution of art to spiritual development is unsatisfactory.
44. Provision for moral development is good. The behaviour and discipline policy is currently being revised with a more positive emphasis. The school and classroom rules are positive, teachers constantly reinforce them and pupils generally respect them. Pupils respond well to the system of rewards for good behaviour noted in the weekly achievement assembly. The school gives clear guidance to teachers on sanctions and anti-bullying strategies.
45. Provision for social development is good. The mixed age classes give good opportunities for pupils of all ages to work and play together, and older pupils take care of the younger children on the playground. Local senior citizens act as oral witnesses to local history and pupils sing carols for the community at the Slimbridge Wildfowl Trust. Social awareness is also raised through education on care for the environment and through pupils' fund-raising for charities at home and abroad, for example, Save the Children, Comic Relief and the Bristol Scanner Appeal. Social development is supported in the annual residential visit for Years 5 and 6.

46. Provision for cultural education is satisfactory. There are positive contributions from daily assemblies, for example in the use and concept of a native American dream-catcher. There are joint visits with other small schools to and from theatre groups, and pupils are given the opportunity to work with practising artists, for example Peter the Potter. Peripatetic music tutors give concerts with and for pupils at the end of term and in special assemblies. Art does not make its full contribution to cultural development, although there has been some study of the lives and work of Clarice Cliff and Mondrian. There are too few opportunities for the study of art and artists, particularly non-white, non-European. No study is made of the contribution of other cultures to mathematics, science, history, geography and technology.

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

47. The school takes satisfactory steps to provide for the care and welfare of its pupils. Staff know individual pupils and their backgrounds well and provide good personal care and support. The youngest pupils in the Reception class feel secure and have settled well into the life of the school. Staff are conscientious in ensuring that the children are collected by a responsible adult at the end of the school day.
48. Child protection procedures are good and the headteacher, as the designated person, ensures that all staff are aware of potential issues. The school makes good provision to ensure pupils are aware of health education issues including sex education. Good procedures are in place for identifying health and safety issues and appropriate concerns have been raised. Within the school buildings, pupils work in a safe and secure environment.
49. The current behaviour policy is inadequate with too much emphasis on rules and sanctions. This is acknowledged and a current review of the policy places a greater emphasis on rewards. This is very necessary as some teachers need clearer guidance in the use of rewards and sanctions. The school has good procedures to deal with potential bullying or aggressive behaviour in a quick and effective manner. Attendance procedures are satisfactory; registers are kept up-to-date.
50. The school keeps basic records in relation to pupils' academic progress and appropriate support and guidance is given to them on their move to secondary education. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are reviewed regularly by the class teacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator and revised targets are set for them. The school has maintained the good pastoral care for these pupils identified in the previous inspection report. The special educational needs co-ordinator is well aware of the weaknesses in identification and assessment procedures and is already working on the revision and updating of the register to reflect the true position.
51. The previous inspection noted that assessment was prioritised in the school development plan and that assessment in foundation subjects was being developed. Since then, there has been little change and the school acknowledges that this is an area for much further development. Assessment procedures, analysis and the use of this data are still prioritised in the school development plan.
52. Statutory assessment tests at the ends of key stages are taken and the results are analysed by the staff to identify strengths and weaknesses in particular areas. This analysis however, was not always used consistently to help teachers plan lessons. The school also takes part in the optional assessments in Years 3, 4 and 5. Although

the school's analysis shows no noticeable gender bias or underachievement in any specific group, the inspection team identified boys as achieving lower results than girls.

53. Currently, the work for children under five is not monitored or assessed systematically against the requirements of the national Early Learning Goals.
54. Key Stage 2 teachers have begun to set individual termly targets in English and mathematics for each pupil and this is evaluated termly with a view to extending the practice at Key Stage 1. Termly targets for pupils with special educational needs are taken from individual education plans and these are regularly reviewed. Teachers design individual assessment sheets by age and ability for pupils in their class, but these records lack detail and do not give adequate guidance for target setting. Teachers make evaluations of progress in some subjects, for example guided reading in the literacy hour. These note individual strengths and weaknesses. However, this does not provide accurate information and teachers' assessments in statutory attainment tests are not always correct.
55. The school has begun to build portfolios of pupils' work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science to provide benchmarks for further and more precise assessment of pupils' progress. The annual written report to parents meets requirements, although the format is under review. The school regularly invites parents to discuss the progress of their children and these consultations are well attended.

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

56. The great majority of parents are very supportive of the school and feels it provides well for their children. A few have concerns over the homework set for pupils and aspects of the supervision of behaviour and the rewards system. These views are confirmed by the findings of the inspection in both respects. The staff work hard to involve parents into the life of the school, and the success it achieves in developing good links has a positive impact on pupils' attainment and attitudes.
57. Good quality information is provided to parents through regular and informative newsletters, the school prospectus and the governors' annual report. Regular consultation evenings on issues such as literacy, numeracy, new or revised policies or initiatives and pupils' progress are especially effective. In particular, parent consultation evenings are now used to set pupils specific termly targets for achievement in mathematics and English in Year 6. Annual reports give parents good information on pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects. Staff are readily available at the end of the day to discuss any issues with parents.
58. All parents of pupils with special educational needs are informed from the moment the needs are identified. They meet regularly with class teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator and are kept well informed of their children's progress. Parents of children who have statements of special educational needs are invited to attend the regular reviews and usually take up the opportunity when their views are taken into account in the setting of the revised targets.
59. Parents provide very good help in all classes throughout the school and for extra-curricular activities; for example the excellent contribution to teaching of information technology which is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. The Friends of

Slimbridge School make significant financial contributions towards resources, provide a good range of social activities for parents and pupils, and provide invaluable help in decorating the premises.

60. The school has established an appropriate Home/School agreement and homework policy. Consistent use of the homework policy has not yet been established and home reading diaries are not used consistently.

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

61. The leadership and management of the school are good and have had a positive effect on most aspects of school life. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and gives it clear purpose and direction. She is working closely with the governors and members of staff to raise standards and the quality of teaching. Her clear vision for the future is evident in her determination to raise standards of attainment by focusing on several key strategies. For example, to continue to improve standards of numeracy by the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The staff are well supported by a professionally able and caring headteacher who recognises the importance of developing a strong team identity. Under her leadership, teachers and support staff work together effectively.
62. The aims of the school are clearly defined and they underpin much of its work and life. Within school all children are valued and cared for and are encouraged to develop into well-motivated and self-disciplined pupils. The school is particularly successful in achieving its aim of creating in pupils positive attitudes towards work. Although there is no explicit commitment to the achievement of high standards, the school is aware of the importance of meeting the needs of pupils of all attainment levels. In this respect, the issues of higher attaining pupils and children under five with special educational needs require addressing.
63. There are relevant structures and procedures in place to monitor standards and provision. Overall, these procedures are satisfactory. The headteacher monitors teaching in classrooms and she monitors pupil learning by scrutinising teachers' planning and pupils' work in books. Some members of the governing body, especially the two governors with responsibility for numeracy and literacy, monitor work in the classroom. The curriculum co-ordinator for numeracy monitors teaching and learning by direct observation in classrooms. However, this is not a practice common to all subject areas. Other subject co-ordinators monitor progress by scrutinising pupils' completed work and some monitor teachers' planning but they have yet to observe teaching directly through classroom observation. Staff meet together regularly and discuss the effectiveness of curricular provision and examine results of statutory tests in order to evaluate pupils' attainment and progress.
64. The school subsidises funding for pupils with special educational needs and has prioritised the need for more resources in its development plan for the current year. The spending targets which it hopes to identify include plans for support for more able children. Apart from a few minor omissions of which the school is now aware, the policy for special educational needs complies with the national Code of Practice. The newly designated governor for special educational needs is aware of the issues involved and is keen to be trained to play a full part as 'critical friend.' The special educational needs co-ordinator has a good understanding of the role. However, the exercise of the management function of monitoring and evaluating provision and

classroom support is severely limited by the lack of non-contact time. Newly appointed, the special educational needs co-ordinator is working with the headteacher to improve her knowledge and understanding of school provision with a view to making it more effective and productive.

65. The governing body is well informed and fulfils its responsibilities effectively. Governors have confidence in the headteacher and support her well, yet they are appropriately demanding, expecting regular updates concerning improvements being made in the school. Relevant structures and procedures are in place to ensure that governors fulfil their roles effectively. They are appropriately involved in decision making, target setting, forward planning and the monitoring of the curriculum. Members visit the school regularly and report back to fellow governors on their experiences. The governors with curriculum responsibilities for literacy and numeracy have clear understandings of the national strategies and monitor work in the classroom.
66. The school manages and uses its strategic resources well. Financial planning is very good. There is an effective system in place to ensure that there is a clear relationship between educational objectives and available resources. Money is appropriately allocated and kept under constant review by the governing body's finance committee. Allocations relate directly to priorities established in the school development plan which is an effective management tool identifying appropriate long- and short-term priorities and containing a programme to ensure that subjects are reviewed regularly. For example, resources used for the development of information and communications technology have considerably improved this area both in terms of accommodation and equipment. Resources spent on implementing the numeracy strategy have made a significant contribution to raising standards in this aspect of mathematics. Governors are appropriately involved in making spending decisions and have a good oversight of the budget. Governors evaluate the effect of the school's spending decisions on standards. They receive regular reports from the headteacher and question the contents, they analyse statutory test results with the headteacher and they visit the school regularly.
67. The school has established good procedures in order to ensure the cost effectiveness of the goods and services that it purchases. All purchases over £500 are made after three quotations have been received. Future expenditure is carefully costed with success criterion being built in. Sometime after the purchase of the new mathematics scheme, the governors' requested it be evaluated and a report on its value in raising standards be made to a governors' meeting. The school receives regular computerised printouts from the local educational authority detailing ongoing expenditure. This information is used well by the headteacher and governors in their financial planning. Educational technology is appropriately used in the administration of the school.
68. The school is adequately staffed to meet the demands of the curriculum. The school effectively uses students in training to enhance pupils' learning and it makes a good contribution to the students' professional development. Suitable informal induction procedures are in place for teachers who are new to the school. These work satisfactorily for supply staff and students. However, they would be improved if the school formalised these procedures and published a staff handbook outlining the administrative procedures and day-to-day routine of the school. A system of appraisal is in place. In the light of current action by teachers' professional associations, it is some time since a teacher was appraised. The headteacher is scheduled to be

appraised in the near future. However, the headteacher regularly discusses with staff their individual training needs and those that relate to the overall needs of the school. Such training has a positive effect on the quality of education provided, for example, training the staff have received in numeracy and literacy has contributed to the successful implementation of the national strategies in the school.

69. The quality of the accommodation has improved since the last inspection. It is now satisfactory overall. The school has recently benefited from the addition of an indoor classroom, an addition of a dedicated information and communications technology room, and an extension to the school hall. These have improved the facilities for teaching information and communications technology and have allowed teachers to plan physical education lessons which are more challenging for pupils. However, there are still some areas of concern. The toilet facilities for staff are not housed in an integral part of the building; there is no separate office for the headteacher, she shares an office with the administrative staff: and the school lacks secure outdoor play facilities for the children who are under five. Some of the furniture in the information and communications technology suite is inappropriate, especially the chairs.
70. Learning resources within the school, which were a concern in the last report, are overall satisfactory and adequately support most areas of the National Curriculum. Resources in information and communications technology, mathematics and music are good. The school has a good supply of computer hardware and software. A good stock of untuned and tuned percussion instruments is available to meet the requirements of the programme of study for music. Use of some of these in a lesson observed during the inspection made a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The library is adequate and contains a good supply of story books. The number of reference books is satisfactory and the school is able to supplement these by loaning them from the County Loans Service. The school is also able to borrow a range of artefacts from the cluster group of schools to which it is attached to support learning and teaching in religious education, history and geography. Curriculum areas where resources are inadequate include design and technology where there is a need for more tools and a greater range of materials; and physical education, which requires more large climbing and jumping equipment. The teaching of special educational needs requires more equipment to support pupils' teaching and learning, and there is an insufficient range of large play equipment available for children under five. Accessibility of resources is satisfactory.
71. The issues raised in respect of management in the last inspection have been addressed. Leadership and management were considered to be areas of serious weakness. Improvement has been very good. The school now benefits from strong leadership. The headteacher, staff and governors work together in partnership with a commitment to raise standards within the school. Systems are now in place to monitor teaching and learning, however, these will be further strengthened when subject co-ordinators play a more active role in monitoring teaching. Governors are now better informed and in a better position to make decisions based on carefully considered data. The governing body now meets all statutory requirements. Since the last inspection, much tighter financial controls have been established. Good strategic financial planning has reduced the deficit reported in the last report. Financial planning is now matched to the priorities outlined in the school development plan. In the last audit report it was stated that the school's financial systems were operating well and the school was commended upon the good standard of financial administration. This area is still a strength.



72. Under the good leadership provided by the headteacher and the effective support of the governing body, the school has made good improvements since the last inspection and its capacity for further improvement is good.

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

**The school is operating well, but in order to build upon the many positive aspects of the school and further improve the standard of work and quality of the education provided, the governors, headteacher and staff, in co-operation with the local education authority, should:**

- **Raise attainment in information technology at the end of Key Stage 1 by\*:**
  - ensuring that all strands of the National Curriculum are taught in each class;
  - providing regular opportunities for pupils to use their skills to enhance their learning in other subjects.
  
- **Improve the quality of provision for children under five by:**
  - providing a learning environment more appropriate to children of this age within the classroom;
  - ensuring that tasks set are more suitable to young children;
  - introducing ongoing observation and assessment in the under-fives to ensure that tasks set take pupils' learning forward appropriately;
  - making more effective use of baseline assessment as part of the whole school-school approach;
  - improving levels of resourcing, especially large construction materials and apparatus for climbing and balancing. (para 78)
  
- **Ensure that the management of continuity and progression in all pupils' learning is as effective and efficient as possible by:**
  - agreeing and implementing a policy for assessment and recording;
  - devising and undertaking a programme of regular assessment in all subjects;
  - using the information from the assessment of pupils' work consistently to inform the planning of a range of tasks and resources which appropriately challenge the full range of ability, but especially the more able;
  - improving the effectiveness of teachers' marking, indicating in their written comments in pupils' books how they might improve their work.
  
- **Further develop the leadership and management roles of some of the subject co-ordinators by:**
  - providing clear guidance, time and training to enable subject co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate teaching, learning and pupils' attainment;
  - providing opportunities to share the good practice that exists in mathematics.

*(\*The school has already identified these issues for improvement which form part of the school's development plan.)*

**In addition to the key issues above, the following issues should be considered for inclusion in the action plan to:**

- Review the school's procedures regarding homework.
- Provide greater balance in physical education by providing the appropriate equipment for gymnastics.
- Review the time allocation and organisation of the school day for literacy and numeracy sessions.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	23
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0.0	4.3	56.5	30.4	8.7	0.0	0.0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		99
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		23

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	6	6	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100	100	100
	National	81	81	84

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100	100	100
	National	81	79	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	8	8	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	7	6
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	13	14	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81	88	81
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	7	6
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	13	14	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81	88	81
	National	68	69	75

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	90
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.5
Average class size	25.5

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

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	28.75

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	173206
Total expenditure	171516
Expenditure per pupil	1682
Balance brought forward from previous year	-2664
Balance carried forward to next year	-974

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	101
Number of questionnaires returned	85

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	38	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	45	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	52	7	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	45	13	2	4
The teaching is good.	61	35	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	38	13	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	26	4	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	28	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	55	33	8	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	54	40	1	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	45	5	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	45	5	1	2

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

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

73. Children enter the school in September in the year in which they become five and initially attend for only half a day. This is gradually increased so that by the end of the autumn term, all are attending full-time in a class which also includes pupils in the Reception year and Year 1. Assessment on entry is carried out when pupils start in the Reception class and shows that attainment on entry is generally above the county average in all aspects of learning. Standards of attainment since the last inspection have improved in speaking and listening, writing, mathematics and science. They have been maintained in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. They have declined in some aspects of creative and physical development.

### **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

74. Children's attainment exceeds the level required by the national Early Learning Goals with the majority of children listening attentively for a limited period of time in the literacy session but their attention wavers when they have to sit for long periods. They respond well to stories, recalling the sequence of events. They know how books are organised, read from left to right and from front to back. They speak confidently and clearly, and most are quite articulate, very willing to contribute to discussions and to ask and answer questions. Early reading skills are developing well. The homework tasks of learning the words needed for reading their texts in school are used effectively. However, the lack of a home/school reading diary limits the involvement of parents in their children's learning. Children learn to write appropriately by copying their teachers' writing or tracing over letters in their books. Few opportunities are provided for them to practise free or extended writing or for exploring language through role-play.

### **MATHEMATICS**

75. Children attain standards which exceed the level required by the national Early Learning Goals. They count confidently to ten and beyond, and perform simple addition and subtraction activities. They recognise simple shapes like square, circle, triangle and rectangle and know their properties, for example the number of sides. They sequence shape and colour when using a mathematics program on the computer. They clamour to join their older classmates in making Venn diagrams when sorting objects. They recognise and name figures up to 20, and make good attempts at writing them.

### **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

76. Children exceed the expected level required by the national Early Learning Goals, especially in geography and science. Several recognise a 'feather' in the illustration of the 'Quarrelsome Queen' as 'a writing feather with ink' and they know that feathers come from birds. They become excited as their teacher displays a feather culled from a buzzard. They are developing a good knowledge of Australian landscape, flora and fauna through their topic on 'Barnaby Bear and his Travels'. Information technology is used effectively to support their learning.

## **CREATIVE AND AESTHETIC DEVELOPMENT**

77. Children's attainment is slightly below the expected level required by the national Early Learning Goals. Singing from memory is enthusiastic and there is lively response to music in nodding, smiling and keeping time on their 'knee-drums.' Some have experience of using paint, printing with LEGO blocks, making hand and finger prints, a little collage work and some free drawing in news books. However, too much use is made of templates, and the children have a limited choice of media and tools. Their learning is broadened by the study of another culture, that of the aboriginal in Australia. Limited opportunities are provided for imaginative play in the role-play area.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

78. Children's attainment is slightly below the level required by the national Early Learning Goals because of the lack of an outdoor play area and climbing and balancing equipment. Insufficient opportunities are planned for outdoor activities and vigorous play. The children run, jump and hop to a satisfactory standard and balance and steer wheeled vehicles safely and competently. Pencils are held correctly and fine motor control is developing well in writing and colouring. They hold pencils with the correct grip and their fine motor control is developing well in writing, colouring, cutting and sticking. There are insufficient opportunities for planned outdoor activities and vigorous play.

## **PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

79. Children's attainment is in line with the expected level required by the national Early Learning Goals. They soon begin to understand and follow school and classroom routines, sitting on the carpet when requested and answering individual questions appropriately. Although some are learning to put up their hands before speaking, many still call out and interrupt the teacher and each other. A minority find concentration very difficult after only short periods of time and this is understandable as the literacy session is long. For the most part, resources are shared well and the children take turns, discussing tasks and occasionally helping each other. The majority are eager to settle to their tasks, persevering even when they find the work difficult. They are very pleased with their own efforts and admire those of others. They are happy to approach adults when requiring help.
80. It is difficult to provide specifically for the needs of these young children in a classroom organised for Key Stage 1 pupils. The role-play corner is uninviting and not used consistently. Although the book corner is comfortably furnished with colourful beanbags, it is rarely used well for browsing. The classroom is attractive, incorporating pupils' artwork.
81. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, but is constrained for the under-fives by the presence of the three age groups in the class. Planning ensures that the national Early Learning Goals feature in every subject of the National Curriculum with activities modified to meet the needs of the youngest pupils. However, activities are not always sufficiently matched to the specific needs of the children, such as structured play in sand and water, painting, plasticine and outdoor activities but this blurring of teacher expectations results in high attainment. In the afternoons, children are not engaged in formal work but can choose from sand and water, painting, plasticine and outdoor activities if the weather is clement. The nursery nurse works well with the



teacher and gives good support to groups, making a valuable contribution to teaching and learning. This valuable support is not always available, and children with special educational needs struggle with tasks set for the rest of class without sufficient help. Observation and assessment are inconsistent and therefore the tasks set do not match what the children already know, understand and can do.

## ENGLISH

82. Standards of attainment in 1999 show that at Key Stage 1, reading is very high in comparison with the national average and close to the national average at the Level 3. Writing is also very high in comparison with the national average, but below at Level 3. Over the last four years, reading and writing are well above the national average. There is no significant difference between boys and girls in reading, but girls do better than boys in writing. In comparison with similar schools, standards are close to the average.
83. At Key Stage 2, standards are above the national average and close to it at the higher levels. Over four years, standards are well above the national average with girls again outperforming boys – the girls' results being well above the national average, and the boys' just above. The trend of improvement in attainment is broadly in line with the national average but, in comparison with other similar schools, standards are below average. In such a small school however, fluctuations occur from year to year because of the small number of pupils involved and it is unwise to draw any inferences from the statistics.
84. The standards of speaking and listening are above the national average at both key stages. Pupils listen well to their teachers and each other and demonstrate their good listening skills in the answers they give to questions and in their contributions to class discussions. The majority is clear, confident and articulate speakers who are happy to take risks when asking and answering questions without fear of censure or ridicule. Pupils with special educational needs sometimes need prompting to help them expand their answers from one word or phrase.
85. Pupils are provided with good opportunities for speaking to an audience in lessons, assemblies and school productions. There are limited opportunities for the development of drama and role-play.
86. Standards in reading are above the national average at Key Stage 1. Pupils read accurately and have good understanding of what they read. High attaining pupils read with great expression, and poetry reading is very dramatic! A variety of strategies is used for working out unfamiliar words and dictionaries are used well to find the meanings. Pupils retell stories they have previously heard, but few make a sensible prediction of 'what happens next.' The relationship between sounds and words is not fully understood by all pupils, particularly the low attainers. Contents, indices and information gathering from books and computers are well developed. By Year 6, reading is in line with the national average. Most pupils read accurately and fluently, higher attainers with more expression than others. Most use their phonic skills well, recognising errors and self-correcting. Pupils with prior lower attainment have few phonic skills and rely on a sight vocabulary, sometimes guessing incorrectly. All have a sound knowledge and understanding of library and research skills but have little opportunity to use them in school. All pupils make progress in their understanding of the organisation of books and the contributions made by authors, illustrators and publishers. There is a disappointingly low quality of discussion of books, authors and

the use of language. Older pupils with special educational needs are supplied with a limited range of reading texts appropriate to their age and experience and therefore their progress is limited at times.

87. Standards in writing are good at Key Stage 1. Pupils produce a wide range of writing for different purposes and audiences according to their age and ability. They write confidently about their own news, personal experiences and simple accounts of traditional stories. They show that they understand the texts they read in the literacy hour as worksheets and formal exercises are completed correctly. Older pupils and those with prior higher attainment write independently of a framework, sequencing events correctly, and are beginning to write their own book reviews, with the help of prompt-sheets. They learn the formal layout of letters and identify spelling patterns such as 'oo', 'ew' and 'oy'. Comprehension questions are usually answered in whole sentences and full stops and capital letters are used correctly. Most are beginning to use other punctuation correctly, for example, question, exclamation and speech marks. The handwriting of the majority is generally joined-up and legible, although the neat style in the practice books is not transferred to free writing. Presentation is often unsatisfactory.
88. At Key Stage 2, standards in writing are in line with the national average. Pupils write at length independently and creatively, including those with prior lower attainment. Although there is some evidence of the study of poetry, none of this is included in pupils' workbooks. Pupils produce a good volume and range of writing for different purposes and audiences, but there is a general lack of exciting and adventurous vocabulary. Poetry on display showed some effective use of imagery, for example rain 'falling gently like tears' or 'crystal liquid filling the dusty crater'. Imaginative and reflective writing featured well in a snowy scene inspired by the Narnia novels. Here pupils wrote about the 'mysterious claw-marks of the robin', 'my frosty fantasy' or 'the frozen stream beautiful as a diamond'.
89. The good progress previously made in writing is not sustained and by Year 6, spelling is no more than satisfactory and punctuation rarely goes further than full stops, question and exclamation marks. The majority of handwriting is joined up and legible, consistent in size and space. Words are spelt correctly and grammar and basic punctuation are used correctly. All except those of prior lower attainment organise their work into paragraphs. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. There is no evidence of the use of information technology as a drafting or presentational tool.
90. Pupils in both key stages enjoy the work they do in the literacy sessions. Guided reading is a particularly enjoyable activity, but few go on to read more of the books from which the extracts are taken. Pupils know and understand the organisation of books and the contributions made by authors, illustrators and publishers. Since September, most pupils at Key Stage 1 have made good progress in the length and volume of their work, including independent and extended writing but presentation is often unsatisfactory. Throughout Key Stage 2, handwriting improves for all abilities from print-script which is often inconsistent in size and space to the majority which is joined-up and legible, although progression in handwriting for boys is uneven. The basic structure of story telling is developing well, but there are not many pieces of creative and imaginative writing and poetry at either key stage. Progress in the use of vocabulary is evident in some topic work at Key Stage 1, but less so in reflective writing. At Key Stage 2, there is some progress in the use of literacy skills across the curriculum. Empathic writing in response to 'Carrie's War' demonstrates pupils'

increasing knowledge and understanding of the use of language in World War Two propaganda. The skill of note taking is developing well particularly in geography, where there is some accurate use of the vocabulary associated with the water cycle. Scientific reports or the writing up of experiments are not used consistently to extend literacy skills. The subject makes a positive contribution to cultural development in the study of diaries ancient and modern, for example Samuel Pepys and Anne Frank.

91. The quality of teaching and learning is sound overall at both key stages. Teachers in Key Stage 1 have satisfactory subject knowledge, good questioning and management techniques and teach lessons which are satisfactory and where pupils improve their knowledge, understanding and skills, for example in the use of the dictionary and spelling strategies. In most lessons, learning objectives have a clear focus and teachers' expectations are appropriately high as pupils reinforce and consolidate their learning in correct punctuation. In a minority of lessons, pupils are insufficiently challenged, the pace is slow and pupils are not clearly motivated. In these lessons, the use of time and resources was unsatisfactory and expectations were too low to allow pupils to make sufficient progress. Throughout the key stage, teachers do not always match the work set to pupils' individual needs, in spite of setting individual targets for handwriting and presentation. For example, lists of words for spellings are the same for all abilities and ages. Word and sentence level work in literacy is well adapted to the range of abilities and teachers' joint planning ensures a similar experience for both Year 1 classes. The teachers' marking is largely positive but gives few pointers to the pupils on where they have done well and where improvement is needed. The work of pupils with special educational needs and those of prior lower attainment is carefully annotated and helpful comments are written to help them improve.
92. At Key Stage 2, teachers also use their good subject knowledge to take pupils' learning forward in all aspects of the subject. They share the learning objectives of the lesson with the pupils so that they know what it is they are supposed to be learning and understand what the set tasks mean. Again, there is insufficient adaptation of tasks to suit the abilities of pupils, especially those with special educational needs and those of prior higher attainment. Teachers and students focus on each group, ensuring that pupils stay on task throughout the activity, so that the majority of them make good progress, for instance, in identifying main clauses and looking at ways of connecting clauses. Marking is on the spot and encouraging but does not always suggest how the pupils might improve. It gives very little guidance on handwriting and presentation, in spite of the declared individual targets. Work is effectively adapted for those with special educational needs but there is little difference between teachers' expectations for the average and above average attainers.
93. The school has appropriately adapted the National Literacy Strategy and sufficient time is given to the subject, but time allocation is not sufficiently adapted to the needs of the school, particularly at Key Stage 1. Here, the length of the literacy sessions is excessive, and this leads to a slow pace in lessons during which pupils lose motivation and interest, and progress suffers. Assessment procedures are developing well in order to give teachers the necessary information for setting individual targets and for use in future planning. There is no structured approach to teaching the uses of literacy across the curriculum. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the role but lacks the time and opportunity to monitor and review. Resources are good for the literacy hour and the reading scheme is satisfactory. Classroom collections, both fiction and non-fiction, are however only satisfactory when supplemented by loans and

some are in need of repair and replacement. The library has a small but satisfactory range of fiction and reference books but the area has recently been converted into a computer suite so that effectively, there is no library for pupils to use for research or the exploration of books. The wide variety of work on display celebrates pupils' achievements and enhances classrooms and public areas.

## **MATHEMATICS**

94. In the 1999 national tests for seven-year-olds 100 per cent of pupils attained Level 2 or above. This is very high in comparison with the national average and is an improvement in standards since the previous inspection. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 or above was 17 per cent, which is close to the national average. Pupils performed well in all aspects of mathematics. In number and algebra, and shape, space and measures, performance is very high in comparison with the national average. In using and applying mathematics, performance is above the national average. When compared with schools deemed to be similar in nature and context, the pupils' performance in the mathematics tests is close to the average. Taking results from the four years 1996 to 1999 together, performance of pupils in tests in mathematics is well above the national average.
95. In the 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds, 88 per cent of pupils attained Level 4 or above. This is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or above was 56 per cent, which is very high in comparison with the national average. When compared with schools deemed to be similar in nature and context, the pupils' performance in the mathematics tests is well above average. Taking results from the four years 1996 to 1999 together, performance of pupils in tests in mathematics is very high in comparison with the national average. There is no significant difference in standards attained by boys and girls.
96. Currently, the attainment of seven-year-old pupils is already above national expectations. In Year 2, most pupils add and subtract numbers to 20 accurately using appropriate strategies. They explain, with encouragement, how they find the answer. They have a very good grasp of what the digits represent in a two-digit number. They can count sequentially and order numbers up to 100. The higher attaining pupils know what each digit in a three digit number represents. This represents good achievement. They can also double and halve small numbers. Pupils are developing their understanding and knowledge of shape well. They identify and use the mathematical names correctly for a number of two- and three- dimensional shapes; higher attaining pupils are able to describe some of the properties of these shapes. They know that squares have four sides of equal length and that all triangles have three sides. They know how many faces and edges there are in a cube. Year 2 pupils use a good range of mathematical vocabulary when discussing their work, for example they estimate before measuring and talk about 'estimated' and 'actual' length. There is an appropriate emphasis on numeracy and this makes a significant contribution to the pupils understanding. Overall, standards of numeracy of seven-year-olds are very good.
97. Currently, the attainment of eleven-year-old pupils is above national expectations. Year 6 pupils have a very good grasp of number. They are able to use a range of strategies when calculating and applying the four rules of number. For example, when multiplying a two digit number that is either one short of or one above a multiple of ten they will multiply it by the multiple and then deduct or add as appropriate the number from their answer. Higher attaining pupils can collect discreet data which they record

using a frequency table from which they are able to produce simple graphs. They use these skills in other areas of the curriculum, for example in science and geography. In geography, pupils collect data about the leisure habits of people and produce graphs from their findings. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of fractions and percentages. They use this understanding to describe and compare proportions of a whole. Higher attaining pupils can calculate fractional and percentage parts of quantities and measurements. Standards of numeracy of eleven-year-old pupils are good.

98. Since the previous inspection there have been good improvements in the provision for mathematics. The school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and this has contributed to the pupils' good levels of attainment in numeracy. Teachers plan mathematics lessons well and address the needs of pupils at all levels of attainment, challenging the high attaining pupils and meeting the requirements of pupils with special educational needs which ensures that they make good progress. The role of the mathematics co-ordinator is well developed and is a very good model for other subject areas throughout the school. The subject is adequately resourced to teach all areas of the mathematics curriculum. A well-drafted action plan for mathematics is contributing to the improvements.
99. The teaching of mathematics is good overall. Teachers plan well and they evaluate the success of their teaching. In their planning they satisfactorily address all areas of the mathematics curriculum. They plan a range of appropriate activities that meet the learning needs of most pupils, including those with special educational needs. Some activities consolidate previously learnt skills and others help pupils to develop new skills and understanding. Most lessons have well-defined learning objectives which are made clear to pupils. They place an appropriate emphasis on problem solving. For example, in one lesson observed involving pupils in Years 3 and 4, they were set a design task involving drawing up plans for a house that had six equally sized rooms, five downstairs and one upstairs. They were asked to find out how many design combinations were possible using a given number of rooms on each floor. Teachers have high expectations of pupils of all levels of attainment.
100. The school has successfully adopted strategies associated with the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers explain things well and give clear instructions. They manage pupils well, encouraging them to ask questions and to share their ideas in discussions, and they use praise effectively to encourage positive attitudes and work habits. They encourage pupils to explain their mathematical thinking and place an appropriate stress on the development of mental mathematics. They use ends of sessions well to consolidate and assess pupils' learning. Teachers generally use assessment, both formal and informal, effectively. They mark pupils work regularly and make helpful and encouraging comments in pupils' books. This contributes to pupils' learning. They keep satisfactory records in their monitoring of pupil progress.
101. Pupils behave well in mathematics. They co-operate well when working in groups, particularly when solving mathematical problems together. They are keen to respond to teachers' questions. Their consistently good behaviour in mathematics lessons contributes to the pace of learning in the subject. Pupils use mathematics in other areas of the curriculum and this contributes towards learning. For example, Years 3 and 4 pupils count beats in music and sometimes use numbers when describing rhythm. Year 6 pupils collect data in geography when studying peoples' leisure habits and draw graphs to represent these. Children in Reception sing and play number games. Year 6 pupils use time-lines in history to represent events chronologically.

102. The co-ordinator has a commitment to the raising of standards of pupils of all attainment levels. She monitors all aspects of the subject, including teachers' planning, pupils' completed work and classroom teaching. She scrutinises assessment test results thoroughly and uses the results of her analysis to build a clear view of the subject's strengths and weaknesses. Good support is provided to teachers and where appropriate suggestions are made for improvement. There is a well-devised action plan in place for the development of the subject. The governor responsible for numeracy also monitors work in the classroom. Learning resources are satisfactory and teachers use them effectively. Satisfactory assessment procedures are in place with regular testing of pupils to inform teachers of their progress.

## **SCIENCE**

103. The school's previous inspection found standards to be satisfactory and often good in both key stages. This has not been maintained due to additional demands such as the school's focus on literacy and numeracy, the method of implementing teacher assessment at the end of Key Stage 1, and the discontinuity in staffing in Key Stage 2. Currently, standards of attainment are just in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Progress is satisfactory throughout both key stages. These findings do not agree with the results of the national tests or teacher assessments because the inspection process takes account of a wider range of evidence. The school has appropriate plans to review the present situation, which will lead to a more accurate assessment of pupils' abilities at the end of Key Stage 1.
104. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for Key Stage 2 show that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 was average while those exceeding it to reach Level 5 was above the national average. However, when compared to the results obtained by pupils from similar backgrounds, the results are below the average of these schools at Level 4 and average at Level 5. The performance of girls was higher than that of boys, which mirrors the national picture. In the 1999 teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 or above was very high in comparison with the national average. However, no pupil was assessed as working at the higher Level 3. When compared with similar schools, the results for pupils attaining the average level at the end of Key Stage 1 was well above the average for similar school but below at Level 3.
105. The small number of pupils at the end of each key stage does not enable accurate comparisons to be made with all schools, similar schools or to consider trends.
106. In Key Stage 1, the youngest pupils are beginning to use scientific vocabulary with increasing confidence and understanding and to make progress in their investigative skills. For example, they investigate the properties of a range of materials using their senses to describe the properties. They correctly identify and name the different parts of the human body and plants and most know that eating the right type of foods is necessary for healthy living. By the end of the key stage, pupils know that a lorry and a computer make sounds and that these are caused by vibrations. They investigate whether string, cord or washing line makes the best telephone line, and record their findings pictorially. Most know that some materials are 'transparent' when we can see through them and 'opaque' when we cannot. The majority know that everyday appliances around the school and home use electricity and that care must be exercised for their safety. They investigate a variety of light sources, accurately predicting which circuits will make their bulb light up.

107. In Key Stage 2, younger pupils test elastic bands and know that the force increases as the elastic band stretches. Most understand the importance of a fair test and predict, test, refine and evaluate their investigations on whether mud or sand allows water to pass through more quickly. There is a satisfactory understanding of how the properties of different materials make them suitable for different uses, such as insulators, and many use correct terminology to describe them, including 'magnetic' and 'non-magnetic'. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have made considerable progress in answering factual questions, using appropriate scientific terminology and providing definitions and explanations in a wide range of contexts. For example, they confidently explain what causes day and night and most have a good knowledge of the planets.
108. The quality of teaching in the two lessons observed during the inspection was satisfactory. However, teachers' planning and a scrutiny of pupils' work shows that although teaching is satisfactory overall, there are weaknesses in current practice which limits the progress that pupils make, including those with special educational needs. For example, all pupils are often given the same task regardless of their age or abilities. This is not always sufficiently challenging for the more able pupils who do not make the progress they should. Further, they are not given sufficient opportunities to investigate and discover for themselves and often activities are teacher-led and too prescribed. For example, in Years 3 and 4 the children watched and listened throughout the session while the teacher demonstrated the experiment. Some pupils became bored and lost interest, which had a negative impact on learning. Teachers generally have a secure knowledge and understanding of science and make good use of appropriate scientific terms and vocabulary to promote learning. This was particularly evident in a Years 5 and 6 lesson about the earth's movement around the sun where the teacher led a lively and profitable discussion, taking care to involve all pupils. In this lesson, good use was made of discussions and questions to help pupils recall and consolidate their knowledge and understanding and to challenge them to think for themselves. Good opportunities were provided for speaking and listening. Overall, progress is satisfactory. Although teachers' planning follows the optional national scheme of work, it rarely identifies the level at which pupils are expected to work. Neither the medium- nor the short-term planning states clearly what pupils of different ages and abilities will learn by the end of a lesson or a series of lessons and this means that progress is uneven. When this is the case, it becomes difficult for the teacher to assess if any learning has taken place and where to pitch the level of work in the next lesson.
109. The science curriculum is delivered through a two-year rolling topic cycle and follows national guidance. However, the current documentation provides limited support to teachers to ensure that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are developed systematically from year to year. Science is not a focus of development in the school and as a result, there has been no recent monitoring of the quality of teaching or learning in science. Teachers sometimes make evaluative comments about pupils' work, which help them to improve. The use of information technology to improve presentation is under-developed. Although the school has set targets to raise standards in science, National Curriculum results have not been thoroughly analysed in relation to pupils' performance in the different attainment targets nor are there completed portfolios of moderated work to assist teachers in assessing the attainment of their pupils with regard to National Curriculum levels.

## **ART**

110. No lessons in art were observed during the inspection. Judgements are therefore based on scrutiny of teachers' planning, pupils' past work, work on display and discussions with staff.
111. Standards in art have been maintained since the previous inspection and pupils currently produce work which is appropriate for their age and ability. Pupils at Key Stage 1 draw and colour for display and to support learning in other subjects. Some opportunities are provided for free drawing in their news books and to illustrate what they have learned in lessons. Three-dimensional masks are made, which incorporate the effective use of collage, which are colourful and expressive. The use of information technology to produce artwork is very limited and so also are the skills of observation. At the end of Key Stage 2, the sketch-book reveals that very little work is covered and progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is unsatisfactory. Much of the work is linked to other subjects, for example, repeating patterns from Egyptian wall-paintings, string printing and drawings of Greek artefacts and musical instruments and examples of black and white drawings in chalk and charcoal supporting work on a Narnian 'Winter Wonderland'. Some work has been done of the paintings of Clarice Cliff and Mondrian and this resulted in some good achievement in the work on display and showed that good quality was achievable. There are some good examples of black and white drawings in chalk and charcoal supporting work on a Narnian 'Winter Wonderland'.
112. Much of the work included in the sketch-book is design and technology based rather than art and little progress is made in either key stage on the progressive development of skills and techniques. The curriculum is based on national guidance but the school has yet to develop a scheme of work adapted to the needs of the school. Pupils' work has been exhibited, with that of other schools in the cluster group, at the local prison. The school participates in joint art days, for example in Bath, where pupils had the opportunity to work on sculpture, painting, three-dimensional work, textiles and collage. Pupils from Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to work with established artists in Bristol. The subject does not make its full contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of pupils with too few opportunities to study art and artists, particularly non-white and non-European. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and a good understanding of the role but has no opportunity to monitor and evaluate teaching. Resources are good for the delivery of the curriculum and work on display brightens up classrooms.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

113. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection in Key Stage 2. Judgements are therefore based on examination of teachers' planning, pupils' past work, work on display, and discussions with staff and pupils.
114. Standards of attainment have been maintained since the previous inspection and pupils produce work which is average for the ages of seven and eleven. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn about designing sandwiches in food technology and make cakes in the shape of houses in connection with topics being studied. The work covers a range of topics and insufficient opportunities are provided for the use of information technology. At Key Stage 2, pupils produce initial designs for the local schools' annual design and technology challenge in which the school is successful and was recommended for an award. This year they are working on moving objects, which



incorporate a cam. Thoughtful and productive discussions show a clear understanding of what is required in the early stages of the planning process. They learn how objects are made from disassembling them. Pupils in Year 3 understand how pneumatics help to create a moving toy and use their previous knowledge and understanding of levers from science lessons to help them make appropriate decisions. They understand that their design ideas must be practical and achievable. At the end of the key stage, pupils produce detailed and labelled plans, noting ideas for materials to use. They learn how to use computers in control technology. The drawings of clothes to be made from recycled materials, however, are little more than labelled drawings rather than working diagrams.

115. The quality of teaching and learning is generally satisfactory and teachers plan good lessons which fit well into the structured theme for the half term. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and make effective use of questioning to stimulate pupils' thinking about design. Teachers place appropriate emphasis on the safe use of tools during practical sessions. The lesson observed was well prepared and organised and both teacher and student conveyed their enthusiasm for the subject to the children. Satisfactory progress is made by all pupils, including those with special educational needs, across the key stages in differing methods of joining materials, selecting tools and resources, and in the process of designing a practical object for the purpose intended. Insufficient attention is paid to the process of evaluating designs either before making them or after the product is finished.
116. The lack of a substantial body of evidence is due to the school's use of a rolling cycle of topics in design and technology, which is currently being revised. Planning follows national guidance but the time allowed for the subject is very limited because of constraints imposed by the core curriculum of English and mathematics. The co-ordinator has a satisfactory understanding of the role which is, however, largely undeveloped in terms of monitoring and evaluating. Resources are not adequate for the delivery of the curriculum although the school has access to the necessary tools and materials through their involvement with the cluster of other small schools.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

117. Seven-year-old pupils and eleven-year-old pupils reach standards in geography that are appropriate for their respective ages. Seven-year-olds are aware of places beyond their immediate locality. They compare and contrast living conditions in other parts of the world with their own experiences. Resources provided are used well to select and gather information. They are able to express views about the environments they study. For example, pupils study Australia and use books to find out what conditions are like for Aboriginal children living in Aboriginal communities. They compare and contrast their own experiences with those of these children noting the difference in layout of villages, types of housing and type of terrain the Aborigine children experience to that with which they are familiar. Progress is steady for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, and eleven-year-olds have a good understanding of how people can both improve and damage the environment. They have a good understanding of the water cycle and know that people can damage water supplies and consequently the environment through thoughtless actions. They also know that people are capable of using natural resources such as water safely for the benefit of the community and without damaging the environment. In their writing, these pupils use a wide range of geographical vocabulary in its correct context. Nine-year-old pupils are able to identify from a map a number of geographical features associated with rivers and waterways, for example river mouth, river bank, flood plain and

stretches where a river meanders and give these their proper names.

118. Since the last report there has been satisfactory improvement in the subject. The school has purchased a new set of atlases, the range of available maps has been increased and there is a globe in each classroom. The number of appropriate reference books has improved. A scheme of work is in place, which helps ensure that teachers plan to give adequate coverage to the National Curriculum programme of study. It remains the case that the school, and the local and regional environment, could be better and more frequently used as a learning resource.
119. All teaching observed during the inspection was good. Lessons are well planned; teachers consolidate and build on pupils' existing knowledge. Resources are used well to help explain concepts and ideas; for example, a large sand tray into which water was poured was used to help pupils understand how a watercourse was formed. Astute questioning by teachers helps pupils organise their thoughts and ideas and helps them articulate these ideas. When expressing them, pupils often use a wide range of previously learnt geographical vocabulary in context. For example, when discussing the effect of water being poured onto sand, one pupil used the word 'erosion' when describing the action it had on the sand. Teachers plan lessons which develop the geographical skills of pupils. For example, pupils formulate questionnaires in order to gather data, for example when studying peoples' leisure habits. They then learn how to represent their results and findings in various ways including making graphs. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing these skills and using them in their investigations.
120. An action plan for geography and the curriculum co-ordinator help teachers to plan. Programmes of study and a scheme of work give planning consistency and help the school meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. These factors and the good teaching contribute towards the satisfactory learning. Currently, however, the co-ordinator does not have the opportunity to monitor teaching in classrooms. Assessment arrangements are currently underdeveloped.

## **HISTORY**

121. No history lessons were timetabled to coincide with this inspection, and evidence is based on displays, scrutiny of work, talking to staff and a study of planning documents. There was insufficient evidence available to make a judgement about standards reached by seven-year-olds. However, eleven-year-old pupils reach standards that are appropriate for their age.
122. These pupils have a good awareness of how major events in history affect the lives of ordinary people. They have carried out an extensive study of Britain since 1930. They know that events of the Second World War caused hardships and suffering on an unprecedented scale. They recognise similarities and differences in life-styles at different times during this period and they appreciate that life experiences change over time. For example, pupils study the way people shopped in the nineteen fifties with the way we shop today. They sometimes draw on their own experiences to make these comparisons. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own lives and contrast their experiences with those of people who lived in earlier times. For example, they study blackout rules that were in force during World War II and they contrast a typical menu of food for one day of a family living through the war with a menu typical of that enjoyed today. Pupils sequence events on a timeline and they understand that some famous people leave evidence of their own lives; for example, the way William

Beverage's political initiatives affect our lives today. Pupils use a range of sources to find out about the times they study, for example they look at pictures, use reference books and examine relevant artefacts.

123. No teaching of history was observed during the inspection. However, looking at pupils' completed work and talking to pupils indicate that teachers successfully communicate a genuine enthusiasm for the subject. This is evident in the quality and amount of work produced by pupils in Years 5 and 6 during their study of Britain since 1930. Teachers make good use of various sources, including photographs and documents, in their work. Good opportunities are provided to extend pupils' literacy skills in their work in history. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make progress in learning to search for information, for example, using reference books and other source materials, and have practiced developing their skills of note taking and summarising. However, completed work indicates that there are too few opportunities for extended writing which limits the contribution the subject makes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
124. The last report indicated that a lack of resources restricted teaching but this has now improved. The school now supplements the resources it owns by borrowing them from other sources, for example relevant artefacts are borrowed from a central store jointly owned by the cluster group with which the school is associated. This means that there has been some improvement in the range and quantity of resources available to pupils when learning how to carry out an historical enquiry. The subject co-ordinator has a good overview of the work pupils do, gained from scrutinising their completed work and teachers' planning. Currently, however, the co-ordinator does not monitor teaching in the classrooms. Arrangements for assessment are unsatisfactory and this makes it difficult to track individual pupil's progress. In order for the subject to have a good capacity for progress the assessment issue needs to be addressed and the co-ordinator needs time to be made available to allow her to monitor teaching in classrooms.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

125. The previous inspection reported that standards of attainment in information technology were higher than national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and above when compared with pupils of a similar age at the end of Key Stage 2. Currently, standards by the time pupils leave school at eleven have improved and attainment is now in line with national expectations, with a small number of more able pupils exceeding this in some aspects. However, standards by the end of Key Stage 1 have not been maintained and attainment is now below national expectations. This is because insufficient time is given to the teaching of the subject and there are inadequate resources. Consequently, not all aspects of the subject are covered and pupils are not getting their entitlement. In both key stages, pupils have too few opportunities to work with computers to support and enhance their learning in other subjects.
126. In Key Stage 1, the youngest pupils are familiar with the function of the keyboard; they use the cursor, number and letter keys and the mouse for selecting an icon and for moving items around the screen. Older pupils are familiar with saving and printing work from their own experiences at home. However, few pupils are aware of the use of computers to draw graphs. They have very limited understanding about aspects of control technology and generally do not use the computer to store or present data. Overall, by the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils possess limited computing

skills. The range of understanding, skills and the level of confidence that the majority of pupils have are lower than expected for their age.

127. In Key Stage 2, the youngest pupils make progress, confidently using the basic editing functions of a word processor. They successfully delete and insert letters, change the font size, style and colour to present their work in a more attractive manner. All pupils develop an appropriate vocabulary and talk about computer hardware and operations using relevant terminology such as 'mouse', 'select', 'icon', 'edit', and 'file'. Most save, amend and print their work independently. As pupils move through the school there is some extension of the work on word processing and they are a little more sophisticated about what they do with the appearance of text, making satisfactory progress. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to draft and edit work directly onto the computer. Although they can use the mouse successfully, their keyboard skills are underdeveloped. Pupils are familiar with the main function keys but many have underdeveloped keyboard skills and are slow at typing in text, which limits the output in their allocated time. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have many well-developed skills in information technology and most use the computers with great confidence. They merge text and graphics to produce good quality pieces of work such as newspapers, which include their own text and imported clipart. Some confidently load disks, find files and use the mouse to click on symbols and drag them into position. They skilfully merge text and graphics when designing a card for a specific occasion and successfully use CD-ROM programs to extract information linked to their topic. They create their own spreadsheets and confidently input data using the correct formulae. They interrogate their databases successfully and print out their findings in a variety of forms. For example, when producing reports alphabetically by surnames.
128. Only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 2. Judgements are based on discussions with pupils, scrutiny of their work, analysis of the provision and teachers' planning. From all of these sources there is clear indication that information technology is a developing strength of the school in Key Stage 2. However, currently, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 because not all aspects of the subject are covered. Learning is more rapid in Key Stage 2 where pupils have access to the small computer suite and have very good quality group teaching by a parent who is extremely competent. This teaching is mostly pitched at the correct level for the age and abilities of the pupils and is extremely well planned with interesting and stimulating tasks to directly support learning in other curriculum areas as well as introducing new skills in information technology itself. His very good understanding of the subject and enthusiasm is passed on to pupils who are willing and eager to learn and make good progress in these sessions. Clear explanations are given to pupils of new work and searching questions are asked to assess understanding before moving on. As a result, pupils respond well and willingly answer questions and make sensible contributions of their own. They are managed well in a calm working atmosphere, which enables them to concentrate on their work and make good progress.
129. The co-ordinator for information technology took over the role in September and is ably supported by a parent who currently provides excellent support and guidance for all pupils in Key Stage 2. Assessment procedures are good in Key Stage 2. All pupils have a clear record of their achievements kept on disks. These can go with the pupils to their next schools. These procedures are unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1. The range of hardware is excellent with each pupil having access to their own computer in the computer suite and other, sometimes older, computers available for use in each classroom. However, the use of the classroom computers is not as well planned by all

teachers as those in the suite and some of them are not used as effectively to support learning. The range of software is adequate to deliver all aspects of the curriculum. There are limited resources to support teaching of control so that pupils can sequence instructions. There are few simulations and adventure games, linked to subjects, to enable older pupils to undertake challenges within the 'modelling' strand. Lack of sufficient resources sometimes has a negative impact on coverage and prevents pupils attaining higher standards. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual development: pupils describe excitedly their earlier task of adding sound to their work.

## **MUSIC**

130. It was possible to watch only two music lessons during the inspection. One of these was of a mixed age class of Years 3 and 4 pupils; the other was a short lesson of a mixed age class of Years 5 and 6 pupils. Insufficient evidence was available to make a judgement on standards attained by seven-year-olds or eleven-year-old pupils.
131. In one of the observed lessons, Year 4 pupils showed an understanding of simple graphic notation. They know how to change the pitch of a guitar string and identify and name a range of musical instruments. The quality of singing of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils is good. In Years 5 and 6, pupils demonstrated an understanding of the importance and the part pitch and tempo play in music but the majority are unable to sustain a 4/4 beat with control. They respond accurately to the symbols in simple graphic notation but not all pupils can clap a simple beat. The quality of teaching and learning is closely affected by the expertise of the teacher and ranges from unsatisfactory to very good. In the good lesson for Years 3 and 4, the teacher's high level of musical knowledge raises her expectations of what pupils know, understand and can do. The result is that the pupils are highly motivated, respond with enthusiasm and the pace of learning is good. Poor subject knowledge and a lack of confidence in the conduct of the lesson in Years 5 and 6 led to poor motivation and response which resulted in a low level of co-operation. This hindered progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, in performing together as a group using a range of percussion instruments.
132. The school is now better resourced than it was at the time of the last inspection. There is a good range of tuned and untuned instruments available for pupils to use in lessons and out of school activities. Each class has its own supply of small instruments for use in the classroom. Larger instruments such as keyboard and drums are available to supplement these. Recorded music covering a good range of cultures and time is available; it is sometimes used to provide a focus for pupils as they enter and leave assemblies and it is available for use in classrooms. Its use helps them to respond to recorded music in a positive manner.
133. The subject is co-ordinated by a recently appointed teacher who is very knowledgeable and has great musical expertise. She supports teachers, helping them with their planning. The music policy is currently being revised. A satisfactory scheme of work ensures that learning is based on a clear progression of building skills. Pupils have many opportunities to experience music making in addition to that which they do in formal lessons. Singing groups are formed to perform at a range of functions. Selection for these groups is on an open basis ensuring equality of opportunity. A wide range of instrumental tuition is available. Pupils can learn to play the piano, guitar, recorder and a range of woodwind instruments. At the moment there are no opportunities for the subject co-ordinator to work in the classroom alongside teachers

who lack confidence in teaching music and this reduces the contribution the subject makes to the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

134. Insufficient evidence was available to make a judgement on standards achieved by seven-year-olds. Eleven-year-old pupils achieve average standards in game skills. The school reports that standards in swimming achieved by eleven-year-old pupils are good. In outdoor games skill lessons, Year 6 pupils demonstrate satisfactory ball skills, which include kicking a ball with either foot, passing a ball and dribbling a ball. Using these skills in paired activity, they show that they are achieving levels to be expected for their age. When working in small groups in a game context, they position themselves and make effective use of space. Safety awareness is evident in their activities.
135. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection but some areas of concern remain. The school hall has reverted back to its original use and thus improving the indoor facilities. As a result, teachers now make movement and dance lessons more challenging. However, the lack of large apparatus for use in the hall restricts the programme of educational gymnastics. Pupils lack the opportunity to perform movement tasks from raised platforms and they lack opportunities to practise some climbing and balancing skills.
136. The teaching of physical education is satisfactory overall as is progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teachers begin lessons with appropriate warm-up activities. There is an appropriate emphasis on skill development. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own performance and that of others. Lessons are planned so that there is a clear progression of skills development. Pupils are given opportunities to use their skills in an appropriate context; for example Year 6 pupils use football skills in a small games context and Year 1 pupils use movement skills in dance sequences and to interpret rhythm, pitch and mood in music. In this way, the subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
137. A wide range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities, particular for older pupils, makes a good contribution to the pace of learning in physical education. A parent organises a cross country club, which is held once a week and is open to all pupils. Around 20 pupils attend and receive good coaching and build up their fitness levels. Pupils also have opportunities to play football, netball, and rugby. Each pupil has the opportunity to receive swimming lessons for some period of each year. The school reports that for the past three years, by the time pupils have come towards the end of their time in Year 6, almost all can swim at least twenty-five metres.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

138. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, the pupils' standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This matches the judgement of the previous inspection.
139. In Key Stage 1, the youngest pupils know about the shepherds and the wise men and understand why Christmas and Diwali are such important celebrations. Older pupils develop an understanding of Christianity and Hinduism and make comparisons between these religions. They know that there are various places of worship for different religious groups and that Christians sometimes go to special places, such as

churches, to pray and Hindus worship in temples. They have an understanding that there are special rules to follow when visiting the temples and know that the God Krishna is important to Hindus. By the end of the key stage, pupils are beginning to understand the significance of special books such as the Bible and recognise that we treat them differently from ordinary books. They write about their own special books.

140. In Key Stage 2, younger pupils discuss the Ten Commandments and learn about other world religions and the celebrations of Easter, Shabbat and Pesach, and their importance to Christians and Jews. They know the importance of these festivals, how people celebrate and why. Older pupils know the significance of the Torah, the holy book of Jews. They develop an understanding of roles and responsibilities. For example, pupils thoughtfully considered the rules they might have for their lives. Some recall previous work well and by the end of their time in the school, pupils show a satisfactory understanding of the richness and diversity of religion. Throughout the school, pupils are generally interested in and respect one another's views and most are sensitive to other people's feelings. Currently, the area that the school is correctly developing is improving the pupils' ability to reflect upon spiritual and religious matters. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
141. During the inspection no lessons were observed, but satisfactory teaching was evident in the scrutiny of the pupils' work and teachers' documentation. Teachers choose interesting themes for pupils to study. For example, special books and celebrations of festivals. Good use is made of artefacts, the local clergy and staff expertise to develop pupils' knowledge of special celebrations such as Easter and Diwali and to bring the subject alive. However, the tasks prepared do not always match the range of abilities within the class, including those of pupils with special educational needs.
142. The previous inspection found that resources were inadequate, staff lacked confidence, assessment was underdeveloped and the school had not yet produced a scheme of work based on the locally agreed syllabus. There has been adequate school improvement in this subject though some important weaknesses still remain. Resources are now adequate and greater use is made of religious artefacts to enhance the delivery of the subject. Staff are now more confident in teaching the subject. The school has recently appointed a co-ordinator for the subject. She is keen, but has yet to work alongside colleagues to gain a greater knowledge of the work undertaken with pupils in other classes. However, informal discussion and active support from teachers within the key stage have gone a long way in enhancing the teachers' confidence. Currently, there are no formal processes for assessing religious education and thus it is difficult for teachers to monitor pupils' progress. A significant contribution to the moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is made, less so to pupils' spiritual development. Assemblies contribute to the pupils' quality of learning by providing some opportunities for prayer and reflection.