

INSPECTION REPORT

BLANNERHASSET PRIMARY SCHOOL

Blennerhasset

Carlisle

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112104

Headteacher: Mrs J Gate

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Hooper
15334

Dates of inspection: 28th February – 1st March 2000

Inspection number: 193167

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Blennerhasset Carlisle Cumbria
Postcode:	CA5 3RL
Telephone number:	01697 320677
Fax number:	01697 320677
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms C W Graham
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs J Hooper	Registered inspector	English Geography History Music Religious education Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage	The school's results and achievements How well the pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
Mr J Vincent	Lay inspector		Pupils attitudes and values How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents Equality of opportunity
Mr C Lewis	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Art Design and technology Physical education	Curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

South West Education Services
4 Wordsworth Close
Exmouth
Devon EX8 5SQ

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a very small primary school situated in the village of Blennerhasset, 16 miles south west of Carlisle. The pupils come from the village and the surrounding rural area and there are a significant number who attend from outside the immediate area whose parents have chosen to send them to the school. The school caters for boys and girls aged between four and 11 years old. At the time of the inspection there were 22 pupils on roll which is two less than at the last inspection held in June 1996. Also at that time there were two classes, but currently, the school runs two classes in the mornings and one in the afternoons. All the pupils were attending full-time and only one child was under five years old at the time of the inspection. Overall, the attainment of pupils when they enter the school is below average, especially their linguistic skills. The school has identified three pupils as having special educational needs, which as a percentage of the total number of pupils in the school is slightly below that nationally. Forty-five per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is over double the national average. All pupils are white and have English as their first language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school plays a very important part in the community and provides a warm caring family atmosphere for its pupils. Teaching, overall, is satisfactory although when the two classes are operating it is often good, especially in the class of younger pupils. Pupils enjoy going to school and attendance is very good. They behave well and have positive attitudes to their work. Throughout the school, many pupils achieve standards expected for children of their age nationally. The dedicated headteacher provides purposeful and sensitive leadership and works extremely hard for the benefit of the pupils. However, she has a full-time teaching responsibility and no time to undertake her managerial tasks. In addition, being the only full-time teacher in the school she is not able to delegate any of her managerial responsibilities and she has no secretarial help to assist in the day-to-day routine administrative work of the school. Due to this inadequate staffing the provision of education for the pupils in the afternoon is often unsatisfactory. However, the governors who are very supportive, have recognised this as being an area of concern and have made this a high priority in their planning for future developments. Currently, the school just about provides value for money.

What the school does well

- Throughout the school, the standards pupils achieve in information technology generally surpass those expected nationally.
- Teaching at Key Stage 1 is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and behave well.
- The pupils' personal development and relationships throughout the school are very good.
- The school cultivates the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- The school provides a caring atmosphere and looks after the pupils very well
- There are very effective links with parents and the community.
- Attendance is very good.

What could be improved

- The level of teacher and administrative staff is inadequate.
- Due to a large number of omissions in their annual report to parents governors do not fulfil their statutory requirements.
- Governors do not have a long-term overview of school developments.
- The effective procedures that are being practised, such as those for the pupils' wellbeing, safety and personal development, are not in writing, so consistency of practice is not ensured.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection in June 1996. For instance, curriculum planning is now clearly linked to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and there is better progression between the two key stages. Information technology resources have

improved significantly. Throughout the school speaking skills and spelling have both improved and handwriting is satisfactory and often good at Key Stage 1 and showing some improvement at Key Stage 2 through regular practice, although there is still room for improvement.

School development priorities, although short-term, are clearly defined and appropriate funds are allocated for them. The school now complies with the requirements for the daily act of collective worship. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is now very good and is a strength of the school. However, the school has not reviewed the position of the headteacher acting as school secretary effectively. Although the school has made satisfactory progress in its improvements since the last inspection, should the current staffing situation continue for much longer, the capacity for further improvement is limited.

STANDARDS

The standards achieved by 11 year olds over the last three years, based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests, are not published in this report. There were fewer than ten pupils who took the tests and government legislation takes account of confidentiality of publication of results to protect individual pupils from being identified, as would happen if any comments or explanations were made on these results. Also, comparisons of trends in national assessment tests are unreliable where cohorts of pupils are small as they are in this school. This is especially so when the number of pupils with special educational needs has a disproportional effect on the results.

There was only one child who was under five at the time of the inspection so that an overall judgement on attainment of pupils by the time they reach five years old was not possible. Also, there was only one pupil in the current Year 6, so again, there was insufficient evidence to make judgements on attainment of pupils by the end of Key Stage 2. However, most pupils throughout Key Stage 2 are working at an appropriate level for their age and ability in English, mathematics and science and, often above, in information technology. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are attaining standards in English, mathematics and science in line with national expectations and above in information technology. In religious education and all other subjects there was insufficient evidence to make confident judgements on attainment. However, the limited inspection evidence and planning indicate that pupils throughout the school are working at an appropriate level in these subjects.

Throughout the school the majority of pupils are achieving appropriate standards for their ability. The school caters satisfactorily for pupils who have special educational needs and for higher attaining pupils and both groups make at least satisfactory progress in their learning.

The school has set challenging targets for pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 for the next three years in English, mathematics and science. However, these targets are realistic in relation to the current attainment levels of pupils in the cohorts.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and enjoy being at school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in their lessons and at playtimes.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of all pupils is very good as are the relationships that exist between pupils and pupils and adults.
Attendance	Attendance is very good.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attitudes to learning are good. The family ambience generated and promoted by the school enables all pupils to work happily in a non-oppressive atmosphere. Most pupils are well motivated, keen to learn and collaborate and co-operate well with each other, their teachers and other adults.

The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils understand the school behaviour rules and strive to meet the expectations set for them. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good. and the school continually encourages pupils to use their initiative.

The school attendance levels continue to be well above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence. However, there are still a few incidences of late arrival in the morning, which do not appear to be challenged or investigated.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching, overall, is satisfactory throughout the school. In 93 per cent of lessons observed the teaching was satisfactory or better, 58 per cent was good or better and eight per cent was very good or excellent. At Key Stage 1, there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Seventy three per cent was good or better and 18 per cent was very good or excellent. At Key Stage 2, 88 per cent was satisfactory or better and 47 per cent was good. The 12 per cent of unsatisfactory teaching was the observation of two afternoon lessons. In the afternoon there is only one teacher for the whole school. She has the extremely difficult task of planning for teaching the National Curriculum at the appropriate levels for four to 11 year olds and maintaining an appropriate pace of learning, and in these two lessons was unable to do so satisfactorily.

In the morning sessions, teachers are generally clear about what they expect pupils to learn although they both have to plan work for pupils with a wide range of ages and abilities. This is particularly so in English and mathematics, where the teachers have adopted the planning for the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively.

In general, both teachers show appropriate knowledge of the subjects they are teaching. However, they have good knowledge of and enthusiasm for information technology, which they plan for and use successfully to support pupils' learning in other subjects. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning, resulting in the above average standards in aspects of the subject.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Generally broad and balanced. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been effectively introduced.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Overall, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, so that these pupils make sound progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school provides very well for the pupils' personal, social and health education. Links with the local community are very good and make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also very good and a strength of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The safety and welfare of pupils are very good and a strength of the school. Teachers and all school staff know the pupils and their circumstances very well. This knowledge, coupled with the family atmosphere promoted by the school, ensures the wellbeing of pupils. Although there are effective procedures in place, very few have been put in writing to ensure consistency of this very good practice.

The school has very strong links with parents who are very supportive of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides purposeful and sensitive leadership and works extremely hard for the benefit of the pupils. However, she has a full-time teaching responsibility and no time to undertake her managerial tasks. In addition, being the only full-time teacher in the school she is not able to delegate any of her managerial responsibilities and she has no secretarial help to assist in the day-to-day routine administrative work of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive. However, due to a large number of omissions in their annual report to parents they do not fulfil their statutory requirements. In addition, governors do not have a long-term overview of school developments.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a general overview of its work, and improvements needed are generally linked into school development planning.
The strategic use of resources	Effective use is made of time and of material resources and the school makes full use of its limited accommodation. However, the school is inadequately staffed and provision of education for the pupils in the afternoon is often unsatisfactory. Currently, the school just about provides value for money.

Both the headteacher and part-time teacher are well qualified. However, overall, staffing is inadequate as the headteacher has to teach the whole school in the afternoons and the provision for this is often unsatisfactory. The accommodation allows much of the curriculum to be taught satisfactorily and, although the facilities for physical education are limited, the school, through its very good links with the local secondary school, has overcome this effectively. Resources, overall, are adequate and the headteacher is very resourceful in acquiring additional supplies, for example, of paper and pencils, often at no cost. She has recently negotiated the purchase, at a very low price, of three up-to-date computers from a local business. These have considerably enhanced the provision for information and communication technology, which has been a contributing factor to the high standards a significant number of the pupils achieve in the subject.

The limited funding, after salaries and other necessities have been paid, is used appropriately, as are specific grants. Through prudent spending over the last year the headteacher and governors now have the funds to meet one of the initiatives on the school development plan to employ the part-time teacher for a longer time in the week which will give the headteacher some time for her managerial duties. The headteacher manages the day-to-day administration of the school's finances efficiently, albeit in her own time.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best and their children are making good progress. • The teachers work very hard and teaching is good. • They like the 'open door' policy of the school and feel comfortable about approaching teachers with questions or problems. • The school is well led and managed. 	There were no significant adverse comments from the questionnaires received or at the meeting for parents with the registered inspector.

In general the inspection team agrees with the parents' comments within the restrictions of such a small school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In general, most of the children when they join the school have had some pre-school education. Assessments made during their time in the nursery and soon after the children start school show that, overall, attainment on entry is below average, especially the children's linguistic skills. The school operates a successful induction programme for these children, so they settle into the mixed reception and Key Stage 1 class quickly and confidently and soon become familiar with the daily routines of the school. There was only one child who was under five at the time of the inspection so that an overall judgement on attainment of pupils by the time they reach five years old was not possible.

2. The standards achieved by seven and 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science are not published in this report. There were under ten pupils who took the tests and government legislation takes account of confidentiality of publication of results to protect individual pupils from being identified, as would happen if any comments/explanations were made on these results. Also, no comparisons of trends in these tests are made as they are unreliable where year groups of pupils are small. This is especially so when the number of pupils with special educational needs has a disproportional effect on the results.

3. From the English lessons observed and the scrutiny of work, overall, by the end of Key Stage 1, the current small cohort of Year 2 pupils are likely to attain standards in English in line with those expected nationally. There was insufficient evidence to make firm judgements on attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 as there is only one pupil currently in Year 6. By the end of Key Stage 1 and throughout Key Stage 2, the speaking and listening skills of most pupils are about average indicating an improvement in speaking skills since the last inspection. Almost all pupils listen attentively to their teachers and each other, and most express their ideas coherently and succinctly. However, there is a significant minority of pupils who do not have the confidence to voice their thoughts. By the end of Key Stage 1 and throughout Key Stage 2 most pupils attain standards in reading in line with those expected for their ages. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils read from appropriate texts accurately and with understanding. On the whole, these skills are built on effectively throughout Key Stage 2 and many older pupils read for their own interest and pleasure. Throughout the school, pupils write for an appropriate range of purposes and audiences and write at an appropriate level for their ages. Key Stage 1 pupils write letters to the correct format, rewrite familiar tales in their own words and write creatively in their own stories. Key Stage 2 pupils write studies on books they have read, imaginative poems and make studies of characters in stories they have read. They often use their writing skills effectively to support other subjects such as history. Overall, standards of grammar are satisfactory as are standards in spelling which have improved since the last inspection. At both key stages pupils use dictionaries effectively to help with their spellings. Standards of handwriting have improved since the last inspection, especially at Key Stage 1, where pupils usually present final copies of their work neatly. However, there is still room for improvement at Key Stage 2. For example, pupils, although they practise writing in a cursive style, too often revert to print in their written work.

4. Lesson observations during the inspection and a scrutiny of the work undertaken during the present school year indicate that the current very small cohort of Year 2 pupils are on course to attain standards generally equivalent to those expected nationally at the end of the key stage in mathematics. At the time of the inspection, there was only one Year 6 pupil in the school and consequently it was not possible to make secure judgements on attainment by the end of the key stage. However, observations and a scrutiny of the work of all the Key

Stage 2 pupils indicate that most pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics as they move through the key stage and attain appropriate standards. Through the National Numeracy Strategy pupils' numeracy skills, in both mental and written calculations, are developing effectively. Also, under this new scheme of work and curriculum pupils undertake a wide range of work in all areas of mathematics. Samples of pupils' work indicate that pupils in both key stages have undertaken an appropriate range of work on shape, space and measures, and tackled a range of problems involving handling data and investigation. Pupils make satisfactory use of their numeracy skills in other curriculum areas such as science.

5. In science, lesson observations during the inspection and a scrutiny of work undertaken during the school year indicate that the current very small cohort of Year 2 pupils are on course to attain standards at least equivalent to those expected nationally at the end of the key stage. As there was only one Year 6 pupil in the school at the time of the inspection, it was not possible to make secure judgements on attainment by the end of Key Stage 2. However, observations and a scrutiny of the work of the Key Stage 2 pupils indicate that most pupils make satisfactory progress in science as they move through the key stage and most achieve standards expected for their ages. Samples of pupils' work indicate that pupils in both key stages have undertaken an appropriate range of work in experimental and investigative science, life processes and living things, materials and physical processes.

6. No whole-class lessons were observed in information and communication technology, although a small number of activities were observed at both key stages. Evidence from these observations suggests that pupils attain standards in information technology above those expected nationally by the end of Key Stage 1, and throughout Key Stage 2, in communicating and handling information, and at least satisfactory in controlling, monitoring and modelling. Pupils are competent in using computers for a good range of activities, such as word processing, research using CD-ROMs and using the Internet and e-mail facilities. Pupils use their information and communication technology skills very effectively to support other subjects.

7. In religious education and all other subjects there was insufficient evidence to make confident judgements on learning and attainment. However, the limited inspection evidence and planning indicate that pupils throughout the school are working at an appropriate level in these subjects.

8. The school has set challenging targets for pupils in the Key Stage 2 national assessments tests for the next three years in English, mathematics and science. However, these targets are realistic in relation to the current attainment levels of pupils in the year groups.

9. The school caters satisfactorily for pupils who have special educational needs and for higher attaining pupils. Both groups make at least satisfactory progress in their learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and this positive situation has been maintained since the last inspection. The family ambience generated and promoted by the school enables all pupils to work happily in a non-oppressive atmosphere and as a result they enjoy coming to school. Parents value this family atmosphere and the support it provides for their children and are full of praise for the moral qualities it provides. This family culture of the school is a continuing feature from the last inspection. Most pupils are well motivated, keen to learn and collaborate and co-operate well with each other, their teachers and other adults.

11. As at the last inspection the behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils understand the school behaviour rules and strive to meet the expectations set

for them. Teachers are excellent role models and lead by example. The family connections prevalent in a small village school mean that most pupils have personal friendships existing from before school days resulting in strong support systems in all pupil age groups. Relationships between pupils and staff continue to be a strength of the school and benefit from the family influence that pervades the school. As at the last inspection there are no exclusions. No anti-social or oppressive behaviour from pupils was observed during the inspection.

12. Personal development of all pupils is very good and has grown since the last inspection. The school continually encourages pupils to use their initiative. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 conscientiously follow a pre-planned programme of lesson tasks and work through it sensibly and unsupervised. Older pupils answer the school phone on behalf of the headteacher. School visits to local museums and other places of educational interest take place in order to widen pupils' outlook and foster personal development.

13. The school attendance levels continue to be well above the national average and are a strength of the school. Similarly there is no unauthorised absence. Responding to the last report the school now publishes the required attendance information in the governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus. However, there are still a few incidences of late arrival in the morning, which do not appear to be challenged or investigated.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. Both teachers work extremely hard and conscientiously to provide the best education for the pupils. Teaching, overall, is satisfactory throughout the school and this is similar to the judgements made at the last inspection. In 93 per cent of lessons observed the teaching was satisfactory or better, 58 per cent was good or better and eight per cent was very good or excellent. At Key Stage 1, there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Seventy three per cent was good or better and 18 per cent was very good or excellent. At Key Stage 2, 88 per cent was satisfactory or better and 47 per cent was good. The 12 per cent of unsatisfactory teaching was the observation of two afternoon lessons. In the afternoon there is only one teacher for the whole school. She has the extremely difficult task of planning for teaching the National Curriculum at the appropriate levels for four to 11 year olds and maintaining an appropriate pace of learning, and in these two lessons she was unable to do so satisfactorily.

15. In the morning sessions, teachers are generally clear about what they expect pupils to learn although they both have to plan work for pupils with a wide range of ages and abilities. This is particularly so in English and mathematics, where the teachers have adopted the planning for the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively. The local education authority has produced a very useful document to help teachers with their planning for their literacy and numeracy lessons where there are mixed aged classes. Teachers are using this to good effect, so that teaching is frequently good and pupils make at least satisfactory progress in their learning. The teachers have wisely made the decision to teach science, the other core subject, to the pupils in the morning sessions to maximise the benefits of having two classes.

16. In the best lessons, teachers build on pupils' previous learning very successfully. This was observed in an excellent science lesson when the teacher did a very careful recall of the previous day's work, emphasising the new scientific vocabulary the pupils had learnt in connection with their work on electrical circuits. She also used extremely good questioning techniques to draw out pupils' thinking and learning and gave clear instructions as to what she wanted the pupils to do. By the end of the lesson it was clear, through experimentation and discussion that the pupils had learnt and understood how to make a buzzer or light bulb work in an electric circuit.

17. Both teachers often show good knowledge of the subjects they are teaching, especially science and information technology. They are enthusiastic about the benefits of teaching information technology skills, and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning resulting in the above average standards in aspects of the subject. They plan for and use these skills successfully to support pupils' learning in other subjects. For example, Key Stage 2 pupils have independent spelling programmes of work, which they use regularly to reinforce and consolidate their learning. The classroom management of the teacher of the Key Stage 2 pupils effectively encourages independent learning as pupils are responsible for ensuring they complete the weekly work set in numeracy and literacy lessons, moving on to the next task as one is finished. The success of this is due mainly to the good relationship, built on mutual respect, that she has with the pupils. Generally, teachers make the work interesting for the pupils who show commitment to their work and many pupils sustain good concentration even when not directly supervised.

18. Teachers plan suitable work for pupils with special educational needs pupils and they provide these pupils, sometimes on a one-to-one basis, with an appropriate and frequently good blend of help and challenge.

19. In general, homework is used effectively to promote and extend class work. Although there are no classroom support staff employed to help teachers in the classes, the school benefits from a significant number of parents and friends who give of their own time freely and considerably enhance the pupils' learning.

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

20. The school provides a generally broad and balanced curriculum with a good quality and range of learning opportunities which successfully meets the needs of all its pupils. The curriculum meets statutory requirements to teach all subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education. Planning shows that work is planned for children under five in line with the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority's 'Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning', and is successfully dovetailed into the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education for pupils at Key Stage 1. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection in the area of curricular planning to improve progression in learning as pupils move through the school and all planning now contains clear links to the National Curriculum.

21. Appropriate time has been allotted to the recently implemented literacy and numeracy curriculum, and the school has sensibly organised the school day and week so that the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science are taught during morning sessions, when there are two teachers in the school. This avoids the difficulties inherent in planning and conducting lessons across two key stages in the core subjects and makes the best use of the currently unsatisfactory level of teaching staff whereby the headteacher is the only teacher in the school for the afternoon sessions. The school has implemented the government's recommended National Literacy and Numeracy strategies well, and planning and teaching take account of the recommendations both for lesson format and for lesson content, despite the acknowledged difficulties of so doing in the whole-key stage, mixed-age classes. The school curriculum is enriched by the provision of a small but, taken over the whole year, generally satisfactory range of extra-curricular opportunities, including sporting activities with other small schools.

22. The school offers equal opportunities for its pupils in terms of gender and special educational needs. The school's provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good; for example, all pupils are taught basic first aid techniques. The governing body has agreed a policy for sex-education and appropriate advice is provided to pupils as they begin to mature. Drugs education is provided as part of the science curriculum. Links with

the local community are very good and make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. The school also has very good links with its partner institutions, for example, the physical education teacher from the local secondary school teaches pupils gymnastics and games, and a nursery class takes place in the school every afternoon.

23. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall and a strength of the school and indicating an improvement since the last inspection.

24. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Through whole-school assemblies and religious education lessons the school provides pupils with knowledge and insight into values and beliefs. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on their experiences and planning shows that religious education lessons encourage older pupils to consider life's fundamental questions. The school curriculum complies with statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship, another improvement since the last inspection.

25. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The teachers consistently promote principles distinguishing right from wrong very well. They know the pupils well and so support this effectively through sensitive discussion of stories and events in assemblies, class lessons and 'circle times' during which incidents are discussed and appropriate solutions found. The teachers provide good role models and clearly foster values such as respect for truth.

26. Provision for pupils' social development is also very good. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively and take responsibility for their work and for others. Key Stage 2 pupils are provided with tasks to undertake during each week and go about their work diligently and confidently. Older pupils look after younger pupils in the playground and each reception child has an older 'prefect' to look after them at playtimes and lunchtimes. Pupils regularly collect for charities showing they have caring attitudes to people less fortunate than themselves.

27. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development. Pupils are taught to appreciate their own cultural traditions and develop a satisfactory understanding of the diversity of other cultures through stories from other cultures in literacy lessons. For example, in the Key Stage 1 literacy lessons during the week of inspection, the "big book" studied was an African folk story. Pupils also study the work of a range of artists in art lessons. Pupils are involved in village life, taking an active part in village celebrations.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. The safety and welfare of pupils continue to be a strength of the school. The school looks after pupils very well. Teachers and all the school staff have extensive knowledge of pupils and their circumstances. This knowledge, coupled with the family atmosphere promoted by the school ensures the wellbeing of pupils. The school has appropriate procedures in place for health and safety matters and staff are well aware of possible areas of risk. The headteacher has a qualification in first aid and continues to ensure that all pupils are proficient in emergency first aid procedures. The number of pupils in school at present enables all staff to provide a high level of pastoral care to every individual.

29. The school has adopted the local education authority child protection policy and the headteacher has received the appropriate training. Attendance registers are marked neatly and are kept in accordance with statutory requirements although registration itself is an informal procedure. There are no formal, written procedures for improving attendance or effective procedures for following up unexpected absence or lateness. Personal development is recorded appropriately on the annual reports to parents and in the pupils' school records. With the small pupil numbers involved staff monitor personal development progress informally and very successfully on an ongoing basis.

30. The school behaviour policy is based on firm but fair assertive discipline. Good behaviour standards are encouraged by informal but effective procedures. Should it become necessary pupils discuss appropriate sanctions in council. Again, this behaviour policy although very effective, is not written. Teachers and all staff ensure that expected behaviour standards are met and lead by example.

31. Teachers use an appropriate range of procedures to assess pupils' attainment and progress. These include the statutory end of key stage assessment tests and a variety of commercially produced tests. Assessment of children starts informally in the nursery and results of these and of the statutory assessments of children in the reception class often help to identify children who have learning difficulties at an early stage. These assessments are used to good effect to plan appropriate work for all children. The small number of pupils in the school allows teachers to assess the pupils very effectively on a day-to-day basis and plan work suited to their needs.

32. The informal records and information kept by teachers on pupils' attainment generally provide a useful method of tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school. A very effective folder of English work, showing key areas of development of individual pupils in reception, Year 1 and 2, has been developed by the their teacher and gives a very good overview of their progress. Teachers make effective use of all the evidence gained, including the analysis of test results, to inform the next stages in their planning.

33. There is appropriate use of assessment procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs, who are identified early in their school career. The special educational needs co-ordinator maintains a register of special educational needs pupils and there are satisfactory procedures for placing pupils on the register, keeping parents appropriately informed, and reviewing progress. Satisfactory individual educational plans are provided for pupils on the register, written by the teachers, and these are reviewed appropriately.

34. All these procedures ensure the wellbeing, safety and personal development of all pupils in the school. However, as recorded in the last report, all these effective procedures are not formalised in writing to ensure consistency of practice.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. The school has very effective links with parents who are extremely supportive and this very good strength continues from the last inspection. As in the last report the school continues to function as an asset to the local village community. Parents show such commitment to the school that they are prepared to give up working time should their assistance be needed. Parents help with swimming, escorting on school visits and support in the classroom. In addition to the annual written reports parents of junior pupils receive their children's work at the end of each term and are encouraged to comment on it. Parents receive other written information when necessary but as the school operates a genuine 'open door' policy most information continues to be by word of mouth. Parents are happy with the level of information they receive and feel the school is very approachable. The school holds two formal meetings for parents a year and parents are welcome to arrange additional meetings if they wish. Most parents returned the parent questionnaire and all their comments were positive, as were those made at the parents' meeting prior to the inspection.

36. There is no formal Parent Teacher Association but parents and members of the local community raise large funds for the school and provide additional resources that further enhance the pupils' learning and personal development.

37. This level of support is indicative of the school's standing in the community.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

38. The headteacher provides purposeful and sensitive leadership and works extremely hard for the benefit of the pupils. This is a similar judgement to that made at the last inspection. As at the last inspection, she has a full-time teaching responsibility with no time to undertake her managerial tasks and she has no secretarial help to assist in the day-to-day routine administrative work of the school. In addition, as she is currently the only full-time teacher in the school she is not able to delegate any of her managerial responsibilities. However, she is committed to providing the best teaching and learning environment in order to raise standards.

39. Governors are very supportive and take a keen interest in the school and many are frequent visitors. The governing body has set up an appropriate committee structure to oversee the work of the school. However, the governors do not fulfil all their statutory requirements as their latest annual report to parents has many omissions.

40. The school has a general overview of its work, and improvements needed are generally linked into school development planning. The school development plan has appropriate targets to be achieved with the necessary funding indicated, which is an improvement since the last inspection. However, there is no long-term overview to show how the staff and governors see the school developing over the next two or three years. The limited funding, after salaries and other necessities have been paid, is used appropriately, as are specific grants. Through prudent spending over the last year the headteacher and governors now have the funds to meet one of the initiatives on the school development plan to employ the part-time teacher for a longer time in the week which will give the headteacher some time for her managerial duties. The headteacher manages the day-to-day administration of the school's finances efficiently, albeit in her own time. The recommendations made in the last auditor's report have been addressed appropriately.

41. In spite of her heavy workload, in her commitment to provide the best education for the pupils, the headteacher has embarked on a programme of monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and teaching and their impact on pupils' learning. However, she is very aware of the problems she encounters when teaching the whole school in the afternoons and works hard to overcome them. She monitors the teaching of the part-time teacher on a regular basis as well as appraising her annually. A headteacher colleague and a local education authority advisor also appraise her each year. The headteacher is a mentor for teacher training students from a local college. As well as receiving funding for this, the school also benefits from an increased adult pupil ratio when they undertake their training in the school.

42. The headteacher is the special educational needs co-ordinator, but inevitably there is no time available for her to undertake the necessary paperwork or attend meetings with parents or outside agencies. Given these difficulties and limitations, there is satisfactory co-ordination of the role of special educational needs in the school. In addition, although the headteacher is a member of the governing body, her role of overseeing the provision for pupils with special educational needs is somewhat in conflict with her role of co-ordinator for special educational needs.

43. Resources, overall, are adequate and the headteacher is very resourceful in acquiring additional supplies, for example, of paper and pencils, often at no cost. She has recently negotiated the purchase, at a very low price, of three up-to-date computers from a local business. These have considerably enhanced the provision for information and communication technology, which has been a contributing factor to the high standards a significant number of the pupils achieve in the subject.

44. The accommodation allows much of the curriculum to be taught satisfactorily and, although the facilities for physical education are limited, the school, through its very good links

with the local secondary school, has overcome this effectively.

45. Both the headteacher and part-time teacher are well qualified, and the teaching is frequently good when there are two classes in the mornings. However, overall, staffing is inadequate and the provision of education for the pupils in the afternoon is often unsatisfactory. Effective use is made of material resources and the school makes full use of its limited accommodation. Although the school has made satisfactory progress in its improvements since the last inspection, should the current staffing situation continue for much longer, the capacity for further improvement is limited. Currently, the school just about provides value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46. In order to ensure that the school makes further improvement in its developments, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Improve the level of teaching staff as proposed in the school development plan. (Paragraphs 45 also 14, 21, 41, 42, 86)
- (2) Take steps to provide administrative help for the school. (Paragraph 38)
- (3) Ensure governors fulfil their statutory requirements by producing an annual report to parents that contains all the necessary elements. (Paragraph 39)
- (4) Have a clear overview of future developments for the school clearly linked to the budget and especially with regard to staffing. (Paragraph 40)

47. In addition to the key issues above, the staff and governors should consider:

- (1) Formalising in writing the effective procedures that are being practised, such as those for the pupils' wellbeing, safety and personal development, to ensure consistency of practice. (Paragraphs 29, 30 and 34)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

28

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	4	50	35	7	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)	Not applicable	22
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	Not applicable	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	Not applicable	3

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	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

There were fewer than ten pupils who took the national assessment tests at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 in 1998 and 1999 and government legislation takes account of confidentiality of publication of results to protect individual pupils from being identified. Therefore the results of these tests are not published in this report.

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	22
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)	1.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14.7
Average class size	11 - am 22 - pm

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
	£
Total income	71,805
Total expenditure	67,224
Expenditure per pupil	3,056
Balance brought forward from previous year	-9,127
Balance carried forward to next year	-4,546

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	22
Number of questionnaires returned	11

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	36	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	73	27	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	64	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	55	45	0	0	0
The teaching is good.	73	27	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	64	27	9	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	100	0	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	27	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	64	36	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	82	18	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	36	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	18	0	0	27

It is important to note that the response of one parent represents nine per cent.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

48. In general, most of the children when they join the school have had some pre-school education. Assessments made during their time in the nursery and soon after the children start school show that, overall, attainment on entry is below average, especially the children's linguistic skills. The school operates a successful induction programme for these children, so they settle into the mixed reception and Key Stage 1 class quickly and confidently and soon become familiar with the daily routines of the school. At the time of the inspection, there was only one child who was under five, so there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on children's attainment by the time they are five years old. Planning shows that work is planned for children under five in line with the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority's 'Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning', and is successfully dovetailed into the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education.

ENGLISH

49. From the English lessons observed and the scrutiny of work, overall, by the end of Key Stage 1, the current small cohort of Year 2 pupils are making satisfactory progress and are likely to attain standards in English in line with those expected nationally. These judgements are similar to those made at the last inspection. There was insufficient evidence to make firm judgements on progress and attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 as there is only one pupil currently in Year 6.

50. By the end of Key Stage 1 and throughout Key Stage 2, the speaking and listening skills of most pupils are about average, indicating an improvement in speaking skills since the last inspection. Almost all pupils listen attentively to their teachers and each other, and most express their ideas coherently and succinctly. For instance, during a literacy lesson a Year 2 pupil who had been listening and following the text in a 'big book' with interest, politely asked the meaning of a word she did not understand. However, there is a significant minority of pupils who do not have the confidence to voice their thoughts. Pupils have opportunities to practise speaking to wider audiences, for example, in assemblies and concerts. This was evident, when one of the youngest pupils asked if she could end an assembly with her own prayer.

51. By the end of Key Stage 1 and throughout Key Stage 2 most pupils attain standards in reading in line with those expected for their ages. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils read from appropriate texts accurately and with understanding. Younger Key Stage 1 pupils have developed the ability to recognise an appropriate range of words by sight and when faced with unfamiliar words they use suitable strategies to help them, such as, blending letter sounds and using clues from pictures and other text. Most pupils in Year 2 show clear understanding of simple text, talk about characters in the stories they have read and discuss other stories they have heard. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to predict what will happen next in the story and understand the feelings of characters in the stories. On the whole, these skills are built on effectively throughout Key Stage 2 and many older pupils read for their own interest and pleasure. These pupils listened with keen interest to the story they were sharing at the beginning of the literacy lesson. Younger pupils appreciated the sentiments in the stories and recognised traits in different characters, whilst Year 5 and 6 pupils were making inferences and deductions from the text, recalling attitudes and making judgements about people's feelings.

52. Throughout the school, pupils write for an appropriate range of purposes and

audiences and write at an appropriate level for their ages. Key Stage 1 pupils were imagining the thoughts of the hippopotamus they had been reading about in a story and writing them in speech bubbles. Earlier work illustrated that they write letters to the correct format, rewrite familiar tales in their own words and write creatively about a snowman in their own stories. Also, they use their writing skills in support of other subjects, for example, when writing about the life cycle of the butterfly and descriptions of ladybirds in their science lessons. Key Stage 2 pupils, in their personal work, keep a daily diary. Other work in books and on display shows that they write studies on books they have read, giving good reasons why they did or did not like the story, they write imaginative acrostic poems about animals to the correct format and make studies of characters in stories they have read. Their written work in their studies of the 1950's and 60's in history showed that they had used their writing skills effectively. Overall, standards of grammar are satisfactory as are standards in spelling which have improved since the last inspection. At both key stages pupils use dictionaries effectively to help with their spellings. For example, Year 2 pupils using three letter dice to form words were checking in a dictionary to find whether they were 'real' or 'nonsense' words. They also become familiar with common spelling patterns such as 'air', 'ear' and 'or', as observed in a literacy lesson. Key Stage 2 pupils successfully order words alphabetically and develop their understanding of suffixes effectively through creating new words ending in 'ful'. Handwriting is satisfactory and often good at Key Stage 1 where pupils usually present final copies of their work neatly, which is an improvement since the last inspection. However, there is still room for improvement at Key Stage 2. For example, pupils, although they practise writing in a cursive style, too often revert to print in their written work.

53. Most pupils, throughout both key stages, are making satisfactory progress in their knowledge and use of English. During literacy hours steady progress in learning is made through the reinforcement and consolidation of previous learning. Pupils who have special educational needs, overall, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment often through the one-to-one support they receive in the classrooms. Throughout both key stages, most pupils enjoy their work and are eager to learn. Many older pupils sustain good concentration even when not directly supervised by an adult. Most pupils said they enjoyed reading, and read for pleasure at home. Many younger pupils, when given the opportunity, chose to read books in the 'Book Corner' rather than take part in other activities. Almost at all times pupils respond enthusiastically to their teachers, contribute constructively to lessons and answer questions appropriately.

54. Teaching was never less than satisfactory and often good. The best teaching was seen in lessons where the teachers had planned and organised the lessons in detail especially for the varying ages and attainment levels of pupils in their classes. In the introductions to these lessons teachers used skilful questioning techniques to expand pupils' thinking and learning and they valued the contributions made by their pupils. Also, they gave clear instructions and explanations for follow-up work. The teacher of the Key Stage 2 class has effective strategies for encouraging pupils to learn independently by making them responsible for ensuring they complete the weekly work set, moving on to the next task as one is finished. However, she did not always have a plenary session at the end of her literacy lessons, which meant opportunities were missed for building on pupils' speaking skills. Pupils with special educational needs undertake appropriate work and with additional support from the teachers they make satisfactory progress overall. Also, higher attaining pupils are also supported well especially at Key Stage 2, as they often work with an older group of pupils. Throughout both key stages teachers monitor pupils' reading carefully through the guided reading sessions in the literacy hour although outside this, the monitoring of pupils' reading is less systematic at Key Stage 2. However, pupils are encouraged to take their books home regularly to share with parents and most do so.

55. Both teachers have undertaken appropriate training for the National Literacy Strategy enabling the strategy to be implemented successfully. The headteacher has undertaken some monitoring of the effects of the National Literacy Strategy on pupils' attainment.

Funding for English resources has been a priority over the last two years and the school now has adequate resources for teaching the subject although the headteacher is aware of the need to build up the range of non-fiction books in the Key Stage 2 class. The school uses a commercial reading scheme to support the younger pupils' reading, although other reading material is used to supplement this. The classrooms have a satisfactory range of books. Supplementary books are supplied by the local education authority's library service. The school does not have a central library and so this limits pupils' independent research.

MATHEMATICS

56. Lesson observations during the inspection and a scrutiny of the work undertaken during the present school year indicate that the current very small cohort of Year 2 pupils have made satisfactory progress and are on course to attain standards generally equivalent to those expected nationally at the end of the key stage in mathematics. This judgement is in line with that made at the last inspection. At the time of the inspection, there was only one Year 6 pupil in the school and consequently it was not possible to make secure judgements on progress and attainment by the end of the key stage. However, observations and a scrutiny of the work of all the Key Stage 2 pupils indicate that most pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics as they move through the key stage and attain appropriate standards.

57. At the beginning of the school year the school implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. Under this new scheme of work and curriculum pupils undertake a wide range of work in all areas of mathematics. Samples of pupils' work indicate that pupils in both key stages have undertaken an appropriate range of work on shape, space and measures, and tackled a range of problems involving handling data and investigation. Pupils make satisfactory use of their numeracy skills in other curriculum areas such as science.

58. At Key Stage 1, where attainment is satisfactory overall, pupils in Year 1 are able to work out 'one less than' and subtract two from within ten, quickly and accurately, most using their fingers to help. Most Year 2 pupils have good recall of number facts to 20. They clearly understand 'subtraction' and the concept of 'difference between'. When subtracting back in ones from a two digit number up to 20, most pupils recognise from their recording that, as the numbers in the subtraction column 'go up in ones, the answers go down in ones'. On another occasion in their mental recall of numbers, one pupil showed he had a good knowledge of simple multiplication facts volunteering spontaneously, that $16 - 8 = 8$ 'because two eights are sixteen'.

59. At Key Stage 2, Years 3 and 4 pupils recognise odd and even numbers and demonstrate an appropriate understanding of reflective symmetry. All are able to identify the line of symmetry in simple polygons and most are able to draw the missing reflected half of the shape accurately. They are able to identify the number of faces on three-dimensional shapes, recording their findings in a table. Some pupils in Years 5 and 6 can explain what a square number is; they know that a square has four axes of symmetry and were drawing common two-dimensional shapes on a grid using co-ordinates.

60. The quality of learning in the majority of lessons seen was good due to the teachers' good planning, clear links to the numeracy Programmes of Study and, in most cases, the good pace set throughout the lessons. Pupils enjoy their mathematics work, especially the quick mental and oral starter activities. They respond well to their teachers and work together well and, in most cases, particularly in Key Stage 2, independently, without the need for constant teacher-intervention.

61. Due to the whole key stage nature of the two morning classes, planning for the wide age and ability range is especially difficult, however, planning for all mathematics lessons seen was based on the government-recommended numeracy curriculum and

strategy, both in lesson content and in lesson format. Teaching in mathematics lessons at both key stages was good overall. Both teachers generate a good working atmosphere, use praise effectively and consistently use and encourage pupils to use appropriate mathematical vocabulary. They plan activities well, working closely to the recommended National Numeracy Strategy and lesson format, reinforcing mental arithmetic skills effectively and systematically with number games and tables practice. They have good working relationships with the pupils and appropriately high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. They use questioning techniques well to probe and extend pupils' learning and provide different activities for the wide range of ages and abilities in the class. Pupils with special educational needs are catered for with appropriate work and additional support and they make satisfactory progress overall. Also, higher attaining pupils are also supported well especially at Key Stage 2, as they often work with an older group of pupils.

62. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy appropriately; the teachers have undergone appropriate training and the quality of teaching in the subject has been monitored. There is good use of information technology in mathematics lessons; in both classes pupils regularly and confidently move to the computers in order to revise and consolidate skills undertaken in group activities. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

SCIENCE

63. Lesson observations during the inspection and a scrutiny of work undertaken during the school year indicate, as at the last inspection, that the current very small cohort of Year 2 pupils have made satisfactory progress in science and are on course to attain standards at least equivalent to those expected nationally at the end of the key stage. At the time of the inspection, there was only one Year 6 pupil in the school and consequently it was not possible to make secure judgements on progress and attainment by the end of the key stage. However, observations and a scrutiny of the work of the Key Stage 2 pupils indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress in science as they move through the key stage and most achieve standards expected for their ages. Samples of pupils' work indicates that pupils in both key stages have undertaken an appropriate range of work in experimental and investigative science, life processes and living things, materials and physical processes.

64. At Key Stage 1, where attainment in science is satisfactory overall, in a series of lessons, pupils were experimenting with building electrical circuits. They understand the concept of battery and mains electricity and understand that a number of everyday appliances use electricity. They know that there is "an add sign and a take away sign" on a battery terminal and that these have to be aligned carefully. They were building batteries, wires, bulbs and buzzers into a circuit, working out how to turn the bulb on and off and recording their circuits by drawing diagrams. In a later lesson, older pupils predicted successfully whether circuits drawn in diagrams would or would not work and demonstrated their predictions effectively. Pupils are working above national expectations in their understanding of this aspect of science.

65. In Key Stage 2, Years 3 and 4 pupils were examining samples of rock containing fossils with hand lenses and identifying how they were created. Pupils volunteer information about the fossils spontaneously, with comments such as, 'that's from underwater, like a squid', and 'these things were alive fifteen million years ago'. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were studying how oil and gas are formed and classifying rocks according to their characteristics.

66. The quality of learning at Key Stage 1 was good and, at Key Stage 2, was satisfactory. Pupils enjoy their science work and are well motivated by the well-planned activities, the good pace generated and the good subject knowledge shown by the teachers. They work well together, are very interested in their tasks and respond well to their teachers' questioning and guidance.

67. Teaching was good overall at Key Stage 1 and, in one lesson, excellent teaching was observed. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. In the excellent lesson, the teacher built on pupils' previous learning very well, made very good use of questioning to guide pupils' thinking and assess understanding, and demonstrated very good, secure subject knowledge. Both teachers succeed in conveying their enthusiasm and interest in science to the pupils. Although teaching was never less than satisfactory, the fact that teaching at Key Stage 2 was less effective than teaching at Key Stage 1 reflects the difficulties inherent in teaching to a class spanning four age groups and containing a wide range of ability. Pupils with special educational needs are catered for with appropriate work and with additional support from the teachers they make satisfactory progress overall. Higher attaining pupils receive appropriate support as they often work with an older age group, especially at Key Stage 2.

68. The school follows the government-recommended scheme of work for the subject, planning a two-year rolling programme of topics. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

69. No whole-class lessons were observed, although a small number of information technology group activities were observed at both key stages. Evidence from these observations suggests that pupils attain standards in information technology above those expected nationally by the end of Key Stage 1, and throughout Key Stage 2, in communicating and handling information, and at least satisfactory in controlling, monitoring and modelling.

70. At Key Stage 1, one information technology activity was observed. One Year 2 pupil, during a literacy lesson, was using a word-processing program on a computer to write about a hippopotamus. The pupil demonstrated a good understanding of how to use the shift key to obtain a capital letter, the delete key to remove a letter and other functions such as the 'find' and 'read' keys to help her with her work.

71. Years 3 and 4 pupils, have their individual files on a spelling program which they access by double-clicking on their names and use effectively in small group activities during literacy lessons. Through these they reinforce and consolidate work undertaken in the previous activity, as in one case, the use of the 'ful' suffix. In Years 5 and 6, in a mathematics lesson, pupils inserted a CD-ROM and opened the appropriate drive/file/folder very confidently. They demonstrated a high level of confidence with the software, reading on-screen instructions and responding appropriately, and had good keyboard and mouse skills. In another lesson, pupils researching 'The Victorians' were interrogating a CD-ROM encyclopaedia appropriately to answer questions on a worksheet. Unfortunately, during the inspection the pupils were not able to access the Internet due to a breakdown in communications, but all pupils have their own e-mail addresses and are competent in using the facility. For instance, one pupil communicates regularly with a relation in Australia.

72. Pupils' quality of learning was good overall in both key stages due to the good level of support provided by the teachers who have enthusiasm and confidence in the use of information technology. They are given an appropriate level of challenge in the tasks set and most lessons observed contained an information technology activity of some sort. Pupils are attentive to the task and clearly enjoy the activities, demonstrating appropriate confidence with the hardware. They are well-motivated and work together well, take turns and working independently.

73. Teaching in the one lesson observed at Key Stage 1 was good, as it was in the Key Stage 2 activities. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, make good use of appropriate vocabulary, used questioning well, organise or provide good support for pupils in small groups and provide a good range of resources to aid and guide learning.

74. The headteacher's resourcefulness in buying, at a very good price, three up-to-date computers from a local business has considerably enhanced the information and communication technology provision.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

75. No religious education lessons were observed during the inspection, and although a scrutiny of work and displays was undertaken and discussions held with a few pupils there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on attainment by the end of the key stages.

76. All pupils have religious education lessons together and the vicar or a member of a local Faith Mission group often takes these. Pupils at both key stages have a clear understanding of Christian festivals and their importance and Key Stage 1 pupils had made individual booklets to illustrate the story of the first Christmas. Through stories they hear, most understand that not all people are Christians, and that some worship different gods. Pupils know many of the Old Testament stories and understand the importance of prayer as shown in their 'Tree of Prayers' and illustrated when one of the youngest pupils asked spontaneously to say a prayer at the end of an assembly.

77. The school follows the local education authority agreed syllabus in which the teachings of Christ are emphasised, along with the sense that all great religions have something to offer, and should be considered carefully. The school has sufficient resources for the subject. Visits to places such as the local church make an appropriate contribution to the knowledge of the pupils.

ART, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY, GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, MUSIC and PHYSICAL EDUCATION

78. Due to the fact there is only one class in the afternoons and all of the above subjects are on the timetable to be taught in the afternoons, very few lessons were observed during the inspection. However, from the teacher's planning, a scrutiny of work, displays and discussions with pupils, it is clear that appropriate work is planned for the pupils and most pupils are working at a level expected for their ages.

79. Two art lessons were observed. After listening to and appreciating 'Cockerels and Hens' from Saint Saen's 'Carnival of the Animals', pupils at Key Stage 1 were experimenting with ideas suggested by the music and pictures. They were colouring with pens and crayons and sticking fur onto a template, to make animal masks, effectively developing their creative, imaginative and practical skills. Through direct observation of stuffed birds, a group of the Key Stage 2 pupils were successfully developing the technique of drawing using charcoal, experimenting with effects such as 'smudging' the lines to create

shading. Work on display shows that pupils also have the opportunity to work in three dimensions, for instance, using clay to make masks, pots and models.

80. In the same lesson, other Key Stage 2 pupils were designing a board game on an animal theme as part of their design and technology work. They were successfully devising and making artefacts created from ideas and information in books to aid their designs and once made, through playing them, they tested the effectiveness of their games. Pupils appraised their art and design and technology work appropriately through describing and discussing it with the rest of the class at the end of the lesson.

81. In a history lesson, as part of their studies on the Victorians, pupils at Key Stage 2 were researching, using various sources, famous people who lived at that time. Some were putting their information technology skills to good use, finding facts through a CD-ROM. Key

Stage 1 pupils, were, in particular, focussing on the life of Florence Nightingale and were making sensible suggestions whilst looking at pictures as to which lamp she might have carried that gained her the title of 'The Lady with the Lamp'. Other work showed that, previously, pupils throughout the school had made an appropriate study of life during the 1950's and 60's.

82. Although no geography lessons were observed, work on display and in books indicates that pupils had been developing their mapping skills appropriately through, for example, at Key Stage 1, making a plan of their classroom identifying furniture and other articles in a key. Pupils at Key Stage 2 had also made plans of the classroom but in more detail, and were clearly familiar with the points of the compass using them accurately to indicate positions of places on a plan.

83. No music lessons were observed, although pupils listened to and enjoyed the music of Saint Saen at the beginning of their art and design and technology lesson. Most quickly drew the conclusion that the music was about cockerels and hens, suggesting that the rhythm sounded like the movements their heads make as they peck at the ground.

84. Although planning indicates that pupils undertake a full programme of physical education, no lessons were observed. However, the headteacher states that all pupils by the time they leave school at the end of Key Stage 2 can swim at least 25 metres.

85. In the lessons observed, pupils were well-behaved and keen to work. They collaborated sensibly and shared resources amicably.

86. The quality of teaching, although satisfactory in the two art lessons, was unsatisfactory in the design and technology and history lessons. This was mainly due to the fact that in these lessons in the afternoons the teacher has the extremely difficult task of planning for teaching the National Curriculum at the appropriate levels for four to 11 year olds and maintaining an appropriate pace of learning. In these two lessons she was unable to do so satisfactorily. In addition, in the history lesson the resources the Key Stage 2 pupils needed for their research were not readily available and so a great deal of time was wasted while the pupils tried to find what they needed. Also, pupils at Key Stage 1 spent an inappropriate amount of time colouring in their pictures of lamps at the end of the lesson. Voluntary help from parents, friends and governors makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning in these afternoon lessons.

87. For all the subjects, the school has appropriate aids to help with planning, either developed by the teachers or government recommended schemes. Although resources are adequate for all subjects, they are not always stored very tidily. Visitors to the school with expert knowledge, and visits pupils make to support their work, enrich the curriculum. The school does not have a hall for indoor physical education or a field for games, which was a weakness noted at the last inspection. However, as then, the school does have the use of the village hall for indoor physical activities but this is not equipped with ropes and wall bars for off the floor gymnastics. Also, the village playing field is easily accessible for games. The school is very fortunate in being able to use the physical education resources at the local secondary school and having the free transport and tuition it provides on a regular basis.