

# INSPECTION REPORT

**OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Worcester

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116921

Headteacher: Mrs M Blackman

Reporting inspector: Mr P B McAlpine  
21552

Dates of inspection: 26-29 June 2000

Inspection number: 193378

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

© Crown copyright 2000

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

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bransford Road St John's Worcester
Postcode:	WR2 4EN
Telephone number:	01905 421409
Fax number:	01905 424064
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend M Lagorio
Date of previous inspection:	10-12 December 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
P B McAlpine 21552	Registered inspector	English Art	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve? The school's results and pupils' standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? English as an additional language.
R Watts 9399	Lay inspector		Pupils attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Finance and efficiency
P Edwards 21069	Team inspector	Science Information technology Music History	Pupils under five
J Woodcock 1624	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Design technology Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? Equal opportunities Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

PBM Inspection Services Limited  
P O Box 524  
Cheadle  
Staffordshire  
ST10 4RN

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

The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>25</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is smaller than most schools. One hundred and seventy-five boys and girls attend full-time, organised into seven classes. The characteristics of the school have changed significantly over the past four years. It has increased in size by almost one half. Three new classes have been established and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs has almost doubled to 28 per cent, which is well above average. About three per cent of the pupils have statements of special educational needs, and this is very high. Take-up of free school meals is low; data about eligibility for free meals, which can be different to take-up, is unreliable. The pupils come from a very wide range of backgrounds. A small proportion of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds; about two per cent speak English as an additional language, which is above average, and one pupil is receiving extra support with English. Attainment on entry varies significantly from year to year. The attainment of the present intake is above average overall; two years ago, attainment on entry was well below average. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school each year at times other than the normal is very high; many pupils who join the school do so with special educational needs. Almost as many pupils were admitted to other classes this school year as joined the reception year, making baseline assessments an unreliable benchmark from which to measure the educational value added by the school. The high pupil turnover reflects mobility within the community, pressure for places in other local Catholic schools, and parental preferences. Staff turnover has been very high and three quarters of the teaching complement has been appointed since the previous inspection. For two years, a shortage of space led to large, mixed-age classes being taught in the library and the hall. Building work to extend the school was completed in September 1999 and the school has now entered a settled phase. The headteacher was appointed five years ago and this is only the second year since then that she has not had a significant teaching commitment.

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

This is an effective and improving school. Standards are broadly average. Nearly all pupils are making expected or better progress in English and mathematics, reflecting the good quality of the teaching and the effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The headteacher provides a firm steer to the educational direction of the school. She is promoting high quality teaching and developing good levels of teamwork. Income and expenditure are higher than average, reflecting the small size of the school and additional provision for pupils with special educational needs. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The teaching is good, with a significant amount that is high quality in mathematics, and this is leading to a rate of learning that is good overall in English and very good in mathematics in the juniors.
- The headteacher, teachers, classroom assistants and other adults at the school are very effectively encouraging the pupils to work hard, enjoy learning, and behave very well.
- The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very good overall.

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

- Not enough time is devoted to sustained independent writing in the juniors or to science throughout the school; this is leading to standards in writing being lower than reading at the age of eleven and to unsatisfactory progress in science in the infants.
- Standards among seven-year-olds are currently below average in English, mathematics and science.
- The monitoring arrangements do not include scrutiny of pupils' work, which is why the shortcomings in science have not been identified and remedied.
- Links with a significant minority of parents are ineffective.

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

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

Improvement is satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching has improved significantly, as has curricular guidance and planning. The overall quality of teaching is now better than most schools whereas at the time of the previous inspection a substantial amount was unsatisfactory. Schemes of work have been written and implemented for all subjects and progression in learning is now satisfactory. An appropriate management structure has been established and the level of delegation is good. Long term financial planning and school development planning are now satisfactory. Communication with the majority of parents is broadly satisfactory. However, a significant minority of parents have concerns about the leadership and management of the school. These concerns are unsupported by the evidence; they nevertheless show that communication with parents has not improved enough.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	All schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	A	C	D	X	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	A	C	C	X	
science	C	C	C	X	

The table shows that the overall test results in 1999 were below average in English and average in mathematics and science. In English, the proportion of eleven-year-old pupils who attained or exceeded the expected national level was about the same as most schools but very few exceeded the level and this is one reason why the results overall are below average. Almost everyone tested did much better in reading than in writing. In mathematics and science, the proportion that attained or exceeded the expected level was greater than most schools; as with English, not enough pupils exceeded it and this reduced results overall.

The results in English declined between 1996 and 1999. The 1999 results in mathematics and science were similar to the previous inspection but varied widely in intervening years. The decline and the variations reflect the small size of the year groups, increasing numbers of pupils with special educational needs and shortcomings in the teaching of writing. When annual variations are smoothed out, the trend in test results over the previous four years is close to the national trend. The high proportion of pupils who are admitted or who leave the school at other than the normal time is bringing more pupils with special educational needs into the school. Their needs are well met but it is not always possible for them to catch up on expected standards.

Comparisons with similar schools are not included because the free school meal data on which the comparisons are based is unreliable. The range of backgrounds of the pupils and the proportion with special educational needs are much greater than the low take-up of free sandwich meals indicates. Educational value added over the four junior years is satisfactory. The pupils increase their knowledge in line with national expectations in English, with a faster overall rate in mathematics. Achievement over the past two years has increased sharply and 85 per cent or more of the pupils, depending on the subject, extend their knowledge at expected or faster rates.

Current standards at age eleven are broadly average and consistent with or better than the 1999 test results in English, mathematics and science. Standards in writing have improved. Standards in this age group are satisfactory in all of the other National Curriculum subjects; they have improved considerably in information technology since the previous inspection. Religious education is inspected separately. Standards at age seven are below average in reading, writing and mathematics, and much lower than in 1999, reflecting the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Standards in science are well below average at age seven; standards in other subjects in this age group are depressed by low attainment in reading and writing. In every year group throughout the school, the extent of current learning is good in English and very good in mathematics, reflecting the good quality of the teaching. Learning is satisfactory in science in the juniors but unsatisfactory overall in the infants. Learning is satisfactory or better in all the other subjects. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress in relation to their difficulties. Overall, girls do better than the boys but this disparity does not reflect shortcomings in the teaching. The school is on course to exceed the statutory targets for 2000 and 2001.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils like lessons, work hard and concentrate well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Behaviour is frequently exemplary. No bullying, racist or sexist behaviour was seen. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The oldest pupils are capable of good teamwork. Levels of courtesy and respect for others are high. Responsibilities are taken seriously and pupils are diligent in carrying them out.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is good overall, better than most schools and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Ninety seven per cent of the teaching is satisfactory or better, including 78 per cent that is good or better and 25 per cent that is very good or excellent. One lesson in science was unsatisfactory. There are no significant variations in quality between the key stages. There is good teaching in every year group. The very good teaching is in the reception year and Years 3, 4 and 6. The excellent teaching is in Year 6.

The teaching is very good in mathematics and meets the needs of all pupils. The teaching is good in English. All pupils are adequately stretched in reading and acquiring a satisfactory knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling but not enough emphasis is placed on sustained independent writing. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught. The teaching in science is satisfactory overall but does not have the same consistent quality between the classes as teaching in the other two core subjects and this is leading to variations in learning between the year groups. The teaching in the remaining subjects generally meets the needs of all pupils. The teaching in geography, history and physical education is good overall. The evidence of direct teaching in art, design and technology, music and information technology is limited; the small amount that is available indicates that teaching is satisfactory or better in each of these subjects. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good.

The excellent teaching is inspirational in quality and extends all pupils to the limit. The very good teaching is rigorously planned and taught, highly motivating, and stretches all attainment groups. The good teaching in English and mathematics follows closely the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and implements the methods very effectively. All pupils are included in shared work; independent work is well matched to learning needs and its purpose clearly understood. Good teaching in other subjects uses methods that lead to quick accumulations of knowledge for nearly all pupils. Satisfactory teaching embraces the educational needs of the majority of pupils but is not always specific about learning objectives for different groups within a class.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad, interesting, and well meets the wide range of pupil attainments. It is enriched by good extra-curricular activities. Strong emphasis is placed on basic skills in English, mathematics and religious education. However, time given to science varies between the classes and that given to sustained writing is generally insufficient.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Particular needs are identified early. A team of skilled learning support assistants supports pupils very well. The recommendations of the Code of Practice are fully met. Targets set for pupils are realistic and achievable.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Needs are appropriately identified and additional support is provided where necessary by the local authority.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development, including the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures for ensuring that pupils are safe and well looked after. Child protection procedures are considerably developed. Health and safety procedures are rigorous. Procedures for monitoring academic and personal development are satisfactory.

On balance, the partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are strongly involved in helping their children succeed. Communication with parents is broadly satisfactory but is not always timely or accurate, through omission not design. The curriculum is broad and interesting but curricular plans and day-to-day organisation do not always fit into the time available.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides a clear direction to the work and development of the school. The deputy headteacher, others with management responsibility, and the staff support the headteacher well and operate effectively as a team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. New governors are interested and enthusiastic about the school. The new chair of governors has reorganised the work of the governing body well. Statutory requirements are met. However, governors are not yet communicating effectively with all parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring arrangements are satisfactory overall. Test results are analysed and used to help determine priorities. The teaching and planning are checked for quality. However, the pupils' work is not checked sufficiently this is leading to shortcomings in science, for example, not being identified.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory.

The staffing, accommodation, and learning resource are adequate.

## 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>▪ The good standards achieved by all of the pupils.</li> <li>▪ The caring attitudes and hard work of the teachers.</li> <li>▪ The good behaviour of the pupils.</li> <li>▪ The improvements in teaching in the last year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A substantial minority of parents thinks that the school does not work closely with parents.</li> <li>▪ A large minority think that the school is not well led and managed.</li> <li>▪ A few parents think that the timing of the parent-teacher consultation meetings is too late in the school year.</li> <li>▪ Information about events in the school is provided too little and too late.</li> <li>▪ The late arrival of some pupils at the start of the school day.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with the parents' positive views. The view that the school is not well led and managed is unfounded; the school is effectively led and managed and the good improvements in teaching, for example, reflect very positively the work of the headteacher. The extent to which the headteacher and her staff work closely with parents through the homework arrangements and through the arrangements for supporting and guiding academic and personal development of pupils apply equally to all pupils and families and are typical of most schools. Statutory requirements to keep parents informed about the progress of children through written reports and consultations are fully met. The amount of information provided is satisfactory but there are instances of day-to-day communications containing inaccurate dates and being distributed at the last minute, reflecting oversight not design. The extent of late arrival at the start of the school day is greater than typical and should be remedied.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The test results overall were below average in 1999 in English and average in mathematics and science at age eleven. One third of that year group had been placed on the special educational needs register, a proportion that is almost double the national average, and nearly all of those on the register had difficulties with literacy. About one pupil in five in the year group was at an advanced special educational need assessment stage; 10 per cent of the year group had statements of special needs and were not entered for the tests. The early indications of the results in 2000 are that standards have improved, especially in English, and that the statutory targets for 2000 will be exceeded.

2. In the 1999 tests in English, the proportion of eleven-year-old pupils who attained or exceeded the expected national level, 71 per cent, was about the same as most schools but very few exceeded the level and this is why the results overall were below average. In reading, every pupil entered for the tests attained or exceeded the expected national level, including those with special needs, and one third of them attained a higher level; this was much better than most schools. In writing, however, only just over one third of the pupils attained the expected level and only two exceeded it. This shows that the overall results in English were reduced by low standards in writing as well as by the large numbers with special educational needs, particularly for those pupils with high attainment in reading that did not have special needs. In mathematics and science, the proportion that attained or exceeded the expected level, 81 per cent and 86 per cent respectively, was greater than most schools; as with English, not enough pupils exceeded the expected level and this reduced results overall.

3. The overall test results in English at age eleven declined between 1996 and 1999; slightly fewer children in 1999 attained the expected national level than at the time of the previous inspection and fewer reached the next level. The results in mathematics and science in 1999 were similar to the previous inspection but varied considerably during intervening years. In mathematics and science, more pupils attained expected levels in 1999 than in 1996 but fewer attained a higher level. Altogether, the four-year overall trend in test results, which adds together results from different subjects and smoothes out the annual variations, is close to the national trend. The small size of the year groups is leading to pronounced annual variations in results compared to larger schools. The variations are mostly caused by the presence or otherwise of pupils with special educational needs, particularly when these needs reflect difficulties with literacy or numeracy. The high proportion of pupils admitted or who leave the school at other than the normal time is bringing more pupils with special educational needs into the school. Their needs are well met by the teachers but it is not always possible for them to catch up on expected standards by age eleven.

4. Comparisons with similar schools are omitted because the data is unreliable. The purpose of the comparison is to provide a measure of the educational value added when the background of pupils is taken into account. The grouping of schools with similar characteristics is based on the proportions of pupils eligible for a free meal. The take-up of meals is low. The local authority does not provide a school meal service, only free sandwich meals on application. Data about eligibility is neither collected nor collated by the authority and so there is no means of verifying that the number of pupils who take up a free meal is the same as those eligible. A significant minority of pupils come from localities with relatively high levels of low-income families and unemployment. The very high levels of special educational needs and pupil mobility are characteristics not normally associated with schools in a low free school meal category. Using the free school meal method of determining a similar school group would appear to show that the value added by this school is much less than that of others with the same proportion of free meals. Such a finding is at odds with substantial inspection evidence about pupil progress.

5. Current standards among the eleven-year-old pupils are broadly consistent with the 1999 national averages in English, mathematics and science. Attainment remains higher in reading than in writing. About 90 per cent of the pupils in Year 6 are reading at or above the expected national level, including 25 per cent at a higher level. In writing, about 65 per cent are attaining or exceeding the expected level, including about 20 per cent at a higher level. The standard in writing is higher than last year because the teacher has placed more emphasis on this aspect of the subject, particularly grammar, spelling and punctuation. In mathematics, about 70 per cent of pupils are attaining or exceeding the expected national level for their age, including 25 per cent at a higher level. In science, 70 per cent are in line with expectations, including 20 per cent at a higher level. Standards in information technology and each of the other subjects are satisfactory, except in music, where not enough evidence was available to make a judgement. In Year 6, there are more boys than girls with high attainment and more boys than girls with special educational needs. Overall, girls do better than boys. This disparity does not reflect shortcomings in the teaching. There are no significant differences in attainment between pupils from different backgrounds. Early indications of the 2000 test results are consistent with these findings and show a good improvement in English.

6. Nearly all eleven-year-olds are independent readers with good phonic skills. Comprehension skills are good and they can read well for study purposes. The few not at the expected national level read worksheets and textbooks independently but struggle with more complex unfamiliar words. High attaining pupils are enthusiastic about books and can read most

texts put before them. In writing, those at expected levels write appropriately for different purposes using correct grammar, in the main, and accurate punctuation and spelling. High attaining pupils write, complex sentences, varying well the vocabulary and using standard English expressions. The four in ten pupils not yet at the expected level have a wide range of attainment. Some are not far behind but several are three or four years below expectations and face significant difficulties with written work. In mathematics, the substantial majority know the multiplication tables to 10, for example, carry out operations using decimals, carry out computations using large numbers, and have satisfactory or better knowledge of shape, space and measures, and a good knowledge of data handling. High attaining pupils are familiar with negative numbers, interpret straight-line graphs well, and are comfortable in using probability graphs. Low attaining pupils find checking the accuracy of their work difficult. In science, nearly all in Year 6 have a secure understanding of forces, for example, and most of them have a satisfactory understanding of life processes, materials and their properties, and electricity and circuits.

7. In art, the Year 6 pupils are confident, have good representational skills and pay close attention to detail. Ability to represent shape and form is satisfactory but few pupils know how to vary the quality of line. In design and technology, the substantial majority attain levels consistent with expectations and a few exceed them; they are familiar with the design process and have good making skills. In geography, most pupils are developing a satisfactory knowledge of places in the United Kingdom, Europe, and further afield, and have satisfactory map-reading skills. No history lessons were seen in Year 6 but the pupils' work, and talking to them, shows that they have a satisfactory understanding of periods of history including the Romans, Vikings, Victorians, Egyptians and a good understanding of the period during and after the Second World War. In information technology, attainment among eleven-year-olds is satisfactory in all aspects of the subject except control technology, where equipment has been lacking until very recently. Word processing and data handling skills are generally good; pupils can access the Internet, use graphics program and CD-ROM data bases; they have very good levels of confidence when exploring programs and learning for themselves how they work. No music in any junior age group was seen. No physical education was seen in Year 6 but pupils in Year 5 are developing appropriate skills of dexterity and coordination and can plan, perform and evaluate their movements successfully, indicating that standards are on course to meet national expectations.

8. Nearly two-fifths of the current eleven-year-olds are on the special educational needs register; 21 per cent of those with special educational needs are at advanced stages of assessment and receive additional support funded by the local authority; eight per cent have statements of special educational needs. No pupil was found on the register that should not have been and none that should be on the register and were not. Overall, more eleven-year-old pupils have special needs this year than last. The proportion on the special needs register is more than twice the national average and the proportion at an advanced assessment stage is very high.

9. Performance in lessons, work since entering the year group, optional national tests, and teachers' records, show that all the pupils in Year 6 are making or exceeding the expected amounts of progress, or making good progress in relation to their difficulties in English and mathematics. The teaching in this year group is very good overall; those with high attainment are appropriately stretched and those who experience difficulty with literacy and numeracy are doing well in relation to their difficulties.

10. Standards among pupils under five are good. About 90 per cent have attained or exceeded the national benchmark for pupils entering compulsory education in language, literacy and mathematics. Within this proportion, about half the pupils are already working within the first level of the National Curriculum in reading, with about 20 per cent doing so in writing and mathematics. Standards are good in personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development. Standards are satisfactory in physical development but pupils have only limited access to outdoor play equipment.

11. Standards among seven-year-old pupils are currently low. The low standards reflect the well below average attainment of this year group when they entered the reception year and the low attainment of pupils who joined the cohort after the normal age of admission. In English, about six in ten pupils in Year 2 have attained the national level typical of a seven-year-old, including one in ten in reading and one in twenty in writing who exceed it; overall, this is fewer than most schools. In mathematics, about seven in ten pupils have attainment in line with expectations and almost none exceed them. In science, few pupils have comprehensive knowledge across all of the attainment targets in the National Curriculum program of study. Low attainment in writing is depressing attainment in other subjects in Year 2 where written work is required. Nevertheless, learning in art, design and technology, geography, history, information technology, music and physical education is broadly satisfactory at age seven.

12. Forty-three per cent of the pupils in Year 2 joined the year group after the normal age of admission, a proportion that is very high. One third of the pupils are on the special educational needs register. The teaching is effective in all subjects except science. The pupils' performance in lessons, their work since joining their current class, and school records show that all of them are making nationally expected amounts of progress, or better, or make good progress in relation to their special educational needs in English and mathematics. Progress is satisfactory in each of the other subjects except science, where progress is slow. Three quarters of those admitted at the normal time went on to attain expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. This proportion is much closer to the national average and shows that the true effectiveness of the teaching is masked by the high amount of pupil turnover. Indeed, about half the pupils in Year 2 with

very low baseline assessments at age four have now caught up with national expectations. Only half of those admitted after the usual time are attaining expected standards but they are catching them up.

13. The impact of pupil mobility can be demonstrated by analysing separately the test results of those pupils who entered the juniors at age seven and then continued until the age of eleven. In 1999, 73 per cent of these pupils in English and 91 per cent in mathematics attained the expected level, including 18 per cent who attained a higher level. Results such as these place overall standards for this group as average in English and above average in mathematics.

14. The pupils' work, performance in lessons, and school records show that the amount of educational value added is satisfactory. The achievements of the pupils over time have increased sharply in the past two years. Nationally devised optional tests for Years 3, 4 and 5 in English and mathematics have been used regularly for three years. These, together with statutory tests, show that nearly all pupils, including many with special educational needs, are currently increasing their knowledge in English and mathematics at a rate of one National Curriculum level every two years, which is the expected amount. Between 20 per cent and 40 per cent, depending on the subject, increase their knowledge by more than this expectation.

15. The test information shows that three and four year ago, only about half the current Year 6 pupils were extending their knowledge by expected amounts; achievement overall at that time was unsatisfactory. Since then, achievement has accelerated and these pupils have caught up lost ground. Achievement is accelerating for pupils in each of the other junior years. In Year 4, for example, 92 per cent in mathematics and 88 per cent in English extended their attainment by expected amounts between the ages of seven and nine; this is better than the typical picture. In mathematics in Year 4, 38 per cent increased attainment by more than the expected amount and these pupils are already attaining a standard close to that expected by age eleven; such achievement is very good. Those who did not extend attainment by expected amounts were pupils at advanced stages of special educational needs; they nevertheless extended their knowledge well given the difficulties they experience. In Year 5, more than 80 per cent in English and 90 per cent respectively in mathematics and science have attained expected standards for their age and about half in each subject have attained the standard expected by age eleven one year ahead of time. In the light of the accelerating levels of achievement, the statutory targets for 2001 should be revised upwards.

16. The pupils' work in English and mathematics confirms the test and assessment information and shows that the current extent of learning in these subjects is good throughout the school. This finding includes Year 2, where current attainment is lower than expected. In Year 2, for example, pupils who began the school year only able to write one or two words, and not yet attaining the first National Curriculum level in writing, are now attaining the expected national level. They can write half a page or more of well organised thoughts and ideas, use full-stops to demarcate some sentences, capital letters, speech marks and exclamation marks. This amount of progress is very good. In Year 3, a high attaining pupil began the year able to write logically organised stories and accounts, with mostly accurate spelling and punctuation. He now writes using well-organised and interestingly developed ideas, very accurate spelling, a full range of punctuation, a very varied range of simple and complex sentences, and good use of adjectives and adverbs. His attainment has increased by more than one level in one year, which is very rapid indeed. This positive picture of learning in writing is replicated in every year group. The findings are similar in mathematics.

17. Learning in science is not as consistent as in English and mathematics. The termly planning does not require teachers to identify what will be taught each week and the pupils' work shows that in some year groups, science is taught irregularly and too little overall. It is taught systematically in Year 4, for example, where standards are average overall and progress during the current year has been good. Learning in each of the other subjects is satisfactory throughout the school and the pupils generally make expected progress.

18. Two of the three pupils with English as an additional language speak English fluently and do not need additional support. Their learning in other subjects is in line with national expectations. One pupil has recently been assessed as needing support with English so that learning can be increased. The learning of pupils with special educational needs is generally good in relation to the difficulties they experience, reflecting the well-managed support. Many of the eleven year old pupils on the special needs register are catching up well in reading and numeracy compared to their earlier attainment. This is an improvement since the previous inspection report. Throughout the school, carefully prepared educational plans with clear learning targets are used thoroughly by teachers to set appropriate challenges. There are clear procedures for monitoring progress as pupils move between special needs assessment stages. Satisfactory proportions of those on the register are returned to less advanced assessment stages as progress improves; some pupils are removed from the register altogether because they have caught up sufficiently with national expectations. They receive good support from the special needs coordinator and learning support assistants. The links with class teachers are effective. This represents good provision and contributes well to the improving rate of pupils' progress.

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

19. Pupils have good attitudes towards school. The vast majority of parents say that their children enjoy coming to school. Pupils start enthusiastically in the morning, although a significant number arrive a few minutes after the official start time. Children in the reception class are very interested in activities available and have a bubbly, excited attitude to

school. In most lessons, pupils are stimulated well and display a keenness to participate and an enjoyment of challenge. This was particularly strong in well-taught literacy and numeracy lessons. Pupils work hard and conscientiously. They display a pride in their work and are keen to show it to outsiders. Pupils with special educational needs are positive about their learning, fully integrated into school life and are accepted by their peers. Those pupils taking part in well-supported extra-curricular activities respond eagerly.

20. Generally, behaviour is very good. In almost all lessons, pupils do as they are asked and work conscientiously. They raise their hand to answer questions and refrain from interrupting others. On the few occasions where admonishment is required, they respond obediently. The school has several pupils with behavioural difficulties. These pupils are often supported by adults and generally have responded well to the school's efforts to improve their behaviour. A notable feature of the school is the extreme orderliness with which pupils move in groups around the school, supervised by adults. Pupils behave well as they eat their packed lunches and when they play together. In assemblies, most pupils are attentive, listen to the speaker and participate in the singing. The infants tend to be more restless, until they become caught up in the role-play, and they sing with far more gusto than do the juniors. Although one or two parents have had experience of their children being bullied, no examples were seen during the inspection and, in discussion, pupils said that this is not generally a problem. A few had experienced difficulties in being accepted when they came to the school and felt that this went on longer than it should. There are a few ethnic minority pupils. They appear to be well integrated into school life and no racial harassment was seen. There were no exclusions last year.

21. Personal development and relationships within the school are good. Pupils have respect for the beliefs of others although their knowledge of these is limited. They show care for resources and they clearly respect the efforts of the parents who maintain the colourful gardens and hanging baskets in the grounds. They treat staff at the school with respect and the rapport between teacher and pupil is good. In the best classes, where rapport is very good, a relaxed yet disciplined atmosphere allows everyone to get the most out of the lesson. Relationships between pupils are good and they work well together, sharing resources and showing awareness of the needs of others. For example, pupils in a Year 3 gymnastics lesson collaborated to move apparatus around with care. Pupils have opportunities in class and around the school to show initiative and take responsibility, which they accept and fulfil well.

22. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. Overall attendance is in line with the national average and there is little unauthorised absence. Lateness is a problem for some pupils.

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

23. The teaching is good overall; 97 per cent is satisfactory or better, including 78 per cent that is good or better and 25 per cent that is very good or excellent. The quality of teaching is better than most schools and is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. One lesson in science was unsatisfactory; this quality is not typical of the work of that teacher in other subjects. No teaching is poor or very poor. There are no significant variations in quality between the key stages. There is good teaching in every year group. The very good teaching is in the reception year and Years 3, 4 and 6. The excellent teaching is in Year 6.

24. The teaching is very good in mathematics, where 100 per cent is satisfactory or better, including 89 per cent that is good or better and nearly half that is very good or excellent. The teaching is good in English, where all of the teaching is satisfactory or better, including 88 per cent that is good. The teaching in science is satisfactory overall; 88 per cent is satisfactory or better, including 45 per cent that is good or better; 12 per cent is unsatisfactory. The teaching in geography, history and physical education is good overall; in physical education, the teaching is very good in the juniors and satisfactory in the infants. The evidence of direct teaching in art, design and technology, music and information technology is limited; the small amount that is available indicates that teaching is satisfactory or better in each of these subjects, except in music in the juniors, where not enough teaching was seen to make a judgement.

25. The teaching in mathematics meets the needs of all pupils. In English, high, average and low attaining pupils are adequately stretched in reading and they are acquiring a satisfactory knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling. An increased emphasis has been placed on sustained writing this academic year, following analysis of the 1999 test results, but more needs to be placed, especially in subjects other than English, if standards in writing are to equal those in reading. The teaching in science does not have the same consistency as teaching in the other two core subjects and this is leading to variations in progress between the year groups. The teaching in the remaining subjects generally meets the needs of all pupils and none were found to be underachieving or struggling to keep up. The teaching is meeting the needs of pupils with English as an additional language. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good; these pupils are helped to overcome their difficulties by the effectiveness of the learning support assistants.

26. Where teaching is very good or excellent, the lessons are exciting and challenging for the pupils. In an excellent mathematics lesson in Year 6, challenging questions were used to verify and extend what pupils knew about decimals, negative numbers, frequency graphs and probability. The questioning was perceptive and, together with very imaginative use of resources, helped generate a spirit of enquiry and maintain a fast pace to the work for all pupils. In a very good mathematics lesson in Year 4, a range of prepared questions was used to target pupils at specific levels of attainment and

include everyone in the mental mathematics part of the lesson. Using a whiteboard, the teacher explored finding the area of a regular shape by counting squares. She then encouraged the pupils to find quick ways of working out the area without counting all of the squares, which led the pupils towards solutions involving multiplication. The task was quickly extended to finding out how many squares were needed to cover half or quarter of the shape; finding quick ways to do this led to the use of division. The pupils were constantly challenged to extend their knowledge of addition, multiplication and division, to apply their knowledge of the multiplication tables in new situations, and to explain their methods. By the end of the lesson, the high attaining pupils perceived ways, for example, of finding three quarters of numbers that were multiples of three or four by using their knowledge of the threes and fours multiplication tables.

27. Where teaching is good, nearly all pupils increase their knowledge and skills appropriately by the end of the lesson. Basic skills and subject content are clearly explained and there is a strong emphasis on correct terminology. In a good English lesson in the reception year, for example, the children were very familiar with terms such as “consonant” and “vowel”. This enabled them to participate in a challenging dice game that involved blending three sounds selected by a roll of the dice, two of which were consonants and one a vowel, into ‘words’ and then saying whether what they had made was an actual or a nonsense word. By playing this as a class game with the teacher, every child’s letter recognition and phonic skills were consolidated and extended in a context of challenge, enjoyment and enthusiasm. The teacher could check up on learning, correct the pronunciation of sounds made by specific letters, and get children to demonstrate how sounds are blended. They listened carefully to each other and eagerly pointed out and corrected any mistakes.

28. The one unsatisfactory lesson lacked clear learning objectives and this led to work that had insufficient challenge. Because the work was without challenge, the children lost interest and did not complete their tasks quickly. Few children made adequate progress in the time available.

29. There are satisfactory or better levels of subject knowledge and expertise among the teachers overall in all of the subjects. The shortcomings in writing and science, apart from the unsatisfactory lesson, reflect curricular time management rather than a general lack of subject knowledge. All teachers are technically competent in teaching phonics and other basic skills. The teachers have a good knowledge of the National Curriculum attainment levels in English and mathematics, and a satisfactory knowledge in the other subjects, and this is leading to expectations in lessons being appropriately high. Teaching methods are generally effective. The methods in English and mathematics follow those in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy Frameworks and are implemented very effectively. The teachers manage the pupils very well and maintain high standards of behaviour. Time, resources, and support staff, are efficiently and effectively used. Assessment at a classroom level is good. The teachers and support assistants know the pupils well, check their understanding constantly, remedy misconceptions and errors quickly, and encourage them to overcome difficulties. In a good English lesson in Year 6, two learning support assistants worked patiently and persistently with pupils experiencing difficulties with writing and encouraged them to check the accuracy of their work and to find the right words for what they wanted to say. Homework arrangements are good. Homework is regularly provided and there are appropriate systems for communicating with parents.

30. Weekly and daily planning is satisfactory overall. Weekly planning in literacy and numeracy is generally of good quality, although learning objectives are more sharply and consistently identified in numeracy and include more detail about work for pupils at different levels. The planning in subjects such as history and geography, where opportunities for pupils to write at length sometimes arise, does not identify learning objectives that are specific to the improvement of writing skills and this should be remedied.

31. In English and mathematics, the rate at which pupils learn and make progress is good in all year groups. In nearly all lessons in these subjects almost every pupil extends their knowledge or skills by appropriate amounts and their understanding deepens. Work is pitched at different levels to meet the needs of different pupils. In a good mathematics lesson in Year 2, mental work at the beginning of the lesson deepened the pupils’ understanding of adding and subtracting numbers as inverse processes. By the end of the lesson, high attaining pupils were confidently applying their new knowledge when constructing number sentences involving the addition and subtraction of two digit numbers; the others used numbers smaller than this. Although the extent of lessons seen in non-core subjects varied, in most subjects the teaching was as effective as in the core subjects. In a good music lesson in Year 2, for example, all pupils deepened their understanding of rhythm. At the beginning of the lesson only a few pupils were confident with simple rhythms; by the end of the lesson, almost all of them were confidently emulating relatively complex rhythms. Levels of pupil interest and involvement are good and often very good. All pupils spoken to about their work understood what they had to do, reflecting the sensible sharing of aims and objectives with pupils by teachers at the start of most lessons. The pupils also know, in the main, what they must do to improve. In a good physical education lesson in Year 5, for example, the pupils could evaluate their batting and bowling skills and concentrate on the weakest areas to improve them.

32. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teaching is characterised by good relationships between the special needs coordinator, learning support assistants and pupils who work hard on interesting and appropriate tasks. Individual education plans have clear targets, which are shared with the pupils and reviewed regularly. Teaching is particularly concentrated well on improving literacy and numeracy skills and pupils’ self-esteem. The effective management of pupils, and the use of resources, helps create good conditions for learning. Communication between class teachers and learning support assistants is effective and enhances pupils’ progress.

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

33. The curriculum is broad, caters well for the wide range in pupils' interests and abilities, and is enriched by good extra-curricular activities. Good emphasis is placed on English, mathematics and religious education. However, there are imbalances in the time given to science and to sustained, independent writing. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Provision for pupils' personal development, including the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.

34. Overall, curriculum planning is good, and weaknesses noted in the previous inspection report have been fully remedied. New teachers find the long, medium and short term planning arrangements very helpful in preparing lessons and this has facilitated their induction into school. However, the medium term plans do not designate the time to be allocated to each subject and it is not clear that what is to be taught will fit into the time available. In lessons, teachers use time well but because not enough time is allowed for assembling and moving pupils from one part of the school to another, lessons at the end of assemblies, morning and mid-day breaks do not always begin on time. When this happens, the time available for teaching National Curriculum subjects is reduced and this is unsatisfactory. The school meets statutory curriculum requirements, including provision for religious education in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. Policies and schemes of work in all subjects guide planning and provide continuity in pupils' learning. Currently, good progress is being made in adapting the planned curriculum to meet the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's recommendations for most subjects.

35. Provision for English and mathematics has been strengthened by national strategies, both of which the school has implemented effectively. All classes have a lesson each day for literacy and numeracy and pupils use the skills learnt appropriately in other subjects. Provision for information technology is being developed in line with recent national guidance but limited opportunities are given for the development of monitoring and control technology. The programme for pupils' personal, health and social education is taught through science and religious education and is satisfactory.

36. The school has an appropriate homework policy that helps create opportunities for pupils to be supported by parents. A good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the statutory curriculum. Sporting activities includes football, games and gymnastics; the pupils attend these with enthusiasm. Other activities encourage pupils to participate with equal enthusiasm such as a choir, computing, recorders and an Italian club. Other clubs are run at different times during the year, depending on staff availability. Educational visits are used well to widen pupils' experiences of the locality and region, for example visits to environmental study areas, outdoor pursuits centres and the City of Worcester.

37. The school provides effectively for pupils of all ages, gender and ethnic diversity. The curriculum provides equality of access and opportunities for all pupils and most make good progress in lessons. The school reflects equal opportunities in its aims and objectives. Teachers group pupils appropriately and boys and girls work well together. Pupils with special educational needs are identified as early as possible and good provision is made to improve their learning skills so that they can grow in self-esteem and confidence. Where appropriate, these pupils are supported very well in lessons by a team of skilled learning support assistants. The requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are fully met and the targets set for pupils are realistic and achievable. Effective use is made of visiting specialists to support learning such as speech therapists, a local authority advisory teacher and additional help for pupils experiencing behavioural difficulties.

38. The school has a good tradition of teaching personal, social and health education; its programme is comprehensive. The governors monitor carefully that sex education is appropriately taught and that the school nurse is positively and usefully involved. The police liaison officer takes part in the school's drugs awareness programme as well as topics associated with personal safety and health. Most teachers are skilled in helping pupils explore these issues further during science and religious education lessons in which pupils express their thought and feelings with increasing confidence.

39. Links with the community are good. There are good links between the Year 6 teacher and the secondary school, which contributes to the smooth transition for pupils. The school has established a positive relationship with local public services such the police and health visitors; it receives good support from local companies and retailers, particularly with staff training in environmental studies work and mathematics. Links with local colleges and training institutions are very good and students are placed at the school as part of work experience and teacher training.

40. The school makes very good provision for the spiritual development of pupils. A sense of awe and wonder is promoted in all aspects of the curriculum and pupils learn appropriately about the beauty and rich diversity of the world about them. The pupils learn about the wonder of nature, for example, through their involvement with the school garden. A strongly held Catholic belief permeates all aspects of the curriculum and enhances the pupils' spiritual development. All pupils join in with prayers and hymns and there are many opportunities for reflection and contemplation. Strong links are maintained with the local church to celebrate major festivals in the year and through the sacramental programme. The pupils, including those who do not follow the Catholic faith, attend church to take part in mass as part of the school's programme of collective worship. Through collective worship, the pupils are provided with knowledge and insight into

the religious beliefs of Christians and those of other major religions. There is further provision for the spiritual development of the Year 6 pupils, when they attend a 'retreat day' organised by Catholic Sisters at a nearby abbey.

41. The provision for the pupils' moral development is very good. The pupils are taught how to distinguish right from wrong and their behaviour, in and around the school, reflects the high standard of moral development promoted. The motto 'to love and to share' is central to the teachings of the school. The teachers emphasise good behaviour and attitudes to work and, where appropriate, the pupils' efforts are rewarded during the weekly achievements' assembly. The teachers are good role models and the pupils live up to the standards expected of them.

42. The provision for the pupils' social development is good. They contribute actively to the life of the school and are taught to take responsibility from an early age. Older pupils perform a range of tasks that assist the smooth running of the school. They are given responsibility for planning the mass and take on the role of servers during the church services. They perform songs and musical items for senior citizens and invite them into school to attend some of the major Christian festivals. Over the year, the pupils support several charities and this extends their social skills. They develop an understanding of the difficulties encountered by others through their involvement with these charities, for example the children of Romania and the people in the care of a local hospice. The pupils' involvement goes beyond fund raising, with visitors talking about the work of the various charities.

43. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. The pupils' appreciation of their own culture is furthered by visits to local theatres and museums and lessons in art, music, history and geography. A visit to the civil war centre enhances the pupils' knowledge of the Stuart period. The pupils expressed their enjoyment of the recent arts week during which they were given the opportunity to make puppets and participate in various art, music and dance activities as well as listen to stories told by professional storytellers. The pupils in Year 5 are given an insight into the diversity of art through their study of other cultures and the work of famous artists. Whilst significant emphasis is placed on the study of the Catholic faith, the pupils are provided with opportunities to learn about other faiths and cultures. For example, the mother of one of the pupils told the pupils in Year 2 of some of the major features of the Islamic faith. A small number of pupils take part in an Italian club, learning the language and about the culture and classes correspond with a partner school in Italy.

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

44. There are good procedures for ensuring that pupils are safe and well looked after. The adults who care for pupils who are ill or who have accidents at school are adequately trained. When accidents or illness occur, they are recorded appropriately. The school has adopted local child protection procedures and this meets requirements. The designated teacher and all other teachers and adults who work with pupils are trained appropriately in child protection procedures; this is good practice. Health and safety procedures are in place and equipment and premises are appropriately checked. There are good procedures for tracking the action taken on risks identified.

45. Procedures for monitoring academic and personal development are satisfactory. Children are assessed when they start in the reception class and informally throughout that year. This enables satisfactory evaluation of pupils' learning and helps teachers identify where additional support is needed. In the rest of the school, pupils' progress in mathematics, science and English is formally assessed well at least once each year. Detailed records of what children know and can do in English are maintained and used to set specific targets for individual pupils; this is good practice. However, such records are not maintained consistently or in a manageable form in mathematics. Portfolios of moderated work in each subject have not been gathered together and there is no formal means of checking the accuracy of teachers' evaluations. This is unsatisfactory but no significant inaccuracies in teachers' judgements were found.

46. The educational support and guidance that pupils with special educational needs receive is good. The arrangements for monitoring and promoting academic progress are good. Teachers know individual pupils well and are fully aware of their differing needs. Good use is made of additional teachers and learning support assistants to help pupils achieve the targets set in their individual education plans.

47. The school makes satisfactory use of data to improve educational and personal support for pupils. At the end of Years 3, 4 and 5, pupils take nationally prepared optional tests. This is leading to a detailed profile of the achievements of individual pupils as they get older. Test information from earlier years is brought together well for mathematics and English. Teachers use the information to set annual targets for individual pupils and then compare the targets with the results at the end of the year. This good practice allows teachers to measure progress but the analysis does not go beyond an individual pupil level to check the performance of groups and cohorts. Other subjects are monitored informally in lessons and teachers evaluate overall progress at the end of the year. Teachers use day-by-day assessment in lessons to modify plans for subsequent teaching. Their good knowledge and relationships with pupils are used to record the pupils' personal development; records of this are passed to the next teacher.

48. The senior management is not yet using test information sufficiently to monitor the progress of groups of pupils over time. Assessment is used well to place pupils in appropriate attainment groups for English and mathematics. Pupils who



are significantly below the attainment expected for their age are placed on the special educational needs register and assessment is used well to set their individual learning plans. The school has made good use of the detailed analysis of completed national assessment tests papers, particularly in Year 6, to modify teaching methods and content, where weaknesses are identified.

49. Past annual reports are maintained in a pupil's personal record. Incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour are recorded and there are good systems for rewarding good attitudes to work and behaviour. Anti-bullying procedures are effective, based on the school ethos of caring for each other. However, a small number of pupils felt that too long had been taken to rectify minor problems, yet important to the child, that had been experienced when integrating into classes they joined part way through the year.

50. Registers are completed correctly each day and action taken to maintain and improve attendance is satisfactory. However, insufficient information is gathered on the significant minority of pupils who are a few minutes late. The school has no strategy to improve punctuality and this should be remedied.

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

51. The extent to which the school works in partnership with parents is, on balance, satisfactory. Almost all parents are happy that their children like school and with the standards and the general quality of teaching. However, a significant minority are dissatisfied with aspects of communication and with leadership and management. At the meeting attended by 21 parents before the inspection, those present had positive views about the present state of the school and felt it was improving. There were concerns over the quality and timing of information and lack of consultation before major decisions such as the allocation of pupils to new classes. There were general concerns about the learning and organisation of pupils in the past. Many parents expressed the view that the school had come through a difficult time associated with the growth in size and the change of teachers but had now turned a corner and was getting better quickly.

52. A majority of parents responding to the questionnaire are well satisfied with the school. There is strongest support for the view that teaching is good and that pupils are expected to work hard. Most parents think that their children like school and that pupils behave well. However, a significant minority have deep reservations; some of these are expressed in letters. Over a third of respondents do not think that the school is well led and managed, 30 per cent think that the school does not work closely with parents, 20 per cent do not feel comfortable in approaching the school with problems, and 20 per cent think that there are insufficient extra-curricular activities. A few parents commented on the numbers of pupils leaving the school. Overall, the same number of pupils have left this year as have joined; this includes pupils joining the reception class and mainly illustrates the high rate of pupil mobility but also a small amount of dissatisfaction. School records show that most of those leaving did so for natural reasons but that a minority withdrew their children because they were unhappy with the school. During the inspection, team members spoke to parents before the start of school. The views stated reflected the two opposing views. The focus of concern of the minority was the personality of the headteacher as a manager and point of contact with parents.

53. The inspection evidence supports the positive views of parents. Teaching is good, as is progress, and pupils behave very well; each of which reflects positively upon the work of the headteacher. As for those areas of significant concern, the school provides a good range of extra-curricular activity and the quality of information for parents is generally satisfactory. The findings do not support the criticisms of leadership and management. Although the management of the school is good, and many aspects of the work of the headteacher are very good, the perception of a minority of parents otherwise is leading to some unsatisfactory relationships and this needs to be remedied.

54. Because of this undercurrent of disaffection, the school's links with a significant minority of parents are currently unsatisfactory. The school is insufficiently positive in the face of what it recognises as a problem, for example, the governing body have not discussed the issue recently even though any reduction in pupils may pose a significant threat to school funding. The school is very active in involving parents in the spiritual side of the school, with many well-attended meetings to discuss the preparation of pupils for Catholic sacraments. The school has held meetings to discuss developments such as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, although only a relatively small number of parents attended. However, the school does not do enough to seek parental views and bring into the open their concerns. Nor does it consult parents on the further development of the school or how, in application of best value principles, it can best meet the wishes of parents. Few parents attend the annual parents' meeting and the school, in turn, does not see this as a vehicle for consulting them on their views and opinions on priorities for future development.

55. The school provides parents with satisfactory reports on their child's progress, with opportunities to discuss them. Whilst all meet statutory requirements, the quality of reports is variable. The best give good detail, particularly in the main subjects of English, mathematics and science; they are written about individuals and discriminate well between differing abilities. Some pupils are given targets for development. In the weaker examples, not enough is said about progress in a particular subject and too much about attitudes, such as concentration and behaviour. When their children start school, parents and the reception teacher complete the baseline assessment together. Parents of pupils sitting the national assessment tests have the opportunity to talk to the teacher about the process. The prospectus and governors'

annual report to parents, whilst well presented and giving much useful information, do not meet all statutory requirements, missing out several of the required elements by oversight, not design. The home-school agreement has been issued and returned by most parents. Other general information for parents is satisfactory but there are occasions when insufficient notice and inaccurate dates are given.

56. Most parents with children in the infants hear them read at home and make comment in the reading diary. Many parents of juniors help them with homework. These involvements help to raise standards. The majority of parents attend consultation evenings although this is reported to fall off for the final discussion of the report. The special educational needs coordinator is developing good relationships with the parents of children experiencing learning and behavioural difficulties. Parents are regularly informed of the progress of children with special educational needs and how they can help them to improve. Several adult volunteers help regularly in the school, giving much valued assistance, for example, with hearing pupils read and practical activities. Two parents work hard to make the school grounds attractive with plants and flowers and several help run extra-curricular activities such as cycling proficiency. These show good levels of parental involvement. The parent-teacher association enthusiastically raises funds and is well supported by staff. Events are well attended by parents.

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

57. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff together are good. The headteacher provides clear direction to the work and educational development of the school and is promoting very positive attitudes among the pupils. She is aiming to establish a caring school with a strong religious ethos, a broad curriculum, and high standards in English, mathematics and the other National Curriculum subjects, and is largely successful in fulfilling these aims. To achieve them, she has established an appropriate management structure, with clear roles and responsibilities, good delegation and constructive teamwork. The deputy headteacher is making an effective contribution, leading by example through the very good quality of her teaching, and by showing good initiative in her support of day-to-day management. The two key stage coordinators manage the work of the infant and junior classes appropriately. Subject coordinators are making a positive contribution to standards through effective leadership in their subjects. At a day-to-day level, the subject coordinators are involved in supporting the planning in their subjects. In the long-term, they know what needs to be done to raise standards. The English coordinator, for example, knows from her analysis of the test results that writing is a major area for improvement and is already placing a greater emphasis on grammar, punctuation and spelling. There is a strong commitment on the part of all teachers to raise standards.

58. The response of the senior management to the previous inspection has been very positive. Improvement since that time is satisfactory, demonstrating that management is effective. The four-year trend in standards is close to the national trend, and average overall, and standards have been kept at broadly satisfactory levels despite significant changes to the characteristics of the school. The achievement of the pupils is satisfactory over the long term and is increasing. The headteacher has raised the quality of teaching through the training and monitoring procedures used to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Teachers' expectations of the pupils are much higher than four years ago. The assessment arrangements have been expanded and the information efficiently used to target the teaching at specific groups of pupils and to match the work effectively to learning needs. Curricular planning and the documented guidance are much better than they were and good overall. This has been achieved through good levels of delegated responsibility and by extending the roles of subject coordinators, an issue identified by the previous inspection. Long term financial planning is now satisfactory. The school development plan has been improved and provides appropriate direction to the work of the school. One area that has not improved enough is communication with parents. There remains a significant minority of disaffected parents, a legacy of past rather than present problems, with whom the governors in particular have not done enough to communicate the successes of the school.

59. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities satisfactorily; relevant requirements are met. All members but one of the governing body have been appointed since the previous inspection and all but two have been appointed within the last year. A new chair of governors, the third since the previous inspection, joined the governing body in December 1999. The working relationships between senior management and the new chair of governors and new members of the governing body are appropriate and communication between them is effective. The governors are interested and enthusiastic about the school and have a strong sense of the ethos and character they wish to create. One of the first acts of the new chair of governors was to reform the committees, constitute them properly and introduce appropriate terms of reference. The range of committees and delegated responsibilities is now typical of most schools and adequate to meet needs. The governing body as a whole, and its committees, meets regularly; their business is properly conducted. Governors have good levels of informal involvement with the school together with an appropriate programme of formal visits. The chair of governors has visited every class since his appointment. These developments are leading to the majority of governors being adequately aware of strengths and weaknesses and what needs to be done to develop the school, though the newness of their appointments means that some governors are still learning the details necessary to carry out their new roles efficiently. Appropriate training for governors has been provided and the individual skills and expertise that each governor brings to the body are made good use of; for example, a governor with accountancy skills has oversight of the school budget. Apart from required communications with parents through the minutes of meetings, the governors are not communicating sufficiently the strengths of the school to parents or acting positively to remedy the

disaffection felt by a minority.

60. Monitoring arrangements are satisfactory and have been extended since the previous inspection. The headteacher, and deputy headteacher, are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's performance, in the main, and take appropriate action to secure change. Teaching is observed and evaluated for effectiveness. This has been happening for about two years and is contributing to the good consistency in the methods used in English and mathematics. Several teachers, including the headteacher, are involved in this activity. The English coordinator, for example, observed the work in the spring term of every teacher during literacy hours. A common format is used to record observations and detailed feedback to teachers follow. This shows satisfactory rigour. The mathematics coordinator has conducted a similar exercise. So far, there have not been repeat visits to check that recommendations for improvement have been implemented; this should be remedied. Subject coordinators and the headteacher check the term plans. In science, the checking revealed a lack of emphasis on experimental science and this led to changes in teaching. Weekly plans are checked by the headteacher, who identifies areas for improvement where necessary. A significant omission from the monitoring, however, is checking samples of pupils' work regularly to see if progress is being made and the work is consistent with curricular plans. The lack of such a system is one of the reasons why inconsistencies between classes in the frequency and amount of science taught have not been identified.

61. Induction arrangements for newly appointed staff are good and relevant statutory requirements are met. Satisfactory appraisal and performance management systems are in place. The professional development system for teachers is appropriate. National funding provided for this purpose is used as intended. Teachers are regularly involved in training aimed at improving school performance and this training, in literacy and numeracy for example, is having a beneficial impact.

62. School development planning was an area for improvement following the previous inspection and is now broadly satisfactory in quality. The process of identifying and deciding priorities involves senior management, teachers, and governors, sufficiently for the arrangements to be corporate and for everyone to have an interest in making developments succeed. The current development plan extends over three years, appropriately demonstrating a long-term strategy, and is based on an evaluation of previous progress; this is good practice. The priorities are relevant to the needs of the school and to raising standards. Targets, responsibilities, resources, monitoring, and success criteria are included. The targets, however, do not lend themselves to measurement. In English, for example, the priority of raising standards in reading, spelling and writing does not say by how much. The success indicator for this development is that an action plan is written and put in place, which is less useful than one that concentrates on the impact of the development on pupils' attainment and progress as measured through test results. There is evidence of slippage with a few of the developments. This reflects the relatively large number of priorities, too many to be tackled realistically within a year, and problems caused by the growth in pupil numbers during the 1998-9 school year. For example, the audit of the library is delayed because the room was used as a full-time teaching space last year.

63. The school makes satisfactory strategic use of its financial resources, although the newly appointed governors are only just acquiring the knowledge necessary for them to play a significant role in this. The school development plan shows that the costs of projects for the year are adequately calculated in advance. Long term planning has been dominated by the need to accumulate resources so that the school could expand to seven classes. This has now been achieved but currently the school is spending more than it receives in income and this is reducing its finances carried forward from last year. Senior management is aware of this and has contingency arrangements in hand. The school lacks an effective means, such as computer modelling, to project the impact of decisions two or three years ahead; with current high pupil mobility, this is important. Each year the budget is set carefully by the headteacher. This part of the planning is good and funds allocated for specific purposes have been properly spent. Once funds have been allocated, financial control by the school is good. The principles of best value are applied appropriately to all purchases.

64. The leadership and management of special educational needs is good. The requirements of the code of practice are fully met. The governing body monitors provision appropriately and has recently appointed one of its members to continue to undertake this work. The special needs coordinator has very good knowledge of the code of practice and of what needs to be done. Together with a team of skilled learning support staff, the coordinator is beginning to reduce the number of pupils on the special educational needs register in each year group. Arrangements are appropriate for assessing pupils' differing needs on entry to school. However, high pupil mobility in some year groups makes this task more difficult, particularly with the slow transfer of records from other schools. The headteacher and coordinator are taking action to improve the situation. They provide teachers with good training, particularly in writing individual education plans, and in the use of a wider range of diagnostic tools. The special educational needs learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. They keep up to date by attending appropriate training and have a clear understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities. Resources for teaching pupils with special educational needs are good and are used well.

65. The staffing, accommodation and learning resources are adequate for the needs of the school. The teachers are appropriately qualified and trained. Learning support staff are experienced and efficiently deployed. The accommodation is sufficient in size and there are specialist areas, such as the library and practical areas that enhance the learning opportunities for pupils. There are no subjects with significant deficiencies in resources.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

### Key Issue 1

66. The headteacher and her staff, with the support of the governing body, need to raise standards in writing in the juniors to at least the same level as standards in reading, and increase learning in science in the infants to at least the same rate as is expected nationally. Senior management and the infant teachers should not take for granted that the below average standards at age seven in English and mathematics will correct themselves in 2001. They should monitor progress in that age group very carefully and provide extra guidance and support as necessary from within existing resources. Writing is already a development priority for the school and the early indications of the 2000 test results show a measure of success. In addition to writing and science, senior management needs to increase the rigour with which pupils' work is monitored. To bring about improvement, the headteacher and her staff, with the support of the governing body should:

- ❑ increase the junior teachers' knowledge of how to teach writing, especially of the methods and organisational strategies necessary to teach sustained independent writing efficiently and effectively in that age group;
- ❑ increase the infant teachers' knowledge of science, and of effective methods of teaching it, where this is necessary;
- ❑ improve the medium term planning by designating precisely for each year group:
  - the number of occasions that sustained independent writing will be included in the provision in English, and in other subjects, and by identifying the specific writing skills that will be extended on each occasion;
  - the number of occasions that science will be taught and by specifying the knowledge and skills that will be extended on each occasion;
- ❑ set challenging, measurable targets for improvement in writing, mathematics and science in each of the year groups;
- ❑ check rigorously a selection of pupils' work and the teaching of writing and science in each class; and report regularly to the governing body on progress towards achieving the targets;
- ❑ check frequently the progress of pupils in Year 2 in English, mathematics and science and initiate measures to boost progress should this be necessary.

(Discussed in paragraphs 2, 5, 6, 11, 12, 17, 23, 25, 28, 30, 33, 34, 60, 79-95 and 105-112)

### Key issue 2

67. The governors, with the support of the headteacher, need to improve the effectiveness of communications with parents and remedy the disaffection among a minority. To bring about improvement, they should:

- ❑ increase the quality, range and frequency with which they communicate to parents the good practice found at the school, standards, and progress towards major development targets;
- ❑ improve the arrangements for consulting with parents and for clarifying, checking and responding to their concerns;
- ❑ improve the timing and accuracy of information sent to parents so that it is received in good time and free from errors.

(Discussed in paragraphs 51-56 and 59)

### Other areas for improvement, not included in the key issues, that should be considered for inclusion in the action plan

68. The following are other weaknesses referred to in the report but not included in the key issues, which the headteacher and her staff, with the support of the governing body, should consider for inclusion in the action plan:

- speed up the process of obtaining records from other schools to reduce the response time for the completion of initial assessments for pupils experiencing learning difficulties (paragraph 64);
- designate the time for assembling and moving pupils after break times, midday and assemblies with greater precision and allow for these within breaks and assemblies rather than afterwards (paragraph 34);
- collate portfolios of moderated work in each subject and use them as a means of checking the accuracy of teachers' assessments (paragraph 59);
- use test information to monitor the progress of groups of pupils over time (paragraphs 47,48 and 62);
- implement a strategy to improve punctuality;
- increase the opportunities for children under five to have outdoor play and the range of large play equipment (paragraphs 10 and 67);
- the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents do not meet all statutory requirements, missing out several of the required elements by oversight, not design (paragraph 55).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	22	53	19	3	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	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	175
Number of full-time pupils taking up free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	49

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.9
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	17	10	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	22	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81	81	81
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	22	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81	81	81
	National	82	86	87

### *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	12	9	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	10	9
	Girls	8	7	9
	Total	15	17	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71	81	86
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	10	10
	Girls	7	7	9
	Total	14	17	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67	81	90
	National	68	69	75

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	169
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. Total entered is 171. A further four pupils below compulsory school age attend the reception class.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.9
Average class size	25

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	100

### ***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.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	316422
Total expenditure	318076
Expenditure per pupil (based on 180 NOR)	1768
Balance brought forward from previous year	29446
Balance carried forward to next year	27792

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	175
Number of questionnaires returned	73

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	26	7	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	36	8	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	44	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	44	5	3	3
The teaching is good.	64	25	8	3	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	40	11	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	32	11	7	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	41	1	3	0
The school works closely with parents.	34	36	22	5	3
The school is well led and managed.	40	18	19	15	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	44	5	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	44	15	7	4

### **Other issues raised by parents**

All significant issues raised by parents are included in the parents' summary earlier in the report.



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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

69. Standards on entry to the reception class vary considerably from year to year, reflecting the small size of the year group. Nearly all of the present pupils entered the reception year with typical or better levels of attainment for their age in language, literacy and mathematics; about one in five had better than typical attainment. The large proportion at typical or better levels makes overall standards above average this year. Two years ago, fewer than one quarter had typical attainment in those areas of learning and the remainder had attainment that was significantly below expectations; in 1997, attainment on entry was well below average overall. Taking the previous three years together and smoothing out annual variations, attainment on entry is broadly average compared to other schools nationally.

70. The quality of the provision is good. By the age of five, all children have made satisfactory or better progress. Almost all of them have attained the national benchmark for pupils entering compulsory education and about one third have attained the first level of the National Curriculum in English and mathematics. At the time of the previous inspection, there was no provision for children under five, the age of admission having changed three years ago. At the time of the present inspection, all of the pupils are following the National Curriculum and only four pupils have not yet reached their fifth birthday.

71. Good teaching in all areas of learning leads to the children making good progress. The teacher knows the pupils thoroughly and assesses their progress well. Targets are set in language and literacy for all children. These are specific and help to develop children's learning. The teacher is well supported by a learning assistant. The support given is well planned and very effective. The curriculum at this time of year is based on the National Curriculum but linked to the areas of learning for children under the age of five. It is satisfactory in all areas except the structured and unstructured play element of physical and social development. This is due to the lack of large play equipment. The staff have produced a useful booklet offering guidance to parents on the daily routines.

#### **Personal and social development**

72. Standards are good. A suitable emphasis is placed on this area of learning. The children are given opportunities to carry out tasks such as taking the register and tidying up the classroom. They take the jobs very seriously and do them very well. The children are encouraged to share equipment and materials, for example when working with jigsaws and on the computers. The teaching is good and this area of learning permeates all of the work in the classroom. The teacher has high expectations of the children's behaviour and work and, together with the learning support assistant, provides a good role model for the children. Both adults explain and reinforce routines so that children know what is expected of them and are encouraged to develop independent working habits and skills, which they do very effectively. By the time they enter compulsory education, the children have attained the desirable learning outcomes in this aspect.

#### **Language and literacy**

73. Standards are good; about nine in ten pupils have attained or exceeded the national benchmark for pupils entering compulsory education, with about half attaining the first level of the National Curriculum in reading and one in five in writing. The children listen attentively and most are eager to answer questions. All of the children enjoy stories and handle books carefully. Nearly all of them recognise a range of words in familiar stories and most letters of the alphabet. The higher attaining children can read simple sentences. Nearly every child is able to shape and form letters with satisfactory accuracy. Those at expected levels can copy words and sentences and more difficult words accurately, with good letter formation. Children with higher attainment write short phrases and sentences without copying.

74. The teaching is good. As the children work, the teacher and the class assistant talk to them and ask questions to promote language skills. Stories are read well and this helps the children to concentrate, follow themes, and enjoy the characters and events. Children are provided with good opportunities to learn and repeat rhymes and poems. The staff encourage the children to listen carefully. They praise contributions to discussions and this motivates the children's involvement. The teacher provides interesting and relevant activities to encourage early writing skills. Computers are used effectively to aid the teaching of spellings. There is a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics that effectively helps to develop the pupils' reading and writing skills. The children are introduced to the literacy session sensitively and those under five are presented with a range of activities suitable for their age and ability. Most children make at least satisfactory progress and attain the desirable learning outcome by the time they are five.

#### **Mathematics**

75. Standards are good. About nine in ten children have attained or exceeded the national benchmark for pupils entering compulsory education, including about one in five who have attained the first level of the National Curriculum. Most children count up to ten with higher attaining pupils having a secure understanding of larger numbers. Most children recognise and name squares, triangles and circles. The computers are used effectively to develop the children's

recognition of shapes. The teaching of mathematics is good. Much of the work is based on the National Numeracy Strategy Framework for teaching with very effective use of whole class activities that are introduced in an imaginative way to capture the children's interest. The teacher makes good use of questions to assess the children's understanding and to help them develop appropriate mental strategies when solving simple number problems. Good use is made of the resources and time available. This results in children having many opportunities to learn and reinforce their number skills and understanding. Most children make at least satisfactory progress and by the time they are five, the children have attained the desirable learning outcome in mathematics.

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

76. Standards are good. The children are aware of what is needed to make plants grow and many can name parts of a plant such as roots and leaves. When using a computer, the children show good control of the mouse and find their way around the keyboard easily. Teaching is good. Activities are satisfactorily resourced and planned, and build on previous learning. The planning links activities well. This promotes a sense of purpose among the children and helps them make sense of their work. The teacher has high expectations of work and behaviour and makes sure the children understand what is expected of them. The children are encouraged to work independently but with appropriate intervention when needed by adults.

### **Physical development**

77. Standards are satisfactory. The children have weekly physical education lessons but opportunities for outdoor play are limited and there is a lack of large play equipment. In the physical education lessons the children make appropriate progress developing and improving their games skills. Teaching is satisfactory and staff encourage the children to develop their fine motor skills when writing and drawing. The pupils are just making satisfactory progress and attain the desirable learning outcome by the time they enter compulsory education.

### **Creative development**

78. Standards are good. The children work confidently with a variety of materials. For example, they produce attractive pictures using a mixture of paint and sawdust to produce compositions with a three-dimensional effect. They produce good quality paintings in the style of famous artists such as Van Gogh. The children use materials and paint experimentally and the quality of the teaching is good. Children are provided with good opportunities to sing and to play percussion instruments as part of the National Curriculum music provision. The teachers encourage the children to talk about their work and express their feelings. All children are encouraged to take part and the learning support assistant is used effectively to work with small groups of pupils. The planning of appropriate activities, along with the use of a satisfactory range of resources, results in children being able to make at least satisfactory progress in this area of learning and attain the desirable learning outcome by the time they enter compulsory education.

## **ENGLISH**

79. Standards among eleven-year-old pupils are average. They are broadly consistent with the 1999 national average but lower than at the time of the previous inspection. Achievement over the four junior years is satisfactory. Learning this year is good. Attainment is higher in reading than in writing. About 90 per cent of the pupils in Year 6 are reading at or above the expected national level, including 25 per cent at a higher level. In writing, about 65 per cent are attaining or exceeding the expected level, including about 20 per cent at a higher level. The standard in writing is higher than last year because the teachers have placed more emphasis on this aspect of the subject, particularly grammar, spelling and punctuation. Nearly two-fifths of the year group are on the special educational needs register; 21 per cent of those with special educational needs are at advanced stages of assessment and receive additional support funded by the local authority; eight per cent have statements of special educational needs. The proportion on the special needs register is twice the national average and the proportion at an advanced assessment stage is very high. All the pupils in Year 6 are making or exceeding the expected amounts of progress each year, or making good progress in relation to their difficulties. The teaching in this year group is consistently good; pupils with high attainment are appropriately stretched and those who experience difficulty with literacy are nevertheless doing well in relation to their difficulties.

80. The 1999 National Curriculum test results for the eleven-year-old pupils were below average overall. The proportion that attained or exceeded the expected level, 71 per cent, was one percentage point above the national average. However, this proportion included 10 per cent of pupils who exceeded the expected level, which was only half the proportion nationally, and this is why the results overall were below average. All of the eleven-year-old pupils entered for the 1999 tests attained or exceeded the expected national level in reading; one third attained the next level two years ahead of time. This is much better than the picture in reading nationally. However, in writing, only one third attained or exceeded the national level. Test results in English are based on the results in reading and writing being added together and the under performance in writing is one of the reasons for the overall results not being high enough. One third of the cohort were on the special educational needs register, nearly all of whom had difficulties with literacy, including 19 per cent at advanced

stages of special needs assessment and two pupils (10 per cent) with statements of special needs, neither of whom sat the tests.

81. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is the most significant factor reducing overall test performance. The results over the previous four years have declined from very good to average as more pupils with special educational needs have joined the school. The satisfactory or better progress shown by an analysis of pupils' work in their current year groups confirms that the decline in results in English mainly reflects changes to the characteristics of the school.

82. Comparisons with similar schools based on the proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal are not included in the report. Comparisons of pupils' current attainment as measured by nationally prepared optional test material with earlier attainment shows that pupils are generally increasing their attainment in line with national expectations and that achievement over time is satisfactory. The analysis shows that achievement generally has increased in the last two years and is reaching the point where nearly every pupil extends his or her attainment by one National Curriculum level every two years; achievement such as this is good.

83. Standards among seven-year-old pupils are currently low overall, with individual exceptions. There is little difference in attainment between reading and writing. The low standards reflect the well below average attainment of this year group when they entered the reception year and the low attainment of pupils who joined the cohort after the normal age of admission. About six in ten pupils in Year 2 have attained the national level typical of a seven-year-old, including one in ten who exceeds it; overall, this is fewer than most schools. Forty-three per cent of the pupils in Year 2 joined the year group after the normal age of admission, a proportion that is very high; some of those who started in the reception year have left. One third of the pupils are on the special educational needs register. The teaching is effective. The pupils' performance in lessons, their work since joining their current class, and school records show that all of them are making nationally expected amounts of progress, or better, or make good progress in relation to their special educational needs. Three quarters of those admitted at the normal time went on to attain the expected level. This proportion is much closer to the national average and shows that the true effectiveness of the teaching is masked by the high amount of pupil turnover. Indeed, about half the pupils in Year 2 with very low baseline assessments at age four have now caught up with national expectations. Only half of those admitted after the usual time are attaining expected standards but they are catching them up.

84. Three pupils speak English as an additional language. Their teachers and the local authority appropriately assess their needs. Two pupils speak English fluently and do not need additional support one newly admitted pupil has only just started to receive support; it is too early to evaluate the quality or impact.

85. Throughout the school, speaking and listening skills are satisfactory overall. A few pupils have significant difficulties but the substantial majority attains expected or higher levels for their age. High attaining pupils in Year 6 are very well spoken. They talk and listen confidently in most settings. They vary expression and vocabulary to engage the listeners' attention and employ standard English in most situations. Most pupils in Year 6 develop ideas thoughtfully, clearly describe events or opinions, question others' ideas, and regularly use features of standard English.

86. Standards in reading are close to good throughout the school, except in Year 2. The substantial majority of pupils in Year 1 are reading at a level that is appropriate for their age. They read short sentences of familiar words that they recognise by sight or can quickly work out using early phonic skills. A few pupils are already reading at a level more typical of pupils in Year 2. These high attaining pupils will tackle unfamiliar words such as "overlooking" by using phonics and by breaking the word into syllables. The majority of pupils in Year 2 use phonics in this way and have satisfactory vocabularies of printed words they recognise quickly. All but a few pupils in Year 3 are well launched into reading and 60 per cent are reading at the level expected by age nine, one year ahead of time. These pupils read straightforward information books and storybooks independently and accurately. They can read work sheets and textbooks and have sufficient skill to use reading effectively to learn in other subjects. In Year 4, between 80 and 90 per cent of the pupils read at this level, a proportion that is good by national standards, and one in five of this group is reading at a standard close to that of an eleven year old. In Year 5, about eight in ten pupils are reading at a level that is appropriate or better for their age, including about half who are independent readers with good phonic skills, and a small proportion who are self-motivated and very confident readers. These standards have been achieved despite 40 per cent of the pupils being on the special educational needs register and more than 60 per cent who have transferred from other schools.

87. Nearly all of the pupils in Year 6 are independent readers who use various methods to work out the sound and meaning of unfamiliar words. They read aloud fluently, with good expression that follows the meaning of the text and shows that they understand what they are reading. Silent reading skills are well developed. They choose books out of interest in particular types of story or author, such as a boy who chose 'Lord of the Rings' because he had previously read 'The Hobbit' and his father had recommended the book. A small number of pupils are not yet at this level but are not far behind; they can read straightforward material independently and accurately but sometimes have difficulty predicting the meaning of unknown words from clues in the sentence or paragraph. The high attaining pupils are self-motivated and confident readers, capable of tackling text at an adult level of difficulty. They use information books effectively for

research purposes and make reference to sections of text when discussing themes and ideas in information books or stories.

88. Standards in writing are satisfactory throughout the school, except in Year 2. In Year 1, about six in ten pupils are writing at or above the first level of the National Curriculum, including two in ten who are close to the standard expected by age seven. The majority can write sentences and phrases using well-formed letters and show awareness of punctuation and the correct use of capital letters. Higher attaining pupils can write short stories or accounts in which the events are logically organised. One in ten pupils in this year group are at advanced stages of special educational needs assessment and experience significant difficulties with literacy. A substantial majority of pupils in Year 2 can write stories, for example, of half a page or more in length that have definite beginnings, middles and endings. Only about half of them have levels of spelling and punctuation that are consistent with expectations for this age group. When they entered the year group, most pupils could only write one or two words, so present standards are a considerable improvement on earlier ones even though they remain below average overall.

89. In Year 3, the substantial majority of pupils organise events and ideas in writing logically. More than half the pupils are already writing at a level expected by the end of the next school year; stories and accounts are lively and interesting; they use a full range of punctuation, mostly accurately; make good use of adjectives and adverbs; and write complex sentences. Over the course of the present school year, a good majority of these pupils have extended their writing skills more quickly than expected nationally.

90. In Year 4, about two thirds of the pupils are writing at expected or higher levels for their age and most of the others are not far behind. Typically in this year group, the pupils write using paragraphs, incorporate speech marks accurately to separate dialogue, and use grammatically correct but straightforward sentence structures. The amount of progress made by these pupils during the year is satisfactory for those of average attainment and below average attainment but the high attaining pupils have not extended their writing skills sufficiently. This reflects limitations in the curriculum, rather than the teaching, which does not promote enough opportunities for pupils to write at length and to acquire the advanced writing skills necessary to sustain ideas, themes, characterisation and plot beyond the simplistic. The number of opportunities to write at length is also limited in Year 5. About two thirds of the pupils write at expected or higher levels, which is marginally below average overall. Nevertheless, their work shows that progress in writing, apart from extended writing skills, is generally good. A small number of these pupils are very high attaining and write at a level almost three years ahead of expectations. A significant minority in this year group experience difficulties with writing. They are appropriately supported and make satisfactory progress in relation to their difficulties but their attainment is two years or more below expectations.

91. About six in ten pupils in Year 6 are able to write stories, newspaper articles, reports, letters, accounts, and poems, that are organised appropriately to suit the purpose. They use grammatically correct sentences, in the main, with accurate punctuation and spelling. About one third of this group have relatively advanced skills. They use long, complex sentences, with commas separating clauses and well-developed use of adjectives and adverbs. These high attaining pupils are consciously varying the beginnings to sentences and to paragraphs and incorporating standard English and colloquial forms. The four in ten pupils not yet at the expected level have a wide range of attainment. Some are not far behind but several are working at a level that is three or four years below expectations and face significant difficulties. The pupils' work shows that opportunities to write at length are insufficient in the year group overall. When opportunities occur in subjects other than English, not enough is done to extend pupils' awareness of the choices of organisation, vocabulary, grammar, and style that they can make to suit the purpose for writing, and so apply and control their knowledge efficiently to improve their work. This is particularly the case for those with lower attainment in writing than in reading, where the disparity indicates that they could achieve more in writing and so boost their overall attainment in the subject.

92. All pupils try hard. Everyone spoken to about reading showed good levels of interest in books. The infant pupils are aware of their own progress and anxious to succeed and move to higher levels. The junior pupils are choosing books out of interest and many of them have good reading habits in their own time. All pupils apply themselves to written work and generally complete set tasks within the given time. Many of the older junior pupils are enthusiastic about their writing and achieve much satisfaction from the creative process.

93. The teaching is good; 100 per cent is satisfactory or better, including 88 per cent that is good. This is much better than the national picture. No very good or excellent lessons were seen. There are no significant differences in the quality of teaching between the key stages or between the year groups. The teaching follows closely the National Literacy Strategy and the teachers' implementation of these methods is effective. Shared text and word level work is generally very well managed and basic literacy skills are well taught. Teachers' questioning and explanation skills are consistently high quality. In a good lesson in Year 4, for example, the teacher very carefully explained how the location of a hyphen, comma or full stop could alter totally the meaning of the text. She did this through careful use of well chosen examples written on a white board and by asking questions such as "I wonder if anyone can explain..." or "What do you notice when..." which promoted close observation, deduction, and the application of previously learnt knowledge to help achieve new understanding. In a good lesson in Year 6, clear teaching of the difference between 'character' and 'appearance' led to a challenging discussion that raised the pupils' awareness of the need to include in their writing descriptions of a character's body language, motives, thoughts and feelings. A sharper focus on choices of adjectives and

adverbs to refine the description of these features, together with using the work of renowned authors to reinforce learning, would have made this an excellent lesson.

94. All lessons cater adequately for the needs of pupils at different levels and low attaining pupils are well supported. This differentiation is identified appropriately in the weekly planning in almost every year group. Work is satisfactorily matched to learning needs and no pupils were found who were either struggling with work that was too difficult or coasting with work that was too easy. The pupils are checked closely as they work and misconceptions and errors are quickly remedied. Assessment and test information is appropriately used to group pupils by attainment and to identify with good accuracy those who are best supported through booster groups and additional literacy support.

95. Subject leadership and management are good. Documented curriculum guidance of appropriate quality is in place and followed carefully by the teachers. Teaching in every class has been observed by the coordinator, checked for quality, and feedback to teachers provided. Assessment systems are good. Newly introduced arrangements for individual target setting are working effectively and leading to increased levels of involvement in their own learning among the pupils. National Curriculum test results are analysed sufficiently and outcomes used to set school development priorities; for example, the subject coordinator has already identified the need to improve pupils' writing skills and action has been taken. Resources are satisfactory. National grants to support the introduction of the literacy hour have been used effectively. The junior library is a very good asset; however, the range of information books is narrow and the condition of a significant minority of the books is unsatisfactory.

## **MATHEMATICS**

96. Standards among eleven-year-old pupils are average and similar to those found by the previous inspection. Achievement in the long term is satisfactory. Learning in lessons this year is good in the infant year groups and very good in the juniors. About 70 per cent of the eleven-year-old pupils are attaining or exceeding the expected national level for their age, including 20 per cent exceeding it. Standards at the end of the infant key stage are low, because many pupils have special educational needs. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is good. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their difficulties. Pupils with English as an additional language learn mathematics at the same rate as other pupils. There are no significant differences in attainment or progress between boys and girls.

97. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds show that, pupils' attainment was broadly in line with the national average, with eight out of ten reaching or exceeding the expected standard. The number of pupils achieving higher levels was well below the national average. Girls achieved higher standards than boys. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at age of seven were below the national average, with eight out of ten reaching the expected standard. The number of pupils achieving higher levels was close to the national average. Girls achieved higher standards than boys did. Trends over the last four years, once annual variations have been smoothed out, indicate that standards have been kept broadly in line with the national average.

98. High pupil mobility is having an adverse effect on attainment. Although the pace of learning quickened last year in all classes, attainment remains well below average in Year 2, reflecting the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs who joined the year group over the last two years. There has been an increase in the number attaining the national expectation in Year 1 and in the reception class. Throughout the junior year groups, the proportion of pupils attaining and exceeding expected levels has risen significantly this year. The school is working hard to improve standards and has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy, which has led to a greater emphasis on mental mathematics and improved teaching. Pupils have clear targets for improving their knowledge of number facts and multiplication tables. They can use a wide range of methods for counting, for example, as well as number charts and number lines. Pupils with special needs are improving their rate of progress and the percentage of pupils achieving higher levels of attainment also continues to improve. The scrutiny of independent year group tests results confirm the progress made. However, the improvements have not yet been reflected in the test results at the end of both key stages.

99. By the end of the infant key stage, seven out of ten pupils show confidence in rounding up and down numbers to the nearest ten. They are able to play number games, recognise unit size and record number patterns accurately. Lower attaining pupils use apparatus sensibly to assist this process. Higher attaining pupils make good progress and achieve appropriate standards. They can add and subtract numbers up to one thousand and mentally recall 2, 5 and 10 times tables. Pupils can recognise missing numbers in sequences and have a working knowledge of halves and quarters. They are able to undertake simple money transactions by buying and selling sweets and food and giving correct change. Higher attaining pupils can recognise and record angles and name two-dimensional shapes using correct names such as rectangles, triangles and squares. They have a working knowledge of symmetry. The majority of pupils can measure and order objects using direct comparison, know the days of the week, and read time to the hour. They collect information, for example when collating facts about how they travel to school, tally their findings and transfer this information to simple block graphs successfully. Overall, progress is satisfactory, but Year 2 pupils have not developed the ability to ask and respond appropriately to questions including "what would happen when...".

100. By the end of the junior key stage, seven out of ten pupils show good gains in the speed and accuracy with which

they can recall tables counting in 5's, 7's, 9's and tens. They can add and subtract numbers up to twenty successfully. Pupils are able to identify differences between decimal numbers using four digits. Higher attaining pupils can locate negative numbers on a number line correctly. The majority of pupils show an understanding of place value of numbers up to 1000. Higher attaining pupils use their understanding of place value to multiply whole numbers and decimals by 10, 100 and 1000. Most pupils develop a sound knowledge of fractions and measuring length, capacity and time. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs, who form one third of the class, are beginning to organise their work but find checking their results difficult. Pupils of all abilities have a good understanding of data handling and collect information using bar charts and pictograms. They use information technology skills well to record and print this information but the manual methods used are less successful. Higher attaining pupils use straight-line graphs well and are familiar with the term and can recognise a normal probability graph, for example when investigating the frequency of different coloured sweets. By the end of the key stage, pupils know about area and have a knowledge and understanding of reflective symmetry. Pupils' ability to use and apply mathematics to solve problems is developing well.

101. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is very good throughout; it is often very good in the junior key stage. In the reception class, the teachers' very good knowledge of the mathematical needs of younger children is used well to develop their knowledge of numbers. Clear explanations are given in response to well motivated children about the use of numbers in their daily lives and the properties of shapes. In Year 1, for example, the teacher used good questioning techniques to check the different levels of pupils understanding of doubling numbers. In classes throughout the school, planning is good, expectations are high, relationships are positive and pupils are well motivated. Teachers achieve a good balance between whole class work and individual support and as a result, pupils work productively, at a brisk pace and progress is good. Good time is given for lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs to consolidate their newly acquired skills.

102. Teachers use questions effectively to challenge pupils' understanding. In Year 5, well-established routines, clear individual targets and good behaviour management helps pupils improve their ability to mentally add and subtract numbers. In Year 3, the teacher and the learning support assistant give good support to groups of pupils working on tasks matched well to their differing needs. Pupils work hard and are acquiring a good mathematical vocabulary such as "equals" and "fractions" when talking about their work and progress is very good. In Year 6, the teacher's very good knowledge of different ways of improving mental counting skills helps pupils work with increasing speed and accuracy. The very good use of resources to design challenging tasks helps extend pupils' thinking, particularly higher attaining pupils. The teaching methods promote a spirit of enquiry and pupils work productively and at a brisk pace. Pupils in Year 6 are given continuous feedback on their progress with constructive comments on how to improve, particularly when developing the use of bar charts to record the results of their investigations. At the end of lessons, the teacher makes good use of a range of questions to check pupils' knowledge and understanding and to refine individual targets for improvement. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. The Year 6 teacher is skilled at diagnosing their needs and they receive good support in using key mathematical words from learning support assistants, which enhances their learning, communication skills and self-esteem.

103. The good attitudes and behaviour of pupils in both key stages have a positive impact on their learning. Pupils enjoy mathematics and, for many, it is one of their favourite subjects. They concentrate well, work at a good pace, discuss their work sensibly and appreciate each other's efforts. In most lessons, teachers give good oral feedback as pupils' work, and the assessments made are used well for planning the next stage of learning. Teachers place appropriate emphasis on developing correct mathematical vocabulary and this makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy skills. Homework is used appropriately to consolidate pupils' numeracy skills, particularly in Years 2 and 6.

104. Overall, the leadership and management of the subject are good. The coordinator has been instrumental in the successful implementation of the National Numeracy strategy and has a clear vision for the development of the subject. Test results are analysed and used well to inform the action plan for improving standards. The targets set for each year group are realistic and achievable. Good use is being made of baseline assessment to start tracking pupils' progress. The guidance given to teachers and the planning of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection. Effective staff training has been provided and is giving teachers increasing confidence to teach the subject, particularly mental mathematics. Resources are good, managed well and used effectively. The school is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. It has identified the better use of baseline assessment and the moderation of pupils' work to produce a more consistent approach to making judgements about pupils' attainment, as areas for improvement. A good start has been made in monitoring and tracking pupils' progress but the sampling of pupils' work and use of regular lesson observations are less well developed. Work in other subjects, such as science and information technology makes a positive contribution to the development of pupils' numeracy skills.

## **SCIENCE**

105. Standards among eleven-year-old pupils are broadly average but are well below average at age seven. Currently at age eleven, about seven in ten pupils are attaining or exceeding the expected national level, including about two in ten exceeding it. Achievement over the long-term and learning during the current academic year are satisfactory for pupils aged eight to eleven years but unsatisfactory overall for pupils aged six and seven. The variations in learning partly reflect

differences in teaching quality but mainly reflect variations in the amount of curricular time given to the subject by different teachers. There are no significant differences between the attainment and achievements of boys and girls or between pupils from different backgrounds. Pupils with special educational needs generally make satisfactory progress in relation to their difficulties.

106. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged eleven, the proportion attaining the expected national level was broadly average but the proportion attaining a higher level was below average. The 1999 teacher assessment results for pupils at age seven were below average. At the time of the previous inspection, attainment was broadly in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Whilst the pupils make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress in most year groups, progress for a minority is slow. Progress throughout the juniors is broadly satisfactory although the high quality of teaching in the subject in Year 4 enables pupils in this year group to make particularly good progress. The overall progress made in the infants is unsatisfactory even when taking account of the high proportions with special educational needs.

107. By the age of seven, the pupils are developing a satisfactory understanding of the growth of plants and can name the major parts such as stem, root, leaves and petals. They understand that plants need water, warmth and light to enable them to grow. The pupils study the characteristics of creatures and find out how living things are similar and different. They begin to understand that some foods are healthier than others are and can indicate what a healthy diet might include. Their knowledge of the remaining attainment targets in the National Curriculum programme of study is limited. The pupils in Year 1 make effective use of computers to record their favourite fruits to make up a fruit salad. However, far too little time is devoted to science in the infant key stage, particularly in Year 2, where there is only a superficial coverage of the main aspects of the subject. Whilst documented planning indicates that appropriate emphasis is placed on the subject, an analysis of the pupils' work shows this not to be the case. As a result, the pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable and enter the next phase of learning with levels of achievement well below expectations.

108. The pupils make satisfactory progress overall throughout the juniors. In Year 3, most pupils understand that materials change when heated or cooled and they have a reasonable knowledge of which materials will dissolve when placed in water. The pupils in Year 4 make particularly good progress. The subject is taught regularly and systematically to a high standard and, as a result, the pupils develop a secure knowledge of many aspects of science. They develop a good understanding of materials that are most suitable for specific functions such as waterproofing and insulation. They acquire a sound understanding of the human body. This knowledge is built upon satisfactorily in Year 5.

109. The pupils in Year 6 have a secure understanding of forces and demonstrate the ability, for example, to measure in newtons. Most of them have a satisfactory understanding of the functions of the major organs of the body and the higher attaining pupils can explain the functions in more detail. They have a satisfactory knowledge of electricity and circuits as demonstrated when they made battery operated fairground rides as part of their design and technology work.

110. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and there are examples of very good teaching. Eighty-eight per cent of the teaching is satisfactory or better, including 45 per cent that is good or better. One lesson was very good; one lesson was unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, the teacher has very good subject knowledge and plans the activities extremely carefully, building on what the pupils have been previously taught. There is a high expectation of what the pupils can do and, as a result, they achieve good standards of work. For example, in a very good Year 4 lesson where the pupils investigated the flow of different liquids, the task was explained carefully to the pupils and they knew exactly what they had to do. There was sufficient opportunity for them to choose the appropriate method of recording their findings. Some pupils recorded their findings on the computer, drawing their own table, whilst others drew tables in their books. The pupils were encouraged to complete the task and the teacher motivated them to work hard. They understood the concept of a fair test and made sensible predictions as to which liquid would flow quickest down a slope. The pupils' learning in this class was good, partly because, in the pupils' words, "science is interesting and exciting". Where teaching is unsatisfactory, there is a lack of challenge for the pupils. The demands made on both lower attaining and higher attaining pupils are much too low, leading to unsatisfactory learning.

111. In the infant key stage, although the small amount of unsatisfactory teaching is a contributory factor, the low achievement of the pupils is mainly due to the pupils being given too few opportunities to work on science activities during the academic year. The pupils' books contain few instances of any work, let alone challenging work, and lessons do not build systematically on what has gone before. In the juniors, whilst it is evident that many pupils can talk about the science topics, they are given too few opportunities to record their work and the work is frequently insufficiently demanding for the higher attaining pupils. The quality of marking is variable from class to class. In the best examples, there are clear targets for improvement but in other instances marking is superficial and the teachers' handwriting makes it difficult to read comments.

112. A knowledgeable and enthusiastic coordinator manages the subject. She sees medium term planning and gives valuable advice to colleagues when appropriate. However, she has not recently had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning with the result that she is not able to check that all of what is planned by the teachers is taught.

## **ART**

113. Standards are average in all year groups; achievement is satisfactory. This is similar to the previous inspection report. There are no significant differences in attainment or progress between boys and girls or pupils of different background. Only one or two pupils with special educational needs experience difficulty with the subject and progress for the majority with special needs is no different to others in a class. The evidence from lessons is limited; only one lesson, in Year 6, was seen. This lesson was of good quality and all pupils in the class gained worthwhile experiences. Pupils' work was examined and pupils spoken to about their work. The quality of artwork on display throughout the school, including two and three-dimensional work, indicates general effectiveness in teaching and a satisfactory breadth to the learning.

114. All Year 6 pupils are confident about their work. Drawing and painting activities are entered into readily and pupils use crayons, felt tips and brushes without inhibition. They have a satisfactory knowledge of different materials and make appropriate selections of materials to suit the task in hand. Observational drawing is satisfactory and representational skills are generally good, with close attention to detail. Ability to represent shape and form is satisfactory but few pupils understand how to vary the quality of line.

115. Displayed work shows several examples of artwork that stems from a study of established artists and art from different cultures. Drawings of teapots, cups and wineglasses by pupils in Years 5 and 6 show careful analysis of shape and form. Year 5 excelled themselves in response to an artist in residence who taught them about Australian aboriginal art. Their work entitled "Bush Potato Dreaming", in which they explored the unique colour and patterns of aboriginal designs, is particularly powerful and shows good imagination and skill. Charcoal portraits by Year 4 pupils are lively, expressive, accurate representations of children in the class, with some attempts to vary line and tone to create form accurately. Year 2 pupils produced vivid emulations of the work of Mondrian. The reception year pupils, the class of the subject coordinator, shows good knowledge of mixed media techniques, the work of Van Gogh, and stick and block printing techniques.

116. Subject leadership is good. The documented curriculum is appropriate and the coordinator has worked effectively to implement it throughout the school. She leads well by example. Management is satisfactory. The coordinator is a source of help and advice and actively seeks to offer advice to all teachers. At least one classroom has less stimulating artwork on display and the work produced is not of the same quality as elsewhere. No opportunity for lesson monitoring occurs and the pupils' work is not looked at rigorously. Resources are satisfactory and the school has several useful general-purpose areas that help promote the subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

117. The attainment of the substantial majority of pupils is in line with that expected nationally by the age of eleven; a few pupils achieve higher standards. No lessons were seen in the infants, but evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' plans and discussion with staff, indicate that pupils' achievements are in line with those expected nationally by the age of seven. This is similar to the last inspection report.

118. By the age of seven, pupils are beginning to generate design ideas and record information using pictures. They are able to make and refine their products, for example when studying the story of Joseph. Pupils show a pride in their work and the variety of coloured fabrics used and the shapes made indicate an imaginative interpretation of the story. They show improving skills in designing recipes in food technology when making a fruit salad. By the age of eleven, pupils are familiar with the design process and have good making skills. Progress is good. They can identify the purpose of making an object, explore alternatives and evaluate the effectiveness of their work. Most pupils draw and use increasingly complex models and record the difficulties experienced when working with different materials, for example when making slippers or constructing a tent in Year 6. They demonstrate with pride working models of a fairground roundabout, which used cogs, levers and an electric motor. Higher attaining pupils have good ideas about how to improve the model by the inclusion of a switch to control the flow of electricity. They understand the principles of using different gear ratios to speed up or slow down the rotations of this fairground machine and their progress is very good. Completed work in design and technology is generally imaginative and takes good account of aesthetic considerations.

119. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the juniors. Most teachers have good knowledge of the subject and plan lessons well. This enables them to teach skills effectively. However, in a few lesson, plans lack specific learning objectives and the wide range of choices offered makes it difficult for some pupils to understand the purpose of the work, slowing their progress. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and encourage constructive relationship; this has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and progress is good. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are enthusiastic about their work. Girls and boys work equally well on tasks and cooperate sensibly. Pupils with special educational needs are improving their making skills, are growing in confidence and self-esteem as a result of the good support they receive.

120. No teaching was seen in the infants but lessons are planned well and appropriate resources are identified to support learning. The planning shows that teachers provide a balanced curriculum for each year group. Pupils' work is marked



regularly with some supportive comments to help pupils improve. The planning together with the pupils' work indicates that teaching is satisfactory and that pupils make appropriate progress by the age of seven.

121. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The coordinator has very good subject knowledge, is enthusiastic and shares effective practice well with colleagues. The staff training provided by the coordinator is very good and meets the individual needs of the teachers who are growing in confidence to teach the subject. The school has recently adopted the recommendations of the Qualification and Curriculum Authority for teaching the subject. This is improving teachers' planning and is helping to raise standards. The coordinator monitors pupils' achievement well by sampling their work and discussing areas for improvement with their teachers. Resources for learning are suitable, accessible and are used well to promote learning. The subject makes an effective contribution to pupils' numeracy and literacy skills through the opportunities provided for measuring and in acquiring the appropriate design and technology vocabulary.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

122. The substantial majority of pupils attain a level that is consistent with national expectations by the age of eleven; a few pupils achieve higher standards. No lessons were seen in the infants but evidence from the pupils' work, teachers' plans and discussion with staff, indicate that pupils' achievements are in line with those expected nationally by the age of seven. This is similar to the last inspection report.

123. By the age of seven, most pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are at the expected level and most make satisfactory progress. Pupils are aware of the local area and can identify and describe human and physical features on a map of the British Isles such as countries, hills, rivers, roads and towns. They plot on a map the journeys made to Birmingham, Liverpool and Worcester. Pupils show an increasing understanding of the features that contribute to making an attractive or unattractive environment, for example, after visiting a local nature reserve. However, lower attaining pupils' rate of progress is slowed by a lack of appropriate recording skills.

124. By the age of eleven, most pupils show developing knowledge of the countries in Europe and make very good progress. They can identify key features on maps and gather and select information well using the internet and CD-ROM programs. Pupils use geographical terms such as equator, tropics and compass directions when talking about their work. They enthusiastically locate places on a map of the world, such as major countries, capitals, and main rivers using grid references correctly. They ask questions about different cities such as "how does Paris differ from Worcester" and are confident when working in-groups to present their finding to the class. Pupils with special educational needs are acquiring an appropriate vocabulary and making good progress in recording information using a word processor. In Year 4, pupils are able to use photographic evidence to identify the different use of land, and where people work, when studying a village and city life in India. Higher attaining pupils are developing an understanding of the links between land usage and human economic activity. Lower attaining pupils have acquired sufficient geographic vocabulary to actively participate in class discussion and talk with enthusiasm about farmers growing rice.

125. In the juniors, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' very good subject knowledge is used to motivate pupils, ask challenging questions, and help pupils acquire a good knowledge of European countries. They assist higher attaining pupils develop a greater knowledge of these countries by using computer assisted learning. Effective planning and teaching methods are used well to help pupils apply creative ways of presenting the information they have acquired. All pupils work productively and at a brisk pace. The very good relationship between teachers and pupils encourages positive attitudes to the subject and high standards of behaviour. As a result pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress. There is a good balance between giving information and providing opportunities for pupils to discuss their findings using correct vocabulary. Resources, such as photographs and maps, are used effectively and have a positive impact on pupils' interest and progress. No teaching was seen in the infants but lessons are planned well and appropriate resources are identified to support learning. Teachers provide a balanced curriculum in each year group. Pupils' work is marked regularly with some supportive comments to help pupils improve.

126. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The recommendations of the Qualification and Curriculum Authority have been adopted. This is improving teachers' planning and is helping to raise standards. The coordinator has good subject knowledge but has limited opportunities to share effective practice with colleagues. The assessment of pupils' achievements is appropriately recorded. Samples of work are beginning to be collected to build a better view of the progress made and the standards achieved as pupils move through the school. Resources for learning are suitable, accessible and are used well to promote learning. The local environment is used well to help pupils develop their geographical skills.

## **HISTORY**

127. Only two history lessons were observed during the inspection, both in the infants, but discussions with pupils and staff and an analysis of work undertaken shows that satisfactory progress is made throughout the school. By the age of seven, most of the pupils have a good understanding of chronology and can sequence significant events in the correct order. The good teaching in a Year 2 lesson, which involved a clear explanation of the task, helped the pupils to construct a time line. Similarly in Year 1, the good teaching which involved the teacher questioning the pupils effectively to determine their understanding of time, enabled the pupils to sequence events and place cards into date order according to their changing design. By the age of eleven, the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of periods of history including the Romans, Vikings, Victorians, Egyptians and a good understanding of the period during and after the Second World War. Work is linked with literacy although more opportunities could be made available for extended writing activities in the subject. The pupils in Year 6 constructed sets of questions to ask a visitor to the school who had lived through the Thirties and Forties and the answers were used effectively to enhance their account of the period.

128. The two lessons observed in the infants were both good. Discussions, and analysis of the pupils' work, indicate that the teaching is at least satisfactory throughout the school. The marking of the pupils' work is generally good. Some of the work relies too heavily on worksheets, which limits the opportunity for the pupils to respond in full sentences and to think how they might present their work.

129. There is a scheme of work in place and there is ample evidence around the school to indicate that history is taught regularly and systematically. This has a positive impact on the progress the pupils make. Visits to places of interest, such as the civil war centre also add to the pupils' knowledge of particular periods in history. The coordinator monitors the subject effectively and is aware of what is being taught throughout the school.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

130. By the time they are seven, the pupils attain standards in line with the national expectations. By eleven, they attain in line with expectations in all aspects except control technology. Pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress in all aspects except control technology. All teachers are undergoing training as part of the national initiative and this is having a significant impact on their confidence and on the curriculum.

131. The pupils enter school with limited information technology skills but are given a good introduction to the use of computers in the reception class. The computers are used regularly and systematically, particularly to support the teaching of literacy and numeracy. For example, the pupils were seen using the computers well to enhance their word recognition skills, matching pictures to words. Throughout the infants, computers are used effectively to support other areas of the curriculum. In Year 2 for example, the pupils create a block graph using data they have collated about their height and they produce good pieces of written work using word processors and occasionally illustrate this work with pictures that have been downloaded from 'clip art files'. By the time they are seven, the pupils are competent in using the mouse and keyboard. They have had experience of using programmable toys to develop their skills in estimating length and understanding direction and they regularly use headphones and tape recorders as part of their literacy activities.

132. By the time they are eleven, the pupils have attained satisfactory skills in all elements of the information technology curriculum except control technology. The school has recently purchased control technology equipment and it will be introduced to the pupils when the staff have undergone appropriate training. The pupils make good use of the Internet; pupils in Year 3 have used their skills to look at the temperatures in countries of their holiday destinations. Year 4 pupils show good skills in using a publishing program to design a birthday invitation containing text and pictures. The older pupils in Years 5 and 6 demonstrate satisfactory skills when they use CD-ROMs to research information as part of their science work on the human body. Levels of confidence and willingness to explore programs for themselves are good.

133. No direct teaching of class groups was seen. Adults were seen supporting and guiding pupils as they worked individually or in pairs. The quality of this support was satisfactory. A regular computer club attended by many of the Year 6 pupils and run by staff and a parent helper enhances the curriculum. The pupils have participated in the design of a school web site and there are regular opportunities for them to access the Internet and to use e-mail facilities. Those pupils with access to computer facilities at home demonstrate a good understanding of the technology.

134. At the time of the last inspection, some of the computer activities lacked challenge and the teachers have worked hard to ensure this has been overcome. The school has adopted the national guidelines for the subject and the range of activities undertaken by the pupils ensures that all groups make appropriate progress as they move through the school. The staff see the computers as an integral part of the curriculum and their planning indicates that the subject has a high priority. In addition to the improved confidence of teachers and the regular and systematic teaching of the subject, the acquisition of new computers has also raised the profile of the computer technology.

## MUSIC

135. The infant pupils make at least satisfactory progress in their acquisition of performing and composing skills and in their ability to listen and appraise music; not enough evidence is available to form a judgement about the juniors. The quality of teaching the two lessons observed in the infants was good. Good teaching in the reception class enables the pupils to make good progress in composing. For example, in the lesson observed, the pupils showed good skills in using a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments to illustrate different aspects of the weather. The activity was well organised by the teacher, encouraging the pupils to work cooperatively and to consider the length of notes when putting their performance together. Good questioning skills by the teacher ensured the pupils thought carefully about what they were doing and considered how they could improve their performance.

136. In a good Year 2 lesson, the teacher's very good subject knowledge and confident approach to the subject enabled the pupils to make good progress in their understanding of rhythm. The teacher's enthusiasm for music encouraged the pupils to have a go at copying the teacher's rhythmical patterns. The good feedback given to the pupils about their performance enabled them to determine how they could improve. By the end of the lesson, many pupils could identify familiar hymns when the teacher clapped the rhythm.

137. Due to the school's timetabling arrangements, it was not possible to see any music lessons in the juniors during the inspection. However, during assembly the pupils sang confidently and tunefully without the aid of an accompanist.

138. A part-time member of staff employed on a temporary basis currently teaches music in the juniors. Due to financial restraints, this arrangement will cease in September, and class teachers will have responsibility for their own class music. The coordinator has discussed the situation with colleagues and will provide support. The school is also adopting the national guidelines as the co-ordinator feels this will give the staff more confidence and provide greater structure to the subject.

139. There is no 'formal' choir but the pupils come together to sing for special occasions such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest Festivals. Additional musical activities are provided during an 'Arts Week' when, for example, the pupils were involved in playing Brazilian Rhythms. These activities play a significant part in the pupils' cultural development. A small number of pupils take advantage of the recorder club organised by a teacher. The school is not able to take advantage of the peripatetic music service although a number of pupils play instruments for which they receive private tuition.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

140. Standards are satisfactory. No teaching in Year 6 was seen but standards in Year 5 show those pupils are on course to attain national expectations by the age of eleven. This picture is similar to the last inspection report. On entry to school, pupils have appropriate physical skills and their achievements are in line with those expected nationally by the age of seven. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress between the ages of eight and eleven; progress is satisfactory for the pupils aged six and seven. All pupils follow a curriculum split into units of work balanced over a year, which for the week of the inspection included gymnastics and games. Pupils' attitudes are good. They respond immediately to teacher's instructions and participate enthusiastically in all activities. Pupils cooperate well with others and thoroughly enjoy their lessons.

141. By the age of ten, pupils are able to plan, perform and evaluate their movements successfully. They know and understand the importance of warm up and cooling down activities to protect the body from injury. Pupils are very aware of safety issues, such as standing a safe distance when swinging a cricket bat or lifting apparatus. Teachers' records indicate that pupils are improving their skills of swimming. In Year 3, pupils make good progress in planning, performing and evaluating their movements when moving on apparatus, showing changes in direction as part of their sequences of movement. They understand and use correct mathematical terms to describe these changes such as "turning through a right angle" or "turning 90 degrees". In Years 4, pupils show improving skills in fielding, throwing and catching a tennis ball. Higher attaining pupils are able to return the ball quickly and accurately to the wicket keeper. Boys and girls improve their striking skills using lightweight cricket bats with most of them holding the bat correctly. Lower attaining pupils, show gains in eye-hand coordination when practising these skills. All pupils participate in mini games of cricket with enthusiasm. By the age of seven, pupils are beginning to improve their running and jumping skills. They understand and enjoy small team games. Younger pupils improve their ball skills, are aware of the use of space and the importance of working safely, particularly when using apparatus.

142. The teaching and learning are very good in the juniors, satisfactory in the infants, and good overall. Some teachers have very good knowledge for teaching gymnastics and games; this helps them observe and analyse movements and give good advice to pupils on how to improve. Lessons have a clear focus and the skills to be learned are demonstrated well. Teachers give clear instruction and check carefully whether pupils understand the tasks set and the pupils respond with enthusiasm. Work proceeds at a good pace and pupils are expected to improve, such as in a Year 4 games lesson, and progress is very good. Pupils listen carefully and follow the teachers' guidance about working safely well. The sensitive

support given helps those with special physical needs grow in confidence. These pupils make good progress in improving their games skills, for example in Years 3 and 4. However, in some lessons in the infants, teachers give insufficient time for pupils to practise and consolidate their skills, for example when high jumping.

143. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The coordinator has very good subject knowledge and is a skilled teacher. Staff training is good and is helping to improve the teaching of dance and gymnastics. The school's policy and scheme of work give good guidance for teachers' planning and the development of knowledge and skills; they are being revised to meet developments in the subject. The physical education programme is balanced over a year and pupils have good opportunities for athletics, dance, games, gymnastics and outdoor adventurous activities. Requirements for teaching swimming are met. Very good use is made of visiting, high quality, sports coaching staff to support these activities, particularly in games and swimming. Pupils have good opportunities to participate in competitive sport and a wide range of extra-curricular clubs. Resources for learning are very good and are used well to promote learning.