

INSPECTION REPORT

MELBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bilborough, Nottingham

LEA area: Nottingham City

Unique reference number: 122426

Headteacher: Mr A. Owen

Reporting inspector: M. A. Mackay
23112

Dates of inspection: 10th July – 13th July 2000

Inspection number: 193671

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior (with nursery unit)

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Melbury Road
Bilborough
Nottingham

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Maureen Barker

Date of previous inspection: 13th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Michael Mackay	Registered inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Science ◆ Information and communication technology ◆ Music ◆ English as an additional language ◆ Special educational needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Standards achieved ◆ Leadership and management
Alison Birch	Lay inspector		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ How well the school care for its pupils ◆ Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development ◆ Partnership with parents
Robert Green	Team inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ English ◆ Geography ◆ Physical education ◆ Equal opportunities 	
Elaine Radley	Team inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Mathematics ◆ Art ◆ History 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Teaching and learning
Sue West	Team Inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Under fives ◆ Design and technology ◆ Religious Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Curriculum and other opportunities

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Melbury Primary School serves an area that reflects a significant level of social and economic deprivation. The school is larger than average. It has 255 full-time pupils in the main school and 52 children in the nursery class who attend part time. The children's attainment on entry to the nursery class is well below average and their skills in language and literacy are generally poor. Half the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special needs is thirty-three per cent. This is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special need is, however, below average. The school has less than one per cent of pupils with English as an additional language. About five per cent of the pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a sound quality of education for its pupils. Standards are below those seen in most schools, but it is close to that found in similar schools. The pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is satisfactory, given the low point from which the pupils start. There is good quality teaching in more than half the lessons. This is helping to raise standards, particularly in mathematics and science, but also in most other subjects. The pupils' have good attitudes to their work and develop good relationships with each other and with their teachers. The pupils who have special educational needs achieve well because the school makes good provision for them. The leadership and management of the school are sound. The governors provide good support for the work of the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school has implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy well. This has improved the standards achieved at Key Stage 1.
- The pupils achieve well in reading, speaking and listening and science when their attainment on entry is taken into account.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is effective. Consequently, these pupils make good progress.
- The provision for children in the nursery is good. It creates a firm foundation for learning.
- The members of the learning support staff contribute significantly to the pupils' learning
- The work of the governing body provides effective support for the school's work.
- The school has good procedures for monitoring the pupils' attendance.

What could be improved

- The standards in writing and mental calculation at Key Stage 2.
- The standards in information technology at Key Stage 2.
- The quality of teaching in the reception class and in the classes taught by supply staff.
- The opportunities the pupils have to take responsibility and use their initiative.
- The balance of the curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997. Since then, the school's improvement has been satisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved significantly, so has the provision the school makes for pupils with special educational needs and for the children in the nursery class. It has also improved the way it monitors the pupils' academic and personal development, and assesses and records their attainment and progress. It has had some success in raising attainment in reading, mathematics and science. It has established clear procedures for supporting and monitoring how the curriculum is developed, but it has not implemented the procedures quickly enough to achieve all its objectives. The school has been

largely successful in securing improved heating. There are some of aspects of the school's work that have not improved sufficiently. These include the pupils' attainment in information and communication technology.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	E	E	E	D	well above average A above average B Average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	E	E	E	C	
science	E	E*	E	D	

The standards attained by the pupils aged eleven in the 1999 national tests were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. The standards attained in mathematics were close to those found in similar schools, but the standards in English and science were slightly below the average attained by pupils in similar schools. The school's national test results for the years 1996 to 1999 show that the improvement in standards at the school has kept pace with the national trend. The inspection evidence indicates that the school has now begun to close the gap between its own results and what pupils achieve nationally. The school sets suitably challenging targets. It met those it set for its pupils in 1999 in English and surpassed them in mathematics. The main strengths in the standards of the work seen are in the pupils' speaking and listening, reading and science. The main weaknesses are in writing, mental calculation and information technology at Key Stage 2.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	COMMENT
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most of the pupils enjoy coming to school and many have positive attitudes to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most of the pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. A small number of pupils who have emotional and behavioural problems occasionally disrupt lessons. The behaviour of the pupils in classes taught by supply teachers is sometimes unsatisfactory.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. The pupils relate well to each other and to their teachers. However, they do not often show initiative in what they do because the school provides too few opportunities for them to develop and demonstrate personal responsibility.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The pupils' attendance is below the national average.

The pupils' relationships with one another and with their teachers are generally good. The main weakness is the pupils' unsatisfactory personal development. This is so because the school provides insufficient opportunities, within the lessons and outside them, for its pupils to experience an appropriate measure of responsibility and independence in their work and play.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

In fifty-five percent of the lessons seen, the teaching was good or better. Fourteen per cent of the teaching was very good or better and eleven per cent was unsatisfactory or worse. The quality of teaching has improved very significantly since the last inspection. The strengths of the teaching include the teachers' good knowledge and understanding of literacy and numeracy, and the quality of the planning for these subjects, the use of learning support staff, and the use of homework. The teaching consistently meets the needs of all pupils except for those in the reception class and those in classes taught mainly or wholly by supply teachers. In these, the quality of teaching is sometimes not good enough to secure the pupils' academic progress or instil in the pupils the school's values, or its expectations of good behaviour. The pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, learn well because they get good support. The main weakness in the learning of the other pupils is the lack of independence in managing aspects of their own learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is good in the nursery, satisfactory at Key Stage 1, but lacks balance for some classes at Key Stage 2.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The teachers and the learning support assistants work well together to provide a good measure of support. The teachers make effective use of pupils' individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school makes sure that the pupils' are assessed in their first language in order to establish accurately what their needs are and to plan appropriate learning activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. The school makes good provision for the pupils' moral development and satisfactory provision for their spiritual and social development. Cultural development is unsatisfactory because it is not given sufficient prominence in the life and work of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. The school has good procedures for monitoring attendance and assessing the pupils' attainment. It has satisfactory procedures for monitoring the pupils' personal development but not for promoting it.

The school is implementing the national initiatives in literacy and numeracy well. It provides a wide curriculum that includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum, as well as religious education. The curriculum for the children in the nursery class is good. There are some weaknesses in the curriculum for pupils in full-time education. For example, the provision for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The school has a good improvement plan. It is successful in bidding for funds to support its work, but has difficulty finding supply teachers to cover absent teachers. The work of most subject co-ordinators is effective. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are well informed. They play a significant role in preparing the schools' improvement plan. They work closely with the school to ensure that the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are properly implemented.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school evaluates the performance of its pupils well, and makes effective use of the outcomes. It evaluates the teaching well.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school makes good use of funding to provide for pupils with special educational needs but it has insufficient resources for the reception class and for information and communication technology.

The leadership has ensured that the school has implemented the national initiatives in literacy and numeracy well, and improved the teaching. It has improved provision for pupils with special educational needs and made better use of the learning support assistants to support the work of the school. The number of permanent teachers is not adequate. The school relies too heavily upon short-term supply teachers. There are sufficient learning resources to match the demands of the curriculum, except in the reception class and for teaching information and communication technology, where they are unsatisfactory. The school has a good, short-term school improvement plan. The governors make a positive contribution to the work of the school. However, the pace of improvement in some aspects of the school's work has been too slow. This is evident in the slow progress made in installing an adequate number of computers and in implementing the school's risk assessment procedures. The school strives to supply best value. It has sound financial planning. It compares its performance with that of other schools and has invested wisely in raising the quality of the teaching. These are beginning to help the school improve the standards attained by its pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best • The teaching is good • The school is well led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons • The amount of homework the children get to do at home • Behaviour at the school

The members of the inspection team agree with most of the parents' positive views. However, there are some aspects, such as the leadership's response to the school's staffing problems, that are could be more effective. The members of the team do not agree with the views of some of the parents that the school provides too little homework. The inspection evidence is that the school is implementing a satisfactory policy on homework. The team does not agree with some parents' views on the pupils' behaviour. The behaviour of most of the pupils is satisfactory. In some classes, the behaviour is good. In lessons taken by supply teachers, however, the pupils' behaviour is sometimes unsatisfactory. The members of the team agree with those parents who feel that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside normal lesson time.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The attainment of a large proportion of the children who enter the nursery class at the age of three is well below expectations. In particular, the children's language and literacy skills are poorly developed. Most of the children make good progress in all the areas of learning during their time in the nursery class because the teaching is good. The school's initial assessments confirm that the children make particularly good progress in language and in mathematics, even though these remain below the standards expected for their age. The children make slower progress, however, when they transfer to the reception class because the teaching there is not always satisfactory and the children have insufficient learning resources of the appropriate quality. By the time the children reach five, the age of statutory full-time education, their attainment is still below the nationally expected standard.

2. In the 1999 national tests for the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' attainment in reading and writing was well below the national average for all schools but broadly in line with that achieved by pupils in similar schools. In mathematics, the pupils did significantly better. Their results were broadly in line with the national average but well above average when compared with similar schools. Since 1998, the school has successfully raised the standards its pupils attain in reading, mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils who attain Level 2, the expected level on the national tests has risen year-on-year.

3. The standard of the work by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 that was seen during the inspection is about average, and better than that described by the national tests. The pupils' attainment in speaking and listening, reading and writing has improved recently because the school's implementation of the literacy strategy is beginning to help raise standards. In mathematics, most of the pupils are currently working at a level that is broadly in line with national expectations. This is the direct result of a well-implemented numeracy strategy. Standards in science are higher now because the school has improved the teachers' subject knowledge and provided the pupils with greater opportunities to engage in practical and investigative activities. In all of the other subjects of the National Curriculum, except art, the standard of the pupils' work is close to that expected for their age.

4. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' results were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. They attained average standards in mathematics in comparisons with similar schools but, in English and science, the pupils' results were below the average achieved by similar schools. The school met its target for attainment in English in 1999, and exceeded its target for mathematics.

5. The standard of work at the end of Key Stage 2 that was seen during the inspection is slightly better than that indicated by the 1999 national tests. It is about average in science, but still below the national averages for mathematics and English. In English, the pupils' standards in reading have risen to a standard close to the national average, but their standards in writing have not improved much and are still well below the national average. This is partly because the teaching has been disrupted in all four year-groups, and partly because the school has not devised a suitable strategy for teaching extended writing to supplement its good work in literacy lessons. The standards seen in science are better than the test results suggest. This is because the teaching is significantly better than it was. One outcome of this is that, in the most recent national tests, the school has increased the proportion of its pupils who exceed level 4, the expected level. However, this is still below the national average for above Level 4 results. Nevertheless, it is now much closer to the standards achieved by pupils in similar schools. The standard of work seen in other subjects of the National Curriculum, except for information and communication technology and art, is satisfactory. The pupils do not get sufficient teaching in information and communication technology to enable them to reach the expected standard. This is because the school does not have the resources to teach the subject effectively.

6. The school has responded satisfactorily to the key issue in the last report to raise attainment in English, mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils who attain Level 4, the expected level, in the national tests has risen year-on-year. Fewer pupils achieve at Level 5 than is seen nationally, but this largely reflects the school's intake. The improvement in the school's results in English and mathematics is largely due to the success it has had in implementing the national initiatives for literacy and numeracy. These have had more impact on the Key Stage 1 results than on the Key Stage 2 results because the older pupils have not had the benefits from these strategies for the same proportion of time as the younger ones. The significant improvement in standards in science by the age of eleven is due mainly to the measures the school has taken, following the last inspection, to improve the teachers' subject knowledge and increase the opportunities they provide for the pupils to experience practical, investigative work.

7. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets described in their individual education plans largely because they are well supported by the teachers and the classroom support assistants. Whilst most pupils are effectively supported in class, some benefit from instruction in small groups withdrawn from the class. The work of the learning assistants in these sessions is particularly effective in providing activities that are well matched to the needs of the pupils in their charge.

8. The children in the nursery who have English as an additional language make good progress because the school arranges for them to be assessed in their first language. This helps the teachers to match the work well to the children's needs. There are no pupils in the main school who have English as an additional language.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Overall, the attitudes of the pupils are good. Most of the pupils are keen to come to school because the teachers and other staff work hard to make the pupils feel safe and the lessons interesting. The parents consider that the school does a good job in promoting their children's positive attitudes to school. These have been maintained since the last inspection. In lessons, the pupils are generally well motivated, enthusiastic and involved in their work. This is particularly noticeable with the children in the nursery class who demonstrate high levels of interest and enthusiasm while participating in learning activities. In some lessons in literacy, science and geography, involving Years 5 and Year 6, the pupils show a very deep interest in what they are learning. For example, in a science lesson, the pupils became absorbed in tracing the extent of their learning about the solar system when they plotted their knowledge using diagrams and flow charts. However, this interest and involvement is not evident in all classes in the main school. In some lessons, particularly where the teaching is unsatisfactory, the pupils' levels of concentration are not always sustained.

10. The pupils' written work is well presented because most teachers have high expectations of their pupils. For example, the work of the pupils in Years 5 and 6 in science is attractively and logically set out. The pupils' diagrams, tables and charts are carefully constructed and easy to understand. The school provides more opportunities than it did at the time of the last inspection for pupils to take some responsibility for aspects in their work. For example, it now provides good opportunities for pupils to experience practical activities in mathematics and in science. There are, however, too few opportunities for them to do independent research across a wide enough range of subjects. This is partly because the school has insufficient resources in information and communication technology to allow pupils access to the Internet, and partly because the school has no central library of reference books.

11. The behaviour of the pupils is generally satisfactory. Most pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. They usually show respect for the feelings of others and they take pride in their school buildings. The standard of behaviour has improved recently due to the high commitment and hard work of the staff. This is seen in the very significant reduction in the number of temporary exclusions and disruptions to lessons. However, there are occasional instances of poor behaviour. A small proportion of the pupils, those with specific behavioural difficulties, sometimes operates beyond the normal

boundaries of acceptable behaviour. The school strives hard with these pupils to achieve better standards of behaviour. It uses a number of strategies that beginning to meet with some success.

12. The school's rules for good behaviour are clearly displayed around the school. The pupils know the range of awards given for good behaviour, such as stickers and gold stars, and the series of sanctions imposed for misbehaviour. Most of the pupils feel that they act as an effective deterrent, most of the time. The lack of continuity in the teaching of two out of the three mixed classes of pupils Years 3 and 4 has prevented the strategy from being as effective in them as it has been in the other classes. Since the last inspection, the midday supervisory assistants have received effective training in handling misbehaviour at lunchtimes in the playground and in classrooms when the weather is inclement. The result has been improved levels of acceptable behaviour. The school has been particularly successful in reducing the number of exclusions for poor behaviour. The way the school handles serious misdemeanours has the support of a large proportion of the parents. From discussions with parents, and from an analysis of returns to the pre-inspection questionnaire, it is clear that the parents feel strongly that the school monitors standards of behaviour well and implements its behaviour policy promptly and consistently. The inspection evidence supports the views of the parents.

13. Some aspects of the pupils' personal development are satisfactory. The pupils form good relationships with one another, their teachers and the other adults in school. For example, the pupils with special educational needs are well supported by other pupils. The good standard of relationships has been maintained since the last inspection. Most of the pupils understand the impact their actions have on others because the school provides opportunities for the pupils to think deeply and reflect on what they do. Most of the pupils, therefore, respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others in a satisfactory way. This is demonstrated in 'circle time' and in personal and social education lessons.

14. There are other aspects of the pupils' personal development that remain unsatisfactory. Too few of the pupils show an appropriate degree of initiative in their learning or in their contribution to the life and work of the school. This is because the school does not provide them with the opportunities they need to develop the expected levels of responsibility. The older pupils, for example, do not undertake the range of responsibilities and activities usually found among pupils of their age. During the period of the inspection, there were no occasions when the pupils were observed doing any of the following: working unsupervised, making use of the computers during the lunch times, or engaging in activities such as playing chess, reading or practising recorders. Nor were the pupils seen carrying out routine tasks that would be helpful to the teachers or to other pupils.

15. The pupils' attendance is below the national average despite the good efforts of the school. For the inspection week, the rate of absence was significantly higher than that for the same period in the previous year. The school regularly reminds parents to support the school by encouraging high levels of attendance among their children. However, there are a significant number of families who do not comply with the school's wishes. Another reason for poor attendance is the high number of pupils who leave the area without notifying the school. The level of unauthorised absences has declined recently, mainly because the school makes effective use of its links with the education welfare officer to deal with absences.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although there is inconsistency in the quality of teaching across the year groups. Thirty-four per cent of the teaching was satisfactory, and in fifty-five percent of lessons, the teaching was good or very good. Eleven per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory or poor. In some classes, the teaching was consistently good or very good. Half of the unsatisfactory teaching occurred in lessons that were taught by temporary teachers. In the best lessons, the teachers planned very carefully for the differing needs of pupils and demonstrated good subject knowledge. They were clear about what the pupils were to learn. Consequently, the pupils made good progress in these lessons. In one very good English lesson in Year 2, the teacher had very clear objectives for teaching spelling. She successfully involved all the pupils by providing individual letter cards and asking the

pupils to spell a variety of words. Through skilful questioning, she was able to develop the pupil's knowledge of initial letter sounds and phonemes, helping them to learn quickly. A common feature of the high quality teaching is the very good management of the pupils and the very effective use of well-trained support staff. In a good mathematics lesson, for a mixed class of pupils from Year 3 and Year 4, the difficult behaviour of one boy was extremely well managed and was not allowed to disrupt the learning of the rest of the class. The high expectations of the teacher, together with very clear explanations ensured that all the pupils tackled the work on Venn diagrams with enthusiasm and commitment. By the end of the lesson, most of the pupils had improved their ability to sort data.

17. In the less successful lessons, the teachers are not clear about what will be learned, and the work is not well matched to the pupils' abilities. This was evident in some of the teaching in the reception class. In a literacy lesson, the low expectations of the teacher led the children to consider the writing task as optional. The task focused on drawing a picture but the teacher had not established routines, even for the children to write their names. This resulted in very little progress being made in writing, particularly by the more able children.

18. In the majority of lessons, there is generally a calm and purposeful atmosphere but, in some of the unsatisfactory lessons, the behaviour of a significant minority of pupils affects the quality of learning for all. In these lessons, the teachers often have low expectations of what the pupils can achieve and the teachers' own subject knowledge is limited. This results in slow progress being made by many of the pupils. For example, in a religious education lesson for a mixed class of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils, the teacher's poor management skills and limited subject knowledge resulted in some of the pupils behaving badly and making little progress during the course of the lesson.

19. The best teaching that was observed was in English where sixty-seven per cent of the lessons were good or better. However the quality of the teaching varies considerably across the school, particularly in those classes covered by supply teachers. Most teachers follow the recommended structure for literacy lessons and, in the most successful of them, the quality of interaction between pupils and teachers is very high. The teachers question the pupils skilfully, allowing them to contribute to the lesson. The teachers reinforce the pupils' learning through carefully chosen activities that are well matched to the pupils' abilities.

20. The school has introduced the numeracy strategy well. Although there were fewer very good lessons seen than in the literacy lessons, the quality of the rest of the teaching is consistently satisfactory or good. The teachers' planning is of a consistently high quality and work is well matched to the different abilities of the pupils. The mathematics results show steady year-on-year improvement. However, the teachers' questioning techniques in mathematics sometimes fail to reinforce the pupils' use of mental calculation strategies. One consequence of this is that some pupils demonstrate a low level of skill in this area.

21. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good. The teachers are skilled at deploying the well-trained classroom support staff to help the pupils take an active part in the lessons. Some learning support assistants work with groups withdrawn from the classes. This is usually to carry out intensive instruction in language work. The quality of this work is never less than good. It makes a significant contribution to the attainment and progress of the pupils who receive it.

22. The teaching makes effective use of homework to support pupils' learning, particularly in mathematics. The school has recently introduced homework booklets that feature appropriate learning targets for the pupils to work towards. However, some of the pupils are not generally aware of these targets. The teachers have yet to get all of the pupils fully involved in reviewing their own learning. The homework tasks are regularly marked, but there are too few examples of the pupils being given a clear idea of what they need to do to improve further.

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

23. The school offers the pupils a broad curriculum. The curriculum for the under-fives features all the areas of learning and is well planned. The curriculum for pupils of statutory school age contains all the subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education and personal and social education. The latter has been introduced as part of the school's work on promoting good behaviour and on improving the pupils' social development. The main strengths of the curriculum are the school's provision for teaching the areas of learning in the nursery class, and literacy, numeracy and science in the main school. The main weakness in the curriculum is the lack of balance across the year groups. The school ensures equality of opportunity in relation to the pupils' gender, race and religious affiliation, but its timetable for subjects does not provide all of the pupils with the opportunity to experience a balanced curriculum. In Years 3 and 4, for example, the time allocated to English work near the end of the term significantly reduces the time available for other subjects. On two days, the pupils spend more than half the available time on English related activities, but not always effectively in the lessons taken by supply teachers. In some year groups at Key Stage 2, there is an imbalance in the weekly timetable for physical education. Although information technology is used satisfactorily to enhance work in other subjects, the school does not have the resources to provide sufficient opportunity at Key Stage 2 for the pupils to acquire the full range of knowledge and skills. The school has satisfactory arrangements for sex education and for drugs awareness education.

24. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The work is well adapted to meet their needs and the information in their individual education plans helps the teachers to identify the key skills to be learned. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language in the nursery class is good. The teachers adapt the learning activities for these pupils to ensure that the children benefit from effective teaching across all of the areas of learning. There are no pupils in the main school who have English as an additional language.

25. The school has successfully implemented most aspects of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. These initiatives are beginning to help raise standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing and number work at Key Stage 1, and in all of these areas, except mental calculation and writing, at Key Stage 2. The pupils have too few opportunities to practise and extend these skills in their work. The school successfully links work in literacy and numeracy with work in other subjects. For example, what the pupils learn in numeracy lessons helps them to understand tables and graphs in geography and science lessons. What they learn in literacy is helping pupils to communicate what they learn about history and geography.

26. The school's arrangements for enhancing the curriculum are unsatisfactory. It does not plan the use of visits to places of education value to support work across a wide enough range of subjects. Nor does it make effective use of visitors to the school, such as poets, musicians and artists, who might enrich the taught curriculum and contribute to the quality of the pupils' learning. The school does have, however, some links with a local football club and a local cricket club.

27. The school makes satisfactory provision the pupils' spiritual development. It provides opportunities for the pupils to deepen their spiritual experience in a number of subjects. In a lesson in science, for example, when the pupils studied the miracle of seed germination and growth, they became enthralled by the wonder of how pea pods could be made to 'pop' to reveal perfect rows of peas. In another lesson, a girl delighted in learning how to use paints to make the shade pink, and in another the pupils listened, enthralled, to a story about the discovery of a dinosaur's egg. The arrangements for acts of worship meet the statutory requirements. These are well planned to complement work in personal and social education. They contribute to the development of the pupils' values and beliefs.

28. The school makes good provision for the pupils' moral development. It helps the pupils to formulate a set of rules to guide relationships and behaviour. These are known as 'The Melbury Rules'. They are couched in positive terms that emphasise the need to care for each other and the environment

of the school. The teachers discuss the rules with the pupils to help them understand the need for friendship, kindness and for positive attitudes to work and play. The pupils' moral development is further addressed in the lessons in personal and social education and in 'circle time' when pupils have opportunities to share their ideas and explore their feelings about right and wrong actions. One such example is the 'Circle of Friends' which has proved to be particularly successful. It involves each pupil agreeing to a number of targets to improve his or her behaviour with the help of selected friends. These friends are responsible for encouraging the pupil to work towards the targets. The strategy has proved successful in on many occasions. It is making a significant contribution to improving the pupils' behaviour by raising their self-esteem and reducing the incident of unacceptable behaviour. An additional benefit is that the strategy encourages the pupils to expand their circle of friends.

29. The school makes satisfactory provision for the pupils' social development but not for some aspects of their personal development. The pupils benefit from participating in a residential camp when they learn to live and work together away from home. The work they do in religious education lessons and in personal and social education lessons contributes to their development. However, there are too few opportunities, and too little encouragement, for pupils to develop personal skills. For example, there are few opportunities for them to accept responsibilities within school. Very few of them act as monitors, share reading or writing with younger pupils, or engage in independent activities at lunch time, such as using computers for research, practising recorders or playing educational games. The pupils do not, on their own account, support charities for children in the developing world or those for children in this country who are less fortunate than themselves. Across the curriculum, the school provides insufficient opportunities for the pupils to develop a measure of independence in their learning. Too many of the activities are directed by the teachers and give little scope for the pupils to use their initiative in research and discovery activities.

30. The pupils have some awareness of their own culture through the work they do in history and literature lessons. Some lessons contribute to work on other cultures. For example, the pupils study mendhi and rangoli patterns from India, and learn about some aspects of Chinese and African art. In one of the year groups, the pupils study Japanese head-dresses. However, the pupils are not as aware as they should be of the rich cultural diversity of the world in which they live. The school misses many opportunities within the curriculum to promote music and dance, or to familiarise pupils with the customs and traditions of their own country and those of people from other cultural traditions.

31. The extra-curricular activities provided at the school are very limited so make little impact on the pupils' personal development. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 benefit from drama classes and those in Years 5 and 6 have opportunities to participate in a games club that seeks to foster positive attitudes and relationships. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting activities or in creative activities such as music making, art activities and craft activities.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The school makes satisfactory provision for child protection and for the pupils' welfare. Overall, the procedures for monitoring personal development and progress are satisfactory. The support for pupils with special educational needs is particularly strong. This is because the school has good links with outside agencies and successfully bids for local authority funding to finance its work. It receives very good support from the educational welfare services that has a positive impact on the care of all pupils. It also makes good use of its well-trained learning support assistants. However, for the majority of pupils, there is a lack of opportunity for personal development. They are not sufficiently involved in agreeing their learning targets and the targets for their personal development. The school does not provide sufficient opportunities for the pupils to assume an appropriate measure of independence in their work or to accept responsibility for routine tasks. The school is beginning to record some aspects of personal progress regularly. The personal progress of pupils with special behavioural needs is well recorded.

33. The first aid procedures are satisfactory. The school has a large number of its staff trained in first aid. Its procedures for child protection comply with the requirements of the local Area Child Protection Committee. However, some teachers, particularly supply teachers, are insufficiently trained in the awareness of child protection to be fully effective. The school has recently improved its arrangements for carrying out health-and-safety procedures because it has begun to implement risk assessments for a range of school activities. There are a number of minor health-and-safety issues that the school needs to address. The headteacher has been made aware of them.

34. The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory overall, and some are good. They are particularly effective in the nursery class and for maths, English and science in the rest of the school. The procedures for assessing children's learning in these subjects have developed well since the last inspection. The school uses a range of assessments and tests, including the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority optional tests, to target areas of weakness in pupils' knowledge and understanding. The school carefully analyses the results of its pupils. The Years 5 and 6 teachers use the outcomes to target areas of weakness in the pupils' learning. For example, they use the information to inform the planning of the work the pupils do in the booster classes, in preparation for the national assessment tests.

35. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is satisfactory. The school uses a good range of assessments, including assessments on entry to the school, standardised tests and non-statutory national assessments. It uses these in a satisfactory way to organise the pupils, to forecast the likely outcome of statutory tests and to inform the school's medium-term planning.

36. The school works hard to monitor and promote discipline and good behaviour through the implementation of effective procedures. As a result, the pupils generally behave well. The parents' responses to the questionnaire, and the views expressed at the parents' meeting before the inspection, indicate that they believe that the school is successful in promoting the pupils' good behaviour. The pupils know, and generally follow, the four school rules, which are prominently displayed throughout the school. There is a satisfactory range of rewards for good behaviour, from stickers to gold star awards. These are presented to the pupils at special assemblies at which the school celebrates their achievements. The school has an appropriate set of effective sanctions for dealing with misbehaviour. The teachers usually apply the sanctions consistently and fairly. However, the "time out" sanction, when pupils are sent either to a corner in their classroom or to a different classroom, is not always used wisely. For example, occasionally, pupils spend too long a period not learning. This is unsatisfactory because it denies the misbehaved pupils proper access to the teaching of the curriculum. The behaviour of pupils during wet lunch times has improved significantly since the last inspection. This is partly because the mid-day supervisory assistants have received useful training for handling misbehaviour. The midday supervisory assistants also employ an appropriate system of rewards and sanctions for pupils at lunch times. The parents consider that the shortened lunch breaks are an effective means of influencing the pupils' behaviour. The school does not tolerate incidences of oppressive behaviour, and it has efficient ways of dealing with them. They were invoked during the period of the inspection in response to an incident in one of the lessons. The majority of parents agree with the school's policy and practice.

37. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. The teachers record and report attendance consistently and comply with the school's procedures. The school is working hard to improve the low attendance levels and high rates of unauthorised attendance. The newly implemented approach of following up these absences each day has been well received by the parents, although some do not consistently comply with the school's wishes.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. The school's partnership with the parents is satisfactory. Most of the parents who responded to the questionnaire, or who attended the pre-inspection meeting for parents, or who were spoken to by inspectors during the course of the inspection, have positive views of the school. They feel that the

headteacher and staff are approachable and that parents' complaints and suggestions are handled well. The parents consider the nursery provision is good and they value its work. Many of the parents feel that the school encourages its pupils to work hard and that it provides good support to the children who have special educational needs. However, a significant number of the parents feel that there are not enough extra-curricular activities for the pupils. Many of the parents are concerned that the school's reliance on supply teachers in a number of classes is inhibiting their children's progress. They also feel that temporary teachers do not handle misbehaviour incidents as well as the permanent teachers do, resulting in some disruption to the lessons. The inspectors agree with the views of the parents that are expressed above.

39. The school provides a number of opportunities for the parents to learn about the curriculum being taught to their children. Few parents, however, are involved in the work of the school by helping in class or on school visits, although some do assist with swimming duties. Some parents feel discouraged from offering their assistance. For example, a number of parents who expressed an interest in helping with after-school sports clubs and other activities felt that the school did not encourage them to become involved.

40. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. There are three parents' meetings each year for parents to discuss their children's progress with the teachers. The information for parents provided by the school is satisfactory, and the parents are happy with the information they receive about their children's progress. The annual reports on the pupils' progress are clearly written and include, where appropriate to the age of the pupils, information on how well the pupils are performing in relation to the national test results. There are opportunities for parents and pupils to add their comments on the reports, although the pupils do not often complete theirs. The form and content of the reports comply with statutory regulations. The school keeps the parents informed regularly about school issues through leaflets and letters and, to a lesser extent, through the occasional newsletters. The school publishes a useful prospectus and an introductory pack for new pupils that includes road safety leaflets. However, the governing body's annual report to parents does not fully comply with the requirements because it does not include the action taken since the last inspection, or a financial statement. The information provided for, and the support given to, parents whose children in the nursery have English as a second language, is good. The school also provides useful information to parents of pupils with special educational needs. It involves them in an appropriate way when it reviews their children's progress.

41. The contribution of parents to their children's learning is satisfactory. Many parents support the school's homework scheme, particularly for English and mathematics. Although there is no official home/school organisation, some parents raise funds for the nursery. The headteacher and other staff provide an adequate range of social activities for parents and pupils. For example, they organise fund-raising activities, such as the shoebox appeal, Christmas productions for full-time pupils, summer fairs and harvest festivals.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The school's aims and values are reflected in much of its work. The implementation of the national initiatives in literacy and numeracy have been well planned and managed. The headteacher and senior staff have enabled the teachers to approach these initiatives confidently, because they have prepared them well through the use of appropriate training. The school's planning to provide the resources needed in literacy and numeracy to teach effectively has been successful. The results of the good preparation and support for teachers is beginning to bear fruit, particularly at Key Stage 1, where most of the pupils have had the benefit of being taught these subjects since they began full-time education. The benefits for some of the older pupils are less evident because their learning has been disrupted by frequent changes of teachers due to staffing problems.

43. The headteacher and the senior staff have successfully raised the quality of teaching since the last inspection through the provision they have made for training, particularly in the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, and in science. In the last report, the inspectors judged the teaching to be good or better in only one in ten lessons. Now the teaching is good or better in more than half of them.

44. The work of teachers who have responsibility for subjects, or who manage other aspect of the work of the school, is largely effective. The co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science, for example, make a significant contribution to the quality of education provided at the school. The two English co-ordinators prepared the school well for the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. They have identified the weaknesses in writing in Key Stage 2 through their monitoring of the pupils' work. The co-ordinator for mathematics has been instrumental in introducing the numeracy strategy. She has identified effective strategies for improving the quality of teaching that are having a positive impact on the standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 1. They have yet to impact significantly on the standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 2 because of the recent absence of some teachers. The management of science has helped to improve the quality of teaching so that the more able pupils are achieving higher standards.

44. The teacher with responsibility for special educational needs manages the school's provision well. She ensures that the pupils' needs are well met through the careful deployment of learning assistants and the provision of good quality learning plans for the pupils.

46. The deputy headteacher has responsibility for the school's arrangements for assessing and recording the pupils' attainment and progress. This work is well done and provides the school with sufficient information to allow it to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' attainment.

47. The headteacher and members of the senior staff monitor and evaluate the school's performance in relation to the national picture and that of similar schools. They have been successful in taking effective action to raise standards in reading, mathematics and science. In science, for example, the provision of greater opportunities for pupils to experience practical, investigative work in science has led to more challenging work and more pupils achieving at the higher levels. However, they have not yet developed a strategy for improving the teaching and learning of writing at Key Stage 2 to supplement that provided by the literacy initiative. Although the school devotes much time to English, some of it is not well spent, particularly in the classes affected by the absence of teachers. Consequently, the standard of writing is too low and is affecting the performance of the pupils in other subjects.

48. The school has a good annual improvement plan. It identifies a range of appropriate priorities for development and it is well linked to the school's budget. It achieves most of the annual targets in the development plan. The school does not have, however, sufficiently detailed planning for development that covers a longer period that would help it to steer more effectively towards its longer-term targets. The business meetings between the headteacher and the senior teachers are not always planned or recorded in sufficient detail.

49. There are other aspects of leadership and management that are weaker. Although the school has addressed the key issues arising out of the last inspection, it has been slow in some of them. These include the completion of risk assessments under the school's health and safety policy and the provision of adequate resources for teaching information and communication technology. The lack of resources for this subject and for the reception class is preventing the school from raising the standards achieved by the pupils.

50. The staffing problems at the school have created considerable difficulties in ensuring continuity in teaching and learning. Some classes are taught by a variety of supply teachers. The school has found it difficult to recruit a permanent, part-time teacher to share the teaching in the part-time deputy headteacher's class. This disrupts the learning of the Year 6 pupils in her class. It also affects the quality of the education received by pupils in other classes when, through the unavailability of supply teachers, the pupils have to be distributed among other classes. Two other teachers have been absent

for long periods because of illness. The school has not secured a stable complement of permanent (or long-term supply) teachers to ensure continuity in the education of some of its pupils, particularly in two of the three classes in Years 3 and 4. Consequently, many of the pupils have not made sufficient progress this year. The arrangements for releasing some of the school's senior teachers to carry out other duties increases the school's dependence upon an uncertain availability and quality of supply teachers.

51. The governing body fulfils most of its statutory duties well. It is an increasingly effective body. It has invested wisely in governor-training opportunities and recruited new members who take a keen interest in the work of the school. The governors regularly visit the school to monitor aspects of its work. For example, the named governors for literacy and numeracy visit classes and discuss with the teachers the progress they are making in implementing the national strategies. The governors have a better overview of the curriculum and how it is being taught than they did at the time of the last inspection. They now have a clear insight into what teaching and learning takes place throughout the school. The governors play a significant role in preparing a thorough and useful school improvement plan that sets out the school's priorities for the year. They ensure that the plan is properly costed and they are not afraid to ask challenging questions of the headteacher and key staff. However, they do not always make sufficient demands on the headteacher in relation to the pace and management of the proposed changes. Overall, the governors' contribution to the work of the school is much better than it was at the time of the last inspection. They now have a clear understanding of their responsibility to monitor the quality of education and the performance of the pupils.

52. The school makes satisfactory use of most of its resources. It is particularly successful in bidding for funds to support its work with pupils who have special educational needs. It makes good use of these funds to train and employ its learning support assistants. The teachers have effective ways of deploying the learning assistants, who make a significant contribution to the work of the school.

53. The school administrative staff is well deployed. The main administrative officer is efficient and contributes effectively to the smooth running of the school. The lunchtime supervisory assistants are adequately trained and are well organised to meet the needs of the pupils. The caretaker and the cleaning assistants work hard to keep the school clean and well maintained.

54. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily. It makes good use of special grants to support the pupils' learning. It makes effective use of in-service training to raise the quality of teaching. It has an effective appraisal system in place. The headteacher and the governors on the finance committee have sufficient experience and expertise among them to offer useful advice to the full governing body when it considers its options for spending the available funds. The school has sound financial planning and appropriate procedures for seeking good value for the money it spends on teaching and learning resources. It compares its performance with that of other schools and invests wisely in raising the quality of the teaching. These are beginning to help the school improve the standards attained by its pupils.

55. Taking account of its recent achievements, its response to the key issues of the last inspection, and the areas it needs to develop further, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. In order to improve standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Raise standards in writing and mental calculation at Key Stage 2 by:
 - ◆ devising and implementing effective methods for teaching the pupils how to plan, structure, draft and edit sustained pieces of writing to supplement the good work it already does in literacy lessons,
 - ◆ making better use of the available time for English teaching,
 - ◆ providing more opportunities for pupils to acquire and practise the techniques of mental calculation.(Paragraphs 4, 5, 19, 20, 25, 47, 73 and 82)
- (2) Raise standards in information and communication technology by:
 - ◆ extending the range of experiences the pupils have in lessons, particularly in the use of e-mail, the Internet and the use of computers for monitoring and control,
 - ◆ improving the resources, particularly the number and quality of computers,
 - ◆ implementing as quickly as possible its revised scheme of work.(Paragraphs 23, 49, 105 and 107)
- (3) Strengthen the teaching by:
 - ◆ reducing the school's dependence upon supply teachers,
 - ◆ increasing the level of challenge in the work provided for the children in the reception class,
 - ◆ providing the teaching and learning resources needed in the reception class,
 - ◆ improving the way mental calculation and writing skills are taught, particularly at Key Stage 2.(Paragraphs 17, 19, 42, 47, 49, 50 and 73)
- (4) Improve the way the school promotes the personal development of the pupils by:
 - ◆ providing greater opportunities for them to assume an appropriate measure of independence for their own learning,
 - ◆ providing the pupils with better access to the school's library of reference books to enable them to do more independent research,
 - ◆ providing greater opportunities for the pupils to accept responsibility for day-to-day routines at school and the way they use their time outside lessons.(Paragraphs 29, 32 and 72)
- (5) Improve the quality of the curriculum by:
 - ◆ making better use of the time allocated to subjects,
 - ◆ strengthening the contribution of the community to the pupils' learning,
 - ◆ reviewing the provision for extra curricular activities.(Paragraphs 23, 26 and 31)

Minor issues:

- ❖ Ensure that the governing body's *Annual Report to Parents* satisfies statutory requirements.
(Paragraph 40)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

66

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

25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13	41	35	9	2	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	281
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		128

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	101

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2
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	23	16	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	16	19
	Girls	14	14	16
	Total	31	30	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (51)	77 (77)	90 (64)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	19	18
	Girls	14	13	15
	Total	29	32	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74	82	85
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	25	17	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	14	13
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	19	24	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	45 (37)	57 (46)	55 (31)
	National	70 (64)	69 (58)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	13	12
	Girls	9	8	12
	Total	17	21	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	40	50	57
	National	68 (64)	69 (64)	75 (70)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	7
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	230
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.5
Average class size	28.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	225

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

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

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	1	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	10	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
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	£
Total income	554858
Total expenditure	572160
Expenditure per pupil	1960
Balance brought forward from previous year	25790
Balance carried forward to next year	8488

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	307
Number of questionnaires returned	43

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to dis-agree	Strongly dis-agree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	30	2	5	0
My child is making good progress in school.	72	21	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	37	7	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	40	10	5	0
The teaching is good.	70	26	2	2	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	65	26	7	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	26	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	19	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	57	33	2	2	5
The school is well led and managed	67	28	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	21	7	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	14	21	12	19

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

57. The children are admitted to the nursery class when they are three. They attend either the morning or the afternoon session until the term in which they are five. They then transfer to the reception class and attend school full time. At the time of the inspection, there were twenty-six children in each of the nursery sessions and four children under the age of five in the reception class. The children enter the nursery class with skills well below what is expected nationally for their age. Most of the children are on course to achieve the desirable learning outcomes by the time they transfer to the reception class. The children, therefore, make good progress during their time in the nursery, and some make very good progress. This is because the quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and is frequently good or better.

58. The children's progress is slower in the reception class than it is in the nursery class. By the time they are five very few meet the desirable learning outcomes. This is due, in part, to the lack of consistency in the quality of the teaching, some of which is unsatisfactory. The staffing of the reception class also contributes to the lack of consistency because the class teacher is not sufficiently well supported by qualified learning assistants. The lack of resources for teaching and learning also affects the quality of the children's learning.

The children's personal and social development

59. The children's personal and social development is well provided for in the nursery. The teacher and classroom support assistant establish very good relationships with the children. They encourage them to work and play together and to develop good relationships with adults. The children behave well and quickly learn the routines of the classroom. This is because the teaching has high expectations of the children and draws clear boundaries for them in relation to what is acceptable behaviour. The children co-operate well and respond positively to the activities and experiences provided for them. They quickly establish respect for one another and learn to carry out some tasks independently. They take turns well and share the equipment sensibly. For example, when they work in the sand and water trays they do so happily, without fuss, and behave sensibly. The children listen carefully and respond well to instructions when they are being taught by the teacher, or the classroom support assistant. They relate well to children in the class who have special educational needs. The teaching provides a stimulating environment that encourages the children to ask questions, make choices and investigate what is in the classroom.

60. The children's personal and social development receives a set back when the children enter the reception class. Their behaviour deteriorates and they become less co-operative and less enthusiastic about what they learn. This is because the teaching is less successful in setting clear boundaries for behaviour and does not have sufficiently high expectations of the children in terms of their attitudes to work and to each other. Some children become unruly, misuse equipment and leave toys strewn across the floor. On occasion, however, when the teaching is sufficiently challenging and interesting, the children begin to concentrate and are willing to co-operate on learning tasks. The school has not provided a sufficiently rich learning environment for the children in the reception class, nor has it secured a desirable level of continuity in the quality of the teaching.

The children's language and literacy development

61. Most of the children leave the nursery class with skills and understanding in the uses of language and literacy that put them in line to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes by the time they are five. The children sustain a growing vocabulary and learn to speak clearly about their home life, their class work and their play. They are confident when they contribute ideas and opinions in class discussions and conversations. They ask sensible questions and listen carefully to what others are saying. For example, they hold conversations on toy mobile phones and re-enact stories and

experiences in imaginative play. Most of the children recognise their own names and describe how their names are made of letters and what sounds they represent. The older children copy-write using name cards and, in less formal activities, invent their own symbols when writing. The children develop good attitudes to books. They are often to be found reading on their own or sharing a book with a friend. They enjoy listening to adults read stories to them. All of the children understand that the pictures in storybooks help readers to understand what they read. They know that print is read left to right and from the top of the page to the bottom. They treat books with care and put them away when they move on to another activity. They enjoy listening to taped stories, and use earphones sensibly.

62. The rate of the children's progress slows when they reach the reception class. This is because the literacy strategy is not yet firmly in place and the lesson planning does not clearly identify what the pupils are to learn or the tasks they are to do. The work set does not consistently provide the children with sufficient challenge or provide the continuity and progression they need to make good progress. For example, the group work does not effectively help the children to consolidate what they learn or encourage them to build upon the writing and reading skills they already have. One consequence of this is that the children sometimes stop concentrating on what they are supposed to be learning. They begin to mis-form their letters and become careless about their work. However, those children who are higher attainers in reading continue to make good progress. They read fluently and make some progress in writing words and phrases.

The children's' knowledge and understanding of the world

63. This area of the children's learning was judged to be unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. It is now satisfactory and some aspects of it are good. The children observe and discuss spiders and snails. They record what they discover in careful drawings. They watch tadpoles develop into frogs and talk confidently about the process to adults. They grow peas in the school garden, and learn much from the many impromptu visits to different parts of the school's grounds. They talk about the digging machines they have seen. They know that water is carried to buildings in underground pipes. They use a working telephone box and explore the world of adult work, inside and outside the home, through role-play activities. They know some of the ways that the Chinese celebrate their New Year because the teaching provides them with opportunities to listen to stories and to make a 'stir-fry' which they eat using chop sticks.

64. The children in the reception class frequently benefit from joining in with the nursery children when they explore the environs of the school. They talk confidently about what they have learned about the wider environment when they show adults the large-scale model of their ideal place to live. The model demonstrates their satisfactory understanding of such features as rivers, roads, parks and seashores. The business of assembling the model was accompanied by much pertinent questioning and negotiating. From activities such as these, the children develop a satisfactory understanding of the important features of human settlements.

The children's creative development

65. The children in the nursery class develop good creative skills. This is because they have many opportunities to select activities for themselves as well as benefit from directed lessons in music and painting. The children sing well and enjoy what they do. They memorise many simple tunes and choruses. They pay attention to rhythms and pauses in music, and they hold notes appropriately. They particularly enjoy 'London's Burning', and know to sing loudly only at the words 'Fire, fire!' The children learn to explore the sounds made by xylophones and glockenspiels.

66. In art work, the children hold their brushes correctly and use paint sensibly. They take delight in recording the things they have seen and experienced. For example, the classroom is currently adorned with delightful pictures of animals the children have seen at the zoo. In directed lessons, the children learn how to mix colours. The delight of one child who exclaimed 'It's pink, it's pink!' was shared by all. This good work is continued in the reception class where the children demonstrate their skills in pictures of colourful flowers and exciting tigers. The children in this class sing well. They accompany

their singing with music made on simple, un-tuned instruments. The teaching in both classes values the children's artwork. It is displayed it well. This encourages the children to strive harder to improve their work.

The children's physical development

67. The children in the nursery class attain satisfactory standards in physical development because they have good access to a well-equipped outdoor area where they can safely explore climbing, stretching, running and jumping activities. They make good use of well-chosen mobile toys such as prams, cars and a bus capable of holding a small group of children. They know how to travel safely at speed and are beginning to show good awareness of space and of other people. All of these activities are well supervised. The teacher and the classroom assistant encourage the children to extend their skills whilst paying attention to safety. The physical development of the children in the reception class is inhibited because there are insufficient resources to teach effectively. The lesson planning for the week of the inspection did not identify physical activities and the inspectors saw none.

ENGLISH

68. The standards the pupils achieve at the end of Key Stage 1 are close to what is expected nationally of pupils aged seven. The national tests in reading and writing for 1998 and 1999, however, indicate their attainment is well below the national average, but in line with that of pupils at similar schools. However, the impact of the teachers' work in literacy is helping to raise standards.

69. By the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of the pupils attaining the nationally expected level for pupils aged eleven, is below average. The national test results for 1998 and 1999 show a less favourable picture. They indicate that the pupils' attainment is well below the national average when compared with all schools, and below average when compared with that of pupils at similar schools. The inspection evidence is, however, that the pupils' reading skills are about in line with those expected of most eleven-year olds but that the standards they attain in writing, particularly in extended pieces of work, are below average. This is mainly because the school does not give the pupils sufficient opportunities to use the skills they learn in literacy lessons in their pieces of extended writing. Consequently the pupils lack the ability to express their ideas in well constructed, sustained writing.

70. The school has successfully raised standards in reading and writing in Key Stage 1 since the last inspection and they are now closer to the national averages. In Key Stage 2, the school has raised standards in reading since the last inspection. Although the rate of improvement is slowing, it is keeping pace with national trends. Standards in writing have not improved enough.

71. The Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in reading so that by the age of seven the higher attaining pupils are achieving average standards in line with national expectations. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 are beginning to use books successfully and have a good understanding that print conveys meaning. They listen with fascination to the stories read by the teachers and chatter happily about the plot and characters, sharing and predicting what might happen next. By the end of the key stage many pupils use dictionaries successfully and read books, labels and captions independently.

72. This progress slows during years 3 and 4 because the teaching has been severely affected by staff absence. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in reading are below those expected nationally but the results over the last four years show these are improving. Many pupils in Year 6 describe enthusiastically and accurately the works of favourite authors and give explanations for their choices. They read fluently, recognise bias in print and appreciate the technical skill used by authors to create the desired effects among their readers. However, most of the pupils have only a limited knowledge of the range of books usually enjoyed by pupils of this age and their choices show a preference for fiction. The school does not have its own library facility. This inhibits the pupils' ready access to a sufficiently wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. Some of the pupils visit their local library and know how libraries are organised.

73. The standard of the pupils' writing at Key Stage 1 is improving because the teaching makes effective use of the literacy framework to plan effective lessons. The pupils are systematically introduced to the mechanics of writing and produce a good legible handwriting style. By the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils are able to spell many key words correctly and know and use regular spelling rules when they write. They develop an adequate vocabulary and have begun to use words effectively to describe the settings in their stories and to give the reader information about the characters that they use. The higher attaining pupils are developing a good writing style. Their stories have a good pace and shape. They write interesting introductions and carefully thought out endings. At Key Stage 2, there are inconsistencies in the pupils' learning partly due to the school's inability to deliver continuity in the teaching in recent months. This is because it has been unable to recruit long-term supply staff of the right quality for two of the three mixed classes of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils. By the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils are writing at a standard below national expectations. Approximately one third of the Year 6 pupils are at a standard in writing which is in line with national expectations. The greater proportion of pupils, therefore make unsatisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. In the best examples of writing, the pupils are beginning to use more complex sentence constructions and to write for a wider range of audiences. Although the school has not yet devised an effective way of developing the pupils' skills for writing extended pieces of work, it has created some opportunities for the pupils to extend their writing across a range of subjects. In Years 5 and 6, for example, the pupils are helped to combine work in geography with work in English. In one lesson, the pupils wrote a letter of thanks relating to a recent residential visit and in another they scripted weather reports which they had modelled on the ones that they had seen on television.

74. Many of the pupils have limited speaking and listening skills when they begin Key Stage 1 but, by the age of seven, they have gained sufficient confidence to enjoy sharing their work and discussing issues related to their lessons in literacy. Most of the pupils improve their speaking and listening skills quickly because the teachers have good management skills, are good at providing opportunities for pupils to talk and to listen, and are proficient at telling stories. The pupils enjoy the story sessions, and most of them listen intently. They also listen well in other subjects when, for example, they are being given instructions in physical education. By the end of Key Stage 1, most of the pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected nationally. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' speaking and listening skills are also in line with those expected nationally. Most pupils confidently participate in discussions and express their own ideas clearly and concisely. In the best lessons, the teachers' skill in focusing on particular words helps the pupils to use language effectively and overcome weaknesses. Some lower attaining pupils ask only brief questions and find it difficult to develop ideas thoughtfully and accurately, but they are usually supported sensitively by the teachers.

75. The pupils with special educational needs participate fully in literacy lessons because they are well supported by the teachers and the classroom support assistants. They also receive additional support in small withdrawal groups led by well-trained assistants who provide intensive work in basic skills to help the pupils cope with work in the classroom. The pupils have individual education plans that include literacy targets based on their prior attainment and abilities. Nearly all of the pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning.

76. The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in ten out of the twelve literacy lessons observed. In seven of these lessons, the teaching was good or better, and in four of these it was very good. Most teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. They plan well for literacy lessons and provide many opportunities for the pupils to experience a wide range of texts. In the best lessons, the teachers' planning is clear and has appropriate learning objectives that are effectively communicated to the pupils. The pace of lessons is usually brisk. The teachers use effective methods for teaching basic phonic and grammar skills. These are beginning to have a positive impact upon the quality of the pupils' learning. In these lessons, most of the pupils have positive attitudes towards their literacy work. They behave well. They work for sustained periods of time to satisfy the lesson criteria and in response to the agreed class rules. The pupils in these lessons demonstrate that they are able to work with an appropriate degree of independence, collaborate on tasks and give each other a measure of support. They contribute willingly to lessons and, on most occasions, are eager to produce their best work.

Most teachers are conscientious in marking the pupils' work. In the best examples, the marking clearly indicates how the pupils can improve. However, this is not consistent practice, and the quality of marking varies across the classes.

77. The subject is well co-ordinated. The two co-ordinators monitor the teachers' planning, observe lessons and scrutinise the pupils' work. They use the evidence gathered to identify strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and the learning to provide good feedback to teachers on how to improve their teaching. The school prepared well for the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, which it implemented two years ago. The strategy is beginning to have a positive impact upon the quality teaching and learning at the school. The teachers report that the pupils' attitudes towards literacy have significantly improved. The successful implementation of literacy hour lessons and the determination of the co-ordinators and teachers to improve the teaching and learning are helping to raise standards in English at the school.

MATHEMATICS

78. The standards the pupils attain by the end of key Stage 1 are in line with the national average. By the end of Key Stage 2, the standards are below the national average.

79. The results of the national tests in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 2 show that pupils were achieving standards that were well below the national average. Over the last four years the school has made year-on-year improvements. However, the standards have improved at about the same rate as those nationally and this has meant that the gap between school's results and the national ones has remained about the same. The results in 1999 were in line with those in similar schools. The inspection findings confirm that whilst standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are still below average, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

80. The results in Key Stage 1 in 1999 show that pupils achieved close to the national average, including the number of pupils that attained the higher levels. These results were very high when compared to results in similar schools. However the results over the last three years have fluctuated but have always remained a little below the national average. The 1999 results, therefore, demonstrate a marked improvement.

81. The majority of pupils in Year 2 are currently working at a level that is broadly in line with national expectations. They have a good command of the two and ten times tables and can record numbers up to 100 accurately in both digits and words. They can mentally add and subtract ten from any two-digit number and can add three single digit numbers in their heads. All but the lowest attaining pupils can tell the time using half and quarter past the hour. Most pupils have a good knowledge of two-dimensional shapes and can identify reflective symmetry. They have a satisfactory understanding of the processes of data handling and are able to construct simple block graphs. The most able pupils can multiply using repeated addition and are developing a good understanding of division. In one Year 2 lesson the most able pupils successfully tackled division problems with remainders.

82. The pupils in Year 6 are currently working at below average levels. Only a minority of the pupils have a secure understanding of the four rules of number and can calculate fractions and their decimal equivalents, however they lack confidence. All but the lowest attaining pupils are able to double and halve numbers up to 1000 in their heads, although they find difficulty with doubling numbers with one decimal place and halving numbers which would result in a fraction. Their knowledge of the seven and eight times tables is not yet secure. While most pupils multiply a whole number by 10 they find multiplication of a decimal number much more difficult. Only the most able pupils confidently multiply and divide a range of numbers by 10 and 100. Division is less well covered throughout the school and pupils are generally less confident with this aspect of mathematics. The pupils' mental calculation strategies are not well developed. This is reflected as a weakness in the mathematics teaching. The teachers rarely explore, in the initial section of the lesson, the strategies children could use to solve problems. The pupils' knowledge of two-dimensional shape is very variable;

approximately half of the pupils name equilateral triangles and identify their properties. The majority of the pupils can measure in centimetres, millimetres and metres, but most are not able to convert one unit to another.

83. The teaching in mathematics is good overall. Forty-five per cent of the lessons seen were good or very good. All of the teaching seen was at least satisfactory. The teachers plan work that is appropriate to the range of needs among the pupils within their classes. In the best lessons, the teachers used effective questioning to prompt the pupils in how to remember number facts and to clarify and explore their misconceptions. In one very good lesson, in Year 6, the teacher used questioning very effectively to develop the pupils' knowledge of how to organise and represent data using a frequency graph. A less successful feature of the lessons that are satisfactory overall, is the teachers' failure to explore with the pupils how they had solved particular problems. In the good lessons, the teachers consistently model mathematical procedures well and use well chosen examples from real life situations to ensure that the pupils gain a clear understanding. In one good lesson in a mixed class of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils, the teacher used the analogy of a postman sorting letters to help the pupils gain a clear understanding of how to use Venn diagrams. The teachers' marking of pupils' work is consistent. While most of the teachers mark work regularly, they do not often offer comments that will help pupils to improve their learning. Within lessons, the teachers often take time to work with groups of pupils to help them assess how much they understand.

84. The school has successfully implemented the numeracy strategy. Most of the teachers structure their lessons appropriately and use a variety of resources to support the pupils' learning. Each classroom has a mathematics display containing pupils' work and helpful resources such as a 'hundred square'. The Framework is used well to form the basis of the weekly plans, which are clear and useful. The school has introduced useful homework booklets for all pupils. These provide a range of mathematical activities for pupils to do at home. The teachers are careful to adapt the homework to suit the needs of individual pupils. Each booklet contains an appropriate number of targets for the pupils to work towards. However, not all of the pupils are familiar with these targets because some teachers do not give them sufficient opportunities to reflect on them during lessons. The pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes towards mathematics and they enjoy the systematic approach to homework.

85. The co-ordinator has been instrumental in successfully introducing the numeracy strategy. In conjunction with the LEA advisor, she has monitored the delivery of the curriculum observing lessons. These observations have provided useful in developing strategies for improving the quality of teaching. The improved teaching is having a significant impact on the standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 1, although they have yet to impact significantly on the standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 2. The numeracy governor has been involved in much of the numeracy training. The co-ordinator, with the support of the numeracy governor, provides a clear lead for the development of mathematics throughout the school.

SCIENCE

86. On the basis of the work seen during the inspection, the pupils attain standards close to the national average by the end of both key stages. Standards are significantly higher now than they were at the time of the last inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2. The standards have improved largely because the school has made sure that the teachers have a better understanding of how to teach the subject. This has given them the confidence to provide more opportunities for pupils to do practical and investigative work. The attainment of the pupils, aged eleven, in the 1999 national tests was well below average in relation to all schools and below average when compared to the attainment of pupils in similar schools. The standard of work seen in the pupils' books and in their lessons during the inspection is now close to that expected of all pupils by the end of the key stage. Some work, such as that on the behaviour of molecules, is from the next level of the programme of study.

87. By the age of seven, most of the pupils understand the need for a healthy diet. They confidently discuss how a balanced diet can be achieved and they know the importance that fruit, vegetables, white

meat and milk have in promoting health and growth. They construct simple electrical circuits that include bulbs and buzzers. They understand that electrical power can be stored in batteries, and that electricity is delivered to their homes by means of cables and wires. They understand the need for safety first when using electrical appliances. Most of the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of common materials such as wood, plastic, rubber, paper glass and metal. They know the properties of these materials and they know that they can be changed by rolling, squashing, twisting and chopping them. Nearly all of the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of forces such as friction and gravity. They investigate these forces when they roll model cars down ramps. They know, for example, that the steeper the ramp, the faster and further the cars travel. Some higher attaining pupils explain how the friction properties of different surfaces affect the speed and distance travelled by the cars.

88. By the time the pupils are eleven, they have a satisfactory understanding of the terms ‘soluble’ and ‘insoluble’ and use their knowledge to investigate how much sugar may be dissolved in a given quantity of water. They talk confidently about evaporation, and use the process to remove salt from a salt-water solution. They understand the conditions needed for fair tests and how to use tally charts, tables and graphs to record their observations. Most of the pupils acquire a satisfactory knowledge of the life-cycle of plants when they investigate how blackberries and dandelions grow and reproduce. They use the correct terms for the parts of a plant and for life processes such as seed dispersal, pollination and fertilisation. The pupils successfully carry out practical investigations as part of their learning. For example, they devise ways of testing whether or not air has weight and what accounts for loudness and pitch in the sounds made by musical instruments. Some of the higher attaining pupils use their knowledge and understanding of how molecules behave to describe how smells travel and how some materials dissolve in liquids.

89. The quality of teaching across the key stages is never less than satisfactory and is most often good, particularly at Key Stage 2. The strengths of the teaching lie in the high standards the teachers expect of their pupils, the methods they use, the way they organise and manage their pupils, the way they use the available classroom support assistants, and the methods they use to record what the pupils learn. The teachers expect their pupils to work hard and to present their work neatly and logically. They help the pupils to think carefully about what they observe and what they do when they carry out investigations. They help them to set their written work out neatly and clearly. Some teachers provide their own carefully designed worksheets to help their pupils think clearly about the investigations they do and what they can learn from them. The teachers use a good range of methods to help the pupils acquire the skills and knowledge they need. For example, they plan practical activities that are interesting, and they use questions and demonstrations well. The pupils, therefore, quickly become interested in their work and strive to do well. In one Year 6 lesson, for example, the teacher used models of the sun, Earth and moon to show how the moon appears to change shape and how it is possible to predict its phases. The teachers are good at organising the pupils to help them learn effectively. They plan tasks that involve the pupils in individual work, in paired work and in group and whole class activities. They make sure that the pupils always have a clear idea of what it is they are doing. They also expect high standards of behaviour and concentration. Because they do, the pupils waste little time. They make good use of the opportunities they have to work together and learn from each other through questions and discussions. The teachers make good use of the available support assistants, particularly in helping the lower attaining pupils, including those who have special educational needs. The assistants are skilled at helping these pupils participate in the work of the class. As a result, they often make good progress and feel they have achieved well. Most teachers have useful ways of recording what it is the pupils know understand and can do. For example, in a number of Year 6 lessons, the teachers devised a very effective way of helping the pupils demonstrate how much they had learned about the sun, moon and Earth during a recent series of lessons. This helped the teachers to identify gaps in the pupils’ knowledge and to correct misunderstandings. Most teachers keep useful records of the assessments they do. The main weakness in the teaching is the lack of opportunities for the pupils to use the library and the Internet to research scientific issues.

90. The leadership of the subject has been successful in supporting the teachers’ development of their subject knowledge and in promoting more effective ways of using practical investigations to

promote the pupils' learning. As a result the standards being achieved are rising, particularly among the higher attaining pupils.

ART

91. At the end of Key Stage 1, the standard of work by most pupils is below what is expected for their age. Although the pupils make some progress, their attainment is still below average by the end of Key Stage 2. The school has placed less emphasis on the subject due to the implementation of the other initiatives and so standards seen in the previous inspection have not been maintained.

92. A wide range of techniques are taught throughout the school, and the pupils' work shows that they use a variety of media including pencils, pastels, paint, printing and collage work. The pupils are also given the opportunity to study the work of well-known artists such as Mondrian, Monet and Paul Klee. However, much of the pupils' work is over directed and the pupils have little opportunity to develop their own style or to work imaginatively. There are too few opportunities for them to select and experiment for themselves with different media.

93. Four lessons were observed. The quality of the teaching although satisfactory overall varied from good to unsatisfactory. In a good lesson, observed in a mixed class of Year 1 and year 2 pupils, the teacher had good subject knowledge and successfully drew out the mathematical links when pupils were asked to design a patterned swimming costume. She successfully reinforced the pupils' knowledge of diagonal lines, reflective symmetry and repeating patterns. Because the pupils were clear about the task and the expectations of them, they tackled the work with considerable enthusiasm and produced satisfactory results. In a weaker lesson, the teacher failed to sustain the pupils' interest in the tasks provided and the level of the work produced was subsequently of a low standard.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. The standards the pupils attain by the end of both key stages are broadly in line with what is expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. The standards have improved since the last inspection.

95. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils design and make 'pop up' cards representing flying rockets and birds with moving beaks. They think carefully about their finished product and attempt to improve upon its design. The pupils consider what is needed for a healthy diet and use the knowledge they gain from the work they do in science when they decide what needs to go into a fruit salad. When they make 'spinners', they prepare carefully by discussing what materials they will need and how they will be used. They design and build simple mobile vehicles, incorporating axles and rotating wheels. They think carefully about the materials they will use and they evaluate the performance of the finished vehicles but they do not always complete their record of how they designed and made the products.

96. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils know how to make carefully designed fabric purses based on earlier prototypes. They pay careful attention to their choice of colour and fabric and the way they join surfaces. They have begun to evaluate their work to see how well it suits the purpose for which it was designed, but they do not consistently record the methods they use. When the pupils construct models of shelters to keep out the sun, they make prototypes in paper, and complete good designs, using accurate measurements. They identify the improvements they can make to strengthen their models. They cut and measure carefully and take account of safety matters. They have begun to consider, in their discussions, how they might test the performance of the things they make. However, they do not make sufficient progress throughout the key stage in learning to evaluate their work. Some pupils do not always complete the record of what they have done. The pupils' use of suitable technical terms is not sufficiently well developed and the worksheets provided for them sometimes inhibits written work of an appropriate quality. What written work there is, however, is usually neatly presented and easy to read.

97. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen is good. The teachers prepare lessons well and include interesting activities. These encourage the pupils to take an active part in lessons, to question and to hypothesise about outcomes. The school has adopted the scheme of work published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The teachers make satisfactory use of this to produce the school's long-term and medium-term plans.

GEOGRAPHY

98. The evidence from lesson observations, pupils' work and displays in classrooms and around the school indicates that attainment in geography by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is in line with expectations for their ages. The standards of attainment have improved since the last inspection when they were judged to be below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and broadly in line with them by the end of Key Stage 2.

99. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils confidently describe the physical and human features of the places they study. They compare features of their own locality with those of the seaside, and they complete their own seaside maps using simple grid references. They clearly express their views on the attractive and unattractive features of the environment of a contrasting locality. The pupils successfully select information from the resources provided for them by their teachers. They use this information, and their own observations, to ask and respond to questions about the places they learn about but have not visited. In one Year 2 class, the pupils provided reasons for the locations of hotels on the seafront and for caravans further inland. The pupils are beginning to use an appropriate set of geographical terms.

100. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils show satisfactory knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to studies of a range of places and themes on local, regional, national and world wide scales. They are beginning to describe geographical patterns and to appreciate the importance of location in understanding the characteristic features of places. They demonstrate a growing understanding of how people change their environment. They use an appropriate range of geographical skills for their age. For example, the Year 5 and 6 pupils analyse weather maps and use symbols and charts to produce their own weather reports. These clearly demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of important geographical ideas.

101. Nearly all of the teaching seen ranged from satisfactory to very good. One lesson was unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, the teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject. They produce clear plans with appropriately challenging learning objectives. These are effectively communicated to the pupils at the beginning of the lessons. The teaching provides appropriate activities to promote the pupils' learning. In these lessons, the pupils make good progress in what they learn because the teaching makes the subject interesting and provides activities that are well matched to the pupils' needs. The better teaching makes good use of discussion at the end of the lessons to evaluate the extent and quality of the pupils' learning. The school makes good use of a residential visit in the Peak District of Derbyshire to provide opportunities for the pupils in Years 5 and 6 to learn about a locality that contrasts to the one in which they live.

HISTORY

102. It was possible to observe only one lesson. The inspection judgements are based upon an analysis of the pupils' written work and on discussions with the pupils and their teachers. At the end of both key stages, the pupils are attaining levels expected for their age. The standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

103. The pupils are taught through a series of topics. These are arranged into a two-year rolling programme to avoid repetition of work for those children in the mixed-age classes. Timeline charts are

a useful feature of some classroom wall displays, and these help the pupils to understand and successfully use timelines to sequence historical events. For example, in one mixed class of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, the teacher placed old photographs on to a timeline to develop the pupils' understanding of the way that seaside holidays have changed over the last hundred years. She used effective questioning to help the pupils identify important changes. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have a sound knowledge of how families lived in the past and the way life has changed over the years. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils understand the most significant aspects of life in Ancient Greece, Ancient Egypt and Tudor Britain. They confidently retell the legends of the Trojan horse and the Minotaur. In Years 5 and 6, the teachers work hard to ensure that the pupils practise a variety of writing styles through the history curriculum. For example, the pupils assume the role of an Ancient Greek farmer and draft adverts for farm workers. They also retell Greek legends in play scripts.

104. Not enough lessons were observed to comment on the quality of teaching throughout the school. However, in the lesson seen, the teacher made good use of a variety of resources including old photographs, textbooks and information from a recent visitor into school, to develop the pupils' understanding of how life has changed through the last 100 years. The planning of the lesson was good and the pupils were provided with interesting and appropriate activities. These were suitably adapted to the levels of the different ability groups within the class.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

105. The standards attained by the pupils at Key Stage 1 are about in line with those expected for pupils aged seven. The standards attained by the pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are below those expected for their age. Although standards have risen a little, the school has not been successful in raising them sufficiently since the last inspection. This is mainly because the school does not have an adequate number and range of resources of the quality needed to teach the subject effectively.

106. At Key Stage 1, the pupils use word-processing programs to compose simple texts. They have an adequate knowledge of keyboards but do not use them with sufficient speed or dexterity. They successfully use a program to support their reading that requires them to manipulate what happens on the screen. They are beginning to make effective use of a drawing program to create pictures, and a simple data program to help them represent and communicate information in graphical form. Most of the pupils can program a floor robot by giving instructions to it to move along a particular route. In a mixed Year 1 and 2 class's geography lesson, the pupils successfully used their knowledge of the robot to complement their class work on maps and plans.

107. By the end of Key Stage 2, most of the pupils make satisfactory use of word-processing programs to support work across a number of other subjects. In a Year 5 English lesson, for example, some pupils used a word-processing program when writing a study of a character in the novel, 'The Railway Children'. In a geography lesson for a mixed class of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, two boys used the computer to write up weather forecasts on the British Isles. The class also discussed work for the following week's lesson, which was to make a video tape-recording of their weather presentations so that they could be compared to those on television. Most of the pupils have some experience of using data-handling programs and programs for drawing. Some use clip art and simple spreadsheets. However, there are too few resources to provide sufficient opportunities for the pupils to achieve the expected standards for their age. For example, the school does not have suitable resources to teach control technology or monitoring at Key Stage 2. Most of the older pupils have some experience of using CD-ROMs to search for information, but very few have sufficient opportunities to develop skills in using e-mail or other Internet resources such as the World Wide Web. Much of the hardware is very old and well past its usefulness. The lack of up-to-date equipment, in the necessary quantities, is inhibiting the pupils' learning.

108. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about the quality of the teaching. There were no lessons during the inspection period in which the main focus was information and communication technology. However, in some of the lessons in other subjects, the teachers tried hard to

provide access to the available hardware and to teach basic skills in the subject so that the pupils could use them to support their learning in other subjects. During the inspection, pupils were observed using computers to support work in art, English, maths and geography. The teachers have begun to plan to the guidelines published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority in anticipation of soon having the resources they need.

MUSIC

109. Most of the pupils attain the standards expected of pupils aged seven and eleven. The standards are similar to those at the school at the time of the last inspection, except that more pupils are now being taught to play the recorder than was the case in 1997. The introduction of class sets of recorders is a recent initiative that is helping to raise standards.

110. By the time they are seven, the pupils have an appropriate repertoire of simple songs and rhymes, some of which they know by heart. They sing tunefully and with enthusiasm. They are beginning to develop a sense of rhythm, which they demonstrate in clapping activities. They know about high and low pitch. They experiment with pitch using their voices and a range of percussion instruments such as bells, triangles, shakers and chime bars. They use their knowledge of pitch to help add expression to songs and rhymes. The pupils listen carefully to short pieces of music and are beginning to use appropriate terms to describe what they hear.

111. By the age of eleven, the pupils sing a satisfactory range of songs tunefully and with attention to rhythm. They use percussion instruments successfully in their work. The school has recently invested in descant recorders for every pupil. This has provided much improved opportunities for the pupils to learn a tuned instrument. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 have reached a satisfactory standard of playing. They play simple tunes with accuracy, paying attention to the value of the notes and the number of beats to each bar. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 were introduced to the recorder at the same time as the younger pupils. Although they are making satisfactory progress, they have not yet had sufficient time to reach the level expected for their age. The pupils, nevertheless, have a basic understanding of technique and can read conventional musical notation. They know what a treble clef is and how notes are arranged on a staff. They know, too, that musical notes are grouped, by value, into bars. The pupils are familiar with 4/4 time. Some of the higher attaining pupils use their new knowledge and skills to compose short pieces of music, which they perform on the recorder.

112. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. There is enough musical expertise among the teachers to ensure that the subject is taught effectively. The main strengths in the teaching are the methods used to teach the recorder and the effective management of the pupils. Most teachers provide activities that encourage all pupils to persevere with learning how to play. They devise short exercises to help develop accurate fingering of notes and they make effective use of demonstration so that the pupils have a clear idea of what they are expected to do. The methods used to teach musical notation are particularly effective and are well suited to pupils who have very little previous learning in music. For example, in a lesson for pupils aged ten and eleven, the teacher used cut-out representations of notes to demonstrate how they changed pitch depending on where they were placed on the musical staff. She also used demonstrations and activities effectively to revise the pupils' previous learning about the value of notes and how they are represented on the staff. Because the methods are effective, the pupils are learning well. They are encouraged to work hard to acquire the fingering skills they need to play accurately and with expression. The methods inspire confidence among the pupils, who are willing to 'have a go.' One of the best features of the teaching is the opportunity it offers to pupils to learn performance and composition skills at the same time. The teaching also offers pupils the opportunity to listen to the compositions of other pupils in the class. This helps all of the pupils to appreciate the range of musical effects that can be achieved by changing one or more of a composition's elements such as the phrasing of notes or the use of pattern, including repetition. The main weakness in the teaching is in the planning of work for higher attaining pupils. Too few opportunities are available for such pupils to work at a

faster rate and at a more advanced level than the other pupils. This is mainly because most teachers are not yet sufficiently confident about their own musical skills and knowledge.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

113. The pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The school provides swimming lessons for the pupils in Year 3 and 4. Most of the pupils are in line to meet the end of Key Stage 2 requirements of being able to swim a distance of 25 metres. No judgement about standards of attainment was made during the last inspection

114. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils perform simple tasks safely and show satisfactory control in linking actions together. They improve their performance by practising their skills with a partner and on their own. They talk knowledgeably about what they have done, and they are able to make simple judgements about the quality of their performance. They recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they exercise.

115. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils find appropriate solutions to the various challenges that they encounter in the different types of activity. They practise hard to improve and refine performance, repeating skills they have performed previously, with increasing control and accuracy. The pupils work safely in pairs, in groups and in teams. They make sensible judgements about their own performance and that of other pupils. They use this information to improve the accuracy and quality of what they do. The pupils sustain a satisfactory level of physical activity throughout the lessons and successfully explain their understanding of what is happening to their bodies during exercise.

116. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in all of the lessons observed. Where the teaching is very good, the lesson plans are clear and set out appropriately challenging learning objectives. They clearly state how the activities will help the pupils to achieve the selected objectives. The teachers take care to explain and demonstrate to the pupils the skills they wish to teach. There is a friendly and purposeful approach, the pace of learning is brisk, and targets are regularly set for the pupils to attain. As a result, the pupils, are keen, enthusiastic, try hard and enjoy their physical education lessons. They concentrate and give their best. They act responsibly in preparing and collecting apparatus and equipment. Overall, their attitudes to physical education are good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

117. All of the lessons observed were games activities. The school's long-term planning, however, indicates that it teaches gymnastics and dance at Key Stage 1, and gymnastics, dance, athletics, outdoor and adventurous activities, and swimming at Key Stage 2, at other times of the year, to a satisfactory standard.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

118. Overall, the standards the pupils attain at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are broadly in line with what is expected for their ages as indicated by the locally Agreed Syllabus. The school has maintained these standards since the last inspection.

119. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils successfully discuss their relationships and their friendships. They relate their explorations of personal relationships well to Bible stories, such as the 'Good Samaritan'. They learn about the life and work of Jesus and talk knowledgeably about how Jesus and his disciples set a good example of what friendship means, and how people should treat one another. The pupils have a satisfactory understanding of Christian celebrations and festivals such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest. They explore the religious festivals and traditions of other faiths. For example, the pupils learn about Divali and share stories from the Hindu tradition. They explore aspects of Islam, including the Five Pillars of Wisdom.

120. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of Christian, Hindu, Islamic and Sikh religious traditions and practices. For example, they talk confidently about the five Ks of Sikhism. In their retelling of the traditional story of 'The Donkey and the Tiger', the pupils show that they understand the symbolic nature of the tale when they explain it carefully to each other. The pupils know about Divali and about Hindu shrines and they relate their knowledge to the religious stories of the god, Ganesha. The pupils visit a local church and look for similarities in the worship of people of different faith traditions. Although some pupils appreciate the religious significance of ceremonies and religious artefacts, most of the pupils do not have a sufficiently clear idea of their meaning in the life of religious people.

121. The school devotes a significant amount of curriculum time to lessons in personal and social education in order to help the pupils develop good attitudes and positive values. The work the pupils do in religious education supports this aspect of their learning. For example, the pupils link their discussions of relationships and friendships to what they learn about the life of Jesus and what He teaches about how we should treat one another. In 'circle time', when the pupils sit in a circle to discuss matters of personal and social concern to them, they raise matters about anti-social behaviour. In one lesson, for example, they discussed how much they disliked litter on the playground and the incidence of bullying. They listen to each other's opinions sensibly and show an increasing awareness of the need to look after the environment and have respect for all living things. They have a growing understanding of the idea of fair play in human relationships. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are beginning to articulate what they seek from friendships and how they must learn to trust others and show kindness to them. Their work in religious education lessons supports this when, for example, at Key Stage 1, the pupils examine the importance of saying 'thank you' and discuss the example Jesus set when he was confronted by the behaviour of the nine ungrateful lepers.

122. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The main strength of the teaching is in the way the teachers link work in religious education to the concerns and interests of the pupils. This helps them to understand aspects of their own spiritual and experience and those of other people.