

INSPECTION REPORT

COPLE LOWER SCHOOL

Cople, Bedford

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109442

Headteacher: Mrs J Donaldson

Reporting inspector: Ms A M Grainger
20782

Dates of inspection: 11th – 13th June 2001

Inspection number: 193773

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Willington Road Cople Bedford
Postcode:	MK44 3TH
Telephone number:	(01234) 838827
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Howard
Date of previous inspection:	28 th – 30 th April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20782	Ms A M Grainger	Registered inspector	English Art and design Music Physical education	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management
14214	Mrs G Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
1189	Mrs S Brown	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Information and communication technology Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
22113	Mrs A King	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Religious education Equality of opportunity Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the centre of the village of Cople, about four miles east of Bedford. About 60 per cent of pupils live in the village. Others are drawn from neighbouring villages and the outskirts of Bedford. With 52 boys and girls aged four to nine on roll, the school is much smaller than many other primary schools. There are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and none whose first language is not English. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (14 per cent) is below the national average. Pupils on the school's register of special educational needs have learning difficulties. No pupil has a statement of special educational need. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (6 per cent) is below the national average. Almost all children have had some form of pre-school education before starting in the reception class. With small numbers of pupils in each year group, attainment on entry varies from year to year and is sometimes a little above average. Based on pupils now in the reception year, the overall attainment of children on entry to the school is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It has some considerable strengths, but it also has weaknesses that need to be rectified. When pupils leave the school at the age of nine, standards are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science, geography and history. In all other subjects, standards are average, although no judgements are made for music and physical education. While pupils' overall progress through the school is satisfactory, it is good in English between the ages of five and seven. It is also good in mathematics, geography and history between seven and nine. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, as is the value for money provided.

What the school does well

- Standards are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science, geography and history, when pupils leave the school at the age of nine.
- In most lessons, pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They behave well and have good relationships with each other and with adults. The older pupils have a good awareness of citizenship.
- Attendance is very good and is well above the national average.
- There is good care for pupils' personal well being. As a result, pupils feel happy and confident at school.
- The partnership with parents and the community is very good. It does much to support and enrich the learning opportunities provided.

What could be improved

- Pupils are not achieving as well in mathematics as in English at the age of seven.
- Too little account is taken of how the young children in the reception class learn. Not enough opportunities are provided for them to learn through practical activities and investigation.
- The most able pupils are not always challenged well enough in lessons.
- There is too little assessment and recording of what pupils know, understand and can do. As a result, work is not always well enough matched to the range of pupils' needs in the mixed ability classes.
- There is too little checking of teaching and the curriculum and how they contribute to pupils' learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school's overall progress with improvement since its last inspection in 1997 has been satisfactory. The use of accommodation and the deployment of part-time staff are better, with improvements in the accommodation itself. A separate class for reception year children has been

established. The amount of teaching time for pupils aged seven to nine has increased and is now very close to the recommended minimum for pupils of this age. The opportunities for pupils aged seven to nine to work on their own initiative have developed. There is scope, however, for these to be improved further for pupils of all ages. The school development plan now includes aims for the future, although specific targets and criteria for judging success related to these aims are not always included. The rigour with which the school's effectiveness is gauged is still in need of improvement.

High standards have been maintained in the key areas of English and mathematics at the age of nine. Standards are still above average in science. In geography and history, standards have improved at the age of nine. At the age of seven, however, mathematics standards are lower now. Whilst pupils' attitudes and behaviour are usually good, they are not as good as at the last inspection. Curriculum planning and the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress were strengths at the last inspection and they are now areas of weakness. The overall quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory, but it was judged to have been considerably better at the last inspection. It is important to note, however, that there has been a change of teaching staff. This school year, staffing has been unsettled and pupils aged five to seven have been taught by five different teachers. This situation has been dealt with and vacancies for teachers have been filled for the start of next term. With the more settled staffing, the school's capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	A	A	A	A
Writing	A	A*	A	A
Mathematics	A	A	B	B

Key

very high A*

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The above table shows that standards in reading and writing have been consistently well above the national average over the last three years and since the school was last inspected. In 1999, the writing results were in the top five per cent of schools nationally. In mathematics, standards were well above the national average in 1998 and 1999 and above average in 2000. Standards are just as high when the results are compared with those achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work shows standards now at the age of seven to be well above average in reading, above average in writing and broadly average in mathematics. The lower writing standards are a result of no pupil presently aged seven joining their handwriting, even though there are strengths in other aspects of pupils' writing. In mathematics, results are lower because pupils do not make as much progress as in English between the ages of five and seven. This is due in part to the unsettled staffing in the class for pupils aged five to seven this school year. There are also some weaknesses in the provision of mathematics for pupils of this age that prevent them from achieving more highly. Pupils aged five to seven are presently making good progress in English and satisfactory progress in mathematics. Those aged seven to nine are making good progress in mathematics and satisfactory progress in English.

In 2000, teachers assessed pupils' standards in science as well above average, but these assessments do not have the reliability of the tests. Standards in science now are above average at the ages of seven and nine. Geography and history standards are above those expected nationally at the age of nine, with good progress made between the ages of seven and nine. Progress is satisfactory in both these subjects up to the age of seven. In art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology and religious education, standards are average and

progress is satisfactory. No judgements are made for music and physical education owing to insufficient evidence.

At the age of five, standards are above average in personal, social, emotional and creative development, with good progress made in these areas. In communication, language and literacy, mathematical and physical development and in knowledge and understanding of the world, standards are average. Satisfactory progress is made in these areas.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils are keen to learn and to do well. Those in Years 3 and 4 often show mature attitudes and are independent learners. Some Year 2 pupils, however, sometimes find it difficult to remain involved and become restless during lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in most lessons. Behaviour is good around the school and at play and lunchtimes. Pupils' positive behaviour makes the school a calm and sociable place.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils work and play well together. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 mix especially well. They co-operate during group activities and share ideas well, helping each other with their work.
Attendance	Very good. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained consistently high levels of attendance.

Pupils' good attitudes to learning, behaviour and relationships, very good attendance and positive response to opportunities for their personal development, all contribute to the effectiveness of their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Fifteen lessons were seen during the inspection. Of these, 80 per cent were satisfactory or better, including 13 per cent that were very good and 40 per cent that were good. Twenty per cent (3 lessons) were unsatisfactory. The very good lessons were in mathematics for pupils aged seven to nine and in science for pupils aged five to seven. Good lessons were seen in all classes. There were two unsatisfactory lessons in the reception class. There was also an unsatisfactory lesson in writing, taught by a temporary teacher, for pupils aged seven to nine.

The overall quality of teaching and learning in English, including the basic skills of literacy, is good for pupils aged five to seven. It is satisfactory for children in the reception class and pupils aged seven to nine. In mathematics, including in the basic skills of numeracy, teaching and learning are satisfactory for pupils aged four to seven and good for those aged seven to nine. Teaching and learning are good in geography and history between the ages of seven and nine. In all other subjects they are satisfactory, although there is insufficient evidence to make firm judgements for music and physical education. Teaching and learning in the reception year are satisfactory, overall, although there are weaknesses that prevent children from making better progress and achieving more highly. In the areas of personal, social, emotional and creative development, teaching and learning are good in the reception year. In the main, teachers meet pupils' individual needs satisfactorily, although there

are occasions when higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged. This is because all pupils in the mixed ability classes are often given the same work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory, overall. All the required subjects and areas are covered. However, the curriculum for children in the reception class does not take sufficient account of how young children learn. Learning opportunities for pupils aged five to nine are not always planned to take account of all the abilities in the mixed age classes.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The school is sensitive to these pupils' needs and ensures that they are able to progress at the same rate as other pupils in the same classes. There is good support from the learning support assistant.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. There is insufficient attention to developing pupils' awareness of the rich diversity of other cultures, although provision for cultural development is satisfactory, overall.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. There is good care for pupils' personal wellbeing. The weakness in the care for pupils is in the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress to ensure that their individual needs are met.

The partnership with parents is very good. The school works well with parents, providing them with good information. The contribution of parents to the work of the school is excellent.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher ensures that the school runs smoothly. As a small school, there is much informal discussion. The lack of formality, however, means that there are weaknesses in areas such as curriculum planning and the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are clear about the need to check the quality of what it provides.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. There is very little checking of teaching and the curriculum by the headteacher or staff with subject responsibilities. As a result, weaknesses are not identified and cannot be rectified.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Funds are targeted on priorities for pupils' learning. The school's application of the principles of best value to its work is satisfactory.

The school has sufficient teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Resources are adequate, overall, as is the accommodation.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Teaching is good. • The high expectations of their children. • The partnership with parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of changes of teacher in the Years 1 and 2 class.

Parents are very happy with the school. Inspectors agree with most of the parents' positive views. Inspection evidence finds, however, that teaching is satisfactory rather than good and that teachers' expectations of the most able pupils are not always high enough. Inspectors agree that the changes of teacher in the Year 1 and 2 class have unsettled some pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils' results at the age of seven in the National Curriculum tests in 2000 were well above the national average in reading and writing and above the national average in mathematics. The same positive picture is seen when the results are compared with those achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Over the period since the last inspection in 1997, the school has maintained results consistently well above the national average in reading and writing. In 1997, the results put the school into the top five per cent of schools nationally. This was also the case in 1999 in writing. Mathematics results were well above the national average between 1997 and 1999.
2. The evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work shows the standards of the present Year 2 as well above average in reading, above average in writing and broadly average in mathematics. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made good overall progress in English through Years 1 and 2. In mathematics, they have made satisfactory progress. Progress in English is enhanced by the high priority given to reading and the structured teaching of extended pieces of writing, such as stories and play scripts. In mathematics, progress is not as good because the amount of time allocated to the subject is lower than in many schools. On one day each week pupils do not have the required numeracy lesson, having instead only two short sessions of mental mathematics. The overall quality of teaching and learning in English for pupils of this age is good, while that in mathematics is satisfactory. There is insufficient attention given to developing pupils' skills in practical and investigative mathematics. This was identified as a weakness at the last inspection and it has not been rectified.
3. Standards at the age of nine are well above average in English and mathematics. These pupils achieved highly in the National Curriculum tests at the age of seven. The progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, has been satisfactory in English through Years 3 and 4 and it has been good in mathematics. The overall quality of teaching and learning in English has been satisfactory in Years 3 and 4, resulting in the high standards at the age of seven being maintained at the age of nine. In writing, however, progress has been a little slower than in reading and speaking and listening. Pupils have not been sufficiently challenged in the long weekly sessions on writing. In mathematics, progress has been good in Years 3 and 4, because teaching has ensured that, not only have the high standards achieved at the age seven been maintained, but that pupils' breadth of mathematical experience has been broadened.
4. Children's attainment on entry to the reception year at the age of four is broadly average in all areas of learning. Their overall progress throughout the year is good in personal, social, emotional and creative development. Children also make good gains in their speaking and listening skills and in developing the scientific aspect of their knowledge and understanding of the world. As a result of the good progress made, children's attainment is above average in these specific areas when they reach the end of the reception year. In all other areas, children make satisfactory progress. At the end of the reception year, they achieve the standards expected for their age in the reading and writing aspects of communication, language and literacy, in the historical and geographical aspects of their knowledge and understanding of the world and in mathematical and physical development. Children's attainment on entry to the school is a little lower than at the last inspection. This may be because all children now enter in September, while, at the last inspection, entry was phased over the three terms. Children born in the Spring and Summer now enter earlier. The standards achieved at the end of the reception year are similar to those achieved by children of this age at the last inspection.
5. By the age of five, children speak confidently and clearly when answering questions. They listen attentively to the teacher and to each other. Most children write their names unaided, use upper and lower case letters correctly and copy an adult's writing. The highest attaining children write simple sentences correctly, space words properly and are starting to use full stops. All children

know that words and pictures in books convey meaning. Most know the sounds of the letters of the alphabet, recognise simple words and accurately read a very simple text. Most children count to ten and some count well beyond. They understand 'one more than' and 'one less than' a given number up to 10 and many add two numbers to make five. Most children recognise simple two and three-dimensional shapes and are familiar with money, recognising coins on flashcards.

6. By the age of seven, pupils have the expected speaking and listening skills for their age, although they are a little better at speaking than at listening. They give clear answers to questions, sometimes extending them to explain their opinions. Their reading is well above average. They read confidently, fluently and accurately. Skills in reading comprehension are particularly good and all pupils make effective use of letter sounds to 'build' unfamiliar words. All pupils know how to use the contents and index pages of non-fiction books. Story writing is good, with ideas well developed and language selected to describe. Standards of spelling, grammar and punctuation are better than normally found at this age. Pupils do not, however, join their writing and this is a weakness. Most pupils count accurately in fives to 100 and count on from 100. They have a satisfactory understanding of place value to 100. Pupils have an adequate understanding of addition and subtraction, although they sometimes confuse the symbols used. Understanding of space, shape, measure and money is as expected at this age. Skills in using and applying mathematics in problem solving are under-developed and this weakness reduces overall standards.
7. By the age of nine, pupils are confident and articulate speakers who give well thought-through and detailed answers to questions. They listen carefully in a variety of situations. Almost all pupils have favourite authors or express preferences for a particular type of literature such as animal or adventure stories. They have a very good understanding of what they read. Most discuss what motivates a character in a story to act in a particular way. Pupils also use non-fiction books confidently, know how to locate a book in a library and have good skills in using encyclopaedias and dictionaries. Pupils write for a suitable range of purposes, including instructions, letters and stories. As at the age of seven, they structure their stories well. They have increased their awareness of how to use language to describe or create atmosphere. Pupils have very secure strategies for mental mathematics and use them, for example, to identify mystery numbers. They have a very secure grasp of number facts, work with three digits and have a very good understanding of number operations. They have a clear understanding of perimeter and area and calculate correctly, using standard units of measurement. They work very competently with vulgar fractions and have strong problem solving skills.
8. Standards of literacy and numeracy in other subjects are as expected for the age of the pupils. Although pupils achieve high standards for their age in activities such as story writing in English lessons, they are not often required to use writing skills at this level in other subjects such as geography and history. Pupils make effective use of their reading skills in finding information in non-fiction books, for example about evacuees in history lessons in Years 3 and 4. Mathematics skills are used satisfactorily in subjects such as science for recording information as graphs and in design and technology for measuring.
9. In science, standards are above average at the ages of seven and nine. Progress is satisfactory throughout the five to nine age range, sustaining the good skills and understanding achieved by the age of five. By the age of seven, pupils have a good understanding of factors that contribute to a healthy lifestyle, living creatures and their habitats, the properties of materials and physical phenomena. They conduct scientific investigations with understanding, posing sensible questions. Higher attaining pupils make predictions that are usually accurate and record their findings in clearly labelled charts and diagrams. Other pupils' predictions are less accurate and they omit labels from charts and diagrams. By the age of nine, pupils have a good understanding of what makes a test 'fair'. Most pupils devise and organise their own investigations and present their findings in a variety of ways. Higher attaining pupils record their findings clearly as charts, diagrams and graphs. Lower attaining pupils, however, are less successful in this and do not always complete their recordings. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, forces such as gravity, materials and their

properties and the Earth and beyond. Science standards now are much the same as at the last inspection.

10. Standards in information and communication technology are as expected nationally at the ages of seven and nine. By the age of seven, pupils use the computer confidently. They control the mouse, move the cursor and drag and drop objects on screen. They have basic word processing skills, although they do not apply these as widely as is expected at this age. They competently use a paint program. Although they do not programme a floor robot to follow a sequence of instructions, they carry out a similar activity using a 'screen turtle'. By the age of nine, pupils have satisfactory skills in entering and editing text and save their work. They create databases, for example on minibeasts. Pupils satisfactorily use computers for research and competently use e-mail. Pupils do not use and develop information and communication technology skills in other subjects as is expected by the ages of seven and nine. This weakness was identified at the last inspection and it has not been rectified. The overall standards in this area are similar to those described in the last inspection report at the age of nine, although they are lower at the age of seven.
11. In religious education, pupils meet the standards expected by the locally agreed syllabus at the ages of seven and nine. This was also the case at the last inspection. By the age of seven, they have a satisfactory understanding of Christianity and are beginning to develop their awareness of other world faiths. By the age of nine, pupils have increased their awareness of world religions such as Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. They are developing understanding of how practice of a faith affects how a person lives their daily life.
12. In geography and history, standards are as expected nationally at the age of seven and they are above this level at the age of nine. In art and design and design and technology, standards are average at the ages of seven and nine. In all these subjects, pupils make satisfactory progress through the school. The exception is the good progress made in geography and history between the ages of seven and nine. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements on standards and progress in music and physical education, as no lessons were seen in these subjects. In the musical activities seen, however, standards were good. In the physical education activities seen, standards were as expected for the age of the pupils. Standards in geography and history at the age of nine are better than when the school was last inspected. The improvement is a result of more 'hands on' experiences which support pupils in making good progress. Design and technology and information and communication technology standards are not as high now at the age of seven as they were at the last inspection. This is largely because the planning of learning opportunities is less thorough and because teaching is not as good now in these areas as it was at the last inspection.
13. Pupils identified as having special educational needs achieve standards at an acceptable level, in relation to their ages and capabilities. They make good progress in English between the ages of five and seven and satisfactory progress between the ages of seven and nine. In mathematics, their progress is satisfactory between the ages of five and seven and good from seven to nine. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is enhanced when they have the focused support of the learning support assistant. Whilst the most able pupils make satisfactory progress, overall, their progress is good in English between the ages of five and seven and in mathematics from seven to nine. There are some occasions, however, when these pupils do not achieve as well as they might, due to a lack of additional challenge as a result of all pupils in the mixed age and ability classes being expected to work at much the same level.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. The last inspection found that most pupils had very positive attitudes to learning and that they behaved very well. There is now greater variation in pupils' attitudes and behaviour throughout the school and they are not quite as good, overall, as at the last inspection. Children in the reception class have good attitudes to learning and behave sensibly during play and lunch times. They like being at school and enjoy each other's company. Children settle quickly at the start of the school day and listen carefully as their name is called during registration. They like the familiarity of the daily routines, such as completing the weather chart. They politely wait their turn to use the microphone to give the day's weather forecast to their classmates. Children

also enjoy acting as a 'helping hand' within their classroom. They willingly accept responsibilities such as organising the biscuits for mid-morning break and leading their class into and out of assembly. They work and play amicably together.

15. This school enjoys a strong sense of community and pupils are proud to belong to Cople Lower School. Most pupils are keen to learn and to make good progress. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have especially positive attitudes to their work and work well on their own and in groups. During a mental mathematics session, they thoroughly enjoyed fast moving games such as 'Fizz Buzz' and concentrated hard in order to work out the correct response. During a sculpture project as part of their art and design work, pupils of this age worked very maturely together, sharing ideas well and solving problems. Most pupils listen carefully to their teacher and complete their homework on time. Pupils were recently asked, for example, to discuss the Second World War with family and friends in order to find out what it had been like. This topic fired the pupils' imagination and, during a subsequent class discussion, they eagerly contributed ideas and shared the results of their investigations. When taught by a temporary teacher for one morning of the inspection, however, pupils in Years 3 and 4 did not maintain these high standards. Their attitudes on this occasion were unsatisfactory.
16. Although most pupils want to do well, those in Year 2 tend to be less committed to their work and are noticeably more restless during lessons. As a result of staffing difficulties this school year, these pupils have been taught by five different teachers. Although a permanent replacement has now been appointed, this situation has unsettled the pupils and they are now more easily distracted from their work. Although their attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory, overall, boys and girls in this class are inclined to be less mature than those in other classes. During a mathematics lesson that was dealing with subtraction, for example, several pupils made mistakes simply because they had not bothered to listen properly. Others guessed wildly, even though they were perfectly capable of working the answers out logically. In contrast, during a very good science lesson during which pupils went outdoors to explore habitats, pupils in Year 2 responded with real enthusiasm.
17. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and adults are good. Pupils are friendly and out-going and get along well with members of staff and with each other. Pupils of all ages mix freely and are well mannered and polite. Pupils' positive relationships make the school a calm and sociable place. They behave sensibly during play and lunch times and are polite and considerate to one another. The older pupils in Years 3 and 4 help to look after the younger reception children during lunchtime and these relationships are particularly close. There is a very pleasant atmosphere in the playground and pupils play energetically and happily in mixed age and gender groups. They share equipment, such as skipping ropes and balls, safely and sensibly and help to put them away at the end of break time. During the inspection, there was no sign of any bullying, racism or other anti-social behaviour. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection.
18. Pupils' response to opportunities for their personal development is good. Parents share this view and are pleased with the way in which the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. Pupils are friendly and interested in what is going on around them and enjoy helping others. They raise money for charities such as Barnardos, for example, and the school choir sings at the annual village fete. Pupils of all ages support each other well and enjoy taking part in the various extra-curricular activities such as recorder club and country dancing. Pupils respect one another's beliefs, cultures and backgrounds. As a way of marking their seniority, Year 4 pupils become monitors. In this way, they become responsible for a range of jobs around the school, such as closing down the computers and helping to run the school library. Pupils rightly regard this post as a privilege and carry out their duties conscientiously. They are quick to use their initiative.
19. Attendance is very good and is well above the national average. The school has maintained consistently high levels of attendance since the last inspection. Although 40 per cent of pupils live outside the village, they arrive in good time for the start of the school day. Pupils' good attitudes to learning, behaviour and relationships and their very good attendance all make a significant contribution to the effectiveness of their learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, but is not as good as when the school was last inspected and it was found to be very good. Fifteen lessons were seen during the inspection. Of these, 13 per cent of lessons were very good, 40 per cent good, 27 per cent satisfactory and 20 per cent unsatisfactory. The very good lessons were in mathematics in Years 3 and 4 and in science in Years 1 and 2. Instances of good teaching were seen in all classes. The unsatisfactory teaching was in two lessons in the reception class. There was also an unsatisfactory writing lesson taught by a temporary teacher in the Year 3 and 4 class.
21. The overall quality of teaching and learning in English, including the basic skills of literacy, is good between the ages of five and seven and it is satisfactory for pupils of other ages. In mathematics, including the basic skills of numeracy, teaching and learning are satisfactory between the ages of four and seven and good from seven to nine. Teaching and learning in geography and history are good between the ages of seven and nine and this results in above average standards in these subjects when pupils leave the school at the age of nine. In all other subjects, the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory between the ages of five and nine. In the reception class, teaching and learning are good in the areas of personal, social, emotional and creative development. In all other areas, they are satisfactory.
22. In the very good lessons seen, in science in Years 1 and 2 and mathematics in Years 3 and 4, the teachers were very clear about what they wanted the pupils to learn. Activities were very well prepared, with teaching closely focused on what it was intended for the pupils to learn. Expectations of the standards all pupils were capable of attaining, as well as their attitudes and behaviour, were high. As a result, pupils were well involved throughout the lesson, highly motivated and eager to learn. They responded with a high level of maturity for their age in their attitudes and behaviour. In both these lessons, the subject matter was presented in a way that pupils could readily relate to. In the Year 3 and 4 mathematics lesson, the idea of perimeter was communicated through the image of an ant crawling all the way round the edge of a shape. This was reinforced through the use of simple, but well selected, visual aids. In the Year 1 and 2 science lesson, the teacher made reference to the centipede in the story of 'James and the Giant Peach' as new work on habitats was introduced. This careful linking with pupils' own experience resulted in them quickly understanding and making very good gains in their learning. Pupils also responded very well to the opportunity in this lesson for the practical investigation of habitats in the school grounds. In the Year 3 and 4 mathematics lesson, the teacher very effectively checked pupils' understanding through questioning. This meant that she was able to pick up on aspects that some pupils found difficult and ensure that their understanding was developed. It also made sure that pupils did not repeat something once they had fully understood it.
23. In the reception class, teaching and learning in personal, social and emotional development are good because adults have high expectations of what children can do, for example in taking responsibility. This is seen when children take turns to complete the daily calendar and weather chart and to make announcements to the class on the day's weather. Good standards of behaviour and attitudes to learning are expected and achieved. Adults are also good role models for the pupils. They provide children with much praise and encouragement and this helps the children's self-esteem. To promote children's creative development, adults provide some exciting and stimulating activities. The teacher has good subject knowledge in this area and she is effective in encouraging imaginative responses from the children and developing their skills in art and design and music activities.
24. There is good teaching and learning in extended writing, such as stories and play scripts in Years 1 and 2. The teacher supports the pupils in achieving well in these aspects of writing by giving them good models on which to base their writing and focusing them on elements such as the setting and characters. The 'open ended' writing tasks provided in the Year 1 and 2 class allow all pupils to achieve well in relation to their capabilities. In a good art and design lesson in Years 3 and 4, the teacher challenged pupils well through an ambitious sculpture project. As in the very good lessons seen, she had high expectations of pupils' attitudes to learning. She treated them as mature and independent learners and they responded as such. In effective lessons, the learning support assistant is deployed well to support pupils' learning. In particular,

this has a beneficial effect on the learning of pupils with special educational needs. In the Year 3 and 4 lesson in which pupils created sculptures, parent helpers were also very well used to provide additional learning experiences. Their contribution had been planned into the lesson.

25. In several lessons seen, the preparation for the lesson was good and resources were used well to promote learning. In a Year 1 and 2 design and technology lesson, the teacher had set up a wide range of activities related to food prior to the lesson beginning. During the lesson, pupils were able to explore different aspects of food, for example how apples and potatoes can be prepared in a variety of ways. In the same class, some interesting activities were provided in mathematics, using resources such as number cards and coins. In geography and history, pupils are given some good 'hands on' experiences in lessons, for example asking questions of local residents who have lived through the Second World War. Such activities develop pupils' understanding well. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when teachers provided too few opportunities for active learning of this type. Practical experiences such as these help the learning of pupils with special educational needs.
26. Although the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school, there are weaknesses that need to be rectified. In the reception class, there are too few opportunities for children to learn through play and exploration. There is too much emphasis on children completing worksheets, which are not always well matched to their needs. Too little account is taken of how young children learn. The teacher does not, for example, support the development of speaking and listening skills through the use of role play. Too few resources are provided to support 'pretend' play in the home corner and role play areas. In areas such as mathematical development, there is not enough emphasis on practical activities. Children are expected to work with coins on flash cards when working with money, rather than to use real or pretend coins. Lessons are not planned with objectives related to the Early Learning Goals for children of this age. All these factors restrict children's learning and, in two lessons during the inspection, teaching and learning were unsatisfactory.
27. There are occasions in other classes when higher attaining pupils are not challenged well enough, particularly in the Year 1 and 2 class. This is because work in lessons is often planned to be the same for all pupils in the mixed age and ability classes. This lack of challenge is particularly evident in mathematics in Years 1 and 2. This is a key factor in pupils' achievements not being as good in mathematics at the age of seven as in reading and writing. Mental arithmetic sessions are not sufficiently demanding for higher attaining pupils. In other aspects of mathematics lessons in Years 1 and 2 there is a lack of extension activities to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills at a higher level. In an otherwise very good science lesson in the same class, higher attaining pupils were not sufficiently challenged by the work set. The heavy reliance on worksheets in many lessons means that not enough is demanded of pupils. Sometimes pupils are required to complete simple worksheets giving one word answers when their good literacy skills mean that they are capable of more. Overall, teachers do not make enough use of pupils' literacy skills to support their learning in other subjects.
28. In an unsatisfactory writing lesson taken by a temporary teacher in Years 3 and 4, too little work was planned for a session that was to last for most of the morning. Furthermore, the activity of writing a letter with a prescribed content to a new penfriend did not capture pupils' interest. There was insufficient recognition of how highly these pupils are achieving and the work set was at too low a level. The result was that pupils were bored and restless and made very little effort. The unsatisfactory attitudes and behaviour of the pupils were very different from those shown by the same class in other lessons.
29. While marking is satisfactory in some subjects, such as English, in others it does little to support pupils' learning. In geography and history, for example, much marking is limited to ticks. Many science worksheets are unmarked and this is unsatisfactory. Overall, marking is not used well enough to identify what pupils do and do not understand. The comments on pupils' work do not tell them enough about what they are doing well and how they might improve their work.

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

30. Although the quality and range of learning opportunities in the reception class are satisfactory, overall, there are weaknesses that need to be rectified. The range of activities provided across all areas of learning supports children in making satisfactory progress, overall. Insufficient attention is paid, however, to the Early Learning Goals for children of this age. This means that too little account is taken of how these young children learn and the stages of their development. There are not enough opportunities for children to learn through practical activities and investigation, particularly make-believe play. A lack of appropriate planning too often results in whole class activities, which are dominated by worksheets. This is unsatisfactory, especially as these worksheets are not well enough matched to children's needs. Daily access to the outside play area, with a variety of activities which includes wheeled toys and climbing apparatus, allows children to develop the skills needed for large and small movements. The lack of a school hall restricts physical activities indoors. At the last inspection, the planning of learning opportunities for reception children was found to be thorough and it is now unsatisfactory.
31. The learning opportunities for pupils aged five to nine are satisfactory, overall. They include all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Nevertheless, as in the reception year, the planning is unsatisfactory. Apart from literacy and numeracy, which follow the National Strategies and religious education which reflects the locally agreed syllabus, the curriculum is delivered through a two-year rolling programme. As at the last inspection, this ensures that subject matter is not repeated. Work is not, however, consistently matched to the needs of the higher and lower attaining pupils. There are occasions when higher attaining pupils are presented with tasks that are undemanding, while lower attaining pupils are given the same work as others in the class.
32. A satisfactory emphasis is given to English and science, with suitable time allocations for other subjects. A block of work is planned over half a term for some subjects, such as geography and history, to enable them to be studied in sufficient depth. Subjects are sometimes timetabled for a whole afternoon and this is not always effective. Pupils are expected to sustain interest for very long periods and time is not always used well enough in a whole afternoon lesson. The result of timetabling subjects in this way is that sometimes the pace of lessons is rather slow.
33. The school has adopted recent national guidance as schemes of work in most subjects, but these have not been developed into school specific schemes. As a result, teachers' planning, based on the national guidance, often lacks the necessary detailed information to ensure that work is correctly matched to pupils' needs and builds effectively on their prior learning. The school recognises the importance of dealing with this and sees it as a priority to be tackled by the full-time teaching team that will be in place shortly. A commercial scheme of work is in place for physical education. There is no scheme of work for music. While pupils are provided with a broad and balanced music curriculum, it is unsatisfactory that there is no written planning for the subject.
34. The school's strategy for literacy is good for pupils aged five to seven and satisfactory for those aged seven to nine. This leads to good standards at the age of seven. The satisfactory implementation of the National Literacy Strategy for those aged seven to nine contributes to the maintenance of high standards at the age of nine. It results in the pupils who achieved highly at the age of seven making satisfactory further progress. As at the last inspection, the high amount of time allocated to reading is effective. The long weekly sessions for writing are less effective and not a good use of time.
35. While the school's numeracy strategy is effective in helping pupils achieve high standards in Years 3 and 4, the time allocation for mathematics is insufficient. The school is not providing pupils with the required daily numeracy lesson, as there is no such lesson on one day each week. On the day concerned, pupils have brief mental mathematics sessions instead, which is not an effective substitute. This low allocation of time to mathematics is a key reason why standards now are not as high as formerly at the age of seven. Pupils are not covering as much work as they should be. There is too little attention to the practical and investigative aspect of mathematics for pupils aged five to seven. This was also a weakness at the last inspection and it has not been rectified. As the planning of learning opportunities in mathematics is not always

sufficiently supported by assessment information, there is also a lack of challenge in some of the work set for the brightest pupils.

36. Although some opportunities are provided for pupils to practise literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects such as science, history and geography, there is insufficient attention to applying pupils' good literacy skills across all the subjects of the curriculum. There is also too little use of information and communication technology across other subjects. This is one reason why standards in information and communication technology are not as high now at the age of seven as they were at the last inspection. There is now better provision, however, for practical and investigative science and there are more 'hands on' learning opportunities in geography and history.
37. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. In accordance with the governing body's policies, the school makes suitable arrangements for sex and drugs education within science. The programme for personal and social education is effective in developing pupils' awareness of citizenship. It promotes a model of daily life where individuals are valued and pupils are able to gain insights into the needs and concerns of others.
38. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided, especially considering the small size of the school. Pupils have very good opportunities to participate in a range of musical clubs such as choir, recorders and percussion. There is a country dancing club. Through the efforts of parents, opportunities are provided for pupils to learn some French and Spanish. While there is no extra-curricular sporting provision in the Summer, the school has offered football in the Winter, for which parents have paid.
39. There are good links with the local cluster of schools and shared initiatives and curriculum developments to support pupils' learning. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is very good. Many parents and volunteers give good support to the school to enrich the learning opportunities provided. This is seen, for example, when parents help pupils in Years 3 and 4 to develop skills in creating sculptures made from natural materials or work with the whole school on the production of a Millennium quilt. All pupils read to an adult on a daily basis as a result of good parental involvement. During the inspection, local residents visited the school to talk with Year 3 and 4 pupils about their war time experiences. Pupils were about to visit a private garden in which there is an air raid shelter. The church and other areas of the village are also used effectively to support learning. An annual visit to the village supports pupils' work in science. Good use is made of the local environment and the very good resource of the school garden. Visitors such as the vicar and the police are welcomed into school, enhancing pupils' learning.
40. There is satisfactory provision for pupils to have equal access and opportunity in relation to the learning opportunities offered. Pupils with special educational needs have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum. Individual education plans detail appropriate targets to help teachers in meeting their needs. At times, individual pupils are withdrawn for specific activities related to their targets for learning. This is carefully organised on a rota system to ensure that learning in a particular subject in class lessons is not disrupted. Targets for what pupils are to achieve are reviewed regularly. As is the case more widely, computers are not used sufficiently to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs.
41. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and satisfactory provision for their cultural development. Many of the strengths found at the last inspection in the provision for pupils' personal development have been maintained. Religious education and collective worship contribute effectively to the development of the pupils' understanding of values and beliefs within religions. There are good opportunities for quiet reflection and prayer during assemblies, which allow pupils to pause and reflect for a few moments. Themes within assemblies, for example about changing schools, the natural world and 'Awe and Wonder', successfully encourage pupils to reflect on their feelings and to consider the wonders of the world in which we live. There are good links with a Biblical story telling group who visit the school regularly, to promote pupils' spiritual development. In art and design, pupils have opportunities to study features of the natural world. In science, there are also elements of this as pupils study life processes and living things, for example, looking at creatures and their habitats.

42. Pupils are taught effectively the difference between right and wrong to support their moral development. Staff provide good role models, are courteous and show respect and understanding. They ensure that pupils are aware of the rules in school and conform to them. Good systems are in place to reinforce this. Pupils are rewarded through merits for good work and have their own 'Special Day' when their personal qualities are recognised and celebrated. The 'Superstar' board also indicates how pupils are rewarded and their self-esteem raised.
43. Social development is promoted well. Pupils are given good opportunities to work together co-operatively and to share their ideas. They are encouraged to be independent. This is seen, for instance, in the reception class, when children hand round plates at snack time. Opportunities are provided for older pupils in Year 4 to develop a sense of responsibility as monitors. Those in Years 3 and 4 are given specific responsibility for reception children. Extra-curricular activities give pupils opportunities to work and play together outside lessons. Through collections for charities, pupils gain an awareness of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves.
44. Pupils learn about Western European culture in history, through looking at the work of famous artists and in some work related to literature. There are some opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding about different cultures, although these are not extensive. In geography, for example, pupils design Aztec style masks. Opportunities are provided, through religious education, for pupils to consider festivals, celebrations and traditions within Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism and Islam. There are no opportunities, however, for pupils to visit places of worship other than the parish church to find out about the diversity of cultures within society. The last inspection found that not enough was done to prepare pupils for life in the cultural diversity of British society. This continues to be a weakness.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

45. The last inspection found that the school provided very good personal and academic support for its pupils. The school continues to be effective in safeguarding pupils' physical welfare, including in the areas of child protection and health and safety. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress, however, are not as good as they were. Procedures for assessing the standard of pupils' work and checking their progress are now unsatisfactory. This limits the effectiveness with which teachers match work to pupils' individual abilities and the progress pupils are subsequently able to make.
46. All members of staff work well to provide a welcoming and positive environment. As a result, parents see their children enjoying being at school and are confident that they are well looked after during the school day. The school has a warm, family atmosphere and members of staff know their pupils well. Pupils feel well supported as a result and this helps them to make steady progress in their learning. Members of staff are familiar with child protection and health and safety procedures and the school's arrangements comply with current legislation and with local authority guidelines.
47. The school's procedures for checking and promoting good behaviour are straightforward but effective. Pupils who have shown particularly positive attitudes are awarded merit marks and these are totalled up each week. There is a house system for pupils in Years 3 and 4 and, each week, the winning house is awarded a school cup. In addition, class teachers nominate a small number of pupils from their class each month and the successful pupils are entitled to wear a 'Superstar' badge for the next month. These systems work well and effectively motivate pupils to work hard and to make good progress.
48. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good and this is reflected in the consistently high levels of attendance. Class registers are checked regularly and any unexplained absences are discussed with parents. Most absences are the result of illness and, although there are some term time holidays, they usually last for only a few days.
49. Although there were very good arrangements for assessing pupils' progress at the time of the last inspection, these procedures have not been maintained. In the reception class, children are assessed on entry to school and again at the end of the reception year. While this is a means by

which the school can see how much progress each pupil has made, the information gained is not used sufficiently to guide teachers' planning. There is little assessment in the areas of learning for children of this age. The recording of what children know, understand and can do is inadequate to guide the planning of further learning. The information is not used to set targets. The teacher is aware of the need for a more formal approach to assessment in order to match work more precisely to children's needs.

50. For pupils aged five to nine, assessment is satisfactory in English and mathematics, where adequate procedures are in place. These include standardised tests, continued assessment by teachers through weekly spelling and table tests, daily reading checks and commercial assessment sheets for mathematics. Some examples of work in English, mathematics and science that have been assessed against National Curriculum levels are collected. Some analysis of information is undertaken to identify strengths and weaknesses and this is used to set targets in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers are not clear, however, about how these targets influence the planning of learning opportunities. The use of identified learning targets is not established in other subject areas. There are no whole school assessment procedures in these subjects to ensure that information from one teacher is passed on to the next at the end of the school year.
51. Although procedures for checking pupils' personal development are largely informal, they are effective. They are based upon class teachers' knowledge of their pupils' individual circumstances and most teachers know their pupils well. Relationships are good and teachers are sensitive to pupils' 'ups and downs'. This high quality personal support helps to ensure that pupils enjoy their time at school and that they use their time productively. Pupils are given few opportunities, however, to become involved in reviewing their own progress and setting their own targets. Such a practice would help pupils to be clear about what they need to do to improve.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. The last inspection found that the school enjoyed a very effective partnership with parents and this continues to be the case. Great emphasis is placed on working closely with parents and the school does everything it reasonably can to encourage their involvement. Parents indicate that they are made to feel very welcome and hold the school in high regard.
53. Analysis of the pre-inspection questionnaire indicates that parents are pleased with every major area of the school's work. Indeed, parents unanimously agree that their children like school. They feel that the partnership between home and school is very close. They are also confident that pupils are well behaved during the school day and that teaching is good. There is only one area of concern. Parents have reservations over the staffing situation within the Year 1 and 2 class. During this school year, pupils have been taught by five teachers and parents are worried that this period has unsettled their children. Inspectors agree with these concerns. Pupils in this class are more restless than those in other classes. Inspectors agree with most of the parents' positive views. However, inspectors judge that teaching is satisfactory rather than good and teachers' expectations of the most able pupils are not always high enough.
54. The quality of information provided for parents is good. The school is imaginative in the way in which it keeps parents informed about various curriculum areas. Parents receive topic sheets every half term that give detailed information about the forthcoming themes, subject by subject. In addition, parents were invited along to a 'model' Literacy Hour and they particularly appreciated being able to see the sort of things that happen during their children's literacy lessons.
55. Parents receive two written reports each school year on their children's progress and feel that they are kept well informed. Reports clearly reflect each child's personal and academic progress over the last year. There are also two formal opportunities to discuss their children's progress during the school year, one during each of the Autumn and Spring terms. In addition, teachers are always willing to meet parents should they need further clarification or verbal reassurance about the progress made by their children. Although there are some minor omissions, the school prospectus and the governors' annual report are very readable and

contain much useful information about the school. There are clear procedures for parents of pupils with special educational needs to be kept informed at regular intervals. Opportunities are provided regularly to review progress and the parents are very supportive of the work of the school.

56. Links with parents are very good and many are keen to contribute to school life. They offer valuable support in a number of ways. Parents regularly hear their children read at home and many try to avoid booking a holiday during term time. In addition, numerous parents, grandparents and friends of the school regularly provide voluntary help during the day. They work closely with the class teacher to offer well-informed support to the pupils. Volunteers are plentiful and extremely dependable. Their staunch and unflinching support means that the school can reliably include their help in its day-to-day planning and organisation. With parents' help, each pupil is heard read by an adult every day. This provides pupils with significant support and encouragement. Parents also help when pupils go swimming at the pool in Biggleswade and with gardening within the school grounds.
57. The Home and School Group plays an important part in the life of the school. A variety of activities is organised and the money raised is used to fund learning resources, including leases for the photocopier and some of the classroom computers. All in all, the effect of parents' involvement on the work of the school is excellent and it provides pupils with significant encouragement to work hard and to do their best.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. At the time of the last inspection, the headteacher had been in post for less than three weeks. The previous headteacher had been at the school for twenty-five years. There has also been a complete change of teaching staff since then. There is a new chair of governors as well as some other new governors, including the chair of finance. The school has been reorganised to have three classes rather than two, so that reception children can be taught separately. Consequently, this is now a different school in many respects. Some of the strengths found at the last inspection have been maintained, such as the high standards in English throughout the school and the very strong links with parents and the community. There are other significant areas, however, in which the school is not as good as at the last inspection. These include the quality of teaching and learning, the planning of the curriculum and the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress.
59. In this small school there is much informal discussion among teachers and education support staff. This is effective in ensuring that the school runs smoothly and that the headteacher has a secure overall awareness of what is happening on a day-to-day basis. The lack of formality is a weakness, however, that limits the overall effectiveness of the school. While the school provides its pupils with a satisfactory education, the weaknesses in planning and assessment prevent teachers from being more tightly focused on pupils' individual needs in the mixed age and ability classes. The absence of systematic checking of teaching and the curriculum and their contribution to pupils' learning result in weaknesses going undetected and not being rectified. The school had not identified, for example, weaknesses in the teaching of handwriting that result in pupils not joining their writing at the age of seven. There has been no adequate evaluation of how well teachers meet individual pupils' needs in the mixed age and ability classes.
60. The headteacher has, until this school year, had a teaching timetable that has left her with the equivalent of only one day each week for all her other duties. This largely explains why there has not been sufficient checking of teaching and the curriculum in recent years. The headteacher now teaches for only half the school week. She recognises that it is very important that she develop her role in checking the effectiveness of the school if improvement is to take place. To this purpose, she has recently had training to help her to do this.
61. The senior teacher is presently the only other full-time teacher in the school. She gives satisfactory support to the headteacher in the day-to-day running of the school. With the unsettled staffing the school has seen this school year, the system of sharing the co-ordination of subjects among permanent teachers has lapsed. The headteacher and senior teacher have

ensured that there has been adequate provision in all subjects throughout the year, but little further development has taken place.

62. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory. The headteacher is presently the co-ordinator. She ensures that the register of pupils with special educational needs is efficiently maintained. The requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are adhered to. The governor responsible for this area is actively involved in reviewing and updating the policy. She regularly checks the movement of pupils on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs and reports to the governing body.
63. The governing body has a good awareness of the school's overall strengths and weaknesses. They recognise that there are areas in which there have been recent lapses and that action is needed to deal with this. To this purpose, governors recognise the importance of working with the headteacher and staff to ensure that the provision is checked, strengths are maintained and the necessary improvements made. They are by no means complacent and are presently setting up a group to work specifically with the headteacher in the area of strategic planning. Their present involvement in determining priorities and shaping the direction of the school is satisfactory. Governors are also critical of their own effectiveness and recognise areas in which they could improve in their role of 'critical friend'. They presently have some satisfactory independent strategies for gaining information. Their visits to school are sometimes general and sometimes have a specific focus, such as looking at the provision for information and communication technology.
64. The school development plan is a comprehensive document. It includes aims for the future and cost implications. A key issue at the last inspection was for the plan to include specific targets to support rigorous gauging of the school's effectiveness. This continues to be an area for improvement. The plan does, however, provide a useful tool for guiding development and shows a commitment to rectifying the present weaknesses. The development plan is drawn up by the headteacher initially and is discussed in detail by governors. It is now a regular agenda item for full governing body meetings.
65. The school has satisfactory procedures for ensuring that the financial resources available to it are used effectively. This is an area in which the governing body is sharpening its involvement, with the appointment of a new chair of finance. The chair of finance is a member of the new strategic planning group set up to take the school forward following this inspection. Specific grants, such as for special educational needs, are used properly for their intended purposes. The present carry forward of funds has been earmarked for specific improvements, such as to classroom furniture and resources for the reception class and the development of the external play area. Procedures for day-to-day financial management and control are satisfactory. Day-to-day administration is also satisfactory. The school secretary has a clear understanding of her role and responsibilities and she provides effective support to the school community.
66. The school has sufficient teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. At the last inspection, weaknesses were found in the deployment of part-time teachers and this is no longer the case. The accommodation is satisfactory, although there is no hall in which the whole school can meet and where physical education lessons can take place. The external play area is also fairly small and restricts physical activity. There is little space, for example, for older pupils to play ball games. To some extent the school compensates through use of the village hall and playing field for physical education lessons. The internal accommodation is used more effectively than at the last inspection. Resources for learning are adequate, overall, with planned improvements to those presently available for reception children.
67. The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils, with a specific strength in the provision for English for pupils aged five to seven and in mathematics for those aged seven to nine. Children enter the school with average attainment and overall standards are high when pupils leave at the age of nine. Throughout the school, however, the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and not as good as when the school was last inspected. The curriculum is no longer well planned, although a satisfactory range of learning opportunities is provided. The assessment and recording of pupils' attainment and progress is no longer as good as when the school was last inspected. There is too little checking of teaching and the

curriculum and how they affect pupils' learning. While the school has some considerable strengths, there are also weaknesses that need to be rectified. The overall value for money provided by the school is satisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to maintain the strengths of the school and to rectify the weaknesses, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

a) Improve pupils' achievements in mathematics at the age of seven by:

- giving greater time to mathematics by ensuring that pupils have a daily numeracy lesson;
- paying greater attention to developing pupils' competence in practical and investigative mathematics; and
- ensuring that all pupils are fully challenged in mental mathematics sessions.

(Paragraphs 2, 6, 27, 35, 95, 97, 100)

b) Take greater account of how young children in the reception class learn by:

- ensuring that the learning opportunities for children in the reception class are planned to take full account of the Early Learning Goals in each area of learning for children of this age; and
- developing the opportunities for children to learn through play, practical activities and investigation.

(Paragraphs 26, 30, 70, 74, 77, 79, 83)

c) Develop assessment procedures for all subjects and ensure that information gained from assessment, including in English and mathematics, is used to ensure that work is matched to pupils' individual needs. This includes making sure that the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged in lessons.

(Paragraphs 27, 31, 49, 50, 59, 92, 103, 109, 115, 120, 124, 130, 135, 140, 144)

d) Develop rigorous and systematic procedures for checking the quality of teaching and the curriculum and how they contribute to pupils' learning. Ensure that where weaknesses are identified they are rectified. The headteacher and others involved in this should have training to support this key aspect of the school's leadership and management.

(Paragraphs 59, 60, 102, 109, 120, 124, 130, 144, 149)

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

- handwriting is not joined at the age of seven (Paragraphs 6, 88);
- there is too little use of computers to support pupils' learning across the subjects of the curriculum (Paragraphs 10, 79, 90, 103, 108, 114, 120, 123, 129, 134, 135, 149);
- although recent national guidance for subjects has been adopted, it has not been adapted to meet the needs of the school (Paragraphs 33, 59, 109, 115, 120, 135, 140, 144);
- marking is not used well enough to identify what pupils do well and to help them to know how to improve (Paragraphs 29, 108, 123, 128);
- there are insufficient opportunities for the development of pupils' understanding of other cultures (Paragraphs 44, 115, 149).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	15
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13	40	27	20	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	52
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	7	4	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	7
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	10	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	7
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	10	10	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (100)	91 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	41
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Average class size	17

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	38

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	144,890
Total expenditure	141,847
Expenditure per pupil	2,837
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,223
Balance carried forward to next year	16,266

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	52
Number of questionnaires returned	36

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	36	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	81	17	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	44	0	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	44	0	0	6
The teaching is good.	75	19	0	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	72	19	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	14	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	22	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	78	17	6	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	28	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	39	3	0	3

Other issues raised by parents

Some parents have concerns about the number of different teachers there have been in the Years 1 and 2 class this school year.

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

68. Children enter the reception class in the September of the school year in which they will be five. At the time of the inspection, there were eleven children in the reception class, none of whom had been identified as having special educational needs. Almost all children have had some form of pre-school education before starting in the reception class. On entry to the school, the overall attainment of the group of children presently in the reception class was broadly average in all areas of learning. As year groups are small, there are variations in the attainment on entry from year to year. Records show that it is normally at least average and sometimes a little above average.
69. The present group of children have made good progress during the year in their personal, social, emotional and creative development. As a result, standards are above average in these areas at the end of the year. In communication, language and literacy, mathematical and physical development and in children's knowledge and understanding of the world overall progress has been satisfactory with average standards achieved at the end of the year. Within these broad areas, progress is good in the scientific aspect of children's knowledge and understanding of the world and in their speaking and listening skills. In these specific aspects, standards are also above average at the end of the reception year.
70. Standards in the key areas of communication, language and literacy are a little lower than at the last inspection. The overall quality of teaching and learning is not as good now as it was then, when it was found to be very good. This is largely because activities are not as well matched to children's needs now. This is clearly related to planning which is unsatisfactory now, but was found to be thorough at the last inspection. The curriculum gives better coverage of all the required areas of learning for children of this age than at the last inspection. The school has been helped in this by the development of a separate reception class. Formerly, reception class children were taught together with those in Year 1.

Personal, social and emotional development

71. By the end of the reception year, most children meet and many exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area. Children are happy to come to school and settle quickly to their lessons. They pay good attention to the teacher and nursery nurse, are eager to participate in the activities planned and work and play well together. This is seen when children use construction kits, dress dolls, play in the home corner, or work together on the computer. Behaviour and relationships are good because children understand the routines clearly, know what is expected and respond positively to instructions. Most concentrate well on the tasks set, although some lose interest when completing worksheets. They share resources amicably, such as crayons and scissors. In discussion, children listen to each other, taking turns to speak and respecting the views and feelings of others. They select activities confidently and tidy away at the end of sessions. They show independence in their personal hygiene and when changing for physical activity.
72. The overall quality of teaching and learning in this area is good, helping children to develop their personal and social skills well. The teacher and nursery nurse provide a happy, secure and safe environment for children. Children are expected to behave well. Adults are good role models, showing courtesy and giving praise, for example when encouraging physical activities in the gymnastics lesson. This approach to the children helps to build their self-esteem and makes them feel valued. Children are encouraged to take responsibility. They have turns to be chosen for 'Special Day' when they take the registers to the office and generally help the adults. On their 'Special Day', they complete the daily calendar and weather chart and use the microphone to 'read' the weather report to the class. Children are encouraged to act kindly towards each other and to show respect for the equipment and toys they use.

Communication, language and literacy

73. Most children meet and a few exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area by the end of the reception year. Children's speaking and listening skills are good. A good number are articulate and speak confidently and clearly when responding to questions. They readily engage in discussion and listen carefully to their teacher and to each other. Most children use upper and lower case letters correctly when writing their names unaided. They copy writing from the board or copy beneath the teacher's writing in their newsbooks. The highest attaining children build simple sentences, spacing words correctly and showing some awareness of the use of full stops. All children enjoy books. Most know that words and pictures carry meaning. They know the sounds of letters of the alphabet and recognise rhyming words. Many read a very simple text accurately, making use of picture clues and letter sounds to help them work out unfamiliar words.
74. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall, although an unsatisfactory lesson was seen during the inspection. Opportunities are created for children to engage in discussions and respond to questions. These promote the development of speaking and listening skills effectively. There are missed opportunities, however, to structure imaginative play to encourage conversations in the home corner or 'garden centre' role play area. The lack of planning for such activities, together with too few interventions by the teacher, restricts the progress that can be made through such play. The excellent support from parents for reading in class ensures that each child reads to an adult on a daily basis. This helps them to improve reading skills well. Literacy skills are satisfactorily developed through the use of 'big books' shared together as a class and through group reading sessions. The heavy emphasis on worksheets to teach letter sounds and formation, at the expense of more exciting and purposeful activities, inhibits development for some children. This is because such activities do not gain children's interest well enough. They do not work with enthusiasm or do enough in these sessions.
75. The unsatisfactory lesson seen was a writing lesson when the children joined with those aged five to seven for a creative writing workshop. All were expected to write using 'fantasy' and 'imaginative' experiences. Expectations were unrealistic for these young children and their current stage of development. Many children struggled to begin writing, with much rubbing out and long periods of inactivity. The session was too long and the concept was too abstract for most children. The teacher concentrated on rubbing out and correcting writing, so losing the notion of 'imaginative' writing to a large extent. Children's needs were not met in this lesson.

Mathematical development

76. By the end of the reception year, most children achieve the Early Learning Goals and a few exceed them. Most children count accurately to 10 and some count well beyond this. Most count on and back when using a 'number line' in mental mathematics. They understand 'one more', and 'one less' than a given number. Many can add two numbers to make five. They suggest vocabulary for big numbers saying, 'thousand' and 'million' for example. Most children recognise solid shapes such as a sphere or cube and identify simple two-dimensional shapes such as squares, circles and triangles. They are familiar with money, recognising coins on flash cards.
77. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall, although an unsatisfactory lesson was seen during the inspection. There is some good use of songs and rhymes to teach children about number. Effective use is made of opportunities throughout the day to develop children's basic numeracy skills. This is seen, for example, when children work out how many are present at registration time. Resources, such as 'pattern boards', are used well to develop children's awareness of shapes. Not enough time is given to practical activities, for example using coins, but flashcards with pictures of coins are used instead. Insufficient account is taken of the range of children's needs. Children are given worksheets, which require all of them to complete the same tasks. In the unsatisfactory lesson seen, the main worksheet was confusing and was not suitable for the age group. On completion of this worksheet, the children received a second one. The pedestrian pace in this lesson resulted in a lack of urgency by children and too little work was covered. There were missed opportunities to consolidate the learning at the end of the lesson.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

78. By the end of the reception year, most children achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area and a few exceed them. The scientific aspect is the strongest area of children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Children know that plants need water and light in order to grow. They label external body parts correctly on a drawing, understand how sounds are made and identify living and non-living things. They have a good range of early scientific skills in observing and investigating. Children make a bird's eye plan of the school by arranging objects on a table top and draw maps of the school garden. They have an understanding of the local environment that would be expected at this age and know, for example, about the church and shop. They talk about their families and what they do outside school. Through drawing old and new lamps, they are starting to understand how objects used in the past differ from their modern day equivalents. Children are familiar with computers, and use them to support work in literacy as well as art, for example, creating faces, using a paint program. They have very basic skills in using a mouse and keyboard to control images on the screen. The use of the computer is weaker than other aspects of children's knowledge and understanding.
79. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Visitors to school, such as the vicar and policeman, are used well to enhance learning in this area. During the inspection, a volunteer grandfather helped children to use tools as part of a design and technology lesson. A good range of resources was provided for the lesson. The nursery nurse developed children's understanding well by taking apart a flower press to show the children how it works. Visits to places in the locality and to the school's environmental garden also support activities in the classroom. Too often, however, worksheets replace purposeful experiences. Weaknesses in planning the curriculum also limit the range of experiences to develop early knowledge and understanding in history, geography and information and communication technology. Too little is done to develop children's independence in using computers.

Physical development

80. By the end of the reception year, most children achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area. Children move confidently and with good co-ordination and control. While movement is restricted in the cloakroom area used for indoor physical activity, children have a good awareness of the space around them. They are aware of the importance of warming up and changes in body temperature, because the teacher emphasises this well. They move imaginatively in different directions, in a variety of ways. Outdoors, they have the expected skill in steering wheeled toys, and in the physical skills of pushing and pulling. Children handle pencils, crayons, scissors, glue and paint brushes with care and control. They cut materials carefully and have the expected skill for their age when using scissors and glue. Hand-eye co-ordination is as expected at this age.
81. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Adults give clear instructions in lessons and teach children to use tools carefully and safely. When using the apparatus, indoors or outdoors, skills are carefully taught. Encouragement is given to help children succeed and develop control in their movements. Resources for outdoor play are good and have improved since the previous inspection.

Creative development

82. By the end of the reception year, most children meet and many exceed the Early Learning Goals. Children show good competence in a variety of activities including drawing, painting, printing, modelling and collage. They use paint to marble, bubble-print, press print and for finger painting. Children have good colour mixing skills and create shades of colour. They paint bold sunflowers and spring flowers, using different brushes. They observe the work of famous artists such as Matisse and Buer, as a stimulus for their own creations. Skills in observational drawing are developed well, as children use sketching pencils to draw different containers and a variety of flowers. In some cases, children use skills of shading well. They show imaginative and creative ideas in their garden designs on a paper plate. For this they use a variety of natural materials such as moss and compost, having first designed a collage garden. Children experiment with sounds, exploring a range of instruments and also making their own shakers,

scrapers and beaters. They enjoy singing songs and rhymes, which are used to support other areas such as mathematics.

83. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are presented with a wide range of quality experiences, which develop their creativity well. These activities are successful in gaining children's interest and motivating them. As a result, they make good gains in the development of their skills, such as in painting and drawing. There is a good focus on artists and their work and good opportunities for children to select appropriate resources, such as the correct paintbrushes. The nursery nurse gives good support and this is evident in the results children achieve. There are ample opportunities for children to explore musical instruments. Even though the range of activities is good in the art and design and music aspects, weaknesses remain in planning. This is particularly in relation to imaginative play in the role play areas. As a result, children's learning is not well enough extended in make believe play.

ENGLISH

84. Pupils' results were well above the national average in the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in 2000. They were just as high when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The school has maintained consistently high standards in reading and writing at age seven since the last inspection in 1997. At that time, the school's results had been in the top five per cent of schools nationally in reading and writing. In 1999, they were again in the top five per cent of schools in writing. Girls have done better than boys in the tests over the last two years, especially in reading. There are more boys than girls in the year group that took the tests in 2000.
85. The evidence from the inspection of school work of pupils now in Year 2 shows standards as above average overall in English. Reading standards remain high. There are also many strengths in writing, although overall speaking and listening standards are average. Pupils now aged seven have made good overall progress through Years 1 and 2. No pupil in Year 2 is identified as having special educational needs. Those in Year 1 who have special educational needs have made good progress in line with other pupils of the same age. The overall standard of school work of pupils now in Year 4 is well above average. These pupils achieved highly at the age of seven in the National Curriculum tests. The progress of all pupils since then, including those with special educational needs, has been satisfactory. Standards of school work now are similar to those seen at the last inspection. The exception is in pupils' listening skills at the age of seven. There is no discernible difference in the progress made or the standards achieved by boys and girls.
86. By the age of seven, standards in speaking and listening are as expected nationally, although pupils are a little better at speaking than at listening. Pupils give clear answers to questions, for example, about the books they are reading or the tastes of different foods in a design and technology lesson. Sometimes, these answers are extended to explain the reasons for their opinions. Pupils listen attentively in one-to-one situations and in large gatherings such as whole school assembly. Many find it difficult, however, to listen for any length of time during question and answer sessions or when the teacher gives detailed explanations of activities in lessons. By the age of nine, pupils are confident and articulate speakers. They give extended answers to questions such as about the sculptures they make in art and design lessons. They have a good awareness of the listener as they talk about their work in one-to-one situations. They listen attentively to the teacher and to each other, for example when discussing approaches to problem solving activities in mathematics lessons.
87. Reading standards are well above average at the ages of seven and nine. By the age of seven, pupils are confident, fluent and accurate readers. They have a good understanding of the plot and characters in the stories they read, and predict what might happen next. All pupils make effective use of letter sounds to work out unfamiliar words. One average attaining pupil very quickly sounded out the word 'brilliant' and a lower attaining pupil read 'Londinium' with very little adult support. Some pupils have favourite authors and a higher attaining pupil, for example, reads the novels of J K Rowling. Pupils have secure skills in using non-fiction books to find information. By the age of nine, almost all pupils have favourite authors such as Jacqueline Wilson, Mark Twain and Gerald Durrell. They express preferences for particular types of fiction such as animal stories or adventures. Pupils have a very good understanding of

what they read. They explain, for example, why a character in a story acts and behaves in a certain way. Pupils also enjoy non-fiction books, for example about sports. They have good skills in using encyclopaedias and dictionaries and know how to locate a book on a given topic in a library.

88. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment in writing is above that expected nationally. At the age of nine, it is well above. Pupils at ages seven and nine have good skills in writing stories in which ideas are well developed and there is good awareness of the reader. They plan stories effectively, giving careful consideration to plot, setting and key events. All pupils select words for effect. A lower attaining seven year old wrote, 'The man got out of bed and zoomed to work', while an average nine year old wrote, 'In the swamp, were alagators with scaly skin and piesing eyes'. Throughout the school, pupils write for a suitable range of purposes. Those aged nine, for example, write descriptions of objects, instructions for how to make a cup of tea or how to build a snowman, and informal letters. Standards of spelling, punctuation and grammar are mainly good. By the age of seven, many pupils write complex sentences, which are correctly punctuated. Although handwriting is neat and evenly formed at the age of seven, it is not joined. This is a weakness that reduces the overall standards achieved. At age nine, most pupils join their handwriting, although a few pupils' writing is very small and cramped.
89. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good for pupils aged five to seven and satisfactory for those aged seven to nine. During the inspection, two lessons were seen in the Year 3 and 4 class. One of these was good, but the other, taught by a temporary teacher, was unsatisfactory. In good lessons, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. This supports them in providing suitably challenging work for all pupils. Instructions and explanations are very clear and this results in teachers gaining and holding pupils' interest. The support provided by teachers for pupils as they work helps them to make good gains in their learning. In a Year 3 and 4 literacy lesson, this was further reinforced through the use of praise for good work and responses. The work in pupils' folders shows that there is much good teaching of writing in Years 1 and 2, with pupils given good models on which to base their story writing and other extended writing such as play scripts. Although all pupils do the same activities, the tasks are sufficiently 'open ended' for all pupils to achieve well with directed support from the teacher.
90. In satisfactory lessons, the teacher is clear about the activities pupils are to do. There is not enough account taken, however, of the range of pupils' needs in the mixed ability and mixed year group classes. In a Year 1 and 2 literacy lesson, some of the youngest and lowest attaining pupils found the long introductory session on rhyming couplets difficult. As a result, they became restless and did not sustain concentration very well. These pupils were better involved when the writing activity began and the teacher moved around the room providing support. In Years 3 and 4, pupils do not make such effective gains in their extended writing as those in Years 1 and 2. While suitable activities are provided, pupils are not always well enough challenged to higher levels of attainment. Too little account is taken of the high standards these pupils achieved at the end of Year 2. Overall standards of marking in English are satisfactory, although there are some missed opportunities to help pupils to improve their work. There is insufficient use of computers to support pupils' learning in English, such as for editing and redrafting writing in Years 3 and 4.
91. In the unsatisfactory lesson seen in Years 3 and 4, insufficient work was planned for a writing session that was to take most of the morning. The activity of writing a letter to a new penfriend, with a prescribed content for each paragraph, did not capture pupils' interest. This, together with weak management of pupils, resulted in them learning little and demonstrating attitudes and behaviour of a significantly lower standard than is usual in this class.
92. The overall leadership and management of English are satisfactory. At the time of the inspection, there was no named co-ordinator, owing to staff changes. The headteacher and senior teacher are both overseeing work in the subject and liaising with the temporary part-time teachers. Adequate systems are in place to track individual pupils' progress through the school. These record pupils' performance at specific points, such as in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 and in the optional tests the school does at the end of Years 3 and 4. There are no systems for assessing pupils between these points. The result is that while a suitable

range of learning opportunities are provided, activities are not always carefully enough matched to the range of pupils' needs in the mixed age and ability classes.

93. Too few challenging opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their literacy skills, especially writing, through other subjects such as geography and history. There are, however, more opportunities than at the last inspection for pupils to use books in other subjects. The quality of reading books has improved since the last inspection, but the school is in need of more 'big books' for classes to study together in literacy lessons. As at the last inspection, the contribution of parents to pupils' learning is very good, especially through hearing pupils read at the start of morning sessions.

MATHEMATICS

94. Pupils' performance at the age of seven in the National Curriculum tests in 2000 was above the national average. Standards were also above average when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. These results were not quite as high as in the previous three years, including the time of the last inspection, when they had been well above the national average. While all pupils reached at least the level expected of most seven-year-olds, the percentage reaching a higher level was below the national average. Girls have done better than boys in the tests over the last two years. In 2000, this was because more boys than girls had special educational needs.
95. The evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work is that the present Year 2 are achieving average standards. Standards are acceptable in most areas of mathematics, but there is a particular weakness in pupils' use and application of their mathematical knowledge. There are a number of reasons for the lower standards this year. The time allocated to mathematics is lower than in most schools and pupils have the required daily numeracy lesson on only four days each week. Mental arithmetic takes place briefly on the day on which there is no numeracy lesson, but this is not effective as a substitute activity. The result is that pupils have covered less work than would normally be expected. While pupils now in Years 1 and 2 are making satisfactory progress, overall, despite unsettled staffing this school year, there is a lack of challenge in some of the work set.
96. At the end of Year 4, standards in mathematics are well above those expected nationally. Pupils' results in the optional tests that the school participates in are very good, with some pupils already achieving the level expected at the end of Year 6. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress. Those now in Year 4 achieved highly at the age of seven. Since then, they have maintained high standards and broadened their mathematical experience and expertise. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is well supported when they work with the learning support assistant. There is no evidence in pupils' school work, in all year groups, of any difference in the progress and standards achieved by boys and girls.
97. By the age of seven, most pupils count accurately in fives to 100 and also on from 100. They have a reasonable grasp of place value to 100. They calculate, using addition and subtraction correctly, although a few confuse the symbols used. They apply addition and subtraction competently when working out change in money or when calculating how much money they have. They identify both two and three-dimensional shapes and are aware of the different types of measurement used when weighing and calculating length. Higher attaining pupils have a more refined understanding of these aspects, but are not always offered enough challenge to perform more highly. The weakness in pupils' work is in practical problem solving, which reduces the overall standards achieved.
98. By the age of nine, pupils apply their mathematical knowledge, for example to identify 'mystery' numbers by a process of elimination until they arrive at the correct answer. They round numbers to the nearest 10 or 100. They have a very secure grasp of number facts and competently work with three digits. They have a very good understanding of number operations, for example when working with the three and five times tables. They have a clear understanding of the difference between area and perimeter and are aware of the need for standard units of measurement if calculations are to be accurate. They apply this knowledge to calculate correctly. Pupils work

very competently with vulgar fractions of increasing complexity. Pupils of this age have better skills in practical problem solving than at the last inspection.

99. The overall quality of teaching of teaching and learning for pupils aged five to seven is satisfactory. For those aged seven to nine, it is good. While the quality of teaching and learning found at the last inspection has been maintained for pupils aged seven to nine, it is not as good now for those aged five to seven. A very good lesson was seen during the inspection in the Year 3 and 4 class. Teachers generally have secure knowledge of mathematics and the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. On occasions, especially when only mental arithmetic takes place, the sessions are rather slow and do not offer sufficient challenge, especially for the higher attaining pupils. Nevertheless, the presentation of activities is generally interesting and planned to engage the pupils' attention. In a Year 1 and 2 lesson, for example, the pupils had either number cards with symbols or playing cards to engage and keep them involved. The use of coins to illustrate the value of money was undertaken effectively. As a result, some pupils were able to accurately calculate money, for example that two fifty pence are equivalent to one pound.
100. All class teachers set clear expectations for behaviour and remind pupils regularly to pay attention and concentrate on their work. Pupils respond appropriately to this approach and are particularly positive in their attitudes in Years 3 and 4, which enable them to make effective progress. In Years 1 and 2, although teaching is satisfactory, lessons do not challenge the most able pupils sufficiently, especially in Year 2. Pupils with potential for higher attainment would benefit from greater variation in their work and extension activities through which work at a higher level could be demanded of them.
101. In the very good Year 3 and 4 lesson, the pace was very good, with very clear explanations about what the pupils were expected to learn. The pupils were given graphic descriptions that helped them to understand a new concept. They rapidly gained an understanding of perimeter by the teacher illustrating it as an ant crawling round the edges of a shape. Questioning was used very well to check pupils' understanding and to encourage them to apply themselves to the tasks set. In this lesson, the teacher's expectations of the standards all pupils were capable of achieving were high. Pupils' individual needs were met well.
102. The leadership and management of mathematics is satisfactory, overall. The headteacher, in her role as mathematics co-ordinator, has introduced the National Numeracy Strategy appropriately. She is aware of the need to develop provision further and to raise standards at the age of seven. Some checking of mathematics provision has taken place in numeracy and the governor with specific responsibility for this area has observed lessons. Medium-term plans are reviewed by the headteacher, but not short-term planning. There is no formal observation of lessons. This is a weakness which has meant, for example, that the lack of challenge for the more able pupils and the limited coverage of practical and investigative mathematics in Years 1 and 2, had not been picked up.
103. Pupils' progress is recorded at the end of each unit of work. Not enough use is made of this, or other assessment information, to plan for individual pupils, especially the most able ones. Resources are adequate, but there is room for improvement. The headteacher intends to purchase more equipment, for instance to support work on space, shape and measure, in constructing three-dimensional shapes. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently and the school does not, for example, have a programmable floor robot to support work in mathematics. Suitable opportunities are provided in other subjects, such as science and design and technology, for pupils to use and develop their numeracy skills.

SCIENCE

104. Teachers assessed pupils' performance in science at the age of seven in 2000 as well above the national average. These assessments do not, however, have the reliability of the tests in English and mathematics at the age of seven. The evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work shows the standards of the present Year 2 as above average. The school work of pupils now in Year 4 also indicates above average standards. There are no marked differences in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils throughout the five to nine age range, including

those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Higher attaining pupils, however, are not always challenged through sufficiently demanding work. Standards now are similar to those found at the last inspection.

105. By the age of seven, pupils have a good awareness of what constitutes a healthy life style. They classify foods into fats, proteins and carbohydrates, although they do not use this language. They make use of mathematical skills when completing graphs, for example, to show favourite foods. They have a good understanding of habitats and identify many creatures, including newts, millipedes, snails and ants. Higher attaining pupils pose good questions in order to further their knowledge asking, for example, 'Is it sheltered there?' or 'Is that the seed pod?' when looking at a poppy seed. They conduct investigations with understanding, for example to test which materials bend and twist, or to show the changes taking place in freezing and melting. Predictions made by higher attaining pupils are usually accurate. Pupils understand terms such as 're-cycling' and sort rubbish into categories to show which can be recycled, turned into compost or disposed of. Understanding of physical phenomena is good. Higher attaining pupils use charts and diagrams competently to record their findings. Some average pupils work at a similar level, but omit labelling at times and their predictions are not always as accurate.
106. By the age of nine, pupils have a good awareness of the Earth and beyond, such as the position of planets in the solar system. Pupils demonstrate a growing scientific vocabulary, for example using terms such as 'gravity', 'thrust', 'repel' and 'attract' when studying forces. Higher attaining pupils record their findings clearly as charts, diagrams and graphs. They understand the term 'insulation' and identify materials that act as good insulators and those which are conductors. They show a good understanding of the meaning of solids, liquids and gases. Pupils have good skills and understanding of experimental and investigative science. When conducting an experiment to see if a plant absorbs water, using celery and dye, pupils explain what they are trying to find out and show good understanding of how to ensure it is a 'fair' test. Average pupils cover the same work and show similar levels of attainment in some work, but presentation is not always neat and work is not well organised in some cases. Most pupils have the expected skills to devise and organise their own investigations, using accurate measures. Lower attaining pupils give brief responses and their reasoning is at a superficial level. They do not always complete their work.
107. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the five to nine age range. A very good lesson was seen during the inspection in the Year 1 and 2 class. The quality of teaching and learning now is much the same as at the last inspection. In the very good lesson seen, pupils responded with enthusiasm when the teacher told them that they were to have a science lesson. The homework from the previous week was built on as new work on habitats was introduced. Independence was promoted and safety emphasised as pupils investigated minibeasts in the school pond and environmental area. Throughout this lesson, the teacher was very clear about what the pupils were to learn. Expectations of the standards all pupils were capable of attaining were high. Pupils were highly motivated by the practical task. The very good environmental resource contributed very effectively to pupils' learning. Pupils used observation skills and made use of the well-prepared resources such as nets and magnifying glasses to develop their knowledge and understanding. They made good gains in their scientific vocabulary, because this was emphasised by the teacher. Effective questioning challenged pupils' thinking. The weakness in this lesson was that all pupils completed the same work. Higher attaining pupils were capable of more demanding work in this otherwise very good lesson.
108. Teachers build steadily on pupils' knowledge with an increasing element of investigation, which is an improvement since the last inspection. This is not, however, matched by the quality of some worksheets, which do not expect enough from pupils. Consequently, pupils do not learn to set out experiments in detail because the work sheets require only one word answers. There is still too great an emphasis on worksheets and these limit the use of pupils' literacy skills. Many worksheets are unmarked and this is unsatisfactory. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and give good attention to the acquisition of scientific vocabulary. This enables pupils to use terms such as 'investigation', 'prediction' and 'habitat' with confidence and

understanding. Not enough use is made of computers for research, or to present or interpret information.

109. The headteacher manages the subject, but does not observe science teaching, although she sees half-termly planning. There is too little assessment of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Little use is made of assessment to guide pupils' next steps in learning. Teachers rely too much on informal opportunities and this results in the procedures for assessment being unsatisfactory. The headteacher is aware of the need for more formal assessment procedures to be established in order to have a clearer understanding of what pupils know, understand and can do. The present lack of assessment is a factor preventing pupils from achieving more highly. Recent national guidelines have been adopted as the scheme of work. The headteacher is aware of the need to adapt them to match the needs of the school. Weaknesses in planning mean that higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged. This is because planning does not provide for the range of different abilities in the two year group classes.

ART AND DESIGN

110. Only one art and design lesson was seen during the inspection, in Years 3 and 4. Evidence was also gained from scrutinising work on display and in pupils' folders and sketchbooks. Teachers' planning was examined and discussions took place with teachers and pupils. The standard of pupils' art and design work at the ages of seven and nine is as expected nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move up through the school. At the last inspection no judgement was made on standards in art and design, or on the quality of teaching and learning, so it is not possible to make comparisons.
111. By the age of seven, pupils' achieve a satisfactory standard in their paintings of sunflowers. Higher attaining pupils demonstrate a good awareness of pattern in their repeating patterns of flowers in rows. Pupils have made arrangements of natural objects, including dried flowers, leaves, fir cones and feathers. They have looked critically at their arrangements, adjusting them to make improvements in their appearance. In their drawings of their arrangements in pencil and pencil crayon, higher attaining pupils are starting to record the textures they observe, for example in the grasses. Others are beginning to use colour to record what they see with some imagination. Pupils have competently made textile collages of flowers. Some attractive effects are achieved with different colours and textures of fabrics stitched to a background. There is some good combination of plain and patterned fabrics.
112. By the age of nine, pupils successfully participate in an ambitious sculpture project. Having studied the school environment and looked at examples of environmental sculptures, pupils work in groups to create their own sculptures. As preparation, they take photographs of possible locations for their sculptures, make sketches and list the materials needed. Groups of pupils use different materials and confidently work, for example, in recycled or natural materials. In their other art and design work, pupils in Year 4 demonstrate a satisfactory awareness of pattern, using either two contrasting colours or two shades of the same colour. They successfully observe and draw objects such as musical instruments and lamps. They have the expected competence for their age in using shading techniques.
113. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the five to nine age range. In the lesson seen in Years 3 and 4, teaching and learning were good. The pupils achieved well in this lesson because the sculpture project was well organised. The teacher not only had high expectations of the standards all pupils were capable of attaining but also treated them as mature and independent learners. As a result, pupils showed good levels of concentration and involvement. They worked at a good pace and shared ideas well so that the sculptures were achieved through a good team effort. Other adults present, parents and a learning support assistant, were all effectively deployed to support pupils in the development of their skills.
114. The evidence of pupils' work and teachers' planning shows that pupils are provided with a satisfactory range of activities in art and design as they move up through the school. These broaden pupils' experiences in using a range of materials, such as paint, pencil and fabric. They also adequately promote the development of basic skills in areas such as painting and drawing.

In Years 3 and 4, sketchbooks are used satisfactorily for exploration and preparatory work. There is insufficient use of computers to support pupils' learning in art and design.

115. The headteacher is the co-ordinator for art and design and she provides satisfactory leadership for this area of the school's work. The school uses national guidance as its scheme of work, but this has not yet been reviewed to ensure that it fully meets the needs of the school. There are no assessment procedures for art and design to ensure that what pupils know, understand and can do is recorded and passed on to the next teacher. As a result, activities are not adapted to meet the range of pupils' needs in the mixed age and ability classes. Work in art and design, such as the sculpture project in Years 3 and 4, makes a very good contribution to pupils' social development through group problem solving. Many art and design activities support pupils' spiritual development as they observe natural objects and the environment. Group projects also provide good opportunities for pupils to use and develop their speaking and listening skills. It was noted at the previous inspection that there was little emphasis on the art and design of other cultures. This aspect of the curriculum remains under-developed. The last inspection also found that there was a lack of clarity about what constituted art and design activities and what should more rightly be seen as design and technology. There is no longer any evidence of this blurring of subjects in the activities provided.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

116. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. Other evidence was gained from scrutinising pupils' work, discussions with teachers and pupils and examining teachers' planning. The standard of pupils' work in design and technology is as expected nationally at the ages of seven and nine. All pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school, including those with special educational needs. Standards and progress are not as good, however, as at the last inspection for pupils aged five to seven. This is largely due to the lack of planning for the range of ability in the mixed year group classes and the absence of appropriate assessment procedures.
117. By the age of seven, pupils know how to create movement, using a simple sliding mechanism. They use appropriate language, such as 'pivot', 'lever' and 'balance'. They label diagrams with accuracy to show these features, in many cases using arrows to denote the movement. Pupils use tools competently and assemble, join and combine materials in different ways. This is seen, for example, in cutting and sticking, or the use of split pins to create a moving toy. Higher attaining pupils record design details well through labelled sketches and plan for the materials and tools required. Pupils show increasing skill in the use of a range of equipment such as drills, saws and scissors to cut and shape their materials. Through their work on food technology, pupils know that the tastes of foods can be altered by treatment such as dressings and that they can be prepared in different ways. There is little evidence, however, of pupils recording evaluations of their work or suggesting ways of improvement.
118. By the age of nine, pupils select tools and equipment appropriately. This is seen, for example, when they make money containers, having first investigated a range of bags and containers. They consider materials to see which is most suitable for their purpose, plan their work creating a paper pattern and join the material by sewing, using back stitch and running stitch. They devise an appropriate method to fasten their bag. Most pupils measure, mark out, cut and shape their materials and assemble components and materials accurately. Written evidence of evaluation, or revising of work and deciding whether their product satisfied the original task instructions, is limited. Pupils can, however, explain how they might improve their work.
119. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the five to nine age range. This is not as good as at the last inspection, however, when teaching and learning were judged to be good. The tasks provided are interesting and they motivate pupils well. Appropriate resources are well prepared and contribute effectively to pupils' learning. In a Year 1 and 2 lesson observed, a well-planned range of activities developed pupils' awareness of fruit and vegetables and the different ways in which they could be prepared and processed. Pupils learned, for instance, that apples could be cooked or dried as well as eaten fresh. Overlong introduction and explanations by the teacher caused some restlessness, but once they began the activities pupils were well involved. Appropriate questions from the teacher kept pupils

focused on the tasks and thinking carefully. Most pupils applied themselves well to the tasks set. Good links are made with science and geography as pupils in Years 1 and 2 explore inside a range of fruit and vegetables, tasting, touching and smelling.

120. The headteacher is managing the subject in the absence of a co-ordinator due to staffing changes. She is aware that links with information and communication technology are under-developed. There is no formal monitoring of teaching and learning through lesson observation, although the headteacher sees planning to check on subject coverage. The recent national guidance for design and technology has been implemented, but has not yet been adapted to meet the specific needs of the school. Assessment, and its use to support planning, is a weakness that impedes further progress. There are no formal assessment procedures for design and technology to ensure that work is matched to the range of pupils' needs in the mixed age and ability classes. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

GEOGRAPHY

121. The teaching of geography was not observed during the inspection as class timetables alternate geography and history. At the time of the inspection, classes were studying history rather than geography. Evidence was gained from a scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with teachers and pupils, and from examining teachers' planning. Standards of pupils' work in geography are as expected nationally at the age of seven and they are above this level at the age of nine. This is an improvement at the age of nine since the last inspection.
122. By the age of seven, pupils identify similarities and differences in localities. This is seen, for example, in their work on Mexico and the town of Toucara. Pupils have a reasonable understanding of how to use maps and globes to illustrate location. Most have a good sense of their own locality and can identify specific features. Through work on the local area, they have a satisfactory understanding of how to care for the environment. By the age of nine, pupils consider the environment in more detail and have a good understanding about how to recycle materials and the benefits this brings. They very competently use symbols in map work and also illustrate different types of weather conditions correctly. Their understanding of how locations vary in their physical and human features is good for their age.
123. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory for pupils aged five to seven and it is good for those aged seven to nine. Teachers have a good understanding of the topics covered and effectively share their expertise with pupils. The tasks set are appropriate to the pupils' age and abilities, including those identified as having special educational needs. Since the last inspection, teachers have developed the subject to give a more 'hands on' approach. The village environment is used well as a resource. What distinguishes the good teaching in Years 3 and 4 is that expectations of pupils' level of understanding are higher. There are also more opportunities for pupils to find information for themselves. Displays are used well in Years 3 and 4 to reinforce understanding, such as a display of sculptures made from natural materials from Africa, India, Lebanon and Bangladesh. There is little use of computers, however, to develop pupils' understanding such as through research with CD Roms. The school does not have a programmable floor robot, the use of which would be beneficial in directional work. Marking is a weakness and is often limited to only ticks.
124. The co-ordinator for geography is enthusiastic and has secure subject knowledge. She oversees the school's work in this area satisfactorily, mainly through discussion with colleagues. There is no checking of the quality of teaching and the curriculum and how they contribute to pupils' learning. This is a weakness that prevents the school from evaluating the quality of its provision and seeking to improve it further. There are no formal systems for recording information on pupils' attainment and progress on which to base planning. The school makes very good use of the local environment, both in the immediate school vicinity and other areas of the village, for example, residents' gardens. The provision for geography has been improved since the last inspection.

HISTORY

125. Only one history lesson was seen during the inspection, in Years 3 and 4. Evidence was also gained from an analysis of pupils' work, discussions with teachers and pupils and from scrutinising teachers' planning. The standard of pupils' work in history is as expected nationally at the age of seven. It is above this level at the age of nine, which is an improvement since the last inspection.
126. By the age of seven, pupils have a secure awareness of how people lived in times past such as during the Victorian era. They know how Victorian children were taught and how they behaved in school. As the school is set in a Victorian building they have a good understanding of how some things are the same and other aspects have been adapted or changed. They use artefacts and look at photographs and pictures to find out about this period. Pupils have the awareness expected of this age group of famous people from the past, such as Florence Nightingale and Dick Turpin. They also have the expected knowledge for their age of events such as the Great Fire of London. Through working alongside an archaeologist and analysing different techniques, pupils know for instance how to identify a Christian or a pagan grave, by using a compass to discover the way it is positioned.
127. By the age of nine, pupils have a good understanding for their age of past times. They recognise that there are a variety of sources of historical information. In studying the Second World War, for example, many pupils used their own family members as sources of information. They noted down the findings of this research accurately and shared the information with their classmates. They know about ration books, identity cards, gas masks and evacuees. Pupils have a very clear insight into how people must have felt in these circumstances. Through their work on Invaders and Settlers, pupils have researched information about artefacts.
128. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall, for pupils aged five to seven and good for those aged seven to nine. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and organise lessons well. They manage pupils sensitively and effectively. Teachers provide many interesting and imaginative tasks. These activities are supported well by a wide range of resources, artefacts and first hand experiences. This is a particularly strong feature of the work in Years 3 and 4 and is what differentiates the teaching in this part of the school and makes it good. During the inspection, the pupils in these year groups researching the Second World War talked to local people who had lived through it. There were plans for a follow up lesson to be taught in a nearby air raid shelter. The provision of these first hand experiences helps pupils to develop an in-depth understanding of the topics being studied. Marking is not good enough. It is often limited to only ticks and does not tell pupils what they are doing well or how they might improve their work.
129. A weakness in the teaching is that all pupils are given the same work. While in practice pupils achieve well between the ages of seven to nine and satisfactorily between five and seven, there are missed opportunities to challenge the most able pupils to even deeper levels of thinking. Pupils with special educational needs benefit well from the practical tasks they are given. This approach is a strength in the way the subject is taught in the school. Computers are not used sufficiently to support learning in history. When the pupils write factual accounts and research information it has a beneficial effect on their skills in literacy. There is, however, too much recording of the pupils' findings on photocopied worksheets. When pupils have opportunities to record their findings in their own words, there is very good use of their skills in writing. Work on sorting dates by chronological order supports their learning in numeracy.
130. The co-ordinator for history has a keen interest and enthusiasm for the subject and transmits this to the pupils. The management of history is satisfactory, although there is little checking of the teaching of history and how well the pupils are learning. The school recognises the need to improve this if it is to ensure the effectiveness of its provision and bring about further improvements. There are no whole school systems in place to record pupils' attainment and progress. Consequently, information from assessment is not used to support planning. The provision for history has been improved since the last inspection, particularly in the provision of practical and investigative activities.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

131. No direct teaching of information and communication technology was seen during the inspection. Evidence was gained from a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils. The standard of pupils' work in information and communication technology at the ages of seven and nine is as expected nationally. Standards at the age of nine have been maintained since the last inspection. They are lower now at the age of seven. One reason why standards are not as high now at the age of seven is that there is no planning for the subject. This is a priority in the school development plan and it is currently being developed. The absence of appropriate planning means that there is not sufficient depth of coverage of the programmes of study of the National Curriculum for pupils aged five to seven. The school has not maintained the good use of computers to support pupils' learning in other subjects. Even with these weaknesses, pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress and National Curriculum requirements are met.
132. By the age of seven, most pupils are confident users of the computer. They have the expected skills to control the mouse, move the cursor, and use the drag and drop features of a program. They have used simple word processing, although not as widely as is usually found at this age. Pupils know how to create pictures, using a paint program. They have interesting ideas and show control when mixing colours and making repeating patterns. Although pupils do not have the expected skills in using a programmable floor robot to follow a predetermined sequence of instructions, they have satisfactorily carried out a similar activity using a 'screen turtle'.
133. By the age of nine, most pupils have satisfactory skills in entering and editing text on the computer. They competently create databases, for example on minibeasts. Pupils know how to adapt and save their work. Pupils use e-mail competently to communicate with their friends and satisfactorily use CD Roms for research. There are plans to develop pupils' use of e-mail through setting up an e-mail link with Cople Elementary School in America.
134. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the five to nine age range. Most teachers have satisfactory knowledge of the programs used and all have undertaken recent training in the subject. They provide suitable activities to develop pupils' basic skills in using computers and to give them confidence. Pupils respond well to these opportunities and enjoy using computers. The lack of use of information and communication technology in other subjects means that there are missed opportunities for research, using CD Roms, and for the further development of pupils' computer skills.
135. The headteacher is taking care of the school's work in this area, as there is no co-ordinator due to staff changes. While the overall management of the subject is satisfactory, greater direction is needed to ensure the wider use of information and communication technology as a tool for learning in other subjects. Teachers' confidence and competence has been improved as a result of training received. The school is implementing national guidance, but the headteacher is aware that much needs to be done to provide appropriate planning that meets the needs of all pupils. There are no procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress. The lack of assessment information limits the extent to which individual pupils' needs are met. The number and quality of computers in the school is satisfactory for the delivery of the curriculum.

MUSIC

136. As at the last inspection, it was not possible to see any music lessons as none took place during the inspection period. Consequently, it is not possible to make firm overall judgements on the standards pupils achieve or on the quality of teaching and learning. Nor can comparisons be made with provision at the last inspection. Some evidence was gained from observing the beginners' recorder club, listening to singing in assembly, scrutinising videos of musical presentations by pupils and discussion with the co-ordinator.
137. Most pupils aged seven attend the beginners' recorder club. These pupils achieve a good standard for their age. They read music notation and are aware of beats and the 'values' of different notes. They interpret simple notation to clap a simple rhythm accurately. In

assemblies, Year 1 and 4 pupils sing tunefully together. This was seen when they sang 'Lord of the Dance' without having practised it recently.

138. The quality of teaching and learning in the beginners' recorder club is good. The teacher demonstrated good knowledge and understanding and used the correct musical vocabulary, such as 'tonguing'. As a result of this, pupils made good gains in their learning and achieved well. Learning was also supported by the very pleasant relationship between the teacher and pupils. Pupils responded well to her good humour and this helped them to develop skills with confidence. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour were very good during the session.
139. The music co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has been successful in making music an integral part of the life of the school. She teaches all classes for music, so that all benefit from her expertise. She runs a very good range of extra-curricular music activities. These include five recorder groups, a choir and a percussion group. Pupils have many opportunities to perform, such as in assemblies and school services in the parish church. Pupils in the choir sang at the village fete during the weekend prior to the inspection.
140. Discussions with the co-ordinator indicate that the school provides a broad and balanced music curriculum in timetabled lessons. As the co-ordinator has sole responsibility for music lessons she is able to ensure that work in one year group builds satisfactorily on that covered in the previous year. Lessons are based on national guidance, but it is unsatisfactory that there is no written curriculum for music in the school. There are no procedures for assessing and recording what pupils, know, understand and can do. This means that the school cannot be fully effective in ensuring that the learning opportunities provided meet all pupils' needs in the mixed age and ability classes.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

141. As at the last inspection, no physical education lessons were seen as none took place during the inspection period. Consequently, it is not possible to make firm overall judgements on the standards pupils achieve or on the quality of teaching and learning. Nor can comparisons be made with provision at the last inspection. Some evidence was gained from observing organised playground games for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and country dancing club for Year 3 and 4 pupils. Most pupils in Years 3 and 4 attend this club.
142. During playground games, pupils in Years 1 and 2 show good co-ordination when running. They work well in small team activities with soft balls. The successfully roll them along the ground to a partner. They hit the ball with their hands, aiming well to get the ball to pass through another pupil's legs. In country dancing, Year 3 and 4 pupils show co-ordination and timing. The have the expected control of their movements and understand terms such as 'promenade position'.
143. In the activities seen, the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. Staff running the playground games for Year 1 and 2 pupils organised the activities satisfactorily, gave clear instructions and ensured pupils' safety. They communicated a sense of enjoyment to which the pupils responded very well. Pupils showed very good attitudes, behaved very well and tried hard to do their best. In the country dancing session for Year 3 and 4 pupils, the teacher demonstrated secure subject knowledge, structured the activities well and gave clear instructions. This allowed the time to be used well for pupils to practise and develop their skills. As in the Year 1 and 2 activities, pupils worked well together and aimed to achieve their best. Boys and girls worked very well together.
144. Owing to staff changes, there is presently no co-ordinator for physical education. The headteacher and senior teacher are overseeing the subject together. The school is using national guidance and commercially produced schemes of work for areas such as gymnastics. These have not, however, been adapted to meet the needs of the school. There are no assessment procedures for recording what pupils know, understand and can do. Consequently, the school cannot ensure that the needs of all pupils are met in the mixed age and ability classes. There is no checking of teaching or the curriculum and their contribution to pupils' learning. The lack of assessment procedures and checking of the quality of provision prevent the school from improving what it offers its pupils. As at the last inspection, the school compensates for its lack of suitable accommodation for physical education by using the village

hall and playing field. The school no longer has its own swimming pool, but arrangements are made to provide swimming lessons at a public pool.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

145. No religious education lessons were seen during the inspection. Evidence was gained from a scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with teachers and pupils and from an analysis of teachers' planning. The standard of pupils' work at the ages of seven and nine is in line with the expectations set by the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils, including those identified as having special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move up through the school. Standards have been maintained in religious education since the last inspection.
146. By the age of seven, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the life and times in which Jesus lived. They have secure knowledge about Christian ceremonies, such as baptisms, and understand the meaning behind festivals such as Easter and Christmas. They are beginning to learn about other major faiths. They are aware, for example, of the holy books used, such as the Qur'an and Torah. They have the expected understanding for their age of the Jewish, Sikh and Islamic faiths.
147. By the age of nine, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of different aspects of major religions. Through visits to the local church they are aware of the different features within the building, such as the font, altar and other objects of interest. They are starting to be aware of what it means for an individual to practise a particular faith. They know something, for example, of the Jewish family life. They have extended their understanding of the life and times of Jesus.
148. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, as it was at the last inspection. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and ensure that the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are covered. Activities provided are appropriate for the age of the pupils. Tasks ensure that pupils make satisfactory gains in developing understanding of the world faiths studied. The school has regular visits from a Bible storytelling group, who clearly illustrate the major events within the Christian faith, using a range of resources. The good telling of the stories by this group help pupils throughout the school to understand quite difficult topics, such as the Crucifixion.
149. Religious education is satisfactorily led by the headteacher as co-ordinator. While medium-term plans are reviewed, short term planning is not checked and lessons are not formally evaluated. This prevents the school from reviewing its provision and taking action to develop it. There is little use of computers to support pupils' learning in religious education. While the school takes advantage of the local church for visits, there are few visits to places of worship of faiths other than Christianity. The school is aware of the need to develop visits to other places of worship to broaden pupils' experience. Religious education is used well to link and support social, moral and spiritual development.