

INSPECTION REPORT

PILSLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Station Road, Pilsley,
Chesterfield, NE Derbyshire, S45 8EU

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112605

Headteacher: Mr Peter M Hughes

Reporting inspector: Mr John Rutherford
[RgI's number 20408]

Dates of inspection: 26-29 June 2000

Inspection number:193908

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Station Road
Pilsley
Chesterfield
NE Derbyshire

Postcode: S45 8EU

Telephone number: 01773 - 872378

Fax number: 01773 - 875792

Appropriate authority: Derbyshire

Name of chair of governors: Mr Andrew Cooper

Date of previous inspection: 10 June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
John Rutherford	Registered inspector	History, Geography, Physical Education	How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed?
Mickie Jacobs	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Bob McGeachie	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information and Communication Technology, Religious Education	How well are pupils taught?
Marie Lowe	Team inspector	English, Art, Design and Technology, Special Educational Needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Sue Hoban	Team inspector	Under 5's, Science, Music	

The inspection contractor was:

Sheffield Education Department
Advisory and Inspection Service
Leopold Street
SHEFFIELD
S1 1RJ

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school has 171 full time pupils aged five to eleven years and 46 part time pupils aged three to four years who attend a 26 place nursery class. Most pupils come from Pilsley, a former mining village with a declining population. Fifty five of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and fifty two are on the school's register of special educational needs of whom ten have statements. These figures are high compared with national averages. There are very few pupils from other ethnic backgrounds. Baseline assessments show that pupils' attainment on entry to the reception class is broadly in line with national averages.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Pilsley is an effective school that makes good provision for its pupils. It is also an improving school. Pupils' standards over the last few years have risen quickly and are now in line with or better than those found in similar schools. This is because the quality of teaching is good and the children have very positive attitudes towards learning. The headteacher, staff and governors work well together to improve the school and maintain high standards. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Enables a higher proportion of children to gain the higher levels in the end of year assessments at both Key Stages as compared with similar schools
- Provides high quality teaching, with staff working hard to maintain high standards
- Gives good encouragement to pupils' and as a result they are keen to learn and put in a lot of effort. This makes a good contribution to the progress they make.
- Have clear expectations and procedures about behaviour. Consequently pupils' behaviour is good and they get on well with each other
- Within the very good leadership of the school by the headteacher, staff and governors, there are high expectations and a clear focus on ensuring high quality in teaching and learning.
- Makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Makes very good provision for pupils' moral development. All the adults provide very positive role models.
- Has very good links with the local community. Parents are very supportive of the school.

What could be improved

- The greater use of assessment information to inform planning in the Nursery
- The use of marking to inform children of what they need to do to improve
- The identification of strengths and weaknesses in pupils' understanding in English, mathematics and science through a detailed analysis of the end of year assessments
- The clarity of the success criteria in the short term action plans within the School Development Plan.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When it was last inspected in June 1996, Pilsley Primary School was found to be a caring orderly school that provided sound value for money. Since then the school has improved in a number of ways. The results achieved by pupils in the national tests at the age of seven and eleven have risen and in particular the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels. The school is now obtaining more children achieving these higher levels than in similar schools in reading, writing, and science at Key Stage 1 and in English and science at Key Stage 2. In mathematics the school obtains much the same proportions of children at the higher level, as do similar schools. Teaching has improved and the school has given an increased emphasis to literacy and numeracy skills. The action points from the last inspection have been effectively addressed. The improvements in pupils' behaviour and attitudes, noted in the last inspection, have continued and these are now a strong feature of the school significantly contributing to the progress children make. The programme for Design and Technology has been implemented and now meets statutory requirements. The school has reviewed its topic approach to the curriculum and now provides a good broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 which meets the needs of pupils well. The role of staff with management responsibilities has been clarified and there are now suitable arrangements in place for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. The school development plan is more clearly linked with the budget and effectively supports planned developments. Further work is required in clarifying the criteria against which the success of developments in improving teaching and learning will be judged. The school has taken decisive action to improve the security and use of the accommodation.

STANDARDS

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

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

When children enter the Nursery their attainment is within the normal range but a number have speech patterns that are less well developed. By the time children enter the Reception class baseline assessment indicates that children reach levels typical of the age group in mathematics and personal and social development. They are slightly above in reading and some have weaknesses in speaking and listening.

The standards in reading and mathematics achieved by pupils aged seven are average compared with all schools nationally. They are above average in writing. These results are better than those achieved by pupils in similar schools.

The standards achieved by eleven-year olds have steadily improved over the last three years. Compared with all schools nationally they are now above average in English and

science and average in mathematics. These results are better than those achieved by pupils in similar schools.

A notable feature of pupil attainment is the proportion of pupils who gain the higher levels. At Key Stage 1 it is well above similar schools in writing and science, above in reading and in line in mathematics. At Key Stage 2 the proportion of pupils who gain the higher levels is well above that found in similar schools in English and science and much the same in mathematics.

The targets the school has set for 2000 are lower than the attainment levels in 1999. This is because of the particular characteristics of the group that includes a large number of children with special educational needs. The findings of the inspection suggest that the school has set realistic but appropriately ambitious targets for 2000.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and they are very interested in their lessons
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good and this contributes to an orderly school in which all pupils can settle down to do their best
Personal development and relationships	Pupils relate well to staff. They respect each other and understand how the choices they make about behaviour affect other people
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory and improving each year

Pupils are courteous to each other and to adults. They make visitors feel welcome. Their positive attitudes and behaviour allow everyone to learn and almost no time is wasted in lessons. This makes a very strong contribution to the rate of pupils' progress

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Inspectors evaluated 52 lessons or parts of lessons. The quality of teaching ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory. In eight percent of lessons the quality of teaching was excellent. It was very good in fifteen percent and good in twenty nine percent. In forty six percent of lessons it was satisfactory. In only 2 percent of lessons was teaching unsatisfactory and no poor teaching was observed during the inspection. The quality of teaching is a strength of the school.

Particular strengths in teaching are the way lesson objectives are clearly defined in planning and then communicated to children at the start of the lesson thereby enabling them to know what they were expected to learn. Another major strength is the way in which children are encouraged to express their views and opinions using correct subject terminology. The evaluations which teachers carry out of their own lessons are perceptive and form a good basis for the planning of future work. Well structured lessons and a brisk pace results in few opportunities being missed to help develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding and as a result children generally make satisfactory and often good progress. Where teaching is less strong insufficient account is taken of the developmental needs of children in the planning of work. The close working relationship between teachers and support staff ensures that the activities for pupils with special educational needs are well matched to individual requirements and as a result pupils with special needs make good progress.

The quality of teaching in the literacy hour and other English lessons is good at both Key Stages and, as a result pupils make at least satisfactory and often good progress. In the best lessons there is lively interactive teaching with the teachers' time well spent in direct teaching both in the whole class session and during group work. In mathematics the quality of teaching is satisfactory or better with more than half that seen being very good or excellent and as a result pupils usually make good progress in their lessons.

Throughout the school pupils' attitudes to their lessons are very good, they particularly enjoy lessons where there is challenge and the opportunity to initiate and investigate.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school offers a very good range of learning opportunities for the pupils both within lessons and as part of extra curricular activities
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is a strength, particularly in Key Stages 1 and 2. This enables pupils to make good progress in the same curriculum as all the pupils in the school
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' moral education is very good. A strong behaviour policy is applied consistently and fairly from nursery through to Y6. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A safe, secure environment is provided in which pupils can work and play, confident that they are valued as individuals.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils and statutory requirements are met. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been effectively implemented. Equality of opportunity is well promoted. A very good range of extra curricular activities is offered to pupils. A notable feature of the school is the very good links it has developed with the local community. Parents find the staff approachable and hold the school in high regard. The school provides a good range of information for parents, including newsletters, booklets and meetings. A number of parents provide valuable practical help in the classrooms and in fundraising.

Pastoral care is good and all staff know the pupils well. Parents believe that the school helps their children to develop mature and responsible attitudes. The school monitors pupils' academic progress satisfactorily. Whilst the marking of pupils' work acknowledges

what is correct and praises effort, it does not sufficiently inform children of how they can improve.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school is very good. There are high expectations for staff and pupils and a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. There is a very good partnership between the headteacher and the deputy
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are developing a clear awareness of the work of the school and make a strong contribution to determining priorities for development and how resources will be allocated to them. They have worked hard to improve the learning environment for pupils and to encourage parents to be involved in the life of the school
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has good systematic procedures for observing teaching and analysing pupils' results in order to compare its performance with that of other schools, and set targets
The strategic use of resources	School development planning effectively sets out priorities for improving the education of the pupils, and shows how the school budget and other grants are allocated to finance them

The particular strength of the headteacher's leadership and management is his success in promoting a clear focus on the quality of teaching and standards of learning. This is evident in the very good links with parents, high expectations for pupils and strong professional support for staff. The headteacher is given very effective support from the deputy headteacher, governors and indeed all staff.

The governors carry out an effective role in the strategic management of the school. The school development plan sets out a clear three-year strategy of introducing and evaluating improvements. There are only two shortcomings in the strategic management of the school. The first is the absence of a detailed analysis of pupils' performance in each end of year assessment in order to identify strengths and weaknesses within subjects, and in the use of this information to help steer curricular developments. The second is a lack of sufficient clarity in the short-term action plans detailing how success is to be measured in terms of improvements in pupils' learning.

There are sufficient teachers and support staff who are appropriately trained and experienced to meet the needs of the curriculum. The accommodation is adequate and every inch of space is used to maximum possible effect. The whole school has been decorated and high quality displays celebrate pupils' achievements and effort. All subjects have sufficient resources, with the exception of music, which does not have enough compact discs and tapes to support teaching.

Financial planning is good and the principles of best value are being satisfactorily applied.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The progress their children make • The children's good behaviour in school • The good teaching • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with suggestions or complaints • The school expects the children to work hard • The positive way in which the school works with parents • The good leadership and management of the school • The way in which their children are encouraged to develop mature and positive attitudes • The children like going to school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like to see a more interesting range of activities outside lessons • Some parents would like more information about their children's progress • Some parents are not sure that their child gets the right work.

The inspectors agree with the parents' positive views of the school. The inspection team concludes that children do benefit from an interesting range of activities both in lessons and after school. During the inspection sessions of the tennis and French club were observed. Netball and football teams play in the local league and rugby, cricket, tennis, athletics and swimming tournaments are entered. Pupils can join a choir, a recorder group, a dance and drama and a games club. Residential visits for all junior classes are also organised. Parents are provided with a good range of information, and teachers are approachable and willing to provide information for parents on occasions other than the formal meetings arranged by school. Children are given appropriate work most of the time but there are a few occasions when children could be better challenged by the tasks they are set.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 When pupils enter the Nursery, their attainment is within the normal range of that found amongst children of a similar age. A number of children have poor speech development. Baseline assessments carried out when pupils begin in the Reception class show that their attainment does not differ significantly from national averages in mathematics and personal and social development. It is slightly above in reading and below in speaking and listening.

2 The results of the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 assessments for pupils aged seven show that, compared with all schools nationally, attainment is average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. When results are compared only with those of schools whose pupils are from a similar background, reading is above average and writing and mathematics are well above. A particular feature of the school's performance is the proportion of pupils who attain higher than expected levels in some subjects. It is well above similar schools in writing and science, above in reading and in line in mathematics.

3 The results of the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 assessments for pupils aged 11 show that, in comparison with all schools nationally, attainment is above average in English and science and average in mathematics. When compared only with those schools whose pupils come from a similar background, English and science are well above average and mathematics is above. As with Key Stage 1, a notable feature of Key Stage 2 performance is the proportion of pupils who attain higher than expected levels in some subjects. In English and science it is well above that found in similar schools, while in mathematics it is in line.

4 Attainment in both Key Stages represents good improvement since the first inspection, especially in the number of pupils reaching higher levels in the assessments. Although there have been some fluctuations, the overall trend has been one of steady improvement from year to year. There has been a particularly noticeable pattern of improvement in the performance of boys at the end of Key Stage 2 and it now exceeds boys' performance nationally in English, mathematics and science. The 1999 national assessment results exceeded the statutory targets set by the school. These may not have been sufficiently challenging. The targets for 2000 are based on a careful analysis of performance data and there are clear procedures for ensuring that they provide the school with a level of challenge. They are set at a lower level than attainment in 1999, because of the characteristics of the particular group of pupils, including a large number with special educational needs. The inspection findings are more in line with the targets set for 2000, than the levels of attainment in the 1999 national assessments.

5 Standards in speaking and listening meet national expectations at the end of both Key Stages. Children are confident in offering suggestions and expressing opinions as for example in a Year 1 class where different ideas about keeping promises were given. In a Year 5 class pupils' created and presented a short play based on their understanding of issues within a village locality in India. Pupils' listen well as exemplified in an RE lesson where Year 6 pupils listened to a speaker from the Islamic community and then asked relevant questions.

6 In reading pupils' attainment in both Key Stages is in line with national expectations. In Key Stage 1 average and more able pupils read with expression and their reading is fluent and well phrased. Where they meet an unfamiliar word they can make sensible predictions. Although less able pupils have fewer strategies with which to decipher text, and vary in the confidence with which they discuss stories, they can read simple texts with understanding. In Key Stage 2 pupils know the features of explanatory text and can identify examples of persuasive writing. Average and more able attainers read with confidence and fluency and are able to locate information using the index and contents pages. Less able pupils also have a confident approach to reading and are acquiring a range of skills to help them decode and understand the text.

7 Standards in writing are in line with national expectations at both Key Stages. In Years 1 and 2 standards in handwriting are very good and are good in spelling. By the end of the Key Stage average and high attaining pupils use narrative form and write at length. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils are able to write for different purposes, use punctuation accurately and arrange their ideas appropriately.

8 In mathematics attainment at the end of both Key Stages is broadly in line with the national expectations. Pupils' mental facility with numbers is at least satisfactory and often it is good. Most children are able to add and subtract accurately a list of numbers without recourse to paper and pencil. Many can explain the method they have used to arrive at the answer. In the other mathematical areas pupils' knowledge and understanding is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. For example by the time pupils are in Year 6 they know about percentages, decimal and vulgar fractions, the properties of right angle, isosceles and acute triangles and how to calculate the angles in each.

9 By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have good scientific knowledge and skills. They are aware of the life cycles of plants and some animals, they look for similarities and differences and are beginning to be aware of the characteristics of a fair test. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have built on their skills of hypothesising, predicting and observation and are able to devise a fair test.

10 Standards in art are satisfactory but further work is needed in order to help pupils evaluate and improve on their work. Design and technology is well taught and as a result standards at both Key Stages meet national expectations. Although few lessons were observed in history and geography from a scrutiny of pupils' work standards in both these subjects are broadly satisfactory. They are less than satisfactory when worksheets are used that have not been adapted to suit the needs of pupils with different attainment levels. In information technology standards are close to the national expectations with the majority of pupils knowing how to load a program, use the keyboard and mouse and save and print their work. During the inspection only music lessons in Key Stage 1 were observed. Standards are good in the aspect of performing and composing but there was too little evidence to make a judgement about the aspect of listening and appraising. At the end of Key Stage 2 judgements about standards in music could not be made. The three aspects of physical education that were observed during the inspection were games, dance and athletics. In these aspects standards were satisfactory. In religious education standards of attainment at the end of both Key Stages are generally in line with the expectations within the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11 The school has maintained good progress as required in the key issues of the first inspection and this has a good impact on standards. Throughout both Key Stages and the Nursery pupils' attitudes to school, interest in learning activities and enthusiasm for school is very good. Children particularly enjoy lessons that challenge, and where there is the opportunity to initiate and investigate.

12 Overall standards of behaviour are good. Pupils respond to the behaviour policy which is applied consistently through school and understand the effects their behaviour may have on others both in the class and at play. However at times teachers in some classes demonstrate a need to maintain close control to keep pupils on task. Where this happens there is class teaching followed by activities that do not encourage pupils' independence or initiative. Where pupils' independence and initiative are good, teachers use a range of teaching strategies which include well paced group and class teaching.

13 Pupils respect each other and there is mutual respect between pupils and teachers including mid-day supervisory staff. Pupils are mostly sociable and friendly at playtimes and lunch-time, playing happily in mixed age and gender groups. Parents report that there is no evidence of bullying. Pupils confirm that bullying is rare and that instances are dealt with quickly and effectively. No instances of bullying or oppressive behaviour were observed during the period of inspection. There have been no exclusions from the school.

14 Relationships between staff and pupils are good. This creates a calm, happy atmosphere where pupils strive to meet the standards expected of them. Relationships between pupils are mostly good. They share resources when required to do so and understand the need to listen to one another's suggestions and points of view, for example, when investigating a scientific problem involving electrical circuits and in sharing ideas for the development of a graphic score for music.

15 Pupils personal development is good overall. Through assembly themes and religious education lessons pupils learn to respect the different values and beliefs from a variety of faiths and cultural backgrounds. In assemblies pupils are given the opportunities to discuss values such as promises and trust. They are given time to reflect and give their own views. Pupils are given some opportunities to show responsibility, for example, overseeing the collection of litter in the playground.

16 Attendance is satisfactory at around the national average and improving each year. Pupils come willingly and happily to school and are mostly on time. Parents understand their responsibility for informing school of reasons for absence and usually do so promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17 During the inspection teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in 98% of lessons. In 52% of lessons teaching was good or better and was very good or excellent in 23% of the lessons seen. The quality of teaching is a strength of the school.

18 The quality of teaching is generally consistent across the school with only a few minor variations being noticeable. The teaching of children in the Nursery was always satisfactory but did not contain strongly enough some of the elements which were present in Reception, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and which lifted teaching from being satisfactory to good, very good and in some cases excellent. For example, whilst in the Nursery children are well managed, with high standards of behaviour sought and obtained through good relationships, the planning of work does not take into account sufficiently the different developmental needs of children. In the curriculum planning at Key Stages 1 and 2 there is a much clearer focus on what children have achieved and what needs to happen next and consequently the activities are generally better matched to the needs of the pupils.

19 There is no noticeable difference between the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2 but particularly strong teaching was observed at the end of both the Key Stages. This pattern of consistently satisfactory or better teaching is also evident across the different subjects of the curriculum. There was no subject, where enough lessons were observed to come to a judgement, in which teaching was less than satisfactory, with particularly effective teaching being seen in literacy and numeracy.

20 There are a number of particularly strong elements within the teaching of literacy and numeracy. One such element, that is noticeable in both subjects, is the way children are sensitively encouraged to give suggestions and express opinions through structured opportunities, as for example in the mental and oral sessions found at the start of numeracy lessons. Another very effective characteristic is the quality of teachers' own evaluations of the success of their teaching. The evaluations are done regularly and contain very perceptive comments about what worked well and what might need to be changed next time, and of how well individuals or groups of children have understood the learning. It is clear that staff use such evaluations to help plan the next stages of teaching, and as a result work that is usually well-focused on raising standards is presented to children

21 Many of the elements, which are strong features in the teaching of literacy and numeracy, are also to be found in the teaching of the other subjects. One of the most consistent and effective strategies used across all the subjects was the use of learning objectives. On almost all occasions teaching plans very clearly identify what it is the children are expected to know, understand or be able to do by the end of the lesson. At the start of the lesson, time is taken to explain to the children what they are going to learn and the expected outcomes. Consequently pupils have a better understanding of the 'why' and the 'what' of the lesson, are better motivated to engage in the planned activities, and this has a beneficial affect on standards. Well structured lessons, teachers use of correct subject terminology and their encouragement of children to use it when answering questions, and the brisk pace which almost all lessons are conducted are other features which made a significant contribution to the very positive picture of teaching seen during the inspection. As a result few opportunities are missed either by teaching or support staff to help develop pupils' literacy and numeracy and the substantial majority of children make good progress in acquiring these basic skills.

22 The quality of teaching for individuals and small groups of pupils identified to work with the special educational needs support staff is very good. The close working relationship between teachers and support staff ensures that the planned activities are well tailored to meet the specific needs of the children. Of particular note is the sensitive way children with special educational needs are included within whole class session, as for

example in the introductions to literacy and numeracy hours. This inclusive approach help the children gain confidence and makes a good contribution to the progress they make.

23 The progress pupils make over time is satisfactory and often good. This is mainly because of the structured way in which teachers plan the work and generally enable pupils to build on prior skills and knowledge. An examination of pupils' work showed that teachers give pupils a wide range of opportunities to gain knowledge, understanding and skills. Within this generally positive picture of progress there are however some occasions when pupils make less progress than might be expected. In some lessons, teachers have a tendency to over-direct the activities leaving pupils with few opportunities to devise their own approaches and methods. For example in an art lesson in the Nursery children used teacher drawn templates thereby limiting opportunities to develop representation and imagination. Occasionally teachers talk for too long or ask children to spend too much time watching a demonstration, as for example in physical education, which results in children becoming restless and having insufficient time to work on the activities. The majority of the planned work is well matched to pupils' abilities but sometimes the use of commercial worksheets limits the opportunities for them to extend their learning and apply their skills.

24 The way teachers use day to day assessment is generally successful and results in tasks and activities that promote progress for the majority of children. For example the inspectors heard a sample of pupils read from across the age and ability range. This revealed that texts were successfully matched to pupils' reading ability and that they are taught appropriate skills. However in one aspect, the use of assessment techniques is less strong than it might be, and this is in the area of marking. When teachers are working with the children during lesson time they are often successful at helping pupils to understand what they have done well and how they might improve. There are also good examples of this in the marking of pupils' work but it is the exception rather than the rule. No unmarked work was seen but marking was often just a tick or a general comment such as 'well done' or 'good' with few comments to help pupils improve their work.

25 Teachers use homework to provide pupils with opportunities to practice skills, complete tasks and carry out research. This makes a satisfactory contribution to the progress pupils make.

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

26 The school provides a good broad and balanced curriculum. In the Nursery and Reception the curriculum is planned to meet all the Areas of Learning. At Key Stages 1 and 2 all subjects are taught in accordance with the National Curriculum, this includes Design and Technology where provision was not adequate in the last inspection, and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the curriculum meets the needs of pupils well, especially those who have special educational needs. It offers a very good range of learning opportunities for pupils both inside and outside the classroom.

27 The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been used effectively as vehicles for raising achievement and implementing change. This has included more focused co-ordination, improved planning and evaluation, an increase in teachers' subject knowledge and the development of more interactive teaching.

28 Teachers' medium and short term planning is very good with clear links between the two, and appropriate detail provided of objectives, activities and assessment. Weekly evaluations by the teacher and written feedback from the headteacher are effective in focusing on the quality of teaching and informing ongoing assessment and future planning.

29 A curriculum map, completed by teachers, shows curriculum coverage for each subject, with provision made for mixed aged classes through a two year cycle. However in revising the curriculum in the light of Curriculum 2000 more guidance needs to be given to teachers about time allocated to units of work within subjects.

30 The school offers a very good range of extra curricular activities. During the inspection sessions of the tennis and a French club were observed, well led by staff and well attended. Netball and football teams play in the local league and the school enters rugby, cricket, tennis, athletics and swimming tournaments. Pupils also have the opportunity to take part in a choir, a recorder group, a dance and drama and a games club. Residential visits are organised for all junior classes and educational visits enrich topic work.

31 curriculum caters well for both boys and girls. There is no significant under-achievement of boys. Teachers ensure that boys participate as well as girls in oral and written activities. Boys achieved especially well in reading in Key Stage 2 national assessment (1999) where 100% of boys achieved the expected Level 4 or above. The Nursery is involved in a cluster project to promote early writing skills amongst boys.

32 provision for children with special educational needs is a school strength, particularly in Key Stages 1 and 2. There are clear systems, for example for initial assessment, and for termly reviews of Individual Education Plans, and lines of communication and responsibilities are well defined. There is a supportive ethos amongst staff and children. The Education Care Officers (ECO's) make a very effective contribution in lessons, enhancing the progress of children with statements and facilitating learning for a number of less able children. There is effective liaison between the ECOs, the class teachers, the LEA support team and other agencies, with detailed daily records kept of the intervention and progress made. Parents are kept well informed and involved often through personal contact but also through a home-school diary. The special needs support staff receive both school based and external training. They are very committed to ensuring that the integration of the children with special educational needs is successful and that their progress is maximised.

33 ks with the local community are very good and the school actively encourages villagers to be interested and involved in its activities. The whole village supports events such as the summer and Christmas fairs very well. A recent showing of the video of the Year 4 and 5 residential visit was enjoyed by far more than just the families of the pupils involved. Senior citizens are welcomed regularly to coffee mornings, which also act as additional fund raisers. As a result, local residents are now offering their skills to support teaching, for example in Year 2 history when a visitor recalls going to the beach when she was seven, answering pupils' carefully prepared questions which they find both interesting and enjoyable. The vicar leads some assemblies and health professionals, the police and fire service make valued contributions to personal, social and health education. A nearby garden centre has helped with creating a wildlife garden and pond which enriches pupils' work in science and by providing paint for the murals which parents have painted to enliven the Nursery.

34 school works closely with its partner schools. With the other village primary school they have produced a millennium mosaic for the pleasure of the whole community. There are good working relationships with all the secondary school in the area, in particular the designated receiving school. A 'buddy' reading system exists between the two schools and secondary pupils are welcomed for their work experience. Year 6 pupils have particularly enjoyed a literacy festival at the secondary school.

35 school has maintained the good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and children under five since the last inspection. It has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress.

36 provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Pupils are helped and encouraged to develop spiritual awareness, through many subjects, particularly through religious education and assemblies. For example, time is provided for stillness and reflection as part of an assembly and was observed in themes covering truth, trust, and promises. Pupils are provided with opportunities to examine faiths and beliefs as they learn about Christianity and other world religions such as Judaism and Islam. There is a good link with the local church and the local vicar is a regular visitor to the school. Pupils are taught to appreciate the environment, for example, the wild life garden promotes appreciation of natural beauty and life.

37 provision for moral development is very good. The strong behaviour policy is applied consistently from Nursery through to Y6. There is respect for others and a positive caring relationship between pupils and pupils and adults, including lunchtime staff is evident. Teachers take time to explain to pupils the difference between right and wrong, developing pupils' capacity to make moral choices. Pupils are helped to understand fairness and justice through upholding rules in games, particularly in sporting activities such as football and tennis. Each week there is an assembly to celebrate and reward good behaviour and achievements, to which parents and governors are invited. Class certificates are awarded for merit. This successfully promotes values such as caring and the importance of trying hard.

38 provision for pupils' social development is good. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and co-operatively. Role-play situations are used effectively to promote pupils' personal and social development. All pupils are provided with a wide range of experiences and opportunities to practise and develop their social skills, for example, Bring a Parent to School Day where parents explore mathematics in workshops, and the Summer Fayre that involves parents and the community. Residential visits provide opportunities for pupils to live and work together in a different context. Pupils are encouraged to have special responsibilities and are keen to give visitors clear directions in finding the way around school.

39 provision for pupils' cultural development is good. It is promoted well through subjects and through an interesting range of educational visits. When visiting the Five Pit Trail as part of orienteering, pupils become aware of their own past culture. There are visits to the school by puppet groups, a youth theatre group and other community members.

40 ce the last inspection the school has worked hard to raise pupils' awareness of the diversity of cultures other than their own. Opportunities are used to foster children's multicultural knowledge and understanding through the curriculum. The main religious festivals of Christianity are celebrated and pupils learn about those of other cultures such as the Jewish Passover and the Five Pillars of Islam. They learn to appreciate the values and beliefs of others when studying the different faiths such as Judaism and Islam and visit the local Mosque. The school draws on the expert knowledge of an Asian parent. However further work is needed to develop a greater understanding of the work of a wider range of artists and composers.

41 curriculum includes sex education and health education within science for Nursery, Reception, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. A programme of awareness of the dangers of the misuse of drugs and smoking is delivered during the summer term as a package involving the Police and Health Services. The school is in the process of reviewing this practice with the intention of addressing the area earlier in the academic year. The good provision made within and out of all classes contributes to pupils' personal and social

development. The school prepares pupils appropriately in all aspects of their development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42 The school provides a safe secure environment in which pupils can work and play, confident that they are valued as individuals.

43 Governors and staff give health and safety a high priority. Regular health and safety checks and risk assessments are carried out and any concerns acted upon. A key issue at the last inspection was to improve security and this has been achieved effectively by ensuring all external doors are shut and cannot be accessed from outside except through the front entrance which has an automatic bell on it. Child protection procedures are very secure with all staff understanding how to react if they have cause for concern. First aid is administered with sensitivity and care and good records are kept. Parents are informed in writing if their child receives a bump to the head. The needs of pupils with specific medical and educational needs are understood and there is good liaison with outside health and educational professionals. Pupils are fully confident that there is at least one member of staff whom they feel comfortable to talk to if they have a problem or worry and that they will be listened to.

44 When children are about to start Nursery, parents receive a booklet, which explains their routines and helps prepare children. Nursery staff are sensitive to every child and several parents stay each session until their child is ready for them to leave. Other procedures for assessing Nursery pupils are however currently less well developed. The present records do not yet relate to the Early Learning Goals, or adequately record progress. Assessment information is also not sufficiently well used to inform planning and target setting. Children in the Nursery quickly get used to the idea that they will move up to Reception and the proximity of the two classes helps when it is time to prepare to move on.

45 Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress at both Key Stages meet statutory requirements and are overall satisfactory. At the end of each Key Stage pupils are assessed in English, mathematics and science against National Curriculum expectations for seven and eleven year olds. Apart from the nationally standardised tests the school uses a variety of appropriate assessment procedures at various points. This information is used well to inform teaching groups and does guide curricular planning. However the school does not analyse the national test results in a way which identifies within English mathematics and science the subject material which children did well and not so well in, and is therefore not yet in a position to use this information to help guide curricular planning.

46 Staff know pupils well and use their knowledge to help them with academic work and to sort out any problems which occur. When working in class teachers and support staff give good advice to pupils, which helps them to clarify what they know and understand and also what they need to do in order to improve. The same quality of advice is however not as consistently seen in the marking of pupils' work. Much that was seen tended to be a ticked acknowledgement of pupils' work with praise for good effort, with fewer examples of marking which included comments to help pupils' improve their work.

47 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well organised and in Key Stage 1 and 2 is very good. Needs are identified through an appropriate range of assessments and records of pupils' progress towards the targets in their individual educational plans are up to date. Pupils' progress is reviewed regularly and new targets are set. Because of the systematic approach and the good liaison between the teaching and support staff, pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory and often good progress.

48 Pupils' individual annual written reports to parents are satisfactory and meet statutory requirement. They indicate how parents might help their child in mathematics, science and English and give an overview of pupils' progress and attitudes in the remaining subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Parents can make a written comment and are given an invitation to discuss the report with their child's class teacher.

49 A key issue at the last inspection was to continue further the improvement in positive pupil attitudes and behaviour. The introduction of a positive behaviour and discipline policy, which is consistently used by all the staff including midday supervisors, makes a significant contribution to the good behaviour of the majority of pupils. There is a clear understanding by pupils, parents and staff of how the rewards and sanctions work. Children and pupils throughout the school are delighted by the recognition that their effort and hard work receive. They also know how they are expected to behave, and the consequences of choosing not to reach those standards. The dinner break is a lively but happy time, pupils are clear about what they may and may not do, and midday supervisors involve themselves very well in pupils' play. Pupils are confident that any incidents of bullying or name-calling will be sorted out fairly and firmly.

50 Attendance is improving each year. Class teachers are responsible for monitoring attendance in their classes and for following up any absence not accounted for. The education welfare officer supports the school if there are any problems relating to attendance. Good attendance is rewarded at the end of each year, but this is kept quite low key because the headteacher does not wish to put pressure on pupils who may be absent through illness.

51 Year 6 pupils feel confident about their move to secondary schools and have already had at least a preliminary visit. They are now looking forward to the 'taster' days when they will experience a whole day at their selected schools.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52 The school has developed a strong supportive partnership with parents, which continues to improve. Parents are very pleased with the school and all it gives to their children. They particularly feel confident about talking to the headteacher and teachers if they have a question or concern. They are happy with the way their children are taught and the progress they make and recognise the strong leadership that guides the school forward. Parents know who the parent governors are and ask them not only to raise issues at governors meetings, but also to pass on their thanks and appreciation.

53 Parents are kept very well informed. The prospectus gives parents the basic information they need and the governors' annual report to parents is very informative and well written. Regular newsletters are presented in a friendly, relaxed style, which makes them very readable as well as useful. Some editions include a summary of what pupils will be learning and parents find this very helpful. Notice boards outside the main door and just inside the entrance also give parents the chance to catch up on anything they might have missed. Reports to parents clearly tell them what their children know, understand and can do. There is an element of target setting in that each report includes a section on how parents might help their children at home. At Key Stage 2 pupils have an opportunity to assess their own performance. Parents find reporting evenings help them to understand how their children are doing, relative to others as well as their individual progress. 'Take your parents to school day' has been a very successful innovation. Parents have the opportunity to experience a morning in school, including joining their children for dinner and then to attend workshops and an open forum in the afternoon.

54 Many parents help actively in school and make a significant contribution to its work. Several stay each morning to help with spelling activities, which take place in the first few minutes of the day. The support of parents and grandparents in classrooms and on trips is highly valued by staff. Parents are briefed so that they know what to do. Some help regularly and others offer particular expertise. A group of parents has recently enhanced the nursery by painting murals. Year 5 and 6 were very excited about their religious education lesson with a Muslim parent who included food tasting in her presentation. Parents who help are welcomed into the staffroom. The Helpers of Pilsley School, (HOPS) is a small dedicated group of parents who put on very successful social and fund raising events and governors acknowledge the contribution they make to the school in their annual report. Many parents support the work of HOPS by helping at and attending meetings. Parents also organise special evenings for pupils, such as discos for Key Stage 2 and a games evening for Key Stage 1 that are very popular with pupils and parents. Parents are interested in all their children do, although there is some disagreement over the amount of homework they want their children to have. The evidence from the inspection suggests that the school's arrangement for homework is satisfactory. Many parents use the home/school reading record well to record their comments on how their child has read.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55 The headteacher gives very effective leadership to the school in order to secure the best possible quality of teaching and standards of learning. His high expectations for the work of staff and pupils contribute to the school's continuing improvement in performance in national tests. Staff and governors share the same commitment and work very hard to provide the best chance for the pupils to succeed. There is a clear set of aims for the academic and personal development of the pupils, which gives priority to the development of reading. These aims are reflected in the day to day life of the school.

56 In carrying out his work, the headteacher has a good partnership with the deputy. They systematically plan time together to evaluate the current work of the school and to develop programmes of improvement in response to national, local and school priorities. The roles of most other staff with management responsibilities have been much more clearly defined since the first inspection judged them to be underdeveloped. Subject co-ordinators have appropriate job descriptions and they are given regular time and a budget to maintain and develop work in their areas of responsibility. They carry out systematic audits of work across the school in order to identify priorities for improvement. Co-ordinator files show how these have been addressed, for example through additional training or the purchase of new resources.

57 The headteacher and staff are very clear about the main strengths and areas for development within the school. There is a whole-school commitment to self-evaluation, which is shown in the way that each class teacher reflects on their work and provides a detailed judgement of the effectiveness of their weekly plans. There has been considerable improvement in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning since the first inspection and there are now good arrangements in place. The headteacher provides good leadership in this by observing the quality of work in classrooms and allowing his own teaching to be observed. Co-ordinators have a rolling programme, linked to when their subject is a priority for development, for observing teaching in other classrooms. These observations often have a particular purpose, for example how lessons are introduced or ended. The school's commitment to improvement is seen in the procedures for providing constructive feedback on strengths and weaknesses. Reports often make clear what needs to be developed further as well as what is being done well. A school appraisal system is linked to the cycle of monitoring and evaluation. Classroom observations and a detailed audit of views are followed by a focused discussion in which individual and school priorities for development are agreed. Recently this has resulted in improvements to approaches to teaching reading and writing and the use of classroom resources.

58 The school also evaluates its effectiveness by collecting data on how pupils perform each year in a range of assessments. These are analysed to identify broad areas of strength and weakness, for example the need to improve reading comprehension in both key stages. To develop this work further, the school should carry out more detailed analysis of pupils' performance in each assessment in order to identify strengths and weaknesses within subjects. The data has also been used effectively to set challenging statutory targets for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 and to identify groups of pupils who need additional support.

59 The governors carry out an effective role in the strategic management of the school, which has improved since the first inspection judged it to be insufficient. Through their sub-committee structure they are informed about key areas of the management of the school and involved in their development. A governor who is responsible for reporting back to the whole governing body chairs most sub-committees. The curriculum sub-committee is chaired by the deputy head, which enables it to be more effective in keeping the governing body up to date with teaching programmes in school. Subject co-ordinators are invited to talk about new developments in their area of responsibility. It is through the curriculum sub-committee that Governors are involved in monitoring the school's performance data and setting the statutory targets for pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. They are also involved in monitoring the work of the school by taking specific areas of responsibility, for example two governors have observed and reported on the implementation of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. A public relations sub committee is raising the profile of the school in the community and attracting more parents to attend school activities. Governors are effectively involved in determining priorities for school improvement and how the school's budget will be allocated to them. A particular priority has been spending money wisely on the building in order to create the best learning environment possible for the pupils. In their work they demonstrate the principles of best value, for example when they tested the level of need before organising an after-school club and when they have used competitive tendering for large items of expenditure.

60 The school development plan sets out a clear three-year strategy for introducing and evaluating improvements. The priorities for development combine national requirements and school issues in a manageable timescale. The plan makes clear how the school budget and other grants are allocated to support these priorities. Short-term action plans provide practical detail on the tasks that need to be carried out and a reasonable timescale. However, it is not always sufficiently clear how the success of these will be measured in terms of improvement in pupils' learning. Nevertheless, there has been much improvement since the first inspection, which judged development planning to be inadequate. Alongside the school development plan there is a carefully costed staff development plan, managed by the deputy headteacher, which makes provision for staff and governors to get the necessary time and training to carry out their responsibilities effectively. All staff, including non-teaching members, are actively encouraged to attend courses to further their individual professional development.

61 Financial management is good. The school's income per pupil is lower than most schools nationally, but systematic consultation with staff and governors about priorities ensures that this is allocated to meet the most important needs. There is appropriate delegation of money to subject co-ordinators to enable them to maintain and improve work within their areas of responsibility. The school maintains a reasonable contingency fund as a cushion against the impact of possible falling pupil numbers. When there is a sufficient balance, the school is committed to spending it on agreed educational priorities, for example additional money was recently allocated to increasing speech therapy for some pupils and improving the provision for information technology. There are effective systems within the school for financial control.

62 The management of the provision for special educational needs is effective. There is an emphasis on the early identification of pupils who need additional support and this is provided from within the school's resources or through good liaison with the Local Authority's support team. For example, in the Nursery there is evidence of the school engaging the services of Speech Therapists and of taking Early Years Support advice. The arrangements for providing support assistants and preparing them for their work are very effective in helping pupils with special educational needs to be included in the life of the school and to make good progress.

63 Staffing at the school is adequate. The school is fortunate to have a team of committed teachers, most of whom are experienced and have been at the school for at least four years. Temporary teachers who are currently covering for two absent members of staff have quickly been able to fit in well and adopt the routines and ethos of the school. A newly qualified teacher is receiving good support from her mentor and other staff and she is being given plenty of opportunities to observe good practice, both within the school and at other schools. Support staff work closely with teachers. They are well briefed and make a good contribution to learning in classrooms. Midday supervisors are valued as full members of staff and receive training, which has successfully helped them to develop their relationship with pupils. The secretary is a welcoming first point of contact for parents and visitors, as well as carrying out her varied roles in a calm, efficient manner. The caretaker maintains the school and its grounds to a high standard of cleanliness and safety.

64 The last inspection noted inadequacies in accommodation, particularly relating to security. The secretary's office has been relocated downstairs and a tiny office created for the headteacher. Access during lesson times is only through the front door and the rest of the school is inaccessible from the outside. The staff room has been moved upstairs and a comfortable area created which emphasises how highly governors value staff. A small library has been created from a corridor space. Every inch of space is used to maximum possible effect. The whole school has been decorated and high quality displays celebrate pupils' achievements and effort. Pupils respect the appearance of their school and take good care of it. The school is fortunate to have an attractive wild area and pond to support science and environmental work. The field is well used for play and physical education, but suffers from having a public right of way across it. It is carefully checked before pupils are allowed on. The playground has recently been significantly improved by the addition of games marked on the surface. Pupils are thoroughly enjoying playing on these. Some pupils also appreciate the benches if they wish to sit quietly during the breaks.

65 All subjects have sufficient resources, with the exception of music, which does not have enough compact discs and tapes to support teaching. However it is recognised that a recently purchased commercial scheme contains some CD's with examples of different styles of music. Resources are purchased to reflect subject priorities in the school development plan. Therefore, resources for literacy and numeracy have been increased. New computers and two digital cameras have been added to resources for information technology and pupils in Year 1 are able to handle the cameras to take photographs of their plants and their work in the wildlife area. The library is small, with an adequate range of books, which are supplemented by books held in each classroom.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66 The school has improved rapidly in the last few years and no major issues emerged during the inspection. However to build on the good work of recent years and to continue the process of improvement the headteacher, governors and staff should work together to:

- (1) Improve the provision in the Nursery by making better use of assessment information to guide daily and weekly planning
- (2) Improve the consistency with which the marking of pupils work clearly identifies what children need to do to improve.
- (3) Identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' understanding in English, mathematics and science through a detailed subject analysis of end of year assessments and use this information to help guide curricular development and planning.
- (4) Improve the quality of the school development plan by establishing more specific success criteria in the short term action plans in order to measure the impact of the development on the quality of pupils learning

Minor issue

Improve the resources for music

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	15	29	46	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	171
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	55

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	32

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	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	13	10	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	13
	Girls	8	7	10
	Total	19	19	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	[83] ([68])	[83] ([77])	[100] ([91])
	National	[82] ([87])	[83] ([81])	[87] ([84])

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	13	13
	Girls	8	7	8
	Total	20	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	[87] ([78])	[87] ([82])	[91] ([96])
	National	[82] ([81])	[86] ([85])	[87] ([86])

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	9	10	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	8	9
	Girls	7	5	7
	Total	14	13	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	[74] ([52])	[68] ([48])	[84] ([67])
	National	[70] ([65])	[69] ([58])	[78] ([69])

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	9
	Girls	6	5	6
	Total	13	12	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	[68] ([52])	[63] ([67])	[79] ([72])
	National	[68] ([65])	[69] ([58])	[75] ([69])

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	170
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.4
Average class size	28.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	122

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	29

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	330558
Total expenditure	328588
Expenditure per pupil	1694
Balance brought forward from previous year	12668
Balance carried forward to next year	14638

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	217
Number of questionnaires returned	70

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	44	7	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	53	44	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	56	4	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	51	12	0	4
The teaching is good.	61	37	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	40	7	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	24	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	29	3	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	57	37	1	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	54	43	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	41	6	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	59	7	1	4

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

67 Children are admitted into the Nursery class from the age of three on a part-time basis and move on into Reception at the beginning of September or January of the year they become five. A recent change to two points of entry into Reception is resulting in younger children being admitted to Nursery.

68 Attainment on entry is within the normal range. This judgement has been made from observations of the youngest children and a scrutiny of the Initial Adjustment to Nursery Record. However this has no profiles of children, saved work or parental contributions. Children have satisfactory mathematical understanding. A number have delayed speech. Generally they are quite independent and able to play co-operatively with each other.

69 Children make satisfactory progress in the Nursery and in Reception. Baseline Assessment results taken from assessment at the beginning of the Reception class show children do not differ significantly from the national averages in mathematics, personal and social development. In the area of language and literacy the majority of children are on line to achieve the desirable learning outcomes but some have weaknesses in the aspect of speaking and listening.

Personal and Social Development

70 Children are confident and happy. They relate well to the adults that work with them and are able to use equipment and look after themselves and each other, for example, a four year old child helped a three year old choose the correct apron for painting. When playing in groups they are learning to take turns and share resources. Both young and older children concentrate well on their tasks. They are learning to take care of their environment by helping to tidy up at the end of the sessions. Staff sensitively and consistently implement the school behaviour policy and as a result children are beginning to understand the difference between right and wrong.

Language and Literacy

71 Children enjoy listening to stories and singing simple rhymes and songs linked to a letter sound. Most children have an understanding of books and handle them well. Looking at the book "Mr Bear and the Robbers" one child used the pictures and asked questions to help him understand the story. They are beginning to recognise the shape and sound of some letters, for example, S and some children can name words that begin with the sound, for example, sun and sandals. They are beginning to see the connection between print and words. A few children are beginning to use toys to develop stories of their own for example when putting the bears to bed. In role-play children's imagination and language are developed by adult interaction but there are missed opportunities to target those children with delayed speech. The children are learning pencil control. Most can recognise their own names and some can write, with a few beginning to form the letters correctly. In the Reception class children are taught to listen to and identify sounds made by musical instruments, and sounds and digraphs within words. There is an emphasis on emergent or "have a go" writing and this is proving to be effective in helping Reception children develop an independent approach to writing.

Mathematics

72 There is a range of activities provided to develop children's mathematical understanding. Through the use of mathematical games children in the Nursery are beginning to count, recognise and name colours, shapes and begin to use mathematical language, for example, "how many." However there are missed opportunities to further develop and extend children's specific mathematical language. Children are beginning to count up to 10 with the help of the teacher and developing the concept of "one more." There are opportunities for children to develop the concept of size, quantity and measures through the use of Care Bears, and graded cereal bowls. Through large brick play children develop an understanding of shape and position. They create a problem solving situation when trying to stack the bricks at the end of the session. In the Reception class children can recognise and name a selection of two-dimensional shapes such as square, rectangle, triangle and circle, with some children also being able to recognise a pentagon and a hexagon. A few children also know the term right angle and that this refers to the corner in a square or a rectangle with some beginning to explore the concept of tessellation

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

73 During the inspection period no observations were made of children developing an understanding of their environment or of past and present events in their lives. Scrutiny of planning shows that visits are planned into the local environment that visitors come to the nursery to talk to the children, for example the vicar and a speaker from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA).

74 Children are confident when exploring construction kits. With no adult interaction they are able to work together concentrating when fitting the parts together to build a car. Working on the computer alone they demonstrate good manipulative skills when using the mouse and the programme "Splosh" to paint a pattern. A four-year old was able to explain how he selects different colours. Children eagerly join a newly introduced activity for cutting and sticking. There are no interactive displays or workshop areas to encourage scientific enquiry, discovery and exploration of ideas. Since the last inspection the Nursery has developed this area of learning, but there is still a need to further enhance provision in the area of scientific enquiry, discovery and exploration.

Physical Development

75 Children in the Nursery are confident in their use of space and have an awareness of others. They are developing fine manipulative skills through bead threading, pencil and brush control. They manoeuvre wheeled equipment well. They are able to balance and jump from low heights. They handle large construction with control and safety and persevere when building a construction from large bricks which they later use to balance on. Since the last inspection, two groups have timetabled outdoor play. Further thought needs to be given to this organisation, as well as the use of the hall for PE, to take account of the needs of the children, especially the youngest. In the Reception class, pupils attain good standards in dance. Their movement shows good levels of fluency and control and they can quickly change rhythm and mood to match the piano music, for example from marching to dancing or from relaxed to lively. The pupils extend their literacy skills by learning and responding to words describing movements. They also show good independence in changing their clothes at the beginning of the lesson.

Creative Development

76 Children respond well to music. Most are able to identify fast and slow rhythm. They use their hands to beat a simple rhythm in time to the music. They remember the words of a new song. In Nursery, children demonstrate careful fine manipulative skills and brush control. However these skills are practised within teacher drawn templates limiting opportunities to develop representation or imagination. They recognise colours and are able to mix two colours in paint. During the inspection period there was no observation made of children independently accessing a range of materials, tools, or instruments in order to express their ideas and feelings. In Reception children mix colours and observational drawings linked to their topic work. In the Nursery children have constructed cats' faces using a range of materials, but here the opportunity for children to experiment and generate their own ideas through design is limited by a lot of teacher direction. Pupils in Reception have designed and made musical instruments and have used a digital camera to record the process. Pupils attitudes to this type of work are good, as for example in one lesson where children discussed how to make a base for their paper structure, how to make it hang and how to strengthen it by crossing several strips for reinforcement.

77 The quality of teaching is satisfactory. There is a satisfactory understanding of the areas of learning to be followed by the children. Staff manage children well and insist on high standards of behaviour. There are good relationships. However planning in the Nursery does not take account of the different developmental needs of the children and work is not clearly differentiated. As a result activities lack challenge for the more able children. Consideration should be given to the effective use of time and staff for both the morning and afternoon sessions and to the most effective ways of teaching in the small accommodation space available to ensure high standards of achievement.

78 The curriculum is satisfactory. Work is planned to meet all of the areas of learning prescribed for young children and links to the Early Learning Goals. However in the Nursery the medium term planning goals are not differentiated clearly in the weekly planning to meet the needs of the children. Planning does not provide for independent learning to encourage investigative and experimental experiences to extend children's learning further.

79 Some of the assessment procedures are not sufficiently well developed. The Initial Adjustment to Nursery Records need to be reviewed and developed in line with the Early Learning Goals to include children's profiles, work saving and parental contribution in order to record progress. Daily assessment of children does not inform planning or target setting with sufficient clarity.

ENGLISH

80 At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment in the national assessments in 1999 was close to national average in reading and above the national average in writing. The percentage of children achieving level 3 in writing (above average attainment) was significantly higher than in other schools nationally. The boys in this year group performed well in writing with a higher percentage than national average achieving the expected level 2.

81 Results in the 1999 national tests in English at the end of Key Stage 2 were above national average. There has been a steady improvement over the last 3 years but a sharp rise from 1998 to 1999. Reading was a particular strength last year with 90% of pupils achieving the expected level 4 or above and 100% of the boys achieving this level. Results in writing were lower, with 53% of the pupils achieving level 4 or above. The school has

identified writing as a priority for improvement. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 5 in English was well above the national average, and the attainment of the boys in last year's Year 6 exceeded that of boys nationally.

82 The school's targets for 2000, teacher assessment and inspection evidence indicate that attainment in this year's Year 6 is in line with the national average.

83 In January 2000, the school was awarded the Basic Skills Agency's "Primary Quality Mark" for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. This is a well deserved recognition for the quality of literacy teaching and attainment in the school.

84 Standards in speaking and listening meet national expectations at the end of both Key Stages. The teaching of speaking and listening is a strength throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. It is due to opportunities structured within lessons, and to the supportive and open relationships between teachers and pupils that foster children's confidence in offering suggestions and expressing opinions. Boys participate as willingly as girls in classroom discussions. Following the story of Noah's Ark Year 1 children are able to discuss promises, giving examples from their own experiences whilst other children listen effectively. A group of Year 2 special needs children were supported appropriately in a role-play activity, interviewing a character from a book the class had read. Year 4 and Year 5 children were able to express opinions about an imagined housing development, and give reasons for their views and then read aloud with confidence the formal letters they had written. Year 5 children were able to create and present a very effective short play comparing localities in India, and would later have the opportunity to present this in an assembly. Year 6 discussed in groups evidence from historical objects whilst in an RE lesson the same pupils listened to a speaker from the Islamic community and asked appropriate questions they had previously prepared. In all cases children show good collaborative skills in speaking and listening, and the majority express themselves with confidence in answering questions and in conversation and discussions.

85 In reading pupils' attainment in both Key Stages is in line with national expectations, and most children make expected progress. In Key Stage 1 reading skills are taught effectively with teachers making good use of the National Literacy Framework and the National Literacy Strategy "Progression in Phonics" material to develop both reading and spelling strategies. There is evidence of children effectively building on reading skills taught during the literacy hour, for example in a Year 2 lesson most children were able to make sensible predictions about a missing word in a shared text, justifying their choices by saying that it must be an adverb and it must finish the sentence. By the end of Year 2 average and more able readers read with expression and their reading is fluent and phrased. They are able to refer to non-fiction books, use the contents and talk about the different layout of a non-narrative book. Less able children can read simple texts with understanding, but use limited strategies to decipher unknown words and vary in their confidence to discuss the story or the characters. There is a consistent system for children taking books home and many parents give valuable support by reading with their children regularly. Whilst most children have a positive attitude to reading, they need access to a broader range of reading material for use outside the literacy hour in order to challenge average and more able readers and to introduce them to a range of authors and styles.

86 In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make expected progress in reading and teachers use guided reading sessions effectively to develop comprehension and independent reading strategies. The choice of texts and the reading tasks set in these sessions relate well to the learning objectives of the lesson. Year 6 pupils were able to list features of an explanatory text on individual white boards, whilst, Year 4 pupils identified persuasive language in a promotional leaflet. By the end of the Key Stage, average and above average attainers read with confidence and fluency and are able to locate information in a non-fiction book using the contents and index and scanning appropriate pages. Less able children also have a confident approach to reading and are acquiring a range of skills such as self-correction and using punctuation for meaning and intonation. Whilst pupils understand the nature and purpose of a range of texts, they are not forthcoming in discussing preferences for different authors.

87 Guided reading is effectively taught in both Key Stages, but there is a need to track pupils' progress in these sessions and to use more diagnostic reading records especially in Key Stage 1. Such records would indicate to children, parents and other adults what strategies children need to focus on next to develop fluency and comprehension.

88 Standards in writing are in line with national expectations. Throughout Key Stage 1 children take a pride in their work and in Year 1 and Year 2 standards in handwriting are very good and are good in spelling. By the end of Year 2 most children are able to write independently and average and high attaining pupils can use narrative form and write at considerable length. Sentence structure is generally simple but many children are beginning to choose words for interest. There is some use of full stops and capital letters in the work of children with special educational needs whilst the more able are using speech marks and exclamation marks.

89 Again in Key Stage 2 children's writing reflects the systematic approach to the teaching of spelling, and handwriting is a strength in all classes. Progression in pupils' writing skills is clear from Year 3 to Year 6. In Year 6 the majority of pupils are able to write lively poetry, experiment with language, use dialogue, and the conventions and appropriate style for letter writing. Punctuation is used accurately and children can arrange their ideas appropriately and choose some words carefully. They use capital letters, full stops, speech marks and question marks accurately. In Years 3, 4 and 5 children write with confidence and most children are able to write for different purposes and in appropriate language.

90 Whilst standards achieved are in line with national expectations, there is insufficient evidence in Key Stage 2 of children having opportunities for extended writing. Most pieces, both narrative and non-narrative, tend to be short, even at the end of the Key Stage.

91 Pupils' attitude to literacy is good in both Key Stages. They listen well to teachers' explanations and to each other, and they participate willingly in answering questions, in offering suggestions and in voicing opinions. Children work at a good pace in lessons and take a pride in the presentation of their work in all year groups. They apply their literacy skills in other subjects.

92 Teachers have good subject knowledge and make very good use of the National Literacy Framework. All teachers teach basic skills effectively and the teaching of joined handwriting, linked to a structured spelling programme is a strength in the school. Teachers' planning is generally effective with clear objectives identified and communicated to the children, well-structured lessons and activities clearly developing the learning objectives. The teachers' weekly evaluations are particularly effective in terms of assessing pupils' achievement and in informing subsequent planning.

93 The majority of teachers establish a supportive attitude towards the pupils that enhances children's confidence. In the best lessons there is lively interactive teaching with the teachers' time well spent in direct teaching both in the whole class session and during group work. Teachers remind children of expected pace of work and outcomes. Non-teaching assistants are used very effectively to enhance the progress of children with special educational needs and small groups working with the statemented children. However, in some cases more opportunities are needed for the more able to extend their learning and apply their skills. This is most applicable in the lessons where the independent activities are closed in nature.

94 In Key Stage 1 staff have recently adopted a more systematic approach to developing an independent approach to writing with an emphasis on emergent or “have-a-go” writing. This is proving effective in Reception and Year 2. However the work sample in Year 1 indicated a considerable amount of time spent on copy writing and the use of undifferentiated commercial worksheets. This limits the opportunity for children to bring skills together and may inhibit what more able children can achieve. Learning would be improved by a more consistent approach in methods and expectations in Key Stage 1.

95 Teachers mark pupils’ work regularly, and in some cases indicate to children how they could improve their work. This good practice needs to be developed in all classes and children need to be aware of their learning targets.

96 The support for children with special educational needs in literacy is a particular strength. The teachers and support assistants liaise effectively and pupils’ individual education plans are carefully implemented. Whilst there is some one-to-one teaching of specific skills, children are generally involved in the literacy hour and make good progress as a result of differentiated activities and the support from Education Care Officers.

97 The leadership of English is very effective. The co-ordinator has been seconded to the LEA as a literacy consultant, but the subject is well supported by an acting co-ordinator. Both co-ordinators are well informed and the permanent co-ordinator has worked supportively with staff and manages the subject with confidence. She has led workshops for staff in the school and with other local schools and has introduced strategies to raise attainment in writing. She has been involved in monitoring the subject through evaluating planning and scrutinising work, and has observed all staff teach part of a literacy lesson. The co-ordinator reports that monitoring has highlighted strengths in the implementation of the literacy strategy. However it is important that monitoring and evaluation practices are also used to identify areas for further improvement. Whilst attainment data is analysed at whole school level, there has been no analysis of Standard Assessment Tasks papers to provide more detailed information about specific curriculum targets.

98 The school provides an effective curriculum in English. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and use of the National Literacy Strategy and there is an appropriate emphasis on raising achievement. Children enjoy the subject and leadership is good.

MATHEMATICS

99 Since the last inspection there has been a marked improvement in pupils’ attainment at the end of both Key Stages. This is particularly the case in Key Stage 1 where over the last three years improvements have been taking place at a much faster rate than that to be found nationally. As a consequence the proportion of children in the school who achieved the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 was very high. Of especial note is the improvement in the numbers of pupils who achieved above the national expectation in the end of year assessment. The previous inspection in 1996 noted that no pupil in the school had achieved this higher level, but by 1999 a similar proportion of pupils to that found in other schools nationally were attaining this standard.

100 Although the improving attainment trend in Key Stage 2 is not as rapid as that in Key Stage 1 it nevertheless is rising slightly faster than the national trend. The improvement trend has been particularly influenced by the much better performance of boys who in 1999 achieved results that exceeded those to be found for boys nationally. However the improvement trend for girls has tended to fluctuate from year to year and does not show the same secure upward trend as that seen for the boys. The reasons for this are not easy to discern since in the observation of lessons during the inspection there was no difference between the way boys and girls were taught, nor in teachers' expectations. Girls gave just as much attention and concentration to their work as boys with no marked differences discernible in the standards achieved in their exercise books. Combining the 1999 statistics for both boys and girls the school achieved overall results at Key Stage 2 that were close to the national average but above that to be found in similar schools. As in Key Stage 1 the improvement in the number of pupils attaining the higher levels in the end of year test is significant. The 1996 inspection reported that no pupils were achieving the higher level but in 1999 this was not the case with the proportion of pupils attaining this standard being just below the national average but comparable with that to be found in similar schools.

101 Inspection evidence confirms that attainment at the end of both Key Stages is broadly in line with the national expectations. The school has for the last year, with good external help, been implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. As a consequence of the positive response which the staff have made to this way of working pupils' mental facility with numbers is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. For example in a Year 2 class many children are able to add in their heads three sets of numbers with answers to a hundred and explain the different strategies used in order to arrive at the answers. In a Year 4/5 class children know the terms product, sets of, squared, multiples and factor and almost all are able to quickly provide correct answers to questions posed by the teacher. In a Year 6 class children can determine from a mixture of percentages, decimal and vulgar fractions which are the largest, the smallest and those which are equivalent.

102 In other mathematical areas pupils' knowledge and understanding is also at least satisfactory and sometimes good. For example, many children in Year 1 understand the idea of a pictogram and can answer questions using the data. Some children are able to use the information on the pictogram to pose questions for their classmates to answer. In Year 3 and 4 children have worked with Venn and Carroll diagrams, simple fractions, graphs and symmetry and can explain their work. By the time children reach Year 6 they know about the properties of right angle, acute and isosceles triangles and can calculate the angles in each. Higher attaining pupils are able to calculate the angles in a pentagon.

103 The progress pupils' make in their lessons is usually good and there are a number of reasons for this. Partly it is because children have a good attitude towards their work. So for example, in mental and oral sessions there is an infectious enthusiasm amongst pupils to try and work out the answers as quickly as possible with no shortage of volunteers to give their opinion as to what is correct or not. In independent activities children demonstrate perseverance in completing their given task as when four children in Year 2 co-operated together to play a game which gave them practice at recognising different arrays. Most children make a good effort to record their work neatly and with accuracy, as for instance when a group in a Year 4/5 lesson made sound progress in determining the position of data in a Venn diagram. The behaviour of the substantial majority of pupils is very good and this helps their teachers to concentrate on promoting mathematical understanding. Just occasionally there is a small number of children who misbehave and whilst this is usually effectively dealt with by their teacher it does interrupt the flow of learning and adversely affects the progress made in the lesson.

104 The other major contributory factors to the standards achieved and the good progress that most children make is the effectiveness with which they are taught by their teachers and for children with special educational needs the good quality of additional help they are given by support staff. During the inspection all the teaching of mathematics was satisfactory or better with more than half that seen being very good or excellent. There are a number of factors in the teaching of mathematics that have a significant impact on the progress children make. The first of these is the quality of lesson planning which is very good. For example, all lessons seen had clear learning objectives that gave a tight focus to the mathematics, and because teachers used these to explain what was to be learned, children were able to more easily 'tune in' to what they were required to do. The lesson plans also identified, usually in some detail, the work to be undertaken by the different ability groups within the class. In all the lessons seen this match between abilities and the challenge in the task was well judged and resulted in pupils of all abilities maintaining interest in the task and consequently making at least satisfactory, and in many cases, good progress. Another notable feature influencing progress is the way in which all staff encourage children to give reasons for their answers or explain how they have arrived at a particular solution. This was most evident in mental and oral sessions as for example when children in Year 1 were asked to add three addition sums, decide which answer was the odd one out and give a reason for their solution. In the very best lessons children are also encouraged to use correct terminology in their explanations. Such consistent practice, which was also used but not quite so successfully in plenary sessions, gives the children confidence in talking about mathematics and contributes significantly to their mathematical understanding.

105 Children with special educational needs are sensitively and appropriately given additional help by the close working relationship between their teacher and their support staff. For example in one mental and oral session the support assistant sat close to the pupil and helped her to understand the questions and to work out the solutions. The teacher ensured that the pupil was given an opportunity to answer some of the questions. At other times support staff help pupils with the planned activity as for example in Year 6 where the support assistant gave very good help to a small group of children in learning how to calculate the perimeter of triangles whilst the other children were calculating the angles. In the plenary session the teacher gave one of the pupils the opportunity to explain to the rest of the class how the perimeter of a triangle was calculated. In these ways children with special educational needs are sensitively included within the class lessons and helped to make good progress.

106 Assessment opportunities are identified in lesson planning and are generally well used by teachers to record what children know, understand and can do. The staff evaluations on the success of their own teaching are perceptive and form a good basis for the organisation and planning of future work. The verbal feedback to pupils given in lessons generally helps them to understand a particular concept or what they need to do to improve. All work in pupils' exercise books is marked but in most instances just with a tick or a positive comment usually relating to the presentation of the work. There are few written comments relating to the mathematics itself or suggesting what children could do to improve by setting, for example, some short term targets. This is an area that the school could usefully look at since it would fit with the stated desire to try and further engage children in their own assessment.

107 An underpinning reason for the improvements in the standards achieved is undoubtedly the effective manner in which the co-ordinator, with the support of the senior management team and governors, is leading and managing the subject. Considerable action has been taken since the last inspection. For example the audit of resources called for has been carried out and much investment has taken place as a result of staff discussions. The co-ordinator has time to monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning within the subject. In-service training has been organised, including visits to observe leading maths teachers in other schools. The governor with responsibility for numeracy has observed teaching in two classes and written a short report for the governors. The procedures for target setting are becoming firmly embedded and the statistical data used to monitor the overall progress of the school against the national picture and that of similar schools. These are all considerable strengths. Amongst these the annual analysis of the mathematical concepts in the Key Stage assessments at which the children did well or conversely did not do well, and any patterns that become established over the years, is currently the biggest gap in the school's understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has been well organised and the co-ordinator has a clear view of the next steps that the school has to take.

SCIENCE

108 The 1999 end of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments for seven year old pupils show that the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level (level 3) is well above national average.

109 The school's National Curriculum Test results in 1999 show that at the end of Key Stage 2 they were above the national average compared to schools nationally. Boys' attainment now exceeds boys nationally. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level (level 5) is well above the national average. Girls' performance has fluctuated over time and the school is currently targetting girls.

110 The school maintains a commitment to science and since the last inspection has allocated 10% curriculum time and reviewed the topic approach to the subject. This has ensured challenge for the more able and has had a significant impact on the continuation of raising standards.

111 Children make satisfactory progress and children with special educational needs make above average progress. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have good scientific knowledge and skills. They are aware of the life cycle of plants and animals. One more able child drew the stages of growth of a plant over three weeks and explained the purpose of the seeds. They can sort leaves looking for similarities and differences and can explain the difference between a frog and a toad. Work scrutiny shows that pupils are beginning to develop an awareness of the characteristics of a fair test involving different heights of ramps and vehicles. They use scientific language, for example, hairs, veins, amphibian. They record their findings in drawings, sequential writing, charts and reports.

112 During the inspection period only one lesson of science was observed in Key Stage 2. Judgements are made on the scrutiny of children's work and teachers planning, discussion with staff and children and observation. Throughout the Key Stage pupils build on their skills of observation, prediction and hypothesising. In the one lesson pupils worked in groups on differentiated work investigating circuits; the more able pupils devised a fair test and explained what happened to the strength of a bulb with the addition of extra electrical objects. Pupils with special educational needs are given good help by support

staff when carrying out investigative work and are able to draw a diagram of a circuit and label using symbols.

113 Pupils' attitudes to their work in science are good. When pupils are involved in group investigations there is a sense of enjoyment. In a Key Stage 1 lesson a class visited the pond in the wild life garden. The children were calm, quiet and handled pond creatures with sensitivity and care. A child with special educational needs was encouraged and sensitively looked after by a friend. In a Key Stage 2 lesson pupils concentrated and work together to gather evidence to show that different qualities in wire can change the brightness of a bulb.

114 Science teaching contributes well to the development of pupils' literacy skills. At both Key Stages pupils are encouraged to talk about their findings and what they see and do. Displays of scientific work in classrooms stimulate pupils in writing up their findings. Mathematical skills are developed as pupils take measurements, make and collective information from bar charts, design and use keys.

115 The quality of teaching is good. The intended learning for the lesson is clear and shared with the pupils. Lessons have a brisk pace. A feature of lessons is the calm atmosphere in which pupils are enthusiastically engaged in stimulating activities. Teachers manage practical activities well and good relationships are maintained to ensure that all pupils work co-operatively. A range of teaching strategies is used and children are grouped to ensure challenge to meet their needs. Children with special educational needs are well supported by staff. Where teaching in science is good assessment is planned into the lesson and planning takes account of previous learning, marking informs pupils of the next step of learning and pupils at both Key Stages are given homework.

116 The quality of leadership in science is good. The co-ordinator is committed to raising standards particularly for high achieving pupils in the school. The subject is well resourced, each class having a selection of basic science resources and other resources easily accessible to staff. The school has a policy and uses the QCA scheme of work that is linked into the school's topic cycle and topic units of work. Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' learning have been developed and further development will ensure teachers' assessment informs planning and to include targets for children's learning. Science records identify the attainment of pupils but do not set pupil targets. The co-ordinator makes appropriate use of opportunities to monitor the science curriculum and science is evaluated at the end of each topic. There is a portfolio showing a progression of children's work from Nursery to Year 6. but the process of moderating this work in order to arrive at a common understanding of the National Curriculum levels as seen in children's work has yet to be undertaken.

ART

117 Standards in art are satisfactory at both Key Stages and pupils make progress in line with national expectation. In Year 1 colour mixing and observational drawing and painting is further developed and pupils have the opportunity to use a range of media with opportunities for experimentation. Year 2 children use a range of material to illustrate work on plants or to represent the 'Tree of Life' modelled on a work of Gustav Klint. In Key Stage 2 Year 3 and 4 pupils are able to use ICT to produce rotational or reflective patterns, whilst observational drawings by Year 6 pupils indicate increasing accuracy and expression. Whilst pupils make appropriate progress in the lessons observed in both Key Stages, there is little evidence of pupils being asked to evaluate or improve upon their work.

118 Teachers' medium and short term planning in art is detailed and effective. There is an appropriate balance between developing the specific subject skills and linking art to other curriculum areas. It is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching as only one lesson was observed where the teacher's main focus was the art activity. However non-teaching assistants and parent volunteers are well briefed and make an effective contribution to children's learning. In a Year 2 class for example an adult helper worked with a group of pupils as they sketched a mini-beast and then guided them as they developed this in clay, enabling them to make considerable progress within one lesson. Similarly the non-teaching assistant in a year 4/5 class led a productive discussion on patterns, focussing on patterns on Islamic clothing and helping children to identify the purpose and therefore the style of a printing design they were making.

119 Pupils' learning in art lessons is good. They listen well and work with enthusiasm and concentration. Children take a pride in their work and uses resources and time well.

120 Art will be prioritised in next year's School Development Plan. The co-ordinator will have the opportunity to work with colleagues to draw up a scheme of work linked to the school's existing topic framework and drawing on elements of the QCA scheme. This will be very useful in ensuring consistency as the existing scheme of work has some shortcomings. For example, consistency would be improved if whole school or Key Stage systems were agreed such as the use of sketchbooks especially in Key Stage 2 or the access to resources enabling children some choice of materials was clarified. Half -termly planning is collected by the co-ordinator, but monitoring would be more productive if feedback were given after scrutinising planning or samples of pupils' work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

121 Standards in design and technology at both Key Stages meet national expectations and the subject is well taught. The National Curriculum Programmes of Study are fully implemented and the school has satisfactorily addressed the key issue in the last inspection report. A scheme of work based on the QCA scheme ensures breadth and the development of specific design and technology skills. The subject is well co-ordinated and monitoring and evaluation arrangements are satisfactory.

122 Progress at both Key Stages is in line with that found in most schools. In Year 2 children are able to combine design and making skills to make puppets. This involved observing and drawing puppets, making a paper pattern, joining fabric by stitching and using a range of materials to create the puppets' features. In another Year 2 lesson pupils engaged in a focused practical task where they investigated toys with winding mechanisms and produced a drawing to show how the mechanism works.

123 Pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 were involved in investigating, making and evaluating a range of sandwiches. The pupils in the Year 4/5 class successfully made working torches and recorded their plans and evaluations in a class booklet. The torches produced were effective and individual in style. Pupils in Year 6 record their design and technology work in an exercise book that shows the range of progress of their work. Recent work includes designing and making slippers where pupils use appropriate techniques to produce a wide range of visually appealing and functional slippers using a variety of textiles. In their current work on controllable vehicles Year 6 pupils are able to generate a design with regard to function and aesthetics, select appropriate materials and use their knowledge of electrical currents and of structure and control to produce a working controllable toy vehicle. There is clear progression in the skills and knowledge pupils are attaining through the Key Stage.

124 Pupils' attitudes are good. They enjoy lessons and work enthusiastically. They sustain concentration, co-operate effectively and hold focused discussions. This is evident in the Reception class where children discuss how to make a base for their paper structure, how to make it hang and how to strengthen it by crossing several paper strips for reinforcement. Pupils behave well and act responsibly with due regard to safety rules, for example in the sawing activities in the Year 6 class.

125 The quality of teaching in the lessons observed is good. Lesson planning is thorough and links are made to other areas of learning, for example to literacy, mathematics, history and science. Teachers give pupils a clear understanding of what they are expected to achieve and there is an appropriate emphasis on designing, making and also evaluating work. In the best lessons, teachers' expectations are high, children are encouraged to be ambitious and there is effective teacher questioning and intervention to challenge children's thinking. There is ample evidence that the school has responded successfully to the issue raised in the last inspection of increasing the subject awareness and confidence of staff, and in developing the design aspects of the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

126 Few lessons were observed during the inspection. From the pupils' work examined, standards of attainment are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2. They can research local issues such as the dangers presented by traffic to school children. They collect their own data and present it in graphical form and they can present a well reasoned argument for their opinion of a solution. This work provides a good opportunity for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. The writing of higher attaining pupils is particularly good when it explores different viewpoints about environmental issues. Pupils understand the water cycle and they can name the key features of rivers. They have carried out fieldwork to study a local stream and their work is well recorded in a variety of ways, including graphs and diagrams. Standards are unsatisfactory in the classes of some younger pupils when worksheets are used which have not been adapted to suit the needs of pupils with different attainment levels.

127 In the lessons observed in younger Key Stage 2 classes, pupils are making satisfactory progress in comparing different localities and the way people live within them. They are developing an understanding of the impact of climate on how we live and what the differences are between rural and urban life at home and in India.

128 The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers make the purpose of their lessons clear and when they link this to pupils' previous learning or their current interests, there is more enthusiasm for the new work. They use video recordings effectively to present information about other localities. They prepare the pupils well in whole class discussion that makes clear what they should look for and establishes new geographical vocabulary. Questions after the video have a clear focus on comparison, in line with the lessons' objectives. Pupils are very attentive when watching the video and their responses afterwards show that most of them have grasped the main points. Occasionally the pace of learning is slowed when there is too much discussion or a group task is not made sufficiently clear and the pupils have to wait for more instructions. Follow-up activities are appropriately adapted to suit different age and attainment groups within the classes. In one class there was good additional challenge for a group of higher attainers who had to prepare a persuasive argument about a locality.

129 Since the first inspection required more time to be given to geography, it has been taught as a separate subject. Teachers' planning shows that pupils will make progress through the school in learning the knowledge and skills required by the National Curriculum in many interesting ways, including fieldwork in the locality, visits to places of interest and talks by people who have visited India. There is provision for learning to use maps with different scales, which was previously judged to be inadequate. Teachers' planning is monitored to check that pupils maintain continuous learning progress through the mixed age classes. Pupils' work should also be monitored to ensure appropriate levels of challenge for all pupils within the class, particularly those with mixed ages.

HISTORY

130 In the small number of lessons observed and the pupils' work that was scrutinised, standards in history range from good to unsatisfactory. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain good standards in comparing their life today with the times of their parents and grandparents. In a set of photographs of people at the seaside, they can quickly pick out features that help to place them in chronological order. Higher attaining pupils produce good independent writing about famous people in history, such as Florence Nightingale. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain satisfactory standards in the skills of historical investigation. They can make detailed studies of pictures of domestic appliances from the mid twentieth century to answer challenging questions about them. Standards would be higher if they went on to infer what this told them about the period and how life has changed since then. Most pupils have a sound understanding of the main periods of history and when they occurred. Standards are less than satisfactory in the workbooks of pupils in mixed age classes when they are all completing the same worksheet.

131 Although standards are similar to those reported in the first inspection, there has been improvement in analysing and interpreting historical sources, and in developing an understanding of historical change over time.

132 In the small number of lessons observed there is some very good teaching and it is never less than satisfactory. In both Key Stages, enthusiastic teaching engages the pupils' interest in the past and this helps them to make good learning progress in lessons. A particular strength is the provision of stimulating learning experiences that enable pupils to find out about history for themselves. In a Key Stage 1 lesson, for example, a visitor gave a very interesting talk about a trip to the seaside when she was young. The teacher enabled pupils to get the most from this by preparing them to ask detailed questions about the differences between then and now. The pupils became engrossed in this work and learnt much from it. In a Key Stage 2 class, group work was well organised for pupils to collaborate in carrying out historical investigations. Carefully prepared resources and challenging questions from the teacher resulted in some constructive discussion amongst the pupils. Teachers make careful arrangements to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all of the activities, for example a classroom assistant provides good support to enable her pupil to interact with other members of the class in a group activity.

133 The first inspection required the school to review the practice of teaching history within a topic approach. Since then, history has been taught as a separate subject to ensure that pupils will make progress through the school in learning the skills required by the National Curriculum. The teachers' planning for units of work shows that this is in place. Planning is monitored carefully to check that pupils do not repeat or omit units of work as they pass through mixed age classes. The school should extend this monitoring to include pupils' work, particularly to ensure appropriate levels of challenge for all pupils within mixed age classes.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

134 Limited information communication technology was seen during the week of the inspection. However from the evidence gained through a small number of lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils work, discussions with pupils and teachers and viewing the work on display in classrooms, standards at the end of both Key Stages are close to the national expectations.

135 The 1996 inspection noted that there was limited actual teaching of information technology skills. Since that time the evidence of this inspection is that satisfactory progress has been made in addressing this issue for by the end of Key Stage 2 most children know how to load a program, use the keyboard and mouse, save and print their work.

136 In the area of communicating and handling information children in Year 1 have word processed reports about their holidays and a digital camera has been used to record the events in a science experiment; in Year 2 pupils have used the computer to record their writing about plants. In Key Stage 2 there are similar examples of children using the computer for word processing, as for instance in Year 3/4 where children have written poems and rhymes using the computer. In Year 4/5 pupils views about the story, 'The Highwayman' have been word processed and in this class children have made name cards using different font types and sizes, and produced a 'Home Page' during their visit to the Kingswood Activity Centre. There was less evidence of children at Key Stage 2 selecting suitable information, classifying and preparing it for processing or of children interpreting and analysing the information held on computers and then selecting the elements required for their purpose. These are areas to which the school could usefully give consideration.

137 During the inspection there were a number of good examples of children using IT for the purposes of controlling and modelling. In Year 2 children were successfully introduced to the idea of programming a 'Roamer' and by the end of the lesson the pupils could enter a sequence of instructions in order to make the 'Roamer' move in a predetermined way. In Year 4/5 a small group of children controlled the movements of a 'screen turtle'. In Year 6 a group of children were able to effectively programme traffic lights by entering commands and building and repeating procedures that included a combination of both lights and sound.

138 Children are also able to use ICT systems to support and enhance work in other curriculum areas. Examples of patterns created on the computer and showing symmetry, reflection and rotation were evident in Year 3/4. During the week some pupils in Year 6 retrieved information from a CD-ROM to support their history work in studying the period 1950 –60. Other children in the same year group used a program to reinforce their understanding of two-dimensional shapes whilst others used a Tiler program to create Islamic patterns to support their work in religious education.

139 When children are engaged in using information technology they usually make at least satisfactory progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding. This is partly due to their interest in using the technology and the concentration and perseverance shown in completing the tasks. They will work together well, as for example when three Year 6 pupils discussed how they would form an acute triangle on the computer generated peg-board.

140 The satisfactory progress is also attributable to a number of features within the quality of teaching. Although only a limited number of lessons were seen all teaching was satisfactory with a significant proportion being good or better. A particular feature, which had an instant impact on the progress children made, was the good quality of the teacher interventions made at critical times in pupils' work which helped them evaluate where they had got to and how improvements might be made. A good illustration of this was when the Year 6 teacher helped the group controlling the traffic lights to review the accuracy and practicality of their sequences by posing a number of pertinent questions. Learning objectives are usually clear and communicated to the children in a way that they can understand. The objectives give a good focus to the lesson, as for example when the Year 2 teacher introduced the idea of programming the Roamer. Pupils with special educational needs are also given appropriate help as for instance when the support assistant gave just enough information for two girls to use the Tiler program thereby fostering a degree of independence.

141 The present co-ordinator has only recently taken over responsibility for the subject but is already developing a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses within the subject. Two of the key areas for development, an update and rationalisation of the hardware and further staff training, will be addressed through the recently devised action plan for the school's involvement in the National Grid for Learning.

MUSIC

142 During the inspection three lessons in Key Stage 1 were observed one of which was linked to dance and no lessons in music were observed in Key Stage 2 other than singing in assembly when a religious song was well sung by the pupils. Judgements are based not only on lessons observed but from assemblies, scrutiny of pupils' books, teachers' planning and discussions with staff.

143 In Key Stage 1 standards are good in performing and composing but there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about listening and appraising. In Key Stage 1 pupils draw on previous experiences. They sing tunefully and clap out beats which they are able to transfer to musical instruments. They concentrate, work as a large group and repeat rhythms to improve the quality of their performance. In a physical education lesson pupils responded to music and produced quality body movements. In another lesson pupils worked towards composing a seascape graphic score linked to history and geography using a poem as a stimulus. They are able to use vocal sounds to depict the seascape and interpret the sound in a graphic form which they then play using a selection of percussion instruments. They hold the instruments correctly and explore length and dynamics of sound. The teachers use correct musical language which enhances the pupils' literacy skills.

144 In Key Stage 2 teachers' planning shows that teachers build on children's Key Stage 1 musical experiences. Opportunities are given for pupils to perform and compose and listen and appraise. They sing well in assembly. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards.

145 In Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching of good. Teachers' planning is based on a commercial scheme which covers both Key Stage 1 and 2 and is enhanced with elements of a previous scheme to suit the needs of the children and supports teacher confidence, knowledge and understanding. Teachers share with the pupils the intentions of the lessons and in the plenary outline the intentions for the following session.

146 The school has a choir who takes part in the local Festival and the Sheffield Hallelujah Choruses.

147 Since the last inspection the school has made some progress to the issues raised. A commercial scheme of work has been bought and is being trialled. This now needs to be implemented and monitored for its impact upon pupils' attainment. There has been no response to the school's attempts to provide individual instrumental tuition for pupils.

148 The subject is managed effectively by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who is working towards raising the profile of music within the school. The subject is monitored through discussion with staff. Once the scheme of work is in place the co-ordinator is to monitor its impact through observation and will be able to review the recording of pupils' achievements in music and update the policy. A small budget has enabled new resources to be acquired. The co-ordinator now needs to develop the strand of Listening and Appraising and an evaluation and enhancement of resources for these aspects is required.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

149 Pupils' attain satisfactory standards in games, dance and athletics, which were the three activities observed during the inspection. This maintains the levels attained during the first inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can successfully pass and catch small balls in a variety of ways. They are beginning to develop skill in hitting the ball accurately with a large tennis racket and some higher attainers can transfer this effectively to a simple tennis game situation. A pupil with special educational needs is fully included in such lessons and makes very good progress. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show satisfactory levels of skill in a range of athletics activities, including throwing a simulated javelin, making sprint starts and jumping take-offs.

150 In both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils are making satisfactory progress in developing the skills of passing and catching large balls and applying these to a simple competitive games situation. Older pupils understand the importance of warm up and, throughout the school, pupils show good health and safety routines in preparing hair and jewellery for lessons.

151 Much of the teaching is good and it is never less than satisfactory. There are clear objectives for developing new skills in each lesson and teachers have sufficient knowledge to provide effective instructions and demonstrations. Teachers can also assess individuals' performance accurately when they want to help them to improve or they select them to show good work to others. Some very enthusiastic teachers motivated the pupils to do their very best, setting high expectations for their performance. Occasionally, in both Key Stages, expectations are too high for what many of the pupils can achieve with the type of balls and bats provided. Lesson planning is good. In most cases it takes pupils at a brisk pace through a set of activities which progressively increase the level of challenge. Pupils tried harder when the next level of challenge was offered as an incentive for successfully completing the current activity. At times the pace of learning is slowed when equipment is difficult to access or demonstrations last too long. In some lessons, pupils are required to move around a series of activities in groups. The field, equipment and support staff are very well organised for this and it encourages some pupils to develop good independence in measuring and recording their own performance. Classroom support staff make a good contribution to lessons by working with groups or supporting individuals with special educational needs so that they can be fully included in the activities alongside other pupils.

152 Long term planning shows that the physical education curriculum provides pupils with a balanced programme of the activities within the national curriculum. There is good planned provision for outdoor and adventurous activities in the school grounds, at the nearby 5 Pits Trail and on residential visits. Termly planning, which is based on LEA schemes, ensures that pupils will make continuous progress in learning skills as they pass through the school. There is also a good programme of extra-curricular sporting activities for pupils, for example a tennis club was well attended during the inspection. The small size of the hall restricts the activities that can be done indoors, but good use is made of the yard and field for ball skills and athletics.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

153 Although only a small sample of lessons was seen during the inspection from the other range of evidence available it is clear that the school is providing ample opportunities to develop pupils' understanding and knowledge in the subject which is closely linked to the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

154 Standards of attainment at the end of both Key Stages are generally in line with expectations in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Children in Year 2 were able to recall a recent visit to the local church and could recognise and name a number of significant features as for instance, the font, the altar, the chalice and the stained glass windows. The answers pupils gave to the questions posed by the teacher revealed that a good number of them knew about some of the important ceremonies within Christianity, for example, they understood that baptism was a welcoming ceremony into the Church. In Year 1 pupils knew the story of Noah's Ark and were starting to begin to relate some of the features in the story to their own lives. An interesting discussion, skilfully fostered by the teacher, arose when the idea of a 'promise' was considered with children giving examples of promises they had and had not kept and how they felt when promises were broken. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils know that the Bible is a special book, know that there are special books in other religions and are beginning to understand a number of the stories and their meanings. In a Year 4/ 5 class pupils considered the Hindu story of, 'The Hunter and the Birds' and thought about how the key message of 'working together' related to school life by giving a number of examples of when co-operation achieved a better desired result. Pupils develop sound knowledge of the other major world faiths, for example in Year 3 they were considering aspects of Judaism and in Year 6 were studying Islam.

155 The progress children make in their lessons is often good. Many pupils across the school often enjoy listening to stories in religious education and as parts of collective acts of worship. Children are prepared to offer ideas, answer questions and show an appreciation of the views of others. When engaged in an activity they mostly have a good working pace and show perseverance and concentration.

156 Pupils' progress is also positively influenced by the quality of the teaching. During the inspection all teaching in the subject was satisfactory or better. Teachers plan their lesson well and use a range of resources, including visits, videos, artefacts and outside speakers to gain and retain the interest of the children. For example during the inspection week Year 6 children had a very successful visit from a Muslim parent who helped them to understand some of the basic beliefs in Islam. Where possible links are made between religious education and other subjects, for instance the study of Hinduism in Year 4/5 takes place at the same time as the children are studying the geography topic of a village in India. Teachers and support assistants are skilful at encouraging children to express their views and give them time and opportunity to do so. Activities are generally well matched to the learning objectives but occasionally there can be over reliance on worksheets which do not give children enough scope to record their own learning. This is an area to which the school could usefully give consideration.

157 The curriculum is well organised to take into account the mixed age classes with which the school has to work. The co-ordinator has a clear view of the subject and has led the school well in addressing the issue of greater multi-faith aspects raised by the last inspection. This has been done so successfully that the breadth and balance of the topics taught is now a strength within the subject.