

# INSPECTION REPORT

**BRABOURNE CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Brabourne, Nr. Ashford

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118663

Headteacher: Glyn Jones

Reporting inspector: Lynn Adair  
21095

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> February - 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2000

Inspection number: 193984

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brabourne Ashford Kent
Postcode:	TN25 5LQ
Telephone number:	01303 813276
Fax number:	none
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Tessa Marshall
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Lynn Adair	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Under fives; Mathematics; Science; Information technology; Art; Design and technology; Special educational needs.	The school's results and achievements; How well pupils are taught; How good curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils are?
Susan Burgess	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well the school cares for its pupils; How good the school's partnership with parents is?
Jon Palethorpe	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Religious education; Geography; History; Music; Physical education; Equal opportunities.	How well the school is led and managed?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Brabourne Primary is a smaller than average size voluntary controlled Church of England school for boys and girls aged four to eleven years old. It has 102 full-time pupils on roll, drawing its pupils from a much wider area than the small village in which it is situated. Attainment on entry is generally good compared with pupils of the same age nationally. Fifteen pupils in the school have special educational needs, comprising almost 15 per cent of those on roll, a figure that is below average. Two pupils have statements of special educational need, which is a broadly average proportion. There is no significant ethnic minority. Only 2 per cent of pupils have free school meals, which is much lower than average.

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

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. Pupils build satisfactorily on their good attainment on entry so that they attain high standards by the time they reach Year 6. Their very positive attitudes contribute significantly to their gains in learning. The quality of provision, including teaching, is broadly satisfactory, with strengths in the school's partnership with parents. However, the quality of the curriculum requires improvement to ensure that all pupils benefit and learn as well as they can. Leadership and management of the school is satisfactory, but a more self-critical approach is needed in order to be aware of what is done well and where weaknesses are in order to improve further. Expenditure per pupil is high as it is so small a school, but overall the value for money it provides is satisfactory.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

- Very high standards have been sustained over the last three years in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, and in reading at the end of Key Stage 1. High standards are evident in much of pupils' current work.
- Children's very good attitudes, their behaviour and the way they get on very well with each other have a significantly positive impact on the climate in the school and the gains they make in their learning.
- Moral development is well promoted by the school, creating a strong sense of fairness, justice and self-respect among pupils.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. Their close involvement and interest in their children's work make a very good contribution to the standards they attain.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- The standards achieved in information technology, and ensuring that the subject is planned for more carefully to meet statutory requirements.
- The quality of teaching and learning to address weaknesses in planning and assessment in order to raise expectations of pupils even higher for the rate at which they learn and involvement in their own learning.
- A more thorough evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning in order to identify good practice and where further improvement may be made, with more involvement of coordinators in the process.
- The quality of the curriculum, and of assessment information and the way it is used in planning lessons, to ensure a better match of work across the range of attainment in each class.
- The school development plan, to provide a more useful tool for improvement.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement has been satisfactory overall since the school was last inspected in January 1997, although there is still much work to do. Standards attained at the time of the last inspection required some improvement, and this has been successfully achieved in design and technology in both key stages, in science in Key Stage 1 and in physical education in Key Stage 2. Additional improvement has been made in pupils' knowledge and understanding in religious education in both key stages, and in history and geography in Key Stage 2. However, standards in information technology have deteriorated. The school has established some structures to deal with key issues in the last report related to teaching, the curriculum and assessment, but weaknesses still exist, mainly as a result of a lack of rigorous monitoring and evaluation of both teaching and learning. The role of coordinators has been strengthened, but they are still not effectively involved in the monitoring process. Self-evaluation is still at an early stage of development, and this is reflected in the current school development plan, which still has many shortcomings that limit its use as a tool for improvement. Statutory requirements that were not met in the last inspection now comply, although aspects of the current information technology curriculum are not covered adequately. Heating and ventilation problems in classrooms have been mostly dealt with.

## STANDARDS

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

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

At the end of Key Stage 2, the school has maintained its very high results in English and mathematics, which are in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally and compare very well with average results for similar types of school. In science, the school's performance had a slight dip last year, mainly because the small number in the cohort affected the overall statistics. Nevertheless, the performance was still very good compared with national averages, and similar to most schools with the same free school meals as Brabourne. A high proportion of current pupils are on course to exceed expected levels in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science reflecting their good knowledge and understanding. Results at the end of Key Stage 1 are very high compared with the national average in reading, good in writing, and similar to national averages in mathematics. Results compare very well with similar schools in reading, and the very high standards have been maintained over the last three years. Results are more variable in writing and mathematics, mainly as a result of the small number in each cohort. They are not significantly different to similar types of schools in writing, but below those of similar schools in mathematics. Work of current Year 2 pupils shows that standards in writing and mathematics are on course to be better this year. Standards in information technology are unsatisfactory at the end of each key stage, although standards in religious education exceed the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards in geography, history and physical education are satisfactory in Key Stage 1, and good in Key Stage 2. Standards in all other subjects are satisfactory in each key stage. Children under five achieve higher standards than expected of pupils of similar ages in literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their personal development. Their creative and physical skills are satisfactory. Achievement of pupils across the school is satisfactory in building on their good attainment on entry, although higher attaining pupils could achieve even more if higher levels of demand were made of their work, especially in terms of developing their enquiry skills. Pupils with special educational needs across the school are helped to make good progress, particularly where supported by learning support assistants.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils have a very good work ethic and maintain high levels of concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in lessons and at playtime, notable during the inspection when bad weather meant pupils had few opportunities for outdoor play.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils and adults in the school get on very well together. Pupils could be given more opportunities to bring their own ideas to learning and be less dependent on teachers doing things for them.
Attendance	Good. Punctual and efficient start to the day.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 88 per cent of lessons. A small amount of good teaching was observed (approximately 5 per cent), and this was all in the under fives. The remaining 12 per cent is unsatisfactory, of which one lesson seen was of poor quality. Teaching does not assist pupils to acquire new learning as effectively as it could, and it is often only because of pupils' very good attitudes to learning that they make the progress that they do. The main strength of the teaching lies in the good management of pupils, which creates a positive environment in which to work. The main shortcomings of teaching include low expectations of pupils' achievement, especially for the higher attainers, which results in a lack of challenge in the work provided. This is related to weaknesses in teachers' planning and day-to-day assessment. Basic skills are satisfactorily taught, but not all teachers take full account of the learning intentions for different ages of pupils identified in national literacy and numeracy strategy guidance to build on their prior attainment as effectively as possible.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. Learning opportunities are not well matched to the needs of pupils in each class to take full account of their different ages and levels of attainment. Some concerns about the difference in curricular provision for pupils in Year 1 in different classes. Information technology does not meet statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Arrangements are well organised so that learning support assistants provide good support. Targets for learning could be more precise.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Good promotion of pupils' moral development, sound provision for their spiritual and social development, but their cultural development is still not promoted well enough.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. Good procedures in place to ensure pupils' welfare is well looked after, and satisfactory support and guidance are provided. Weaknesses in monitoring academic performance and personal development.
How well the school works in partnership with its parents	Good. Parents are provided with good quality information. Parents are very supportive, which has a very positive impact on the work of the school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. Headteacher leads by example, with a large teaching commitment, curriculum responsibility and taking after-school clubs. More delegation to other staff is needed, to help them make a more effective contribution.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Sound. Good structure to carry out duties. Very supportive, but need greater understanding of school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. Monitoring and evaluation lack the rigour needed to clearly identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. School development plan is not a useful structure for identifying action needed to address weaknesses and evaluate progress.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. Systems for controlling income and expenditure are effective. Financial planning needs a more strategic view of the school's needs and better evaluation of the use of resources. Principles of best value are adopted satisfactorily.
Adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	Satisfactory overall, but more resources are needed in design and technology, and old library books need replacing. Small hall creates difficulties for physical education.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress and parents are kept well informed of this.</li> <li>• Behaviour in school is good and children are helped to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Their children are expected to work hard to achieve their best.</li> <li>• Teaching is good and the school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents and they feel comfortable about approaching the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The work which their children are expected to do at home.</li> <li>• A more interesting range of activities for pupils outside of lessons.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with almost all of the positive views expressed by parents. However, children could be helped to make better progress with more good teaching. Leadership and management could be more effective in identifying what needs to be done to bring this about. Issues raised by parents have been carefully considered; inspection evidence shows that the range of activities outside lessons could be improved and parents could be consulted more about the type of homework their children are expected to do.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When children enter the school, their attainment is generally above average compared with children of similar ages nationally. Children make satisfactory gains in their learning overall in the reception class towards the desirable outcomes for young children's learning, which are the government's recommendations of achievement at five years old. A large proportion are in line to at least achieve the expected goals by the age of five in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their personal and social development. A good proportion is likely to exceed these goals. Most children are in line to attain expected standards in physical and creative skills. In the last inspection, attainment of the under fives often exceeded expected standards and this continues to be the case. Achievement is satisfactory overall. It is better in class discussions and group activities, when most children are given appropriately demanding work. However, the work could be adapted to extend the learning of higher attainers. In some free-choice periods, children do not achieve as much as they could. Activities are not planned well enough to ensure that children are engaged sufficiently or given the opportunity to develop learning further. The lack of outdoor facilities and a stimulating home corner limits children's development of creative and physical skills to a higher standard, and does not maximise their potential on entry.

2. Inspection evidence shows that standards in the core subject of English and mathematics are generally above those expected of seven year olds nationally at the end of Key Stage 1. Results of the 1999 National Curriculum statutory assessments reflected high standards in reading, where results were in the top 5 per cent of schools in terms of average points achieved. The results were very high compared with those of schools whose pupils are from similar backgrounds. Results in writing and mathematics were very high for the proportion attaining the expected standards, but few pupils attained above this level, which reduced the overall average points scored. This meant that results in writing were above the national average, but they were average when compared with schools of the same type. In mathematics, results were average compared with schools nationally, but below average in comparison with similar schools. Attainment of current Year 2 pupils indicates more pupils are achieving high standards in writing, but in mathematics only a small proportion attain above average standards, although attainment in number is good. According to teacher assessments in science, very high proportions attain above the expected standard, but this was not reflected in current Year 2 pupils' work. Their attainment is mainly average because much of the work provided is at the same average level of demand and is not challenging enough for higher attainers. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in information technology are below those expected of most seven year olds. In religious education, standards exceed those specified for Year 2 pupils in the locally Agreed Syllabus, and the work set makes good use of pupils' effective literacy skills.

3. Standards seen during the inspection at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in religious education are above those specified in the locally Agreed Syllabus for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. In information technology, however, pupils are working at a level lower than that expected of most 11 year olds. The results of statutory assessment tests in English and mathematics for 11 year olds in 1999 were very high compared with national average and in the top five per cent of schools. Results were very high compared with similar schools. This reflects pupils' very good knowledge and understanding in each subject. They were not as good in science, but still above the national average and were similar to other schools with the same characteristics as Brabourne Primary. Inspection evidence suggests that slightly more pupils currently in Year 6 are achieving higher standards in scientific knowledge and understanding than last year's group, and they are on course to improve on last year's results.

4. Attainment in the last inspection was good in reading and broadly average in other aspects of English at the end of both key stages, with some underachievement noted in speaking and listening. Standards have been maintained in reading, and some gains made in writing, speaking and listening. Trends in test results show high standards have generally been maintained, although the small number in each cohort makes it difficult to make reliable comparisons year on year. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall in both key stages, but it is variable, depending very much on the quality of the teaching. Across the school, pupils make sound use of their literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. In Key Stage 1, pupils listen attentively and talk confidently. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are articulate, and ask and answer questions coherently and fully. Pupils throughout the school develop their accuracy and fluency in reading well, and they understand an increasing range of texts. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to extract information readily from books to aid their knowledge of topics studied in other subjects, such as history and geography. Nevertheless, pupils' development of library skills is constrained by the meagre and under-used facilities. Pupils write with increasing independence, accuracy and coherence, incorporating an effective and mature vocabulary. They use their literacy skills appropriately in other subjects, for example, writing accounts of historical events and recording observations in science.

5. Since the last inspection, the high standards in mathematics have been maintained at the end of Key Stage 2, and there has been a small improvement at the end of Key Stage 1. Trends in results of national tests are broadly satisfactory, although more variable in Key Stage 1, mainly as a result of the small size of each cohort. Current achievement in each key stage is satisfactory, although higher attainers are not always provided with enough demanding work to make the gains in their learning of which they are capable. Teaching is now based on the National Numeracy Strategy and, where followed effectively, helps pupils to make some good progress in their understanding of number and satisfactory gains in learning overall in shape, measures and data handling. However, not enough progress is being made in developing pupils' learning in use and application of mathematical skills. Where pupils use their numeracy skills in other subjects, they do so satisfactorily; for example, to measure and to represent data in science.

6. Standards in science at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly similar to those noted in the last inspection, but not as good as those suggested by the 1998 and 1999 teacher assessments. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 reflect the good standards seen in the last inspection and, after a small dip in last year's results, have generally been well above national figures each year. Pupils make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding of key scientific concepts, reflected in assessments at the end of the key stage. However, their experimental and investigative skills are not developed satisfactorily. Pupils carry out a range of practical tasks, but over-direction by adults and prescriptive tasks often limit their ability to develop enquiry skills to a higher level.

7. In both key stages, pupils' achievement in information technology is unsatisfactory. They do not make sufficient gains in their learning, resulting in lower standards by the end of Key Stage 2 than those seen in the last inspection. Pupils do not develop skills consistently or systematically because they do not have enough opportunities to use computers to practise their skills or to use information technology to support their learning in other subjects.

8. Achievement in religious education is satisfactory in each key stage, and the good standards observed are better than those noted in the last inspection. Good use is made of pupils' oral skills. Good standards were also seen in geography and history in Key Stage 2, which is an improvement on the last inspection. Pupils' good literacy skills are used effectively in these subjects in Key Stage 2 to develop their knowledge and understanding well, although achievement is less pronounced in terms of developing their skills in each subject. Standards have improved in design and technology at the end of each key stage, so that they are now satisfactory. Unsatisfactory standards in physical education were noted at the end of Key Stage 2 in the last inspection, and they are now much improved, with some good attainment seen in gymnastics. At the end of both key stages, standards have been broadly sustained in art and music, and in history, geography and physical education at the end of Key Stage 1.

9. Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory. However, the learning of some is constrained because too much of the work provided for all pupils is at the same level, regardless of age and ability in the mixed-age classes. This fails to extend their learning to the levels of which they are capable. As a result, higher attaining pupils, although having a good knowledge and understanding in most subjects, are not helped to develop their skills to a more advanced level, for instance in science and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall towards targets in their individual education plans, particularly in their literacy skills, as a result of the good support by learning support assistants. These pupils make better progress when support is clearly focused and linked to specific targets. Where support is not available, pupils' needs are not always taken fully into account in by teachers planning for mixed-age and ability groups, and these pupils sometimes struggle with material that is too complex. No notable variation in attainment between boys and girls was observed during the inspection.

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

10. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and have a significantly positive impact on learning, a judgement that was similarly made in the previous inspection. The school's youngest pupils in the reception class are very keen and eager to learn. They quickly settle into school, developing very good attitudes to learning and a strong work ethic. They are confident in following school routines. They become engrossed in stories and class discussions, although they sometimes have to sit inactive for too long a period. Pupils across the school are interested in their work and concentrate for extended periods of time, in spite of the sometimes uninspiring material with which they are provided. They are happy to talk about themselves and confidently share their work. There is good support for the few extra-curricular clubs and various charities. Pupils are keen to represent the school in events such as music festivals and sporting fixtures.

11. Behaviour in class, in assemblies and around the school is very good, even when bad weather prevents them from taking outdoor exercise, as was the case in the inspection week. There have been no exclusions in the last twelve months and no incidents of bullying observed. Pupils are quick to follow instructions from an early age and are conscious of the school's high expectations. Lunchtimes are relaxed, sociable and orderly. Pupils are welcoming and courteous to visitors. They consider others when moving around the school, walking in a quiet, sensible way and routinely holding doors open for those following. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting commented favourably on the very high standards of behaviour among the children, and this was borne out by inspection evidence.

12. Relationships are very good between pupils and staff and between pupils themselves. They often applaud the efforts and achievements of others spontaneously, for example when work is shared. They are supportive of each other when working in groups and pairs, for instance when creating sea creature movements with a partner in physical education, or discussing the nature of anger as part of a religious education lesson. A 'buddy' system operates for the first few weeks after children start school, and older pupils provide good role models for the younger ones. Older and younger pupils play amicably together at break times, and clearly enjoy the different areas of play space available. A few parents expressed concern that younger children were intimidated by older ones playing football during breaktime, but there was no evidence of this during the inspection. Play can tend to become boisterous, even in the designated quieter area, but pupils respond quickly to reminders so that calm is soon re-established.

13. Personal development is satisfactory. It is enhanced by the increased responsibility that pupils take as they progress through the school. Even the youngest are encouraged to dress and undress themselves independently, although very few can manage to knot their own tie, a task which takes up a significant amount of the class teacher's time after every physical education lesson. By Year 6, pupils take responsibility for practical tasks around the school, such as helping to serve out lunches, setting up assemblies and ringing the bell. They also volunteer to help with the younger children during wet playtimes. However, there is a tendency by teachers to over-direct pupils in lessons, so that pupils are not able to make

choices in their learning for themselves or take higher levels of responsibility, for example in choosing equipment or in deciding the best method for recording their work. Sometimes pupils sit and wait for the next instruction rather than taking the initiative for themselves, so that time is wasted, leading to fewer gains in learning. As at the time of the last inspection, opportunities are being missed for the enhancement of pupils' personal development through links with both the immediate and the wider community.

14. Attendance, at 95.8 per cent, is slightly above the national average, with no unauthorised absence. Parents ensure that their children are punctual to school in the mornings and relatively few holidays are taken in term time. High attendance rates have been sustained since the last inspection.

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

15. Overall, the quality of teaching in the school is satisfactory and better in 88 per cent of lessons. However, 12 per cent is unsatisfactory and one lesson seen was of poor quality, and in these lessons pupils did not learn as effectively as they should. Teaching is good in five per cent of lessons, all with the under fives. No better quality teaching was observed in the remainder of the school. Often pupils learn well and increase their understanding because of their very good attitudes to learning and their concentrated efforts rather than inspiration drawn from the teaching. In the last inspection, teaching was judged to be variable in quality, with a significant proportion of teaching unsatisfactory, and this is still the case. The main shortcomings identified in the last inspection were a lack of challenge and low expectations of pupils' achievement, and these shortcomings have still to be fully addressed. Common weaknesses within lessons that are otherwise satisfactory lie in teachers' planning and day-to-day assessment.

16. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory in most subjects, with some notable exceptions. In the under fives, teachers are adept at telling stories that enthral the children. They are skilled at explaining new concepts in class discussions so that the children understand what they are expected to learn. On occasion, discussions go on for too long, and the children are inactive rather than exploring and investigating for themselves. Teachers' good subject knowledge in physical education and music at the end of Key Stage 2 means that pupils' skills are developed well. However, unsatisfactory subject knowledge, in art in the same phase, leads to not enough development of pupils' creative skills and techniques. In physical education in Years 3 and 4, subject knowledge is poor, so that pupils make few gains in their learning in these lessons and the quality of their work is unsatisfactory. Across the school, teachers are neither confident nor skilled enough in teaching information technology to ensure that pupils have regular access to computers to practise their skills and support learning in other subjects.

17. Teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is broadly satisfactory in helping pupils to increase their understanding as they move through the school. Most teachers follow the recommended frameworks in planning lessons, but work is not sufficiently adapted to cater for the wide range of age and attainment in each of the mixed age classes. In a literacy lesson for example, work was not drawn from the recommended termly

objectives for either year group, and were chosen more randomly with little rationale. Therefore pupils were not learning in the coherent way intended in the strategy. In numeracy, page numbers as opposed to learning intentions are noted in lesson plans, so it is not always clear at what level the pupils are learning to ensure work is well matched to their needs to help them make the best progress.

18. Overall, tasks prepared for the under fives in focused activities provide an appropriate level of challenge, but in free-choice activities too few demands are made of children and consequently they do not use the time to learn effectively. Teachers miss opportunities to reinforce children's understanding through recording in written or drawn form. Across the school, too much work pitched at one level and too much direction by adults means that pupils are not always challenged effectively to develop their intellectual skills. They rely too much on the teacher, which prevents them thinking for themselves. There is occasionally an over-reliance on uninspiring worksheets or workbooks as the main resource. They are not always adapted sufficiently to cater for the full range of age and attainment in each class, and often fail to enthuse pupils sufficiently. Older and higher attaining pupils are not always challenged enough by activities, and younger and lower attaining pupils sometimes struggle with work that is too difficult. A credit to the pupils is that they still work hard in spite of this. They sustain their concentration, are usually engaged in their work, and are keen to improve.

19. Inappropriate expectations are closely linked to weaknesses in planning. Teachers do not plan effectively for the wide spread of attainment in each class or for the different ages in mixed-age classes. Most plans identify broad objectives for learning and describe what pupils will do. However, they lack precision in identifying the level of skill to be developed, and objectives for learning are too broadly stated to identify specifically what different groups of pupils are expected to learn. There are very few references to intended outcomes for learning related to different ages or levels of attainment, though that is crucial in view of the mixed ages in each class. The lack of precision in planning is often linked to a lack of understanding about what different groups of pupils need to do next, stemming from weaknesses in day-to-day assessment. Teachers are not always aware precisely where pupils are in their learning and where to take them next. Teachers' comments in marking usually respond to pupils' efforts, but few point out where pupils have gone wrong or set new targets. Plans are rarely adapted in the short-term as a result of such assessments, and day-to-day assessment practice is not an integral feature of teaching across the school.

20. Learning support assistants are well involved in planning and help pupils with special educational needs to learn well. The notes they make on these pupils when they work with them are a useful basis on which to build, though they could be more sharply focused on the learning targets in the individual education plans of these pupils. Teachers could make more effective use of this assessment information in adapting future work for these pupils.

21. Teachers' methods are satisfactory overall in aiding learning. The best teaching is characterised by focused questioning, used to target specific pupils so as to check their understanding and help them think more deeply. This was seen particularly in some under-five lessons. Most lessons across the school begin with a useful recap to consolidate pupils' learning, followed by sound instructions and clear explanations so that pupils understand what they are expected to learn. However, introductions are sometimes dull and uninteresting, and often take too long. They are often very prescriptive in what they require, which stifles pupils' opportunities to think for themselves, to experiment and explore,

especially in investigative work in mathematics and science. Teachers check on pupils as they work, and, in the best lessons, use these opportunities effectively to focus on developing the skill of individuals and small groups. Occasionally, though, there is a reliance on worksheets or books to teach the skills rather than the teacher, and this results in pupils raising lots of queries. They then have to wait their turn for answers as queues build up, and consequently time is wasted.

22. Management of pupils throughout the school is mainly good. Good management is based on high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the very good relationships that are fostered. This sets a suitable tone for lessons and learning in which pupils can concentrate well and where little time is wasted on dealing with distractions. Adults are well deployed to support pupils as they work, although parents need to be monitored carefully to ensure that they are not doing the work for the pupils, which limits the development of pupils' skills. Teaching time is not always used effectively. Pupils often have to sit through long introductions and periods of inactivity or wait for the next instruction, which slows their rate of learning. Some lessons include useful summaries of progress so far, when pupils are able to share their achievements, but these times are sometimes dominated by teachers rather than letting pupils contribute more fully.

23. All pupils are provided with homework tasks from an early age, such as reading, learning spellings and multiplication facts, as well as some additional activities, all of which support pupils' learning. By Years 5 and 6, pupils take a keen interest in pursuing topics at home, and this makes a significant contribution to their learning.

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

24. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are unsatisfactory overall, and an appropriate statutory curriculum is not fully in place. Shortcomings identified in the last inspection have been partly addressed. For example, a two-year programme has been developed that give curriculum planning some structure, but it still does not cater fully for the range of age and attainment in each of the mixed age classes. It does not ensure that pupils receive a curriculum well matched to their needs so that they make the maximum gains in their learning.

25. An Early Years' policy briefly outlines the broad expectations for children under five. It refers suitably to the intention to provide a curriculum that relates to the nationally recommended areas of learning. However, these principles are not translated effectively into curriculum plans to fully meet the needs of children of this age. Most intentions are related to National Curriculum subjects, and do not show how such work links to the nationally recommended areas of learning in guiding teachers' planning. Planning does not provide opportunities for regular outdoor activities to enable children to develop their physical skills. Medium and short term planning contains too little definition of the precise skills that are being taught or specific references to either the recommended desirable outcomes for children at the age of five or National Curriculum programmes of study. As a result, planning does not identify clearly enough how tasks are adapted so that children at different levels of attainment make their best progress. Not enough thought is given to the planning of free choice activities to ensure that children make the most of these independent opportunities for learning.

26. The breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has some weaknesses in ensuring pupils' skills are built on systematically from year to year. The curriculum has adequate breadth in that it includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and the Agreed Syllabus for religious education. It is extended in the junior years with the teaching of French. However, not all the requirements of the National Curriculum are met in information technology, and this inhibits the development of pupils' skills in this subject. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies competently, although not all staff are using the frameworks as effectively as they could to guide their short term planning. This means that learning intentions are not always well matched to the range of pupils' needs in each class through a lack of consistent and differentiated planning. Not enough evaluation of each framework's implementation has taken place to address this variance and assess their impact on learning in English and mathematics, notably in development of pupils' use and application of skills in these subjects.

27. Schemes of work have been developed for most subjects, the exception being in information technology where teachers have insufficient guidance to prepare their own plans. Schemes show the work to be covered over each key stage, mostly planned over a two-year cycle to cater for the two-year groups, but they do not identify clearly the learning expectations for each year. Progress from year to year is therefore uncertain, especially in terms of skills being developed. Medium term plans do not show how work is structured over each half term. They set out the learning objectives for whole classes, but these are often broadly stated and pitched at one level, with little indication of what might be expected of the different age groups as well as higher and lower attainers. Learning outcomes are shown, but they are not referenced to the official levels of attainment, and expectations of different groups of pupils are unclear as a result. This means that pupils are not always provided with a close enough match of work to build on their prior attainment.

28. The curriculum is broadened by a satisfactory number of extra-curricular activities, although the range is limited mainly to sports, including football, netball and cricket. There is also an opportunity to learn the recorder. Parents' also show some dissatisfaction with the range of extra-curricular activities.

29. The curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Sound provision is made for the individual needs identified in statements, and pupils are well integrated into all aspects of school life. Individual education plans are satisfactory. The best targets in these plans relate to supporting behavioural and emotional difficulties. They are precise and have means to measure their effectiveness, which assists continuity and the monitoring of progress. However, the targets related to learning needs need to be more sharply focused.

30. There are some constraints to the curriculum that result in pupils not having equal access at the appropriate level. Older, higher attaining pupils in the mixed age classes are often presented with work that is insufficiently challenging to enable them to acquire skills at a higher level. Pupils' access to physical education is limited, partly by shortage of accommodation and the structure of the timetable, but also because some pupils are

withdrawn to read to parents during their physical education lesson. Valuable though the reading session may be, it impinges on an already limited physical education programme. Some Year 1 pupils work with reception pupils whilst others work with Year 2. In literacy and numeracy, care is taken to ensure that those working with younger pupils are challenged suitably, but in other areas of the curriculum they are not presented with the same experiences as those working with Year 2 pupils.

31. The school promotes personal, social and health education satisfactorily. The school's programme of support includes drugs awareness and health education, although not drawn together in a structure to make this explicit for teachers. The governors have an appropriate policy on sex education, much of which is taught through the science programme.

32. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is satisfactory, although since the last inspection there has been no significant expansion of the school's links with either the immediate or wider community to enhance and enrich the curriculum. A small number of visits take place to support the topics being taught, for example to farms and further afield to Greenwich, about which the pupils talk enthusiastically. The school's relatively isolated position means that transport is always required for visits, even to the local church for such events as harvest festival or the Christmas carol service. The parish has been without a vicar for some time, but there are plans, with a new incumbent, to renew previously strong links between church and school. However, the school does not make good use of its location in a very interesting area or exploit the ease with which crossings could be made to France to make use of pupils' linguistic skills. The range of visitors to the school is severely restricted by the limited space available, but specialist music teachers give weekly lessons and Kent Fire Brigade and the school nurse give practical advice. From time to time, parents share their expertise on a particular topic.

33. Relationships with partner institutions are satisfactory. Links with a local nursery help children to settle into school well, as they are encouraged to visit the term before. There is a thriving link with Smeeth Primary School for joint theatre workshops and musical events. Pupils also participate successfully in competitive sport against other schools. Swimming lessons in Ashford are arranged during the summer term. Some links with secondary schools have been established, for example to help pupils to begin to set up a school web page. Exploration of Internet links to widen pupils' horizons is at an early stage of development, but there are plans to exchange information by e-mail with other schools locally.

34. The provision that the school makes for the spiritual, moral and social development of its pupils is satisfactory overall, but there are shortcomings in provision for their cultural development. The situation was very similar in the last inspection.

35. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies take place each day in different groupings with the intention of enabling pupils to reflect on their own lives and those of other people. However, the time taken is often too brief to do this effectively, and pupils do not have a strong participatory role to share their views. There are some sound examples of opportunities for spiritual development through the curriculum, for example when pupils under five talk about what it would be like without sight, and they are enthralled when considering how a plant grows. However, there are too few planned opportunities in other classes and other subjects, such as art and music, to support spiritual development effectively.

36. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. The personal, social and health education programme gives pupils good information about the dangers of drugs. In the study of their bodies and how they work, pupils are given sound positive messages about healthy eating and healthy lifestyles. Aspects of personal, social and health education are now discussed in recently introduced 'circle time'. Here, pupils have opportunities to discuss many moral issues, such as sharing secrets, in a calm and supportive atmosphere. They gain a clear picture of natural justice. The school's code of conduct creates a positive picture of what is right and wrong as well as a need for rules. Teachers show good control and management of pupils in class, which reinforces the good moral code of the school through positive encouragement, stressing principles of fairness and self-respect. Parents are supportive of the school's work in this area.

37. There is sound provision for pupils' social development, although the opportunities provided out of lessons for pupils to take on meaningful responsibility are not so evident in lessons. All pupils take turns in helping with routine classroom tasks. Older pupils take on responsibilities for preparing the hall for assemblies and general duties around the school. Team captains are appointed as part of the school's house system. The school's 'buddy' initiative encourages the oldest pupils to act as friends and helpers for younger pupils at play and lunchtimes, demonstrating good social understanding. Nevertheless, such levels of responsibility are not well promoted in lessons. Pupils are given too few chances to show initiative and take responsibility for aspects of their own learning. The school's extra-curricular sporting activities provide opportunities for pupils to meet together socially and appreciate teamwork.

38. Provision for pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory, and has not improved since the last inspection. Pupils gain some understanding of their own cultural heritage through their studies of literary works, and studies of the locality and the wider world in geography and history. They study other faiths as part of the religious education programme. However, in the school overall, there are too few planned opportunities to promote understanding of the cultural background and heritage of different societies, and Britain as a multi-cultural society. There is not the width of music from other cultures for pupils to listen to and discuss. Where music is played at the start and end of assemblies, little or no mention is made of it during the course of the week. Around the school, there is not enough emphasis on art by famous artists from a range of cultures. There are some opportunities for pupils to learn French, but not to apply their skills in a real life context.

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

39. The headteacher and all other staff of this small school know the pupils well and provide a safe and caring environment for ensuring pupils' welfare. Procedures to support this work are good and have remained at this level since the last inspection. There are appropriate arrangements for the promotion and monitoring of health and safety. Problems occur in very windy conditions because some of the classroom doors cannot be securely fastened, but the school is seeking ways to remedy this situation. Pupils are well supervised throughout the day. When practical help is needed, for instance if pupils are unwell or require first aid, they are treated calmly and quickly. Parents are always informed if there is any cause for concern. Health issues are well taught in science lessons, and visitors such as the school nurse and fire service officers help to raise pupils' awareness of health and safety issues further. The school provides cycling proficiency training and encourages pupils to use their bicycles to travel to school. Child protection arrangements are appropriately organised in line with local authority expectations, and staff training is kept up to date.

40. The school monitors attendance informally but efficiently, and there are routine termly visits by the Education Welfare Officer. Parents' attention is drawn to the importance of good attendance in the school brochure and this is sufficient as the rate is already above the national average and relatively few holidays are taken in term time.

41. The school has very effective measures to promote good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour, expressed in a comprehensive policy that includes references to preventing bullying. Teaching and non-teaching staff are consistent in their application of the principles in the policy and in their high expectations in lessons and at breaktimes. They work very successfully as a team to promote high standards of behaviour. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting expressed strong support for this aspect of the school's work, which helps to promote good behaviour further.

42. There are weaknesses in the school's monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development, a situation that has not been improved since the last inspection when it was also a weakness. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory. A policy has been developed to provide guidance, but its implementation lacks sufficient focus on what pupils have learnt during their time in school. Teachers carry out assessments at particular points of a pupil's time in school, including a baseline profile on entry and the statutory tests at ages seven and eleven. In addition, the school is in the process of introducing optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 to track progress more effectively. The school keeps individual profiles of pupils' work, but these are not organised well enough to allow pupils' progress to be monitored effectively over time. Work is not always dated or the level of attainment noted. There is no moderated portfolio of work to guide teachers, particularly those new to the profession, to enable them to judge attainment accurately. Very little tracking of attainment takes place in subjects other than the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Some notes are kept in relation to pupils' personal development in some teachers' day books, and comments are made in end-of-year reports. However, this does not act as an effective way to keep track of their levels of application, cooperation and concentration on a regular basis.

43. The use of assessment to inform planning is unsatisfactory. Little use is made of the baseline assessment in the reception classes to set targets for children at different stages of their learning and to inform and adapt planning. The school is beginning to analyse information from the English, mathematics and science tests at both key stages and to set numerical targets. However, the process lacks rigour in identifying precisely where improvement is needed in the drive for higher standards and the setting of more challenging targets. Throughout the school, the information gained from assessment is not used well to plan work for different groups within the same class. Assessment opportunities identified in teachers' plans are of a very broad nature. This means that planning is informed more by schemes of work than by assessment information on pupils' individual learning needs. Assessment data is crucial in light of the need for accurate transfer of information in the job-share arrangements that exist in most classes. Teachers need to make better use of assessment information in planning their work.

44. The support and guidance given to pupils is satisfactory. Pupils have recently been involved in devising their own targets for learning and, although they tend to be fairly general in nature, some of the older pupils are perceptive in their awareness of what needs to be improved. Achievements are well recognised and valued by the school, for example when lower attaining pupils read out their work or demonstrate something for others in the class. They are encouraged to improve. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Their needs are recognised through sound screening procedures. Teachers are guided by a suitable policy that complies with the official Code of Practice for special needs. The register is kept up to date, and regular reviews take place involving parents and outside agencies where required to keep track of their progress. Provision for these pupils is then suitably matched to their needs and ensures their entitlement to the curriculum.

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

45. Parents are very supportive of the school. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very positive overall, as were comments expressed at the parents' meeting. They are very happy with the standards achieved by pupils and the progress they make, as well as with their behaviour. They would feel comfortable in approaching the school with any suggestions or concerns, and strongly support the attitudes and values the school promotes. However, some parents would like more advance information about topics to be taught, and there is some disagreement about the expectations for homework. Some parents would also like to see a more interesting range of activities provided outside lessons.

46. The use of parents as helpers in school has improved since the last inspection when parents were not encouraged to hear readers. Parents now make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, regularly helping in class with activities such as reading, cooking or art. Class teachers ensure that parents know how their time with the children would be best spent and deploy them well, though they need to check more carefully that parents do not do pupils' work for them. The very strong Parents and Friends Association organises a range of social and fund-raising events, which enabled nearly £3000 to be donated to the school last

year – a significant amount for such as small school. As a result of joint decisions between staff and the association, this money was used for such items as computer software and maths equipment. Parents are keen to help their children at home. They regularly hear their children read and work with them on other tasks. However, not all are clear about the expectations for homework and would welcome more guidance in this respect so they can offer even better support. The school is aware that it would be helpful to consult with parents on this issue.

47. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good. The quantity of information for parents is good. There is a prominent noticeboard by the school gate and much information is exchanged informally before and after school. Consultation evenings with teachers are held in the autumn and spring terms, usually with one hundred per cent attendance. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to regular reviews of their children's progress and, again, attendance is good. There is also very good support for productions, meetings and the annual open day. Literacy, numeracy and science workshops were well attended. There are regular informative newsletters from both the school and the Parents Association. The prospectus complies with statutory requirements but is rather dull and uninviting to read. The quality of annual reports has improved since the last inspection. They now describe clearly what pupils have covered, and there are some comments on their progress in the best examples, mainly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. There is, however, little evaluative information in other subjects or reference to personal development. Home-school books for younger children are a valuable method of exchanging information, although less use is made of this resource as pupils move through the school.

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

48. The leadership and management of the headteacher and staff is satisfactory overall. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and leads very much by example. In addition to his responsibilities as headteacher, he has a very full teaching programme, a high level of curriculum responsibility, and a large commitment to extra-curricular activities. Since the last inspection there has been a move towards more delegation of responsibility to the deputy headteacher and class teachers, who now have some clearly defined curriculum responsibilities. However, the role curriculum co-ordinators is still at an early stage of development in providing a strong lead to their areas of responsibility. At present they do not make an effective contribution to the work of the school.

49. The school has a set of aims that are clearly set out in the school brochure, and are evident in the work of the school. In particular, very good relationships permeate all dealings with pupils, teachers, non-teaching staff, governors and parents, who all have confidence in the work of the school. Parents indicate that they are satisfied and content to have their children at the school, and pupils indicate that they are very happy. In discussion with Year 6 pupils, they can give an endless list of their likes about the school, but when asked for their dislikes, some can list none. The 'family' feeling about the school has many benefits, and there is much to be proud of, but it does mean that parents and some teachers are not fully aware of what needs improving.

50. The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities is satisfactory. Governors are well briefed by the local education authority. They have a sound committee structure for exercising their responsibilities, and their roles are clearly defined. They are well aware of their statutory duties and are conscientious in fulfilling them. There is a good relationship between the headteacher and the governing body, and governors are keen to be involved and support the work of the school. They have a regular programme of focused visits to find out about its work to assess whether the school is meeting its statutory requirements. They are well aware of the deficiencies in information technology and are currently investigating a number of possibilities to overcome them. This is a good example of how governors are actively involved in strategic planning and ensuring that the school obtains best value for money. The headteacher provides governors with details of the school's national test results which, whilst outcomes are very good overall, do have areas for improvement. The headteacher's regular reports provide little other information on pupil performance, or, in particular, how the school is adding value to the good attainment on entry. There is insufficient in-depth analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses to enable the governors to make a more effective contribution to raising standards. There are inherent dangers in governors frequently describing the school as 'excellent', for this leads to a degree of complacency and a lack of probing for where further improvement may be made.

51. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance is weak. Some improvement has been made in overcoming weaknesses identified in the previous report in terms of standards. Structures have been established to address other weaknesses related to provision, and these have led to satisfactory improvement overall. However, there are still outstanding issues in relation to teaching, the curriculum, assessment and school improvement planning which affect pupils' progress and achievement. The school attempts to use assessment information to monitor and evaluate standards. but there is not a sufficiently rigorous approach to finding out how pupils' attainment matches National Curriculum levels, and whether or not attainment is high enough for individuals, groups or cohorts of pupils. This lack of rigour is also apparent in monitoring and evaluation of teaching, and leads to having insufficient information on its quality. Not enough awareness exists about strengths in different teachers' practice that could be used to help others, or the weaknesses in practice that need to be remedied. For example, in physical education lessons, constraints to learning imposed by the accommodation are being addressed successfully by the headteacher, but this good practice is not used as a model by others.

52. Appraisal procedures have been established which include regular review of performance of staff, but the process is insufficiently informed by rigorous evaluation of practice to deal with current weaknesses and identify personal and professional development needs. Co-ordinators monitor medium term plans and, to a limited extent, outcomes, but there is still little opportunity for them to monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning in their subject directly. Whilst co-ordinators are aware of their role, when they do monitor they do not have the expertise needed to provide sufficient focus and rigour in the process. This results in observational notes that are more descriptive than evaluative.

53. The school has identified its priorities for development in the school development plan, but this is not well structured or sufficiently detailed to make it a useful tool to take the school forward. It identifies improvement only to the end of this academic year and does not have a long-term view. There is a lack of clarity in setting out what action is to be taken to achieve the desired outcomes. Success criteria tend to be based on completing jobs rather than any quantifiable improvement in standards.

54. The school makes satisfactory use of its resources. Sound systems and effective administration help to keep track of the budget. Computer technology is used efficiently and effectively for the school's accounting procedures, the collection of data and electronic mail. The finance committee of the governing body is provided with financial statements, and meets regularly to keep a close check on income and expenditure and to check any variance from the planned budget. However, there has been no audit by the local authority for several years to identify where systems may be improved further. Financial planning is sound overall. Broad costings are identified in the development plan, and these form part of the budgeting proposals. Governors are systematic in their budgeting, which has resulted in them making maximum use of funds available with only a small contingency to carry forward each year. However, there are no long-term proposals for the next two or three years to provide a more strategic view of the school's needs. This makes it difficult to identify the resource implications of any major educational initiatives over a longer term. Governors receive very little information about pupils' performance or feedback on the quality of provision. As a result, they are not able to fully evaluate the impact of spending decisions and the effectiveness of the school's use of its resources, for example in relation to job-share arrangements. Careful consideration is given to the allocation of specific funds, such as those for special educational needs. These have been used effectively on the provision of learning support assistants to support pupils' learning.

55. The school applies the principles of best value to a satisfactory extent. Evidence shows that the school consults widely on major spending decisions to obtain the best price. Discussions on best value take place with other small schools in the area to compare costs. The governing body takes a keen interest in the school and the way that it is perceived locally, and is proud of its comparative performance with other schools in the area. However, there are few formal methods to gather parents' opinions about the school and its curriculum, for example about homework. As a small school, Brabourne faces many challenges in terms of effective delivery of the curriculum. The school makes use of job-share arrangements. These provide many benefits for the school, but one essential requirement of such arrangements is that information on pupils' achievements needs to be transferred effectively when one teacher takes over from another. This is normally midweek and at the end of the week, but the school's arrangements require transfer of information to occur several times, and the deputy headteacher is involved in meetings in both two key stages. This substantially increases the workload on all involved, and is not an effective use of human resources, so there is little justification for such arrangements.

56. Staffing at the school is adequate. There are sufficient full and part-time teaching staff for the number of pupils on roll. However, the fragmented approach to the job-share arrangements results in interruptions to pupils' learning programmes. Teachers are appropriately qualified for the primary phase of education, although there is a general lack of expertise in information technology among staff. Each has multiple responsibilities due to the small size of the school. Staff have gained, through experience and training, adequate skills to lead their areas of responsibility, although they would benefit from further training into how best to monitor teaching and learning effectively. The experienced administrative and support staff efficiently complement the work of the teaching staff.

57. Accommodation is adequate, but some areas are cramped. All four classrooms are temporary buildings outside the original Victorian building. They have sufficient space for pupils, although not enough for effective displays of their work. The heating and ventilation problems mentioned in the last report have been addressed. The school makes use of every available space but the small size of the hall means that only half a class at a time is able to do physical education. The timetable can therefore be disrupted in bad weather when outdoor games are planned for whole classes. The library in the main building is not well organised and some of its resources are out of date. The classification information is displayed at an impractical height for children to use easily. Outside, there are adequate hard and grass play areas, but drainage problems have restricted use of the newly acquired field. The wooden climbing frame, although relatively new, is now unsafe and out of use. There are two small raised ponds in a suitably fenced area, which are used for environmental work. It is unsatisfactory that children under five have no regular access to an outdoor area.

58. Although the general level of resources to support learning is satisfactory, there are shortages in design and technology. Much of the computer equipment is not compatible, and the school has plans to address this. Limited use is made of visits to places of interest and visitors invited into school to enhance the curriculum.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

*(References to the most relevant paragraphs in the report are identified after each issue.)*

59. In order to improve standards further, especially in information technology where standards are below those expected of seven and eleven year olds, the governing body, headteacher and staff need to:

- improve the quality of teaching by:
  - \* raising teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement and the rate at which they work, particularly of higher attaining pupils;  
*(Paragraphs: 9, 15, 18, 74, 82, 88, 95, 98, 110)*
  - \* developing effective methods to empower pupils to take a more active role in their own learning;  
*(Paragraphs: 15, 21, 66, 79, 82, 88, 91, 106, 114)*
  - \* improving teachers' subject knowledge in information technology.  
*(Paragraphs: 16, 102)*
  
- improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - \* evaluating the quality of teaching and learning, with a sharper focus on what works well in order to share good practice and help children learn more effectively, and to identify where further improvements may be made;  
*(Paragraphs: 50, 51, 75, 83, 89, 103)*
  - \* developing the role of co-ordinators to involve them effectively in this process;  
*(Paragraphs: 48, 49, 52)*
  - \* improving school development planning to identify a long-term view of the school's needs, and include more measurable criteria for assessing the success of the plan's implementation.  
*(Paragraphs: 53, 54)*
  
- improve curriculum planning so that:
  - \* schemes of work for all subjects provide clear definitions of what pupils in each year group are expected to learn;  
*(Paragraphs: 25, 27, 89)*
  - \* intentions for pupils' learning are precisely defined in each level of planning, to ensure work is well-matched to the needs of pupils of different ages and levels of attainment in each of the mixed-age classes;  
*(Paragraphs: 9, 15, 17, 25, 27, 30, 67, 74, 82, 88, 91, 95, 113)*
  - \* more opportunities are provided for pupils to practise their information technology skills, and to use information technology to support learning in other subjects effectively.  
*(Paragraphs: 7, 16, 63, 72, 80, 86, 99, 102)*

- improve assessment by:
  - \* developing more effective systems for gathering information on pupils' attainment, so that assessment becomes an integral part of teachers' regular classroom practice;  
(*Paragraphs: 19, 42, 82, 83, 89, 91, 95, 99, 102*)
  - \* using the information from these assessments to provide accurate information for setting targets for individuals and groups of pupils, to track pupils as they move through the school to assess how well they have progressed, and to provide suitable information for planning future work.  
(*Paragraphs: 19, 43, 67, 74, 83, 88, 89*)

**Minor issues:**

- \* comply with statutory requirements by ensuring that National Curriculum requirements are fully met in information technology;  
(*Paragraphs: 26, 100*)
- \* improve the provision for cultural development, in particular the multicultural dimension.  
(*Paragraphs: 38, 90, 107*)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	5	83	10	2	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	<b>YR – Y6</b>
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	102
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	2

<b>Special educational needs</b>	<b>YR – Y6</b>
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	13

<b>English as an additional language</b>	<b>No of pupils</b>
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	<b>No of pupils</b>
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2
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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	7	11	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	18	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (90)	100 (90)	100 (100)
	National	82 (77)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	18	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (90)	100 (100)	100 (90)
	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*

	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	5	6	11

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	5	5	5
	Girls	6	4	5
	Total	11	9	10
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	100 (100)	82 (100)	91 (95)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	5	5	5
	Girls	5	4	4
	Total	10	9	9
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	91 (84)	82 (100)	82 (95)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

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

*Ethnic background of pupils*

	<b>No of pupils</b>
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	102
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

*Exclusions in the last school year*

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

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

*Teachers and classes***Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.18
Average class size	27

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	20

*Financial information*

Financial year	<b>1998/99</b>
	<b>£</b>
Total income	175144.30
Total expenditure	172572.74
Expenditure per pupil	1779.10
Balance brought forward from previous year	(1021.00)
Balance carried forward to next year	1550.56

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	102
Number of questionnaires returned	75

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

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Tend to agree</b>	<b>Tend to disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
My child likes school.	76	20	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	33	4	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	43	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	45	15	0	1
The teaching is good.	77	20	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	27	12	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	16	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	84	13	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	69	25	7	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	81	19	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	76	16	7	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	45	20	3	7

## **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**

60. From the results of baseline assessment undertaken soon after children start school, their attainment on entry is above that expected of children of this age. By the time they reach statutory school age, a good number exceed the expectations of the officially recommended desirable learning outcomes in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and in their personal and social development, making satisfactory gains in their learning from starting school. They meet expectations in their physical and creative development. The good standards observed in the last inspection have been maintained. Achievement is satisfactory overall, although sometimes constrained in free choice periods by the lack of sufficiently well planned activities with clear and focused objectives for learning. Higher attaining pupils could extend their learning further by more demanding tasks, especially in terms of recording in either written or diagrammatic form more frequently.

#### **Language and Literacy**

61. Most children speak very confidently to adults and each other, using a well-developed vocabulary. They listen attentively to teachers during literacy sessions, story times and class discussions. They are keen to answer questions and share their views, as seen when they discuss a story from the Bible and think of things they could not do if they could not see. Reading standards are very good. Most recognise their first names in print and have a good knowledge of most letters sounds, which helps them to recognise and read some words. They read aloud together from a large class book, and know that they must pause when they reach certain punctuation. They alter the pitch of their voices well when they need to read louder as directed by the text. Higher attaining children recognise a range of familiar words and make good use of their phonic skills to tackle more difficult words. In writing, many children are able to form legible letters independently, and some write simple words using their knowledge of letter sounds. Higher attainers are beginning to form simple sentences to recount their news. A smaller proportion still copy or trace over the teacher's writing but their letters are not always well formed. A constraint to better progress in writing is the lack of opportunity to reinforce their learning from class discussions through recording their ideas. Neither is the writing corner used well in free choice activities for more independent writing.

#### **Mathematics**

62. Standards in number work are good. Most children count aloud together to 30, and some beyond, following a number square. They count objects accurately at least to 10, using their fingers or counters appropriately to help them. Many count accurately to 20, matching the amount to the number symbol and writing recognisable figures. Higher attainers add and take away single digit sums and recognise odd and even numbers. Most children have some understanding of the concepts of more and less, larger and smaller and an awareness of

position. Many children recognise simple two-dimensional shapes such as squares and circles. Opportunities for practical activity reinforce understanding in mathematics, but their understanding is often not consolidated or extended sufficiently through independent recording. Too often children fill in missing spaces in workbooks, not always accurately, which does not aid the development of their presentation or recording methods.

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

63. Most children have a good understanding of the world around them, and often beyond. They know the names of parts of a plant, and try to look carefully at a plant shown by the teacher to pick out the detail. They know that plants grow from seeds, and plant their own so they can see them growing over the next few weeks. They know that people in different countries have different ways of life, for example what they eat, how they dress and what sort of houses they live in. A large number are able to locate different countries on a world map, using a special key to help them. However, some sessions consist primarily of class discussion, so that pupils do not have enough chance to explore things or record their ideas for themselves, for example to observe different seeds and record what they see. Some children make vehicles using construction materials and demonstrate sound manipulative skills in handling small pieces to produce recognisable models. Children were not seen to make much use of a computer in the room, and often stayed for too brief a period to make any significant gains in their learning.

### **Physical development**

64. Manipulative skills are at least sound in that they handle pencils and construction materials with increasing control and co-ordination. Children show sound control and co-ordination of their actions when hopping, jumping and using large apparatus. They have a sound awareness of space when moving around on the floor. They move confidently and with increasing control on a range of equipment, but those with good skills have little opportunity to demonstrate their movements to the rest of the class to give them ideas on how to improve. There is no designated outdoor area for the under fives to use on a regular, planned basis to extend skills further or to satisfy children's need for frequent physical activity. Children do not have opportunities to explore large equipment outdoors independently or to use wheeled vehicles to develop these physical skills on a regular basis.

### **Creative development**

65. Children sing known songs competently, developing a sound understanding of 'loud and quiet' in musical terms. They name some of the percussion instruments and describe the sounds they make. They are able to maintain a simple rhythm by clapping along with the teacher, and clap the syllables of their names. Children work with different materials to paint sound representations of their 'Mums', glue and stick paper to form a collage, and mould clay to desired shapes, showing sound creativity. In their role-play area, which is currently a cafe, children make few gains in their learning because there is limited adult intervention in their play, and a lack of effective planning for the development of their language, literacy, personal and social skills. The area lacks imagination, which limits children's skills in making up their own stories and taking part in imagined situations to develop their creative skills further.

## **Personal and social education**

66. Children have established very good relationships with their teachers and each other. Their behaviour is always very good. They are willing to take turns to speak to each other or the teacher. They sustain concentration and sit well in whole-class sessions, sometimes much longer than is appropriate. They work co-operatively in groups when given the opportunity. This is seen to good effect when children work together on a number-recognition activity. Children share resources fairly and treat property with care, for example, when handling the artefacts they have brought in from different countries. They know these are very special. However, children do not have enough opportunity to develop their learning independent of adults. They often wait, albeit patiently, for the next instruction rather than initiating ideas for themselves, which limits the development of higher standards in these areas.

67. Teaching is satisfactory in nine out of ten lessons, good in one fifth of all lessons, but unsatisfactory in one in ten lessons. Good features of the teaching of the under fives, which help them to learn more effectively, include the good questioning skills seen in class discussions. Questions are well targeted on individual children to help them to think more deeply. Teachers encourage accuracy in children's responses, which aids their understanding, particularly of new concepts. Management of pupils is always good, and this provides children with a positive environment in which they learn with confidence. Teachers capture the children's interest and maintain it with well-read stories and well-modulated voices. Children were particularly enthralled when considering how plants grow from seeds and the wonder of this phenomenon. However, there are weaknesses within the satisfactory teaching and the curriculum planned and provided for children under five, which impact on the progress they make in their learning. A good range of interesting topics is planned to engage the children's interest and help them to find out about the world around them. However, the balance of teacher-directed work and free activities is unsatisfactory. Children often have to sit and listen for too long and do not have enough chance to consolidate or develop their learning further, either through recording what they have learnt or by exploring for themselves. Teachers do not plan carefully enough for 'free-choice' time, which leads to some aimless wandering at this time as children are neither engaged nor inspired by the resources which are made available – often the same each day. Planning does not clearly identify the learning intentions for children of differing ability to ensure that all are provided with a close match of appropriately demanding work. This limits the progress of some higher attaining children and is too difficult for lower attainers, as the work is not sufficiently targeted at their specific needs. Planning is not sufficiently informed by assessment of children's achievements. This is aggravated by the complex nature of the job-share arrangements, where staff work on alternate days. This does not help to ensure that children learn in a systematic way and always achieve their best.

## **ENGLISH**

68. The results of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests in 1999 showed that the number of pupils who attained the expected level (Level 2) or above in reading was very high in comparison with the national average. The numbers who gained the higher level (Level 3) were well above the national average. Compared with national figures, the numbers gaining the expected level (Level 2) in writing were very high, but the numbers reaching the higher level (Level 3) were below average, and this reduced the overall average points gained.

When compared with schools whose pupils are from similar backgrounds, the Level 2 results were very high in both reading and writing. The number reaching Level 3 in reading was above the average, but it was well below the average in writing. In terms of average points, these results were not significantly different to those of similar schools. The results of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 1999 showed that pupils' attainment in English was very high in comparison with the national average for the expected level for pupils of this age (Level 4), and well above the national average for the higher level (Level 5). This placed the school's results in the top five per cent of schools nationally, and they were very high when compared with schools whose pupils are from similar backgrounds. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of current pupils is above the national average at the end of both key stages, slightly better than the results in Key Stage 1, but not as high as those at the end of Key Stage 2. Variation is mainly as a result of the small size of each cohort plus differences in the range of ability among current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils.

69. In the last inspection, standards in reading at the end of each key stage were judged to be good. They were considered broadly average in writing, speaking and listening, although some underachievement was noted in these aspects of English. However, current inspection evidence shows standards to be better in speaking and listening. Results in English overall over the last four years have generally been sustained although the small cohort makes statistical analysis less reliable. Literacy skills are used well in other subjects of the curriculum to support learning.

70. Standards in speaking and listening are good. Pupils throughout the school talk confidently and listen very attentively in a range of situations, and in Key Stage 2 in particular, in a range of contexts. They communicate effectively in clear, fluent and interesting language, many showing a wide vocabulary. Many Key Stage 2 pupils are particularly good at maintaining the listener's interest with their choice of vocabulary and a well-developed and mature sense of humour. Pupils use their good speaking and listening skills well in a range of other subjects. In history, geography, drama and religious education in particular, pupils listen attentively to the teacher giving information or asking questions. Many verbal responses are required, to which they respond clearly and articulately.

71. Reading has been a strength of the school for some time, and remains so. By the end of Key Stage 1, the vast majority of pupils can accurately read simple passages with a good level of understanding. They use a variety of strategies to help them with unknown words, such as phonics, pictures and the meaning of the whole passage. They are able to tell the difference between fiction and non-fiction books, and have some understanding of how to find information using the contents and index sections. However, pupils in Key Stage 1 rarely use the library and have little awareness of how to locate a book quickly. There are few aids to help them to find information independently. By the end of Key Stage 2, the vast majority of pupils have a good understanding of what they have read, and can accurately describe events and characters by selecting key points from the text. They have a good awareness of a range of authors and their works, and express carefully considered preferences for reading material. They use reference books readily to gather and collate information on a variety of topics, and these skills are used well in history and geography, for example. However, development of pupils' library skills is constrained by the lack of effectively organised library facilities, and younger pupils in Key Stage 2 lack opportunities to use the library independently.

72. Writing is good across the school, and the percentage in Key Stage 1 who are likely to reach Level 3 is higher this year than last. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils express their ideas using imaginative language, correctly using full stops and capital letters to form sentences. A significant number indicate the use of speech with inverted commas, and sometimes use exclamation marks to emphasise points. Handwriting shows correctly formed letters with consistent size and spacing. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show a good level of competence in writing in a variety of forms. The vast majority can successfully write poetry, either by copying the style of poetry they have read, such as that by Edward Lear or Rudyard Kipling, or by creating their own. They write book reports, showing brief but appropriate responses and an understanding of the main points of the story. In extended writing, pupils appropriately plan and draft their work before producing the final copy, where ideas are sustained and the reader's interest maintained. They employ their writing skills well in other subjects, writing accurate reports of their observations in science, using grammatically correct sentences with clear diagrams and legible, joined handwriting. Some use is made of word processing for pupils to display their work, but too few opportunities are given to draft and improve the writing on screen to develop skills using information technology.

73. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They learn at a satisfactory rate, as they are given opportunities to consolidate and build on work covered earlier. However, those who are more able are not always challenged sufficiently, or adequately motivated, to produce the high standard work of which they are capable. Pupils display a high level of interest and self-motivation. Attitudes to learning throughout the school are good, and this has a very positive effect on pupils' learning. For example, in a rather pedestrian session, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were only required to copy the last word on each line of three verses of poetry to indicate the pattern of rhyme, something well within the grasp of much younger pupils. However, they then wrote some very effective poetry of their own in a similar style with little input from the teacher. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class by learning support assistants, and they make good progress.

74. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in five out of the six lessons seen, the remainder being unsatisfactory, although there are elements within satisfactory lessons that need to be improved to help pupils to make better gains in their learning. Teachers have sound knowledge and understanding of the subject, and use the literacy hour to place appropriate emphasis on teaching the basic skills which helps the pupils overall to make steady gains in their learning. However, there is an inconsistency in teachers' adherence to the National Literacy Strategy, both in terms of the format of the lesson and the content. For example, the literacy framework clearly sets out objectives for pupils from Reception to Year 6, stating what should be taught in each term. This poses some problems for mixed-age classes, though these are not insurmountable. However, in some of the lessons seen, the work given to pupils was not drawn from either year group's termly objectives, and neither was a clear rationale provided for why this was the case. Therefore, teaching over time does not always show itself to build on pupils' skills and knowledge in the planned and coherent way intended in the strategy. Planning in English often fails to indicate precisely what skills,

knowledge and understanding pupils are to be given, and how work for lower attaining pupils is to be adapted. There is insufficient focus on how higher attaining pupils are to be challenged by a higher expectation of their standard of work so that they work to their capacity. However, learning support assistants are deployed well and are particularly effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are always well managed and teachers maintain their authority well. They have high expectations of behaviour, and this creates a productive atmosphere in which pupils are able to concentrate well. Ongoing assessment takes place, but it is often superficial and does not always indicate to pupils how they can improve and build effectively on their prior attainment.

75. The English curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Appropriate attention is given to all areas of the subject, and literacy skills are used well throughout the curriculum. The co-ordinator has worked hard on implementing the literacy strategy. Nevertheless, a high enough priority has not been placed on monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning to ensure the consistency of implementation through the school and to assess where improvement is needed. Resources are satisfactory overall, but more careful consideration needs to be given as to how money is spent. For example, it is unclear whether teachers want pupils to write on plain or lined paper, though it is inefficient use of pupils' time to draw lines across a page. Sometimes teachers hold up books whilst they are reading passages, hoping that pupils can see the text, which is often too small. The use of equipment to enlarge such print would be more beneficial for the pupils. There are sufficient fiction books in classrooms and non-fiction in the library. Some recent purchases are of good quality and in good condition, but far too many are over 25 years old, in poor condition, and not attractive enough to make pupils want to read them. The school has formed a library in the main building, but the books are not well displayed and some are not easily accessible as they are too high up, especially for pupils in Key Stage 1. Too little use is made of the library to encourage pupils to use it and to learn how to access information for a variety of subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

76. A high proportion of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 attained the expected level for seven year olds in the 1999 national tests, which also compared favourably with the results of similar schools. However, only a very small number attained above the expected level, which is low compared with both national results and similar schools. During the inspection, the number of pupils achieving the expected standard was also above average, reflecting last year's test results. The proportion attaining above expected standards is small in mathematics overall, a similar picture to last year's results, although in number work a higher proportion attains above average standards. The small size of the cohort contributes to the variable results over the last three years, although standards appear to have improved a little since the last inspection. However, higher attaining pupils in the current Year 2 are underachieving.

77. At the end of Key Stage 2, the results of the 1999 national tests were above the national average for the proportion attaining the expected level, and a very high number of pupils attained above expected standards. In terms of average points, these results were in the top five per cent of schools nationally, and they were much higher than those of similar schools. The performance of pupils has been generally maintained over the last three years and standards are similar to those found in the previous inspection. Work seen during this inspection also shows a high proportion of pupils attaining above average standards.

78. By Year 2, pupils' number skills are good. They can use the four operations of number accurately in written form. Their mental calculation skills are very good, as seen when Year 2 pupils subtract using two and three digits. Their knowledge of place value is secure. They learn to measure with increasing accuracy, introducing standard units of measure. They are able to interpret data in bar charts and construct simple charts of their own. The main constraints to learning arise from too much work at the same level being given to pupils regardless of age or ability in the mixed age Year 1 and 2 class. This means that some pupils struggle with the tasks while others are not sufficiently challenged. For example, in a lesson on position using clockwise and anti-clockwise directions, Year 1 and lower attaining Year 2 pupils were confused by the complexity of the task and made fewer gains in spite of adult support. In another lesson, Year 2 pupils were asked to double only very simple numbers, which did not effectively build on their prior attainment in number. In addition, an over-reliance on completing pages of a commercial scheme sometimes limits progress because the tasks are too simple and pupils have less practice in setting out their own work.

79. The achievement of most pupils in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, and their attainment in number work is good. By Year 6, pupils are able to handle quite demanding mental arithmetic questions and work effectively to understand the relationships between fractions, decimals and percentages, and how to convert numbers from one form to another. They are able to explain clearly which strategies they are using to find an answer and why. They are good at solving problems, spotting patterns and continuing sequences. Work on shape and measure is developed well, so that by the end of the key stage, pupils are constructing geometrical shapes and measuring with precision. Pupils are able to gather data, and present it in a variety of ways, including bar charts and line graphs. In general, though, pupils' progress in the use and application of mathematics is not as good as in the other knowledge-based areas of the subject. This is related to a lack of planning by teachers to aid more independent investigation and enable pupils to devise their own methods for recording their work. For example in Year 6, when pupils investigate the probability of throwing different numbers using two dice, they are not given enough chance to set up their own ways of recording their results, presenting their findings and arriving at their own conclusions.

80. Pupils do not make enough use of information technology to support teaching and learning of mathematics, a concern in the last inspection. They are given tasks at a very simple level, for example simple tables reinforcement and recording pulse rates in science. In science, mathematical skills are suitably used to support practical work through measures, such as measuring forces in Newtons. Pupils also represent their findings using data handling skills, for example to show body statistics in pictogram form.

81. In both key stages, pupils with special needs usually learn well as a result of effective support from learning support assistants. They are helped to keep up with the pace of the lesson because the content of work is explained to them well. In other mathematics lessons, although special needs pupils often have the support of an adult, their specific needs are not taken fully into account in planning to help them make the best progress possible.

82. Teaching in mathematics was satisfactory in all lessons seen in Key Stage 2, and in one of the two lessons seen in Key Stage 1. The other lesson was unsatisfactory, so that pupils made few gains in their learning. One of the good features of teaching within the satisfactory lessons is the effective class management, which results in a positive climate in which pupils want to learn and the development of a good work ethic. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are therefore positive ones, and this makes a significant contribution to the standards attained and the rate at which pupils learn. They settle quickly to set tasks and usually work hard with a high degree of concentration. They co-operate well with others in group work, to try to overcome problems together by sharing their findings. Learning support assistants are also usually well briefed and well deployed to support pupils, especially the lower attainers. However, there are common weaknesses in the satisfactory lessons, which limit pupils' achievement. Teachers follow the planning format of the National Numeracy Strategy to structure work, but this is not always satisfactory. Lesson plans are often too brief in identifying what pupils will learn, and they rely on page numbers and worksheet references to show the outcomes for learning. There are few references to what pupils of different ages and levels of attainment are expected to learn, to ensure that all have an appropriate level of demand in their work. All pupils respond particularly well when faced with challenge, for example in mental mathematics sessions. Pupils are not so enthusiastic when given uninspiring worksheets to complete. They are not used to taking the initiative, and time is sometimes wasted when they wait for the next instruction from the teacher. Where there are job-share arrangements, plans do not provide enough information for the next teacher about what exactly pupils have learnt and what they need to do next. As a result, work does not always build successfully on pupils' prior attainment. Some ongoing assessment takes place with mental mathematics tests, but this rarely leads to adaptations in future plans to meet identified needs. Marking is often simply ticks and crosses, giving pupils little information about what they need to do next.

83. The school has a brief general policy, and has recently adopted the National Numeracy Strategy framework. However, this has yet to be adapted effectively to cater for the full range of attainment and age in each class. Opportunities in medium-term plans for pupils to solve inventive and imaginative problems are not as good as the provision for study in other areas, such as number. Work is supported by materials from a commercial scheme, but in Key Stage 1 there is too much dependence on the scheme, which often drives learning as opposed to pupils being taught mathematical skills more carefully matched to their needs. Formal assessments are used in addition to the statutory national tests to track progress. This involves some use of tests related to the progression of the school's adopted commercial materials. However, regular and diagnostic assessment of pupils' achievements is not so evident to identify strengths and weaknesses and what pupils need to do next. The coordinator has provided sound leadership in the development of the subject, but systems for monitoring teaching and learning lack the rigour necessary to remove the present inconsistencies in quality of provision.

## SCIENCE

84. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum teacher assessments for the end of Key Stage 1 were very high compared with both national averages and those of similar schools. A high proportion of pupils attained above expected standards. Inspection evidence shows that the attainment of current Year 2 pupils is mainly in line with expected standards. This is better than standards observed in the last inspection, but the high proportion of pupils attaining high standards in both 1998 and 1999 is not evident among current Year 2 pupils. This is due mainly to the quality of teaching, which pitches much of the work for pupils in the Year 1 and 2 class at the same level, giving higher attaining pupils little chance to achieve the higher standards of which they are capable.

85. The results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were above average in comparison with all schools and in line with the results of similar schools. Inspection evidence shows a large proportion of the current Year 6 pupils attain above average standards in terms of their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts, a finding similar to that of the previous inspection. Their investigative skills are satisfactory, but not developed to the same high level as their knowledge. Trends over the last three years have been variable due to the small size of the cohort, but standards over time, in spite of last year's small dip, is above average overall.

86. In Year 2, most pupils have a sound understanding of living things and the properties of different materials. They have a good understanding of electricity, for example the components of a circuit and conductivity of different materials. They are able to describe simple differences between day and night, and spot light sources in a picture. They understand the importance of the senses in exploring the world around them, and are aware of how other senses may be used when one is out of use, for example using smell, touch and hearing when blindfolded. However, little high attainment was seen in the work of current Year 2 pupils, as there was very little discernible difference in outcomes recorded by higher attainers compared with others in their year. A good proportion of Year 6 pupils attain above average standards in science, especially in their knowledge and understanding of forces such as gravity and air resistance. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils have a very good understanding of how their bodies work and health related issues. In Years 3 and 4, they compare the different life cycles of creatures and are aware of the conditions needed for life. They name some of the essential elements of food needed for the energy, growth and repair of their bodies. By Year 6, pupils know the function of the heart in circulation and the effects of exercise on their pulse rates. However, they do not have enough opportunity to develop their investigative skills to the same high level as their knowledge. They predict carefully, know how to carry out a fair test, and are systematic in drawing together their findings to reach conclusions, though this is often to the same prescribed format. Their enquiry skills, particularly of higher attainers, are impeded by the lack of opportunity to carry out their investigations independently of the teacher and to use different ways of recording their findings. In both key stages, pupils use correctly an increasing range of scientific vocabulary. They use equipment with growing confidence as they get older, although the use of information technology to gather and record evidence in science is not well developed. Pupils with special needs are helped to make satisfactory progress overall, although better progress is made where support from adults is carefully targeted.

87. All lessons seen were of broadly satisfactory quality. Good features include well prepared resources and high expectations for behaviour, which results in little time being wasted on distractions. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and teachers manage their classes well. This helps younger pupils to confidently pose questions to clarify their understanding. In Year 2, for example, they are curious and eager to experience being blindfolded and find their way to a specific point in the classroom. Pupils' positive outlook and very good behaviour significantly increase their learning. When given opportunities to work by themselves or in groups, most pupils tackle their practical enquiries enthusiastically. This was seen in Years 5 and 6, when pupils were comparing pulse rates before and after exercise. Good use is made of learning support assistants to work alongside lower attaining pupils, and they are effective in guiding rather than doing the work of these pupils.

88. However, there are some common weaknesses that affect the learning which takes place. Planning is not always sufficiently precise to cater for the wide range of age and attainment in each of the mixed-age classes, especially for the needs of older higher attaining pupils, who are not given enough challenge in their work. On occasion, the pace of learning is slow, when the pupils are not sufficiently involved in their learning and spend too much time listening to the teacher and waiting for the next instruction. Most pupils have good attitudes to science and are very attentive in introductions even when they sometimes have to sit inactive for long periods. Pupils' work is regularly marked, but the insights gained are not used to identify what pupils need to do next to improve, or to guide teachers in adapting future plans or work so that pupils' learning builds effectively on what they have learnt before.

89. A sound level of resources is available to support learning. A scheme of work has been developed in response to the weaknesses identified in the last inspection, but it does not provide enough information about the expectations of pupils of different ages in each of the mixed-age classes, especially in terms of their investigative skills. Medium term plans are not well structured to show how work is organised over each half term. Curriculum planning weaknesses do not help teachers to plan their work carefully enough to help pupils learn to best effect. Some systems are in place for monitoring pupils' achievements and progress over time, for example national assessment results, and these have been used to set end of key stage targets. However, regular assessment of individual progress is not effective in identifying strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work. Neither is information from assessment used to adapt plans sufficiently to tailor work to the specific needs of groups of pupils in each class. Some monitoring of teaching and learning takes place, though the process lacks rigour in addressing weaknesses in practice.

## **ART**

90. Standards of achievement in art are satisfactory in both key stages and match the attainment of most pupils of similar ages. This finding shows that standards have been sustained since the last inspection. Across the school, evidence of pupils' work on display shows that they work with a range of media, materials and techniques, with satisfactory outcomes overall. Some notable examples at the end of Key Stage 1 include successful experiments with a form of batik, using dough as a resistant. In a Key Stage 1 lesson, pupils in Year 2 competently used needle and threads of different thicknesses to decorate woven baskets brought in from home. They develop sound skills in their threading, overstitch and finishing techniques. Nevertheless, in some instances this is not the case when adult helpers do the work for pupils instead of letting them persevere. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Years 5

and 6 make sound observational drawings of still life to reproduce detail in shape and proportion, with some attention to tone. However, good development of skills is limited by the lack of sketching pencils and a lack of awareness of more advanced sketching techniques to add greater depth to their finished pieces. There is some evidence of older pupils gaining an understanding of the work of different artists, for example study in Years 5 and 6 has focused on the work of Picasso, with some good representations in a similar style. However, discussion with pupils across the school and scrutiny of previous work, as well as that on display, shows little evidence of the regular study of different artists' work and their techniques that could be used to develop pupils' own skills. There is also little evidence of pupils developing an awareness of art in other cultures and in different historical periods. They do often use art successfully to support learning in other subjects, such as sound portraiture work as part of their study of themselves in science. Pupils occasionally work in three-dimensions, evidenced in soundly made papier-mâché masks in Years 5 and 6. Pupils have a chance to try different techniques, such as printing and weaving using fabric, but sketchbooks are not used effectively to encourage pupils to experiment more independently. Pupils offer sensible and thoughtful suggestions on pieces of art as well as each other's work, although the evaluation element is not always emphasised sufficiently at the end of lessons to enable pupils to reflect more thoughtfully on where improvements could be made in their work.

91. Teaching and learning was satisfactory overall in both lessons seen, which is an improvement on the unsatisfactory teaching seen in the last inspection. The most successful features were the effective management of pupils to create a positive and productive working environment in which pupils are deeply engaged and involved in their work. Interruptions are minimised, enabling pupils to get the most out of each session. A weakness in art is that teachers do too much for the pupils, such as setting out equipment. Pupils do not have enough chance to think and make choices for themselves, which constrains their creative and imaginative skills. Subject knowledge is not totally secure, which means that techniques are not always well taught to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress in their skills. Teachers' planning is supported by a brief policy and scheme of work that shows how work is organised in each key stage, but expectations of pupils in each year are not clearly defined in terms of skills' progression. A weakness in art provision is the lack of procedures for assessing pupils' work so that learning builds effectively on their prior achievement.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

92. No lessons in design and technology were seen during the inspection. From discussion with pupils and scrutiny of samples of work on display, standards are judged to be satisfactory in both key stages and are in line with those achieved generally by pupils of similar ages. Standards have improved since the last inspection when they were below average. Pupils on the whole across the school develop satisfactory cutting, sticking and joining methods, although older higher attaining pupils, especially in Year 6, do not use these in an advanced way to produce a higher quality of finish.

93. Year 2 pupils study lever mechanisms to make simple sliding pictures. They design and make playground equipment, showing consideration in their designs for materials they will need and satisfactory making skills, for example to make model swings. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have assessed real products, such as teapots, and considered their design suitability for the purpose for which they were made. They make simple jointed figures using split pins, although the finished products are very much to the same design, showing little extension of skills among older and higher attaining pupils in the complexity of the movements. Work in Years 5 and 6 shows pupils making moving vehicles using simple joining methods. They make games for younger pupils, using electrical circuits. Some good examples of work with construction kits were seen, although pupils have little opportunity to develop their skills in controlling their models using the computer.

94. A weakness in the subject is the development of good design skills. In Key Stage 1, pupils produce sound drawings of their ideas, listing the materials needed, but these early skills are not sufficiently built on as pupils move through Key Stage 2. By Year 6, diagrams do not contain enough precision in terms of different perspectives, measures and particular parts of models to aid the making process. They do not prompt original ideas or make use of pupils' good mathematical skills. Pupils have a good understanding of what is needed in the design process, such as modifying their original ideas to make improvements, but they have less experience of recording their evaluations.

95. No direct teaching of the subjects was seen. However, a scrutiny of plans across the school shows that, although these usually identify what pupils will do, they do not always have a clear or precise enough focus on the specific skills and techniques being developed. The lack of effective assessment of pupils' work fails to set appropriately challenging work for the next activity, particularly to extend the older pupils in the mixed-age classes and higher attainers across the school in order to achieve higher standards in the subject, notably in design work. The school does not have a satisfactory level or range of resources to support learning, a concern in the previous inspection.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

96. In Key Stage 1, much of the work on geography and history is combined in topics. Only one lesson of history was observed during the inspection, but additional evidence of teachers' plans, talking to pupils and scrutiny of their books, indicates that pupils' work is in line with standards generally found for their age. Standards have remained at this level since the last inspection. Pupils can respond appropriately to questions about where things are in their village and express their views about them, for example how to keep their village clean and tidy. They can talk about where they live and describe their journey to school. They can make distinctions between their own time and past times, in particular by describing some of the things we now use which were not available to their grandparents, such as computers. They use appropriate language to describe old and new artefacts including books and teddy bears. They are very forthcoming with examples when discussing their work, and produce appropriate written work with clearly labelled pictures.

97. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in geography and history are better than generally found for pupils of this age. This is largely due to their good recall of factual knowledge about the subjects they have studied, and standards have improved since the last inspection. Most pupils can discuss physical features of their own locality and compare it with the Lake District. They use their mathematical skills in constructing graphs to show rainfall at different times of the year or the height of mountains. Some pupils are able to explain the reasons for the differences between the areas, and give reasons for where they would prefer to live. They study villages in India and Pakistan, and can draw out the similarities and differences with England. In history, pupils have recently studied the Ancient Greeks, Ancient Egyptians, Invaders and Settlers and the Victorians. They have a good recall of factual knowledge about these topics. For example, they can talk about Athens, Sparta, Greek traders and the Olympic Games, as well as re-telling the stories of Theseus and the Minotaur and Odysseus and Penelope.

98. Teaching is satisfactory in both key stages in all lessons seen. Teachers have sound knowledge and understanding of both subjects, which helps pupils to make satisfactory progress. Planning, however, is a weakness because it does not take into account the full range of age and attainment in each class, nor is it adequately related to the National Curriculum programmes of study or levels of attainment to show how geographical and historical skills will be developed year-on-year. There is insufficient thought on how to extend the higher attaining pupils with more challenging material, and there is an assumption that extra adult support will meet the needs of the lower attaining pupils rather than any adaptation of material. This frequently results in very little work being produced by these pupils.

99. Pupils are always well managed, and their interest and concentration are well maintained as a result. This is a strength in teaching, with a positive impact in encouraging pupils to demonstrate good factual knowledge. However, most of the work is too teacher-directed, especially in Key Stage 2, which constrains pupils' development of skills. They are not given enough opportunity to plan their own research or find their own sources of information because their learning relies too much on worksheets and sets of resource books provided by the teacher. Daily assessments through marking are satisfactory, but procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and the use of assessments to guide planning, are limited. This means that pupils' prior attainment is not always built on effectively. Opportunities for links with other subjects are used effectively, especially literacy, mathematics and art, but information technology is under-used to support learning. There are sufficient book resources in classes and the library, but the latter is not well used by younger pupils. Too little use is made of artefacts, visits to places of interest and visitors to bring the subjects alive and place learning in a relevant context.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

100. The findings of the last inspection identified standards in information technology that were sound at the end of Key Stage 2, but below average at the end of Key Stage 1. The school has made attempts to improve provision in the light of national developments and has bought new equipment, but progress in terms of pupils' learning has not kept pace with that in most schools. At the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment is below that expected of most seven and eleven year-olds. At present, there is not enough evidence to show that pupils are carrying out all the requirements of the programmes of study of the National Curriculum.

101. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to use the mouse and keyboard competently. They can select their desired options, for example to place rhyming words in the correct box. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know how to log on to their computer, and open and close down software packages and their own work files. They have some experience of word processing, and can use basic edit features. However, there is little evidence of word-processed work across the key stage to show that pupils develop skills to a high enough level. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 enter data about their pulse rates competently into a simple database, but they have little experience of more complex systems or of designing their own. Pupils do not develop their skills systematically from year to year by regular access to the computer, so they do not have the practice they need to achieve better standards. Many have skills that are developed through use of computers at home, but the school does not build effectively on these experiences. Pupils' information technology skills are under-developed in handling information, controlling events, exploring patterns and relationships in simulations, and in monitoring external events. Pupils have little opportunity to consider the use of information technology in the wider world. Only a very few examples were seen of information technology being used to support learning in other subjects, for example in Years 5 and 6 to research information on Rudyard Kipling. However, there is little evidence of regular opportunities for pupils to apply their information technology skills at a challenging and meaningful level in most lessons, notably in mathematics and science. A notable exception is the work of some pupils with a secondary school student, using a digital camera to create pictures for the school web site which is being developed. Pupils spoke knowledgeably about the experience.

102. No direct teaching of information technology skills was observed during the inspection, but teaching generally has weaknesses that constrain pupils' learning. Teachers' subject knowledge is weak, and they lack the expertise to plan and organise effectively for the subject. Opportunities are missed to use information technology to support learning on a large number of occasions. Pupils were observed working with information technology in only a small minority of lessons, and then tasks were at a low level of expectation in terms of skill. However, when provided with opportunities, they are confident and concentrate well. They are good at helping one another, and handle equipment with care. Planning does not define well how information technology will support learning or the specific skills being taught to pupils of different ages in the mixed-age classes. Lessons are not well organised to give pupils a regular time at the computer, a concern noted in the last inspection that has yet to be addressed. Pupils talk enthusiastically about use of computers, but express disappointment at not being able to use the equipment more frequently. Assessment is weak, and individual pupil achievements are not tracked effectively.

103. The school is in the process of incorporating national guidelines into a scheme of work. At present, however, teachers do not have enough guidance in planning work so that pupils learn in a systematic way from year to year, though this is crucial in light of the mixed-age classes. The subject suffers from the lack of effective leadership and management to provide a stronger steer to its work. Little monitoring of teaching and learning takes place to identify where shortcomings exist in order to affect improvement. A sound level of resources supports learning, and funds from the parents' association have assisted the purchase of equipment. However, not all the equipment is compatible and resources are under-used at present.

## **MUSIC**

104. Standards were observed to be satisfactory in music in the last inspection, and this continues to be the case. The only music seen in Key Stage 1 was singing in assembly, and this was of a satisfactory standard. Most pupils sing confidently, many in tune, and all in time. However, there is insufficient evidence to make judgements on other aspects of music in this key stage.

105. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations for eleven year olds. Most pupils sing in tune with expression and an awareness of pulse. They explore sounds with a variety of instruments, and create their own accompaniment to the songs, including ostinato. However, they have too few opportunities to record on paper the sounds they create, for example by inventing their own symbols. They have a satisfactory knowledge of music from other times, and can identify the sounds of some instruments. However, they have limited vocabulary in musical terms when evaluating and responding to what they have heard.

106. Teaching in music is satisfactory, although a lack of teacher confidence in the subject sometimes limits the opportunities given to pupils. For example, when using percussion instruments, pupils have insufficient opportunity to experiment with sounds before they decide what they are going to play, and this limits their creative efforts. When creating accompaniments, too often pupils mimic the rhythm of the melody, and are not sufficiently encouraged or motivated to be innovative. Pupils are well managed, and kept well on task with good teacher-pupil interaction. The listening and appreciation aspects in music are under-developed, with opportunities missed when music is played for pupils to enter and leave assemblies. For example, the board indicating 'Music for the Week' was left blank for the whole of the inspection week, and the music played was not mentioned or discussed. In lessons, interest does wane somewhat when listening to music lessons delivered by tape recorder, and this affects their learning. Procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress in music, and for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are unsatisfactory.

107. Some pupils have opportunities to learn the recorder through lunchtime clubs, and the violin and keyboard through visiting peripatetic teachers. The skills of these pupils are used well in lessons, assemblies and concerts. Resources are just adequate, although there is a shortage of non-western percussion instruments to develop pupils' understanding of a wider range of cultures in musical terms. Storage is difficult, with instruments kept in boxes in a cupboard, making them inaccessible for pupils to use on a regular basis.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

108. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with those generally found for seven year olds, a similar finding to the last inspection. In dance, most pupils have sound control of their basic movements and show appropriate co-ordination. Their responses to stimuli, such as a story and music, are creative and show contrast in shape, direction and level. In gymnastics, pupils work to adapt and refine their movements on the apparatus, and show sound control.

109. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in the lessons seen was good in spite of the limited indoor facilities and the constraints of the timetable. It is also a significant improvement on the last inspection findings where attainment was below that of most eleven year-olds. In gymnastics, many pupils have very good control of their movements, particularly when vaulting, and all are confident when using a variety of apparatus. They try hard to produce good quality work which show good shapes, and are competent when landing from heights. Although no work was seen in swimming and games, swimming records and results of football and netball competitions with other schools indicate a good level of success. Dance is an under-developed area in Key Stage 2, with few opportunities for pupils to respond to various stimuli, including music.

110. Five out of the six sessions seen were satisfactory. One lesson was poor, and pupils made very few gains in their physical skills during this time. The main strengths in teaching include effective encouragement to promote pupils' physical effort, and they performed good quality movements as a result. There is good progression in most lessons, with individual work leading on to partner work. Pupils are used briefly but effectively to demonstrate skills, which acts as an incentive to others. Good reminders are given about safe practice, to which pupils pay heed. Teachers are enthusiastic and work hard to instil the same enthusiasm in the pupils, and this is reflected in their responses. However, weaknesses in teaching physical education include the lack of an appropriate warm-up, and little attention is paid to the effect of exercise on the body. Insufficient attention is given to correct clothing, with one pupil taking full part in his normal school-wear, including shoes, and expectations need to be higher. Teachers do not set a good example by changing shoes themselves, and there are safety issues with pupils wearing jewellery and not having long hair tied back. On occasion, too much time is spent on evaluating performance, giving pupils too little time to practise their own movements. The pace of the lesson is too slow and pupils become bored. In the poor lesson, there was no warm-up, and pupils were allowed to move around on the apparatus with no guidance on how to improve their movements, and they made inadequate progress as a result.

111. The school has limited indoor facilities for physical education. The small hall can only accommodate half a class at a time for older pupils to perform safely. This has been timetabled carefully, but is not making the most effective use of the time available. It means that most pupils only have 20-minute sessions, which is not enough time for them to practise their skills and improve standards. As a result, standards in dance are under-developed, particularly in Key Stage 2. Pupils do not learn how to transport the equipment safely, as it is set out for them at the beginning of the afternoon and put away at the end. The school has experienced some success in local competitions, and pupils are enthusiastic about the sporting opportunities provided out of school time, mainly run by the headteacher, which contribute to this success.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

112. At the end of both key stages, standards are above those expected of most seven and eleven year olds in the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. This is an improvement since the last inspection where standards were judged to be satisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of many Bible stories, which they can re-tell with interest and enthusiasm. They are encouraged to reflect on their experiences and feel good about the world around them. Their level of achievement is satisfactory. Most of their work is through discussion, and they use their speaking and listening skills well. However, they are given less chance to consolidate their learning through recording it in their own way, which would maximise the potential of higher attaining pupils in particular.

113. In Key Stage 2, pupils further develop their knowledge and understanding of Bible stories. They develop an understanding of other faiths such as Judaism and Islam, and are able to see similarities in religious festivals. For example, they can talk about Hajj, the journey to Mecca, the Five Pillars of Islam, and know how and where Christians, Jews and Muslims pray. There is evidence of deepening knowledge and understanding of religious festivals and symbols in different religions as pupils move through the school. The achievement of pupils in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. They are encouraged to see how religious stories relate to their own lives, and this has a positive impact on their understanding. For example, when discussing secrets, they use such words as loyalty and betrayal, and this is effectively related to Jesus and his disciples, particularly Peter and Judas. However, not all pupils in each class make an effective contribution, and more needs to be done to draw them into discussion.

114. Teaching is satisfactory in all lessons seen. Planning is carefully drawn on learning intentions in the Agreed Syllabus, but there is too little reference to expectations for different ages and levels of attainment. Further work is not adapted so that pupils can achieve higher standards. Morality is inextricably linked to many topics, and this has a positive impact on pupils' moral development. Teachers engage pupils well in the moral issues raised. However, the spiritual aspect is not always emphasised so well. In one lesson in Key Stage 1, a lesson on secrets was well managed and pupils spoke well about their views, but there was no spiritual dimension introduced through more opportunity to reflect on their thoughts individually or independently. However, pupils who do respond are particularly good at explaining clearly and articulately their own experiences related to the story they have heard. Good relationships and effective questioning create a positive atmosphere that gives pupils the confidence to share their views. Pupils' attitudes in religious education lessons are good, which makes a significant contribution to standards. They listen attentively and with interest, and most willingly join in with discussions. On occasion, teachers do not always make the best of such opportunities to include all pupils, and consequently pupils sometimes take too passive a role.

115. The subject is satisfactorily coordinated, and the curriculum is soundly based on the locally Agreed Syllabus. There are good links with other subjects and plenty of discussion. Literacy is well used, for instance when pupils in Key Stage 2 write their own version of stories. Art skills are developed when they represent their story in pictures. The school uses the local church and vicar to enhance the curriculum, although the range of visits and visitors is limited. Not enough use is made of a loan service for artefacts, which help bring religion to life for the pupils, though there is an appropriate range of books in the library.