

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BURTON MANOR PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Uplands Road, Stafford

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124202

Headteacher: Mr Keith Evans

Reporting inspector: David Penney  
23039

Dates of inspection: 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2001

Inspection number: 194127

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Uplands Road Stafford
Postcode:	SP17 9PS
Telephone number:	(01785) 356900
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Eaves
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23039	David Penney	Registered inspector	Science Design and technology Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are the pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
13762	Norman Shelley	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
15011	Marion Wallace	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
21245	Bill Lowe	Team inspector	Equal opportunities English Geography History	How well does the school care for its pupils?
10144	Mary Marriott	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Burton Manor Primary School is a co-educational community primary school serving the Burton Manor and Highfields estates and a small rural area centred on the village of Hyde Lea. With 273 boys and girls on roll in 11 classes, the school is of broadly average size. Although the numbers of boys and girls are similar, overall, in the school, there are many more boys than girls in both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils come from a predominantly white ethnic background but there are small numbers of pupils – just over five per cent – from a black background. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (22.4 per cent) is above average. The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average at 19 per cent, as is the proportion of these who have statements of special educational need. There is, as part of the school's provision, a school-funded support unit for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' attainment on entry is below average, overall, with a significant proportion of pupils achieving levels below this. The current Year 6 group has suffered from a high level of changes of pupils; over half of the cohort have joined the school since they became seven years old.

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

The school is effective and gives satisfactory value for money. Standards of attainment on entry are below average, overall, and many children achieve standards that are below even that, particularly in English and mathematics. They make good progress through the school, particularly in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Progress elsewhere in the school has accelerated recently and is now satisfactory. Standards exceed national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2 in listening, art and design and music but are still too low in writing, mathematics, design and technology, geography and information and communication technology. In other subjects, standards match those expected. The school has worked hard and effectively to introduce schemes of work and assessment procedures in many subjects to remove the causes of previous underachievement although more work remains to be done. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good throughout the school. The leadership of the school gives a good educational direction and has retained high standards of pastoral care.

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

- Standards are above those expected nationally in art and design and music by the age of 11. Pupils also do well in local area inter-school competitions in physical activities.
- Pupils behave very well in and around school and are enthusiastic about their work.
- The headteacher is very instrumental in bringing about and maintaining high standards of care and teamwork and leads the work of the school very well.
- The school is a very caring environment; relationships and teamwork are very good and so pupils are confident and happy learners.
- The quality of teaching is good, overall, in all key stages with many examples of very good or excellent lessons.
- The provision for, and tracking of, pupils' personal development are good and the procedures for promoting good behaviour are very effective.
- Parents have a very favourable view of the school and their involvement in its work is very beneficial.
- Governors show a strong sense of commitment and oversee the school's work very well.
- The school targets its spending prudently on agreed educational priorities and makes good efforts to obtain the best value for its expenditure.

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

- The standards attained by eleven-year-old pupils in writing, mathematics, design and technology, geography and information and communication technology are not high enough.
- Some subjects do not have established assessment procedures and teachers do not use the information available from assessments well enough to provide work that matches the developing needs of individual pupils closely.
- Work has not yet been completed on devising schemes of work that clearly identify in a logical sequence the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils are expected to gain.
- The work of monitoring regularly and frequently and evaluating rigorously the work of the school needs to be developed to include, as appropriate, all those with management responsibility.

*The strengths of the school outweigh the weaknesses. The areas for improvement will form the basis of the*

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvements since the last inspection in February 1997. Many of the key issues have been addressed well. Standards have generally been maintained. However, they are still not high enough by the end of Key Stage 2; many of the gaps and weaknesses in these pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are the legacy of weaknesses that have now been addressed. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good. National guidance for the planning of subjects has been incorporated soundly, overall, into the school's practice although further work remains to ensure that planning and assessment systems are fully effective in all subjects. Parents' perceptions of the school have improved. The headteacher and key staff continue to provide a high standard of pastoral care and have begun to analyse the effectiveness of the school's work in a more rigorous fashion.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	C	D	D	E
Mathematics	E	E	D	E
Science	D	E	D	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Although the proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected levels by the age of 11 was very close to the national average in 2000, because there were so few higher-attaining pupils the average score for the school was well below that of similar schools and was below the national average in all three subjects. These results have not kept pace with national trends; a factor in this is the high level of mobility in this year group. In the same year when compared with the national average and with that for similar schools, results for seven-year-olds were well above average in writing, in line with them in reading and below them in mathematics. Inspection findings are that pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average with a significant proportion of pupils well below average. Pupils make good progress, overall, throughout the school. By the age of seven, pupils attain standards that match those expected nationally in all subjects except listening, reading and art and design, where they are above those expected. Standards attained by eleven-year-olds in listening, art and design and music are above average. They are below average in writing, mathematics, design and technology, geography and information and communication technology. In other subjects they match the levels expected nationally. The school has set targets for 2001 in English and mathematics that are still below the national average for 2000 but are challenging for this group of pupils. They are unlikely to be met.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy their learning experiences and are enthusiastic.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. They are polite, friendly and courteous. Their conduct is orderly.
Personal development and relationships	Good, overall. Relationships are very good throughout the school. However, there is scope to increase opportunities to show initiative and responsibility.
Attendance	Satisfactory levels of attendance that match the national average. The

	school has consistently maintained these or better levels since the last inspection.
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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school with many examples of very good or excellent teaching in all areas of the school. No teaching was less than satisfactory. Just over 27 per cent of teaching was satisfactory. Nearly 35 per cent was of good quality and a further 30 per cent of lessons were very well taught. Nearly eight per cent of lessons were outstanding. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory but would benefit from a review of how it is organised. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good in all areas of learning. For the five to seven year olds, English, including literacy, art and design and design and technology are very well taught; all other subjects are taught well, including mathematics and numeracy skills, except for history where teaching is satisfactory. For the seven to eleven year olds, mathematics, including numeracy and music are very well taught and geography is soundly taught; the teaching of all other subjects, including English and literacy skills, is good. Teachers in school on supply make a good contribution to pupils' learning. The setting arrangement in English, mathematics and other subjects, as appropriate, is effective; some of the best quality teaching was seen under this arrangement. 'Specialist teaching' in many areas of the school is effective. As a result of this high standard of teaching, pupils make good progress, overall, throughout the school. Particular strengths in teaching are relationships and the management of pupils' behaviour, which results in confident learners who concentrate well and work hard, particularly in the lower school. Recently, the rate of progress of the oldest pupils has accelerated.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. National strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented soundly and are beginning to have an effect on standards. More work needs to be done to develop schemes of work in some subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory and improved since the last inspection. It is now timely to review the structure and management of this area of the school's work to ensure that it is targeted closely at those with the greatest needs throughout the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good. There is scope to give pupils more meaningful responsibilities and to ensure that they develop their independence and initiative.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress are broadly satisfactory but more work is needed to assure consistency and rigour in subjects other than English, mathematics and art and design. The school is a very caring environment. All adults need to become aware of child protection procedures.

The school enjoys a very good partnership with parents, whose involvement in the work of the school is very effective.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is very instrumental in bringing about and maintaining high standards of care and teamwork. He leads the work of the school very well and has established a good educational direction. The role of all managers needs further development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	They fulfil their roles and responsibilities very well. They are fully involved in budget setting and monitoring expenditure. They are very good critical friends for the school with a good strategic view of its development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Sound and developing more rigour but in need of further development.
The strategic use of resources	Good use of financial and other resources. Good attention to getting best value for expenditure. Good levels of staffing. Accommodation is good, overall, but there is no central library. Some aspects of resourcing need attention.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The way the school is led and managed.</li> <li>• The quality of teaching and the progress pupils make.</li> <li>• The school is very easy to approach about concerns.</li> <li>• The school has high expectations of pupils and helps them to be mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Children like school and most behave well.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about progress.</li> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• The school should work more closely with parents.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed by parents. However, while agreeing that the school would benefit from reviewing the already good arrangements for reporting to parents on their children's progress, it judges that the provision for extra curricular activities is satisfactory and that the partnership with parents is very good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In the national test in 2000, which is the latest year for which there are validated school results and national comparative figures, the standards attained by seven year old pupils were well above the average for all schools nationally. For comparable schools they were well above average in writing, matched the average in reading and were below it in mathematics. In all cases, the proportion of pupils attaining at least the expected levels was significantly above the national figures but the high proportion of pupils with low attainment adversely affected the average scores for the year group. These results represent a significant improvement over the previous year's results and reverse a three-year decline in all three tested areas. Overall, there was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
2. In the same year, the results of eleven-year-old pupils were below the national average and well below those of similar schools in English, mathematics and science. In all three subjects, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected levels was close to the national average and below the average for similar schools but there were too few higher attaining pupils, which adversely affected the average scores for the year group. In addition, over half of the pupils taking the tests had joined the school since taking the national tests at the age of seven. The school's tracking systems identify that the proportion of those joining with low attainment was greater than that of the leavers; this, too, adversely affected the apparent progress of that cohort of pupils, overall. In all subjects, the performance of the boys was worse than that of the girls and worse than that of boys nationally. The rate of school improvement in standards in this age group is below the national trend.
3. Inspection findings are that the standards attained by children, overall, when they enter school at the age of four are below those expected nationally. There are a significant number of children whose attainment is well below that expected. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage (reception class) in all areas of learning – personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. However, only about a third of the class has reached the standards expected of five-year-old children nationally when they transfer into Year 1. Overall, therefore, the standards attained by pupils as they enter compulsory education are below the national average.
4. By the age of seven, pupils have made good progress, overall. It is good in English, art and design, geography and music and is satisfactory in all other subjects. As a result, pupils' standards are above those expected of their age in listening, reading and art and design; they match national averages or expectations in English overall, including literacy skills, mathematics, including numeracy, science, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology (ICT), music and physical education. Standards in religious education match those expected of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
5. From the age of seven to 11, pupils make satisfactory progress, overall, although recently this rate of progress has accelerated, particularly for the pupils in Years 5 and 6. They make very good progress in music and good progress in art and design and history; in all other subjects, they make satisfactory progress. At the age of 11, pupils' standards are currently above those expected in listening, art and design and music. They match the standards expected of eleven-year-olds in speaking, reading, science, history and physical education. Standards of religious education are in line with those expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In writing, mathematics, design and technology, geography and ICT, they are below the average or expected standards.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress from the age of five to seven and sound progress thereafter towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. Their progress is better when younger because specific tasks are planned for them and teaching assistants provide high quality support.

7. Pupils' skills of literacy and numeracy are sound, overall, although many pupils throughout the school suffer from a limited vocabulary. Pupils write reports in science and empathetic stories in history and religious education. Throughout the school, pupils listen well to their teachers and successfully gain specific vocabulary in all subjects. Mathematical skills are used in ICT to calculate angles and distances and in geography when pupils study and compare weather charts.
8. The targets for eleven-year-olds in the national tests this year in English and mathematics are close to the national average for 2000 at 68 per cent for English and 70 per cent for mathematics. For this group of pupils, they are challenging and seem unlikely to be met. Targets set for 2002 are higher; they, too, are realistic and challenging and are likely to be met.

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

9. Children aged less than five years make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development but a significant number of children have limited powers of concentration. They understand clearly what is expected of them in terms of their work and behaviour. They respect each other and distinguish between right and wrong. They know the rules and feel secure in the classroom environment.
10. Pupils' attitudes towards school and their behaviour are very good. They make good progress in their personal development and their attendance is satisfactory. Standards are very similar to those found during the previous inspection but behaviour is better. Parents are very pleased with the standard of pupils' behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs have very positive attitudes to school and are well integrated within the school community.
11. Pupils are very enthusiastic about school. They say that they enjoy it because of its friendliness and that they like their teachers, assemblies and almost all of their lessons! They say that they like the way teachers recognise their efforts. They are encouraged to do their best by the prospect of receiving merits, certificates and prizes. They say that the way the school deals with poorer behaviour and any bullying is very effective and promotes better behaviour. They appreciated the considerable help they were given to revise for the National Curriculum tests. Pupils would like more extra-curricular opportunities, including a computer club. There is generally satisfactory support for the school's activities and good support for trips out of school, including residential experiences in France. Pupils have a very positive attitude to learning and generally do their best with the various challenges that are offered.
12. Behaviour in lessons is almost always good and frequently very good, especially when teaching and activities are interesting and testing. Outside classrooms, conduct is orderly and pupils extend courtesies to adults, for example, holding doors open for them and saying "Thank you" when the politeness is returned. When at play, pupils are lively but mostly conduct themselves with consideration for others. Only very few instances of bullying have been reported and there have been no exclusions in the current or last school year.
13. Pupils develop a good realisation of the effect of their actions on others because teachers take the trouble to counsel pupils when their conduct is not appropriate. Through the sanctions, rewards and recognition process they become aware of the results of their actions. Through assemblies, religious education and the intervention of adults, pupils develop a good respect for others' views and beliefs and, to some extent the lifestyles of other cultures.
14. Pupils relate very well to each other. They work together amicably and supportively, for example in science experiments in Years 1 and 2. They listen to each other with interest and show respect for each other's contributions. The relationships between pupils with special educational needs and adults are very good and these pupils gain quickly in confidence. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. They undertake routine tasks responsibly but their use of initiative is underdeveloped. They are given too few opportunities, for example, to exploit a wide range of research activities and are not given sufficient opportunities for formal responsibility, such as through a school council. Some aspects of self-management are not sufficiently taught or developed, such as self-evaluation and effective team working.
15. Attendance is in line with the average for primary schools. The school has successfully maintained attendance either at or above the average since the previous inspection.

Unauthorised absence is also in line with the average. Families taking holidays during term time cause some absence. Pupils arrive punctually for the start of the day.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is good, overall, and there are many examples of teaching that is very good or excellent.
17. No teaching is less than satisfactory. Teaching in just over 27 per cent of lessons was satisfactory. Nearly 35 per cent of lessons were well taught. In 30 per cent of lessons, teaching was very good and a further eight per cent of lessons were outstandingly well taught. The proportions of good or better teaching are consistent throughout the school. However, there is a greater incidence of very good or better teaching in the teaching of pupils aged five to seven, where more than half of lessons are of this quality, than there is in the teaching of the seven to eleven year olds (36 per cent) or the Foundation Stage (ten per cent).
18. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good in all areas of learning. For the five to seven year olds, English, including literacy, art and design and design and technology are very well taught; all other subjects are taught well, including mathematics and numeracy skills, except for history where teaching is satisfactory. For the seven to eleven year olds, mathematics, including numeracy, and music are very well taught and geography is soundly taught; the teaching of all other subjects, including English and literacy skills, is good. Pupils make good progress, overall, throughout the school because of this high quality teaching.
19. Recently, the rate of progress of the oldest pupils has accelerated because the expectations of their application, attitudes and standards have improved and are now consistently high across all three classes. The legacy of low expectations and lack of rigour persists in one class; it has affected pupils' attitudes to work and their standards adversely through the school year although recently improved teaching has resulted in pupils' attitudes in this class now being very similar to that of their peers.
20. Particular strengths in teaching throughout the school are very warm relationships and the very good management of pupils' behaviour, which results in confident learners who concentrate well and work hard, particularly in the lower school. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, overall, although, for those teaching the seven to eleven year old pupils, it is often very good, for example in science. This means that basic skills are taught well and any difficulties that pupils meet are quickly addressed.
21. Relevant activities are chosen to fit the purpose of the lesson and to interest the pupils. A good example of this is a design and technology activity in Years 3 and 4, where pupils have to make a book with moving parts for the younger children in the reception classes. Such activities ensure that pupils' attention is gained early in the proceedings and that they concentrate well on the tasks given them. Teachers' questioning skills are generally good and ensure that all pupils are included at all times in the lesson. This was particularly important during the inspection week because the weather was extremely sultry and conditions for learning, particularly in some poorly ventilated classrooms in the upper school, were far from ideal. It is to the credit of teachers and pupils alike and a testament to the very high quality of relationships and management mentioned above, that the quality of teaching and learning was so high.
22. Lessons are planned soundly and derive logically from the half-term plans. Because further work is needed across the school to secure efficient planning systems, learning objectives are too broad in some classes, particularly for the older pupils. In addition, teachers often mistakenly write as objectives the activities pupils are to undertake rather than the knowledge, skills or understanding they should gain. Teachers' marking is too variable in standard. While normally regular, it rarely shows pupils how they should improve their work and, as a consequence, many pupils do not have a clear enough idea of how well they have done in a lesson. Teachers use homework satisfactorily to reinforce and extend pupils' learning. Lessons are well structured and good use is made of all available resources, as in art and design throughout the school. Good use is made of the expertise of teaching assistants to plan, assess and support the work for groups of pupils and individuals; their contribution to pupils' learning is good.

23. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good and is undertaken in the lower school by class teachers and teaching assistants. In the middle school pupils are ability grouped for work in mathematics and English and are taught in these groups by class-teachers and supported by teaching assistants, who give high quality support. In the upper school pupils are ability grouped for English and mathematics and are taught in these groups. The special needs co-ordinator gives good support to pupils who have language difficulties in the middle and upper school by withdrawing pupils to the learning unit within the school. However, she is not sufficiently involved in providing support to the younger pupils and children in the school.
24. Teachers in school on supply make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Half of the lessons seen taught by them were very well taught, which has a beneficial effect on the rate of progress made by pupils.
25. The setting arrangement in English, mathematics and other subjects, as appropriate, is effective. Teachers can make provision for a smaller range of abilities in each teaching group and almost half of the teaching in sets for English and mathematics is even better than the general high standard of the school's teaching. Some of the best quality teaching was seen under this arrangement.
26. 'Specialist' teaching, where teachers swap classes and teach the same subject in both or all three in their areas of the school, is in evidence in many areas of the school, for example in music, ICT and physical education in the lower school and in design and technology, geography, history, music and religious education in the middle school. This arrangement is effective because individual teachers use their expertise in a focused and consistent way for the benefit of all pupils in the year group. The proportions of good teaching under this arrangement match the overall school figures reasonably closely.

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

27. The school provides a suitably broad and balanced curriculum in which subjects are taught in accordance with the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Links with the local community and relationships with other schools are satisfactory and have been maintained since the last inspection. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The provision for pupils' personal development is good.
28. Since the last inspection the school has made good improvements. The time allocation for religious education and ICT has increased and statutory requirements for religious education are fully in place. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage follows recommended planning for this age group. Lesson planning and longer term planning now clearly identifies learning objectives but further refinements are needed to ensure all subject areas and strands of subjects identify a clear progression in the development of skills, understanding and knowledge. Curriculum areas that need further refinement in their planning are science, design and technology, geography, history, ICT and some strands of physical education. Planning is good in music and religious education; it is very good in art. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is effective and has contributed to improving standards in English and mathematics.
29. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. Pupils aged between seven and 11 attend clubs for football, athletics, netball, skittle ball and country dancing; there is also a recorder club. There is a recorder club for Key Stage 1 pupils, but there are no other after school activities for this age group. Pupils experience a wide range of visits and visitors that extend pupils' experiences and enrich the curriculum. These include a visiting artist and potter, residential trips to Normandy and Paris and visits to local art galleries.
30. The school responds appropriately to the Code of Practice for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs. Although the policy is out of date, the school has clear systems in place so that pupils are fully included in all aspects of the life of the school. The school is to re-write the policy to meet the expected national guidance published in the Autumn term. The quality of individual education plans is satisfactory. They are compiled by the co-ordinator together with teachers and teaching assistants. Learning targets are set; however, there are too many targets that are very ambitious.

31. The provision for personal, social and health education including sex education and attention to drug misuse is largely informal but effective. It is satisfactory, overall, and is covered in science and circle time. The school acknowledges that planning for personal, social and health education is under-developed. There is currently no school council or planned development of pupils' sense of citizenship. However, the school promotes social inclusion successfully within its very caring ethos.
32. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is now good overall. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development has improved from satisfactory at the time of the previous inspection to good now. Progress has been made in planning challenging tasks and activities that involve pupils in their own learning, but this could be developed much further.
33. The provision made for pupils' spiritual development is good. Opportunities for reflection are now evident in classes and some assemblies. The school fully meets statutory requirements for daily collective worship. Assemblies are well planned and provide simple and effective messages, which are reinforced during the week. There is a very positive caring ethos that permeates the school. Role-play is used well, as when pupils in Years 1 and 2 give a very good assembly based on the theme of 'Our wonderful world.' A strong feature of the assembly was when a pupil asked the whole school to reflect on the wonderful world. Pupils' achievements are acknowledged and appreciated in assembly, such as success in the local athletics competition. Pupils write with empathy and considerable feeling after a visit to a Canadian cemetery: "I felt as though I should have been there and I felt sad for all the Canadian soldiers who died". Pupils' work is appreciated and displayed attractively around the school. Joy and excitement was seen when Year 1 and 2 pupils handled and painted real poppies, also in a dance lesson when the teacher produced a real crab to show the pupils what it looked like and to link it with movements in the lesson.
34. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral development. It is implicit from the time the children enter the reception class. Pupils reflect on their own experiences and have a very clear understanding of right and wrong. The very clear codes of behaviour and values ensure pupils develop a mature understanding of their moral and social responsibilities. The school rules are evident in all classrooms but teachers rarely have to refer to them, as behaviour is so good throughout the school. Pupils are polite and courteous to visiting adults. Teachers have established a supportive atmosphere in which to cultivate pupils' moral development. Pupils demonstrate good levels of care, consideration and responsibility for each other and resources. The star and merit award system encourages pupils to adopt good behaviour. Pupils are well behaved outside and inside the classroom. They are polite opening doors and are generally very helpful.
35. The provision made for pupils' social development is satisfactory. Pupils work well individually, with a partner, in small groups and alongside others in a larger group. Opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of responsibility are less well developed. There is no school council and citizenship is not yet developed. Year 6 pupils help younger pupils in the playground and one pupil is responsible for changing the overhead transparencies and the music in assembly but these opportunities do not involve all pupils. In lessons, opportunities for pupils to develop independence and responsibility are often missed. In a literacy lesson, Year 3 and 4 pupils ask the teacher if they cannot spell a word rather than trying to find out for themselves. In several games lessons teaching assistants clear up the equipment and resources at the end of the activities rather than giving the pupils the responsibility to do so. Relationships between staff, pupils, adults and parents are very good. During the lunchtime and informal breaks social interaction on the playground between adult supervisors and pupils is good. All pupils play alongside and with each other sensibly.
36. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development. The school has worked hard to develop cultural awareness within the school. Pupils regularly take part in a range of local sporting events. Pupils benefit from visits and visitors such as the local fireman, police and artists. Visits to the theatre and local art gallery help to extend awareness of the wider world. The school raises a significant amount of money for local, national and international charities, for example the British Red Cross, UNICEF and charities to help people in Romania and Uganda. There are very good links with European countries such as France, Belgium, and Germany. All older pupils experience a three-day residential visit each summer term and French students visit

the school. There is insufficient focus on the development of pupils' understanding of cultures other than Western European ones.

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

37. Pastoral care is very good, overall, and arrangements for the general welfare of pupils are satisfactory. Relationships between all adults in the school and pupils are mutually respectful, constructive and trusting and contribute to an environment that is conducive to learning and in which pupils feel valued and secure. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are less secure. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good and procedures for monitoring and supporting attendance and personal development are good but are only satisfactory for academic progress. Since the previous inspection improvements have been achieved in the quality of pastoral care, the promotion of good behaviour and the support for pupils with special educational needs. Parents are satisfied with the quality of support, guidance and care.
38. The school has improved its procedures for assessing monitoring and supporting pupils' attainment since the inspection of February 1997. Data from baseline testing, National Curriculum assessments and other optional annual tests are used satisfactorily to track pupils' progress in English and mathematics, to highlight areas in need of general improvement in the curriculum and to identify pupils in need of the extra help provided by booster and other support groups. For example, the school has used its analysis of standard assessment test results to identify a weakness in the writing skills of the pupils and has taken effective action to improve them. The information gained from regular testing in English and mathematics is recorded and used to predict future attainment and to set targets for individual pupils.
39. The procedures for assessment in art are very effective and used well to identify gaps in the school's provision for the subject. The assessment procedures used to measure the progress of pupils in science, geography and music are satisfactory. In religious education, history, design and technology and physical education there are no whole school assessment procedures. In information and control technology assessment procedures are being developed and will be in place for September 2001. There is a realisation within the school that there is a need to further develop the use of assessment results to inform planning. The identification of skills development opportunities in all subjects is also an area that provides scope for further work on the development of manageable and effective assessment procedures.
40. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is regularly assessed and their work is monitored on a daily basis. The results of this monitoring are used to plan the next steps in each pupil's learning. The school is becoming more successful in removing pupils from the special needs register and reviews this on a regular basis. At present, the school does not give priority to early identification and support in the lower school. The co-ordinator is keen to develop this very important area and, now that she has successfully established systems of support in the middle and upper school, intends to establish support structures for early intervention and support in the lower school. The record keeping systems and the maintenance of pupils' files are good.
41. Child protection procedures are in place and a teacher is designated for this responsibility. The staff handbook does not include, for easy reference by staff, any information or guidance about the procedures. Newly appointed full time and temporary teachers and non-teaching adults are not informed at a sufficiently early stage about the procedures because an effective induction process is not in place. Arrangements for pupils' health and safety are mainly good except that risk assessments have not been carried out for some relevant curricular activities. First aid support is exceptionally good because all members of staff, except those who have joined during the present academic year, are qualified to administer it. Supervision outside of lessons is good.
42. Attendance is monitored well. When a pupil's attendance rate is unsatisfactory a note is sent to parents with the annual school report and they are requested to discuss the situation with the headteacher. Certificates are presented to pupils to recognise high attendance. The school adopts the most effective way to promote high attendance – by providing good teaching, challenging activities and an environment that pupils enjoy.
43. Teachers note pupils' behaviour carefully and they are very consistent in the way they apply discipline across the school. Their expectations are high and the quality of teaching and activities in themselves positively promote good behaviour because they inspire interest and participation. A few pupils only occasionally show instances of poorer behaviour and this is dealt with fairly, quickly and effectively. The system of sanctions and rewards is very effective and pupils

thoroughly enjoy and value the weekly celebration of their successes in an assembly. From time to time it is necessary to introduce a range of strategies to support a pupil who has difficulty with behaviour, which is done in conjunction with parents or carers and is carefully monitored. Bullying is firmly discouraged. Pupils are confident to report it and it is dealt with effectively.

44. Some parents and school staff have expressed the view that boredom during break and lunchtime accounts for some poorer behaviour. Improvements have been made and lunchtime supervisors now organise or oversee games and activities. Plans are in place to provide a good range of play facilities in the near future.
45. Pupils are encouraged to become mature and responsible and particularly with regard to their conduct and in their relationships with others. Their achievements in these respects are logged and recognised. Provision for this is largely informal but is effective. However, pupils are not provided with enough planned and structured opportunities for formal responsibilities or with opportunities in which they can exercise initiative. The school does not formally assess and record pupils' personal skills, for example in teamwork, problem solving, self-evaluation and research although some comments are sometimes included in their annual school reports. The school's personal, social and health education programme does not include arrangements to develop these aspects.

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

46. Parents regard the school very favourably and relationships between school and parents are very good. The views expressed by parents are more positive than those expressed at the time of the previous inspection.
47. Parents are impressed with the way the school is managed and are pleased with the quality of education provided for their children. They are pleased that their children like school and with their standard of behaviour. They say that it is easy to approach the school with any concerns. They believe that the school could work more closely with them by giving them more information about pupils' progress. They would like an additional parents' evening in the spring term and a wider range of extra-curricular activities for pupils.
48. Parents are generally well informed about the life and work of the school from the point of applying for a place at the school and on a regular basis thereafter. Daily contact with teachers and the headteacher is easily possible. The annual school report complies with all statutory requirements. Other than in Years 2 and 6, when National Curriculum test results are given to parents, the grades given on pupils' reports indicate attainment relating to the year group but not to National Curriculum levels and, therefore, parents are unable to compare progress to a national standard. A good feature of the school's communication with parents is that improvement targets are set for pupils each term and parents are advised of them.
49. The school enjoys very good support from its parents. The parents and teachers association is very active and raises considerable funds to improve facilities and resources. It is currently taking on the responsibility for the development of playground facilities and is securing substantial support for it. Many parents help regularly or frequently in school and grandparents also contribute to pupils' learning. Attendance at consultation evenings is high and many parents attend assemblies. The support parents give to their children in their English and mathematics homework is effective, as is their support when action is needed over their children's behaviour targets.
50. Those parents whose children have special educational needs respond positively to the school's encouragement to attend the periodic reviews of their children's progress. The school continues to have very positive links with these parents and keeps them well informed about the progress of their children. They are actively involved in annual reviews and target setting in individual education plans.
51. Parents are asked to complete questionnaires when they attend the summer consultation meeting and, by this means, the school determines levels of satisfaction and current concerns. Governors have taken the responsibility of analysing the returns and deciding what actions to take subsequently. An example involved parents' concerns about sex education; the policy has

subsequently been reviewed and a new draft policy is shortly to be submitted to parents for their comments.

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

52. The previous report stated that the headteacher was a caring and enthusiastic leader of the school. This has been maintained. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good, overall, and are significant factors in the school's improvement since the last inspection.
53. The school is well led by a conscientious headteacher, who provides a good educational direction for the school. He sets a good example to the school's community by upholding the ethos of the school and has the respect of pupils, governors and parents alike. The headteacher has been instrumental in the introduction of some significant improvements, for example target setting for pupils and the monitoring of teaching and has very effectively dealt with the difficulties arising from significant changes in teaching staff since the last inspection. The effective management structure leads to regular involvement of all staff through clear channels of communication.
54. The headteacher has built up a loyal and hard working team who successfully share his strong commitment to providing a happy, caring environment for all pupils. There is a high degree of mutual tolerance and respect throughout the school. The headteacher has developed a culture of inclusiveness, which promotes team building, stimulates levels of motivation and sets a common purpose. Members of teaching and non-teaching staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities, which are understood by all. All staff feel secure, supported and valued. This ensures that the aims of the school are implemented very well and that the school's ability to effect the improvements still needed is very good.
55. Key issues from the last inspection have been addressed well, as detailed elsewhere in this report. The head teacher, in consultation with the governors, has devised a useful, and much improved, school improvement plan that effectively reviews current practice and sets clear and appropriate targets. The whole staff and governing body are much involved in its formation and all appropriate training needs are clearly indicated. Finance is well directed to support educational priorities; costs are fully detailed and governors decide annually upon priorities for financed action. These are carefully monitored so that any necessary changes can be made.
56. The local education authority and the headteacher and some co-ordinators have carried out some monitoring and evaluation of teaching. Many subject co-ordinators have worked very hard and effectively to introduce improvements in planning and assessment structures in their subjects but too few of them have opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning regularly and frequently and to evaluate standards rigorously. As a result, they are not able to account fully for the standards being achieved in their subjects. The school's planning team, which includes the managers of the lower and middle school, would benefit from having representatives of other sections of the school to provide a wider viewpoint. In addition, agendas are not set and minutes not taken from the meetings, which are informal and on an ad-hoc basis. This is an area for development and the school should introduce more rigour to this process.
57. The management structure, that includes phase and subject co-ordinators, is effective but current practice is adversely affected by the absence, through illness, of the co-ordinator for mathematics and design and technology. The management of special educational needs is sound. The co-ordinator has worked hard to improve provision since the last inspection. However, the school needs to develop these systems of support into the lower school where at present there is no support from the co-ordinator.
58. The process of performance management is newly in place; however, it is too early to assess its effectiveness. The school is making increasingly good use of ICT systems in many aspects of its work and in teaching and learning. Induction procedures for new full time teachers are satisfactory but arrangements for temporary and non-teaching staff are not secure. Internal and external training that is mostly determined by the school's priorities, supports development of teaching. The school does not have a plan for the training and development of all members of staff, although there are some good examples of training such as first aid.

59. The chairman leads the school governing body very well. It is very effective and provides very good support for the headteacher and staff. All statutory responsibilities are fulfilled. There is a well-organised system of committees, which allows governors to carry out their duties effectively. Governors are very active in the decision-making process and in monitoring the work of the school. They fulfil the work of 'critical friend' very well. Each governor has an identified area of the curriculum and visits the school on a regular basis.
60. Financial planning has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. The level of funding is such that the school has to do its best to make savings in order to support some developments; for example, improved efficiencies were achieved in administration so that the school could afford to appoint a co-ordinator for special educational needs. Best value is always sought for purchases. Expenditure is very carefully monitored. The most recent financial audit commended the systems and controls that the school operates. Grants received are appropriately used for their designated purposes. Finances for pupils with special educational needs are appropriately targeted and the school enhances the provision from its own budget. A negative balance, brought about by the authority's funding decisions to do with nursery education, is being reduced in a prudent fashion.
61. Teachers are sufficient in number and are appropriately qualified to teach the curriculum. The range of experience is wide and teachers with particular expertise are deployed well, for example in history in middle school and in music in middle and upper school and in setting arrangements generally. The use of teachers' expertise in these ways has a positive effect on the quality of learning and standards of attainment. Teaching assistants are well deployed and their contributions to teaching and support to pupils are very good. The school secretary provides a very good service and maintains a high level of administrative efficiency. Other non-teaching members of staff, such as the caretaker, cleaners and lunchtime supervisors, contribute well. The kitchen staff also enter into the spirit of the school by providing theme menus and often dressing up.
62. The accommodation is good; classrooms are large, bright and fully equipped. Improvements since the previous inspection include a computer suite and separate facilities for pupils with special educational needs. The school uses its accommodation well including the multi-purpose hall. However, there are some weaknesses:
- the limited amount of space in the Reception class restricts the use of large play equipment;
  - the school does not use the external secure play area to enable the very young children to play with or on mobile toys because the area is let to a private nursery;
  - the school grounds do not have structured play facilities;
  - some classrooms are not ventilated well enough. On hot days, such as those experienced during the inspection week, it is extremely difficult for pupils to maintain concentration well enough to benefit fully from the high quality of teaching.
63. Learning resources are adequate overall. They are good in science, art and design, geography, music and physical education and are satisfactory, overall, elsewhere. However, many old books are being used in all year groups. Some textbooks have to be shared because there are not enough for all pupils. The amount of large play equipment is insufficient for the foundation stage pupils. The quantity of computers is now adequate for the number of pupils but a wider range of software is needed so that the computers can be put to more effective use. The absence of a central library denies pupils a range of learning and study experiences. Teaching materials for pupils with special educational needs are appropriate and enhance the quality of learning for all pupils.
64. The school has improved well since the last inspection. In view of the progress that pupils make academically and in their personal development, together with the high quality of teaching, relationships, care and many aspects of leadership and management, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. In order to improve standards, particularly in writing, mathematics, design and technology, geography and information and control technology at the end of Key Stage 2, the headteacher, staff and governors should now:

- (a) develop manageable and rigorous assessment procedures in those subjects where it is still necessary and use all available assessment information to ensure that teachers devise work that closely matches individual pupils' developing needs, including those with special educational needs and the higher-attaining ones;

(Paragraphs: 39, 40, 45, 99, 100, 117, 129, 134, 140, 143, 156, 159 and 167)

- (b) complete the development of schemes of work in all subjects, ensuring that they identify in a logical sequence the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils are to gain;

(Paragraphs: 22, 28, 110, 117, 125, 134, 140, 143, 145 and 154)

- (c) develop the role of all managers to include the regular and frequent monitoring and the rigorous evaluation of all relevant aspects of the school's work.

(Paragraphs: 23, 40, 56, 57, 110, 117, 125, 129, 134, 143, 151, 156, 160 and 167)

*The above issues have already been highlighted for action in the School Development Plan.*

### **Other issues the school should consider are:**

- Give pupils more opportunities to develop their sense of responsibility and initiative through independent learning.
- Raise the profile of multi-cultural education.
- Ensure that all adults are clear about the procedures for child protection.
- Review the arrangements for reporting on pupils' progress to their parents.
- Review and improve, as possible, aspects of accommodation and resources.
- Ensure that risk assessments are completed for relevant activities.

(Paragraphs: 14, 32, 35, 36, 41, 45, 47, 48, 62, 63, 67 – 69, 83, 94, 100, 101 and 156)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	66
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7.6	30.3	34.8	27.3	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	273
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	61

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	52

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	16	22	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	15
	Girls	19	21	21
	Total	34	36	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (76)	95 (79)	95 (83)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	15
	Girls	17	16	15
	Total	31	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (79)	79 (81)	79 (83)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	16	24	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	19	17	22
	Total	30	28	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (59)	70 (59)	85 (67)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	12
	Girls	14	17	20
	Total	26	30	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (64)	75 (67)	80 (71)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	11
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	257
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.2
Average class size	24.8

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

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	57

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	484,798
Total expenditure	522,455
Expenditure per pupil	1,900
Balance brought forward from previous year	11,900
Balance carried forward to next year	- 25,757

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	273
Number of questionnaires returned	60

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	38	2	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	38	3	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	50	7	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	60	7	0	2
The teaching is good.	52	40	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	23	42	30	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	40	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	48	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	28	55	15	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	33	58	5	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	48	3	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	38	20	8	22

## **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**

66. Children are admitted to the school in September and January prior to their fifth birthday. There are two reception classes and two full-time reception teachers. At the time of the inspection there were 39 children in the two reception classes, two of whom are identified with special educational needs. Most children attend the local nursery school.
67. Attainment on entry to the school is below the national average with a significant number of children well below average. Baseline assessment follows a national scheme and is thorough. Inspection evidence confirms the below average attainment on entry to the school and confirms that there are a significant number of children whose attainment on entry is well below average. All children make good progress in their learning and achieve very well in all areas of learning except the outdoor play area where resources and learning are under-developed. Inspection evidence indicates that around a third of the children are well on course to achieve, or are already achieving, the early learning goals (which are the standards expected nationally for the average five-year-old child) in all areas of learning except outdoor exploratory play. The remaining children make good progress during the year and are well on the way to achieving the early learning goals, but will not reach them by the start of Year 1.
68. Planning is satisfactory for all areas of learning and identifies clearly what and how the children will learn. Assessment is satisfactory and children's development is carefully recorded. Detailed notes on baseline assessment are completed at the beginning of the year and the end of the year. Teachers make day-to-day notes on individual children's progress. The indoor area caters well for areas of learning, but opportunities for learning outdoors are unsatisfactory. Opportunities for climbing and balancing and travelling under, over and through equipment are limited. There is currently no area for children to develop co-ordination, climbing and balancing skills regularly on suitably large equipment. The school is aware of this and has identified it as an area for development. Plans to enrich learning through play outside are currently being developed. There are insufficient computers in the Foundation Stage classrooms. One computer is shared between the two classes and this is old and limited. There is currently no manager specifically for the Foundation Stage. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

69. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development but, overall, standards are below those expected nationally for their age. A significant number of children lose concentration when working independently and their concentration is limited. Many still need adult intervention to guide them to work with concentration. They develop a secure knowledge of the class procedures from the time they enter the school. Before school starts children are encouraged to engage in activities and there is a happy atmosphere. They have clear guidelines and understand what is expected in terms of their work and behaviour, which has a significant impact on their progress. Moral development is good. Children are taught to respect each other and distinguish between right and wrong. They know the rules and feel secure in the classroom environment. Children are awarded stickers and merit awards for good work and behaviour. These class achievements are used well to motivate children and to help them develop confidence in their own ability. Children are encouraged to take turns and take an interest in the actions of others, for example, in a lesson concentrating on their knowledge and understanding of the world, when children listened to others identifying mini-beasts. Opportunities for partner work contribute to improved awareness of others. Teachers encourage pupils to be responsible by taking Bertie Bear home and writing about his adventure. However, opportunities for taking responsibility are sometimes lost, for example, when the teacher hands out the books. Children are given regular homework.
70. Teaching is good in this aspect of learning. The teachers create a happy, welcoming and secure environment in which children develop knowledge of the school environment and a positive and confident attitude to school. Adult helpers develop a good relationship with all children. Children enjoy the activities and are showing signs of growing confidence and independence because they

are establishing good relationships with their teachers. Children respond very well to the consistently good teaching.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

71. Children achieve below average standards in speaking and listening, language and literacy development. A third of children are on course to achieve the early learning goals but average- and lower-attaining children are unlikely to achieve the goals by the time they enter Year 1. However, they make good progress during their time in the Foundation Stage.
72. Opportunities for speaking and talking to each other are provided regularly by the teachers and in the informal play situations. Children listen to their teacher and other adults well but standards in speaking are below what is normally expected for children of this age. When responding to adults' questions, higher-attaining children respond clearly but average- and lower-attaining children reply with one-word answers or point to the answer. The language and range of vocabulary children use are limited, for example, when they are explaining their favourite activity during the day, many children say what the activity is but do not explain why.
73. In the group literacy session children are developing a reasonable knowledge of books. All children have a positive attitude to reading and books because the teachers make the sessions enjoyable and communicate their own enthusiasm for the stories well. Progress in reading is very good. Higher-attaining children are reading independently and draw simple conclusions from the pictures. Average-attaining children are beginning to recognise and say basic letter sounds and are well launched in reading. Lower-attaining children identify characters and objects in the story because the teacher develops their ability to look for picture clues well. They are unable to identify capital letters and full stops. Teachers are very patient and supportive and this gives children confidence in their own ability. A strength in teaching is the use of vocabulary and the links across the curriculum. For example, children identify the symmetrical butterfly and they colour the wings with a partner.
74. Higher-attaining children write simple sentences with the teacher's support and are beginning to use capital letters and full stops. They are beginning to join up their letters and write longer sentences. Spelling is developing well but children need help with this. They correctly identify when full stops and capital letters are missing from the text. Their handwriting is developing well because the teacher gives them clear guidelines. They know, for example, that they must leave a finger space between the words. Average-attaining children copy the teachers' writing and trace over simple letters and words. Average- and lower-attaining pupils write independently and mark the paper with letters but these are not always recognisable. Handwriting generally shows good improvement over time.
75. Teaching is good in this area of learning. A strength of teaching is the patient way the teacher constantly develops confidence and encourages competence through a supportive relationship in which children feel secure. The teacher uses challenging questions to guide children's understanding and awareness of the text. Children's vocabulary is extended through discussion and the good use of vocabulary.

### **Mathematical development**

76. Children make good progress in this area of learning and a third of pupils are already achieving or on course to achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Two thirds of children have also made good progress but are unlikely to achieve all the learning goals by the time they leave the Foundation Stage.
77. Children develop confidence in their ability to know and use numbers. Number songs are used well to help children learn simple addition and subtraction. They enjoy the 'Five little speckled frogs' song and join in enthusiastically showing gleeful excitement as the frogs jump one by one into the pond. The teacher has good subject knowledge and extends mathematical language well. Higher-attaining children correctly identify subtraction and equals signs. Gradually higher-attaining children are encouraged to take away from five, then ten and finally use a 'hundred square'. These children manage to take two away from 67, correctly identifying 65 as the answer. Higher-attaining children write their numbers clearly, for example  $20 - 5 = 15$ . Lower attaining children need help to recognise numbers under ten. Children recognise basic shapes and high

attaining children know the properties of basic shapes two- and three- dimensional shapes well. They identify a cone, cylinder, pyramid and cube. Higher-attaining children recognise symmetry in the butterfly's wings in the big book story because the teacher uses the mathematical vocabulary well. Average- and lower- attaining children still need constant adult intervention and guidance.

78. Teaching is good. The teacher is enthusiastic and organises a good range of activities that encourage and extend mathematical awareness and knowledge. Children relate to the activities very well and lessons are fun and enjoyable. A strength of the teaching is the use of repetition and reinforcement of learning. Children are well challenged by the work and it is presented in achievable steps that gradually extend learning, competence and confidence. Adult helpers make a significant contribution to group work activities.

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

79. Children achieve standards below those expected in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Higher-attaining children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class but average- and lower-attaining children are unlikely to meet these goals. Considering the low attainment on entry to the school children achieve well in this area of learning.
80. Children's knowledge about their own beliefs and those of others is limited as is their independent curiosity to find out about past and present events in their own lives. Higher-attaining children know bees like pollen and pollen is to be found inside flowers. They have a growing awareness that living things need air to breathe. When observing the spider inside the glass container, they explain that the plastic tubes are needed to help the spiders breathe. In lessons children make very good progress.
81. Children make very good progress in their computer skills. They have access to a computer once a week in the computer suite; access in the classroom is limited. Children confidently move the cursor and all children use the 'paintbrush' correctly with higher-attaining pupils 'painting' a garden showing clouds, grass, and sky. They decorate their picture with features, such as a pond and a line of marching ants and change colours independently. They use the stamp to change the size of the pictures. Average-attaining children complete their picture adding features with real joy and excitement.
82. Teaching is very good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain clearly, for example, the difference between the centipede and a millipede. Lessons are well organised with a range of interesting activities to stimulate interest and learning, for example after discussing the mini-beasts, children explore and observe live creatures in secure pots. They draw and write about them with their own writing. Learning is reinforced in other activities, such as communication, language and literacy and creative development, when pupils decorate a butterfly shape. The local environment is used well to extend children's knowledge of the wider world. Photographic evidence shows that children visit the local farm and shops. Visitors, such as a mother and her baby, visit the school and the children develop awareness of growth and living things. Children plant daffodil bulbs.

### **Physical development**

83. Children's attainment is below the expected levels by the time they are five years old because the school has no resources for outdoor play and opportunities for pupils to develop gross motor skills and co-ordination, riding tricycles and developing pulling and pushing skills are under-developed. The school is aware of this and there are plans to develop an area for Foundation Stage. Attainment in fine motor skills is good. Children improve their manipulative and fine motor skills through a range of appropriate activities. They use pencils, crayons, scissors and paint brushes effectively and with confidence. Hand-eye co-ordination is developed well, for example, through matching and positioning shapes. Higher-attaining children dress independently while average- and lower-attaining children need help with laces and buttons. The teacher is encouraging but allows the children to develop independence in this aspect. Spatial awareness is well developed; pupils find their own space and move among others safely, for example, marching, crawling, creeping or fluttering like insects. The children are challenged to remember the order of the dance and they make their own choices selecting which mini beast they will be. The teacher

intervenes well, for example to remind children to move lightly and quickly. Higher-attaining children move lightly and with good expression, lower-attaining children's movement lacks the clarity - but they all enjoy the lesson and make good progress.

84. Teaching is good and teaching points are clearly and appropriately given and this contributes to the good progress children make. Children respond quickly to the teacher's instructions. The teacher has high expectations of behaviour and children respond to this firm guidance very well. A strength in the teaching is the good range of vocabulary that gives children movement experience and develops awareness of different ways to travel.

### **Creative development**

85. Children's attainment, overall, is below expected levels although about a third of them achieve the standards expected nationally by the time they are five years old. The role-play area is not prominent in either classroom. Provision for music is good. Children know and sing a range of songs from memory, such as the 'Eucalyptus Tree' and 'The Big Brass Band'. All children have opportunities to play instruments and high attaining and average children know and identify the names of percussion instruments. They have a well-developed sense of rhythm because the teacher is confident in music and brings a joy to the lessons. Children tap their knees and clap their hands rhythmically to the music. They all have good opportunities to play the big drum, the tambourine, the triangle, rhythm sticks and the shakers. Music lessons have a very good balance of listening, enjoying, playing and singing. Children develop a reasonable knowledge of music and a positive attitude to it. Children are confident painting and hold brushes correctly. They use a range of materials satisfactorily, including paint, crayons and glue, and are guided to make simple collages through cutting and sticking shapes. Higher-attaining children use crayons appropriately, colouring in a butterfly and developing awareness of symmetry. Evidence in the classroom and around the school suggests that children have a good experience of art. They weave with paper and make bumble bees.
86. Teaching in creative aspects is good. Planning identifies clearly what the children will learn and experience. There is an appropriate range of creative activities and these are well used to extend children's learning. Adult helpers are supportive and encourage children to develop their imagination. A strength in teaching is the good use of language that is well used to extend children's vocabulary.
87. All adults are enthusiastic and share positive relationships with the children and their parents. They are sensitive to the needs of young children and provide a well-organised range of appropriate activities. Routines are well established and children clearly know what is expected of them. A secure and purposeful ethos is established.

### **ENGLISH**

88. National Curriculum tests in 2000 showed that the standards attained by seven-year-old pupils in reading were in line with national and similar school averages. In writing the pupils achieved results that were well above national and similar school figures. However, in both tests, the proportion of pupils attaining at least the expected levels was significantly above the national figures and it was the relatively large proportion of pupils attaining low standards in the tests that adversely affected overall standards. In the writing tests girls performed better than boys but both genders performed better than their peers nationally. In the reading tests there was no significant difference between the performances of boys and girls.
89. In the same year, the standards attained by pupils of 11 years of age in the national tests were below national averages and well below those achieved by pupils from similar schools. Although the proportion of pupils attaining at least the expected level was the same as nationally, there were fewer who attained higher levels and more who attained lower levels; this adversely affected the average results. Test results show that girls are attaining at a higher level than boys whose results are worsening over time.
90. Inspection findings are that standards in reading for pupils of seven years of age have improved and are now good and that their standard of writing is at least in line with national figures. The apparent drop in writing standards since the national tests of 2000 is due to the differences found in year cohorts. This conclusion is further strengthened by the fact that pupils in Year 1 are

attaining at a good level in their writing. Inspection evidence also indicates that pupils of seven years of age are making good progress with their writing skills, as they are with all aspects of their English work at this stage. The relatively low level of attainment at which many pupils enter the school in the Foundation Stage needs to be considered when making judgements about the school's provision for the subject and the progress of pupils.

91. The low standards indicated in the national test results in 2000 for eleven-year-olds have continued despite the school's efforts to improve them. The school has identified aspects of its provision that it feels have been responsible for the low attainment of pupils in Year 6 over the past two or three years and has taken action to rectify them. For example, writing in all its forms has been identified as a weakness and this is being given a much higher profile across the whole curriculum now than it has had in the past.
92. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their speaking skills and good progress in developing their listening skills throughout the school. Many begin school with a limited vocabulary and underdeveloped speaking ability. By the time they reach seven years of age they are more confident, with some quite articulate, speakers. At the age of 11 years old, pupils' speaking skills of pupils are satisfactory. There is, however, a tendency for some older pupils to restrict themselves to single word answers and some still have a limited vocabulary. Listening skills are well developed throughout the school. Pupils pay good attention to each other and to their teachers. The majority of pupils are willing to contribute to class discussions and offer their opinions freely. Often at the end of lessons teachers give their pupils the opportunity to share what they have been doing with the others in their class thus developing their speaking ability. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall.
93. Pupils aged seven attain standards in reading that are above those expected nationally. This is an improvement on the findings of the inspection of February 1997 and on the school's national test results of 2000. However, some lower attaining pupils find it difficult to use their knowledge of phonics to form words. They have a limited number of words that they can read and have difficulty in talking about their books. Pupils in the middle attainment bands and those achieving at a higher level read with expression. They have a generally good reading vocabulary, recognising the majority of words in their books. Punctuation is used well to make their reading more interesting to the listener and they sensibly predict what might happen in the story. They use a range of reading skills, such as the use of pictures and of phonics, to help them deal with unfamiliar words. Over time, pupils develop an increasing awareness of the plot and characters in the books they are reading. At 11 years of age, the majority of pupils have attained a satisfactory level of reading with some higher-attaining pupils reading well. Many pupils expressed an interest in reading and read at home on a regular basis. They express preferences for authors, many of the older pupils naming J K Rowling and her Harry Potter books as being amongst their favourites. During literacy sessions, pupils are given a wide range of experiences of different types of texts, such as poetry, stories and non-fiction, which adds to their knowledge and enjoyment of a range of writing.
94. As they progress through the school, pupils make satisfactory progress in using indexes and contents pages to help them find information in non-fiction books. Some understand the use of book glossaries and give a reasonable definition of what they are for. However, the development of study skills is limited due to the lack of a central library area. Pupils have limited access to non-fiction material and that available is often old and in poor condition. There is a need for an increase in the opportunities provided by the school for pupils to practise general library skills, for example, finding books and accessing information at a level suitable for their individual needs. Inspection evidence indicates that although pupils understand the use of indices they are not practised enough in using them to do so automatically – some still skim through their books when seeking information.
95. Attainment in writing is in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven and below the level expected for pupils aged eleven. Pupils up to the age of seven make good progress with their writing overall and, for those of up to 11 years of age, progress is satisfactory. The development of writing skills has been given a high priority by the school. By the time they are seven years of age the majority of pupils write imaginatively, spell most common words correctly and have reasonably neat handwriting. They punctuate their work satisfactorily, for example using full stops and capital letters, and form their thoughts into sentences. Most correctly explain the use of exclamation and question marks. Higher attaining pupils are using speech correctly in

their writing. Pupils use imaginative and interesting language when writing stories and poems. For example, a Year 1 pupil described a cave as being "Dark and creepy." A Year 2 pupil wrote in a poem:

"I wonder how it would feel to be a leaf floating away,  
When the wind stops the leaves calm down."

96. Pupils of 11 years of age produce work that is often untidy and shows underdeveloped handwriting skills. Their spelling is, for the most part, accurate as far as the most commonly used words are concerned and they produce sentences that demonstrate knowledge of basic language structure. Pupils of higher ability write more complex and interesting sentences and use paragraphs reasonably correctly. Much of the extended writing produced by pupils in Year 6 is lively and interesting with well-organised ideas. However, its effect is often diminished because of poor spelling and grammar – this applies to some higher-attaining pupils as well as to the average-attaining ones. Lower-attaining pupils often struggle to use language creatively or persuasively.
97. Pupils are given reasonable opportunity to practise their writing skills in other areas of the curriculum, for example, the work done in science on pushing and pulling in which Year 2 pupils wrote some good descriptive pieces, demonstrating an ability to order their ideas. In a good link to history and information and communication technology pupils in a Year 3-4 class wrote some imaginative descriptions of a trip to a Roman forum using their word processing skills. During the inspection good links between English and other subjects were noted in music, design and technology, history and religious education.
98. Perhaps the most important improvement in the subject's provision has been the improvement in the quality of teaching. In the inspection report of February 1997 teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching is now good overall and sometimes very good or excellent, more frequently when teaching pupils aged from seven to 11; there were no examples of unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection. As a result of these factors, pupils' progress from the age of five to seven has been good. Progress between the ages of seven and 11 has been satisfactory, overall, although recent progress has been more rapid.
99. To achieve this high standard, teachers plan lessons that provide worthwhile learning experiences for their pupils and interest them. Teachers develop the skills of pupils with well-organised shared reading sessions, activities that are well focused on the objectives of their lessons and high expectations. Lessons generally have a good pace that maintains the interest of the pupils with well-timed changes of activity. Classroom assistance is well used and teaching assistants demonstrate a good knowledge of the points they are helping to teach. Lesson planning is thorough and objectives are clearly stated; teaching strategies clearly recognise the differing needs of pupils. However, there is some inconsistency in the standard of marking, some of which is detailed and constructive and some that is much less so, which leaves pupils unclear about how well they have done and what they should do to improve their standards.
100. As part of its efforts to drive up standards the school has developed an effective assessment and recording system for the subject and makes good use of the information gathered to help with curriculum planning – for example, the formation of ability sets and the composition of booster class and other pupil support groups. Pupils are given written targets and their progress through the school is tracked. The school does not provide the pupils with individual reading records that would enable them and their parents to judge their progress.
101. The subject is led and managed well. The school, and in particular the co-ordinator, is well aware of the need to raise the levels of attainment of the older pupils. An important factor in this is the comparatively poor performance of potentially higher-attaining pupils; the school is aware of its responsibility to improve its provision for them. There is also a need for the school to continue to encourage the use of English over the whole curriculum, particularly the use of extended writing and to ensure that the presentation of pupils' work reaches an overall acceptable standard. Resources for the subject are generally satisfactory with the exception of library and non-fiction book provision. There is no central library, which limits the access that pupils have to a wide enough range of fiction and non-fiction books. In addition, much of the book stock is old and in a poor state of repair.

## MATHEMATICS

102. In 2000, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum tests was below the national average and below that for similar schools at the age of seven. The percentage of pupils obtaining level 2, the expected level, was close to the national average but the proportion of pupils obtaining the higher level 3 was below the national average.
103. In the same year, pupils' standards in the Key Stage 2 tests were below the national average and well below that for similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected level 4 or higher was the same as the national figure but was below the average for similar schools. More pupils achieved very low results than nationally and there were fewer pupils achieving at the higher level 5; this is what brought the overall average down.
104. Since the last inspection the school has made significant improvements in mathematics and numeracy. Pupils' progress throughout the school is sound, overall, and recently has become better. Teachers use an improved range of teaching strategies in both oral and mental sessions and adopt problem solving approaches to learning about the subject.
105. Current inspection findings are that pupils' attainment is average at the age of seven and below average, overall, at the age of 11, with higher attaining pupils attaining broadly in line with national expectations. Within the range of mathematics work seen during the inspection, pupils with higher ability demonstrated average attainment related to number. The achievement and progress of the pupils in Years 1 and 2 are sound but have recently improved; this includes pupils with special educational needs. The achievement and progress of the seven to eleven-year-old pupils in lessons and their progress over time are sound. This includes pupils with special educational needs, who are well supported in classrooms by teachers and assistants who plan appropriate tasks for them.
106. Pupils in Year 1 confidently count numbers to 30 and, with a partner, add beyond 20 with confidence. Higher-attaining pupils in the class confidently add numbers from dominoes and total them. Pupils in Year 2 have a good knowledge of their tables and this helps them in other areas of their mathematics work; for example, they have a secure knowledge of their five times table and begin to devise associated facts of division. Higher attaining pupils classify properties of shape correctly using sides and angles. They interpret weather charts accurately and compare them using their problem solving skills well. By the age of seven, pupils confidently use and understand appropriate mathematical language. Pupils respond well in their lessons and are keen and eager to learn. They behave very well, concentrate and work hard. Their enthusiasm matches that of their teachers. Relationships all round between pupils and their teachers and other adults are very good indeed.
107. Pupils in Year 3 consolidate their knowledge and understanding of finding fractions of number, for example  $\frac{1}{4}$  of 12 = 12 divided by 4 = 3. In Year 4, pupils learn to multiply a two-digit number by a single-digit number and accurately double large numbers. Higher attaining pupils demonstrate secure knowledge and understanding of number, for example, partitioning to find  $29 \times 2 = 58$  [double 20 = 40, add  $(9+9) = 58$ ]. They accurately double numbers to 101. Pupils have a good grasp of basic number facts. In Year 5, pupils learn to round numbers to the nearest 1 and 100. They begin to understand problem solving based on a finite amount of money to spend. Higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of reflective symmetry and make up their own symmetrical patterns. Pupils in Year 6 develop sound mental and oral skills and respond to questions, such as  $60 \times 30$ , quickly and accurately. Pupils develop sound measuring skills using kilograms and millilitres. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and are becoming confident in their learning, concentrate well and work hard. Their behaviour is always good and sometimes very good. Relationships between pupils and teachers, with teaching assistants and other adults are always very good.
108. The quality of teaching is good, overall, with examples of very good and excellent teaching seen, particularly in the older classes. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching is never less than satisfactory, being good in 25 per cent of lessons and very good in a further 25 per cent. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching in all lessons was at least good with almost 60 per cent of it being very good. A further one lesson was of excellent quality. Teachers' planning in mathematics is satisfactory and improving. Teaching is based on good subject knowledge and understanding and a clear knowledge of what is to be learned. This ensures that the basic skills are well taught and that all

pupils know what is being taught. What is to be learned is clearly identified; focused and well-planned activities enable the objectives to be realised in the lesson. In some lessons for pupils in Years 1 and 2, teachers' planning was overly ambitious and, as a consequence, teaching became muddled and unclear. Pupils did not always understand their learning and this had a detrimental effect. All teachers have high expectations of pupils' standards and behaviour. Most lessons are well structured and achieve a good balance between direct teaching and pupils being actively engaged on tasks that are well matched to their abilities. During oral and mental activities, teachers use a good range of questioning to ensure that all pupils are given many opportunities to answer questions. Teachers use time and resources well, for example, in a Year 2 lesson effective use was made of the teaching assistant to assess and record the extent of pupils' learning during the plenary session. In a Year 4 lesson, the rate and pace of the lesson was excellent and very effective use was made of resources used to extend and develop learning. Marking of mathematics is inconsistent across the school. Some teachers' comments encourage and motivate pupils to overcome any difficulties they encounter in their work.

109. The curriculum for mathematics is satisfactory. The National Strategy for Numeracy has been implemented soundly and is beginning to have an impact on the standards achieved. The attention paid to mental and oral work and its application benefits learning across the curriculum. Work was seen that related to information and communication technology, and many examples of listening and speaking were seen. The subject offers a good contribution to literacy development within the school because pupils listen carefully to their teachers and develop their mathematical vocabulary as they move through the school.
110. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory at the present time as the school is without a co-ordinator. However, teachers have worked very hard and successfully to raise standards. Planning of skills development for consistency throughout the school needs to be developed. Sound assessment procedures are used well, for example, to group pupils into sets of pupils with similar needs.

## **SCIENCE**

111. There are no national tests for seven-year-old pupils. Teachers' assessments of pupils' standards in 2000 were that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels was well below the national average but that the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels was well above the national average, particularly in the area of scientific enquiry. In the same year, the standards attained by 11-year-olds in the national tests were below the national average and well below those of similar schools. This was because, although the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels was marginally above the national average, there were too few pupils achieving higher levels. Nevertheless, these results represented a significant improvement on those for the previous two years.
112. Current inspection findings are that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school and, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, attain standards that match those expected nationally. This is the same as reported by the previous inspection team. Although their skills of scientific enquiry are nurtured well, especially between the ages of five and seven, the skills of the oldest pupils in Year 6 are below those expected. This is as a result of previous weaknesses in the planning and expectations of some teachers that have now been addressed. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, as it was at the time of the last inspection.
113. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are grouped by prior attainment for science, which enables teachers to plan work for a narrower range of needs within each group. This system works well because teaching is good. Teachers make very good allowance for pupils to experiment freely within clearly defined parameters of behaviour and application. They provide interesting tasks and question pupils skilfully to probe their understanding and to ensure that all pupils are involved in the lesson. As a result, pupils have good attitudes to learning. They concentrate well on what they are doing and try hard to produce good quality work. However, sometimes teachers do not manage the timing of the lesson well enough to give time to sum up what has been learned at the end and to let pupils explore the extent of their learning.
114. The system also makes good provision for the efficient development of pupils' skills of scientific enquiry as they find out about, for example, the factors that affect how far a car will travel down

slopes. In lessons such as these, pupils work practically, collaborate effectively and record their results regularly in a small variety of methods, the higher-attaining ones doing so systematically. While lower-attaining pupils have no clear idea of fair testing, the average and higher attaining ones clearly understand the concept and recognise that it is only one variable that can be changed. Average-attaining pupils measure with reasonable accuracy and present their findings using a suitable range of methods. They label their diagrams accurately and occasionally predict what they think will happen. Higher-attaining pupils predict appropriately, measure accurately and record systematically, sometimes using their mathematical skills soundly to present their findings in a table and realise, for example, that the smoothness and steepness of a slope affects their car's performance, which is above the levels expected for their age.

115. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have grown plants in controlled conditions and have a secure knowledge of the factors affecting seed and plant growth. They are beginning to be able to draw parallels between these and the factors affecting the development of human beings. However, they are unclear about the process of pollination, for example confusing the purpose of the visit of the bee to a plant. Although teachers have good subject knowledge, too many opportunities are lost to involve pupils more actively in learning as a result of teachers sometimes talking for too high a proportion of the lesson. Nevertheless, questioning skills are good and pupils maintain concentration for long periods of time, sometimes showing very good levels of interest, for example when the teacher produced plants that had been grown in controlled conditions.
116. In Years 5 and 6, pupils gain a good understanding of food chains and the relationships between consumers and producers. This is because the teacher's subject knowledge is very good and she explicitly stated her high expectations of pupils' interest and attention early in the lesson. Having gained their attention, she retained it throughout by conducting the lesson at a swift pace, questioning them very skilfully to make links with their previous learning and using their answers well to extend their learning. As a result, they gave rapt attention, behaved very well and worked productively. Pupils know that some changes that result from the application of heat or cold are irreversible and have a secure grasp of filtration, separation and dissolution, with higher-attaining pupils also being able to separate materials using magnetism and understand the process of erosion. Pupils are now beginning to investigate soundly, plan and conduct experiments reasonably and draw valid conclusions, although their standards in this aspect are not as high as they are in the rest of their science work. Too much of the early work this school year was untidy and scrappy, particularly in one class, where work remained unmarked for too long; this has now improved. As a consequence, pupils' progress recently has accelerated.
117. The quality of teaching is good, overall, throughout the school. Teachers' planning is sound, overall. The school is in the process of adapting national guidelines to suit its particular needs, under the good guidance of the hard working co-ordinator. The format for these varies between year groups; the co-ordinator has a good grasp of the development needs of the subject and realises that planning needs to include specific references to the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils are to learn in a logical sequence. This longer term planning is soundly developed into more specific plans for each half term, which answers the criticism contained in the last inspection report, but too often teachers are confusing what pupils are to learn with the activities that they are to undertake; this is an area for the school to refine and to make more sharply focused. Teachers' lesson plans are often good and clearly identify what pupils are to learn in the lesson; this is not consistent across the school. The co-ordinator has collected samples of pupils' work across the school to show progression in learning. These pieces are not levelled to National Curriculum descriptors and are, therefore, less useful to her colleagues than they could be. While both are broadly sound, overall, more work remains to be done to ensure that planning and assessment systems are coherent and efficient throughout the school. The co-ordinator does not have the opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning regularly enough. Resources for the subject are good and are generally used well.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

118. Since the last inspection standards in art have remained the same but the curriculum and quality of teaching have improved. There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching throughout the school; there is now no teaching that is less than satisfactory and there are instances of excellent teaching. What pupils are expected to learn is clearly identified and there is a clear progression in all aspects of the subject. The co-ordinator has introduced individual art

books for all pupils and has improved the quality of planning, which is now very good. The focus on art and design around the school is very high; work is attractively displayed and appreciated.

119. Standards in art and design are good throughout the school and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress from the baseline of low attainment on entry to the school.
120. By the age of seven, pupils experience a very rich art curriculum. They explore a wide range of materials and are developing competent skills and techniques. Pupils are confident when completing line drawings from imagination or real life, using paints and crayons and mixing colours with enjoyment. They know that a good painting fills the page and produce attractive work in two- and three-dimensions. Pupils use a good range of techniques such as oil pastels, wax crayons, aqua pencils and collage to produce pictures, such as those inspired by Georgia O'Keefe's poppies. They make paper sculptures using scrunched and twisted paper inspired by the work of Alberto Giacometti. Their experience of tie-dye and weaving contributes to their growing awareness and appreciation of colours and texture. Their knowledge of professional artists is good. The teacher's excellent subject knowledge inspires them and they show interest when listening to the artist's work and life. Pupils have good awareness of colour and shape because the teacher has such high expectations and draws pupils' attention to details of composition, colour, line, shape and the aesthetic appreciation of the picture. Higher-attaining pupils talk about how their eye goes to the centre of the poppy and they identify their favourite part of the painting, such as the shape of the petals, the colours used and the centre of the poppies.
121. The very good progress is maintained in Years 3 and 4, where pupils confidently describe the style of Monet. They know, for example, that he was an impressionist painter and used small brush strokes to achieve a distinctive style of painting. Pupils have a good knowledge and evident appreciation of a range of artists because the teaching of art is very good and teachers make the history of art so interesting for pupils. Higher attaining pupils correctly explain the difference between the Impressionist period and the post-Impressionist period. They capture the swirling style of Van Gogh's painting 'Starry Night'. Pupils are beginning to understand the different techniques used and explain the difference between Monet's style and that of Van Gogh. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 6, their knowledge of professional artists and their understanding and ability to use a range of techniques has increased. Pupils compare the work of Kandinsky and Picasso. They know and explain about the work of Louis Comfort Tiffany and create glass paintings inspired by his work. Pupils have good knowledge of stained glass windows because the teacher explains it so clearly. The teacher reminds pupils of the line, composition, colour and general layout of the picture. Pupils re-create accurately the design of clematis inspired by the work of the same artist. Higher attaining pupils complete their line drawing of the clematis and recreate the bold style of the stained glass windows very well.
122. The teaching of the children aged five to seven is very good, overall. For the seven to eleven-year-olds, it is good, overall. The excellent teaching seen in Years 1 and 2 reflects the high subject knowledge of the teacher. Lessons are interesting and highly stimulating and this contributes to excellent opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and appreciation of art. Very good teaching in Years 3 and 4 contributes to pupil's knowledge and appreciation of art and the work of professional artists. In this very good lesson the teacher introduces the life and style of Vincent Van Gogh explaining clearly the post-impressionist period and the change in style from the dash style brush strokes to the swirl style seen in many of Van Gogh's paintings. The teacher uses stories very well to capture the interest of pupils and they listen with rapt attention to the teacher explaining how Van Gogh lost his ear. Resources, such as music, contribute to pupils' growing interest and awareness; for example the teacher plays 'Starry, Starry Night' and explains that the song is about the work of Van Gogh. This increases pupils' interest and appreciation of his work and contributes to their learning. Pupils greatly enjoy their art lessons throughout the school because teaching is very good and lessons are interesting.
123. The co-ordinator is very good; her specialist subject knowledge and organisation, combined with her enthusiasm for art and the very good curriculum, give other members of staff a clear guideline for their own teaching. Resources are good. There is a clear progression from the Foundation Stage to Year 6 because the co-ordinator has a clear vision of the development of art, which leads to very good assessment procedures, inspires her colleagues and has a powerful effect on pupils' standards. As you walk around the school the good quality and range of artwork

are evident in all classrooms, the hall and corridors. Pupils visit local art galleries and artists visit the school to work with pupils. A potter has worked with Years 5 and 6.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

124. At the previous inspection standards of attainment were reported to be in line with national expectations at both key stages. While this is still the case for seven-year-old pupils, the standards that pupils now attain by the time they leave the school are below the expected levels for pupils of this age. While all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make broadly satisfactory progress throughout the school, their progress is not as good as it could be.

125. There are a number of reasons why this is so:

- the subject does not have a co-ordinator;
- the school has not developed a skills based scheme of work to help teachers in their planning although this situation has recently begun to improve as the school has adopted national subject guidance; and
- attainment has been restricted by the lack of opportunities for pupils to develop subject knowledge and skills progressively throughout the school.

126. It was only possible to see a small number of lessons. Judgements about standards of attainment are drawn from these lessons, looking at pupils' work, discussions with the 'acting co-ordinators' and the scrutiny of teachers' planning.

127. By the age of seven, pupils are beginning to develop a sound ability to use simple tools to cut and shape materials such as fabric and paper to make a coat. They draw and cut out the shape of the coat reasonably accurately and sensibly make decisions about the join down the middle of the coat and where the sleeves are. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 design and make apparatus they have seen on a trip to a playground. Pupils evaluate their work satisfactorily through discussion with their teacher. In Years 3 and 4, pupils designed and enthusiastically made a page for a book with moving parts that was being made for children in the reception classes. Pupils evaluated their designs simply and made sensible decisions about the materials and tools that they used. By the age of 11, pupils are beginning to design for a purpose. In Years 5 and 6, pupils collaborate well, refining their design for making a musical instrument. Pupils are inventive; they design structures, test materials for durability, construct models and evaluate the end result.

128. In the limited number of lessons seen, teaching was never less than good and was more often very good. The effectiveness of this high quality performance is adversely affected by the lack of coherent planning and assessment systems that develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in a logical sequence over time. Pupils respond enthusiastically to tasks set. They discuss their work with interest and talk about the processes involved in making, for example, a musical instrument. High quality teaching enthuses pupils to discuss their ideas and to use the reference materials available on tables. An excellent pace to the lesson ensures that pupils work hard. The activities planned are appropriate to the age and needs of pupils. Pupils clearly understand about using tools safely and work with great care and respect for the tools they use.

129. The subject does not have a co-ordinator and this is unsatisfactory because there is no informed and consistent overview of the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers have volunteered to 'act' as co-ordinators for the time being and have worked very hard to implement the scheme of work throughout the school. Planning is improving and an assessment system is being trialled with the older pupils. Teachers do not use assessment information to devise subsequent work to meet the needs of individuals; this is an area for development. There is very little evidence of the use of computers within design and technology. Resources are satisfactory. Although a good start has been made, there is much to do to improve provision and raise standards.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

130. The inspection of February 1997 found that pupils were attaining at a level that was satisfactory overall. Evidence based on lesson observations, an examination of pupils' work and wall displays clearly indicates that for pupils of seven years of age this level of attainment has been maintained. However, pupils of 11 years of age are attaining at a level that is below that

expected nationally; this level of attainment is lower than that noted in the last report on the subject. The school is aware of this lowering of attainment levels of the older pupils, which is due to a number of factors that the school has either dealt with or is in the process of so doing. The action taken by the school has resulted in an increase in the rate of progress made by younger pupils, up to seven years of age, from satisfactory, as found in the last inspection, to good. Despite their lower level of attainment older pupils are, at the time of the current inspection, making satisfactory and sometimes good progress, as a result of the action recently taken by the school to improve its overall provision for the subject.

131. By the time they reach the age of seven, pupils discuss and accurately identify some of the main human and physical elements in their surroundings. For example, they recognise that houses, shops and roads are man made whereas trees, flowers and hills are part of the natural environment. They have a sound grasp of the differences between their own locality and that of others. Pupils name some of the different geographical features of their world correctly, such as the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. In their map work they use simple keys to identify various features. By 11 years of age, pupils understand about the threat now posed to the world's rainforests by man's exploitation. They know how the rainforest system works, how delicate the balance is, and have a basic understanding of the notion of sustainable development. The majority compare the differences between locations satisfactorily, for example their temperature, rainfall and physical features such as mountain ranges and rivers. They understand some of the factors that influenced settlement, for example, food supply, water and defence. The work of older pupils, however, demonstrates a lack of geographical skills – poorly produced maps for example. Their work is also untidy and generally lacking care on some occasions. There is no evidence to suggest that the progress of pupils with special educational needs is different to that of their peers. Overall, pupils take an interest in the activities during lessons and cooperate well with their teachers and with each other.
132. The overall level of teaching has improved since the last inspection and it is now good, with some very good, for pupils up to seven years of age and satisfactory, sometimes good for older pupils. No unsatisfactory teaching was noted during the inspection, an improvement on the findings of the report of February 1997. Where teaching is good or very good, teachers ensure that the pupils are given the opportunity at the beginning of lessons to discuss what has already been covered in the topic. They use these revision sessions well to assess the progress of their pupils, to clear up any misunderstandings and to fill any gaps in their knowledge. The resources used by teachers are often imaginative, well focused on the objectives of the lesson and used effectively to excite pupils' interest. A good example of this is the use of small information cards, made by the teacher, to introduce a lesson on the factors to be considered when choosing a holiday destination; pupils became very involved in this activity. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge; they maintain the interest of their pupils by ensuring that lessons have a brisk pace with frequent and well-timed changes of activity.
133. A feature of teachers' planning is the strong links that they have forged with other subjects. This is particularly evident in the use of ICT to enhance the ability of pupils to research using the Internet. In a Year 2 lesson pupils were encouraged to develop their ICT skills in a well-planned activity concerned with giving accurate directions. Pupils are encouraged to discuss their work and contribute their ideas to class discussions thus enhancing their speaking skills. Pupils listen well to their teachers and to each other. The development of the pupils' ability to use English in all its forms is encouraged with activities that include, for example, note taking, longer pieces of writing and the labelling of maps and drawings.
134. The management of the subject is good and the co-ordinator is very enthusiastic. She is very aware of what needs to be done in order to increase the overall standards achieved by the pupils in their geography work. There is a need to develop a whole school system of assessment and record keeping on which future planning can be based and that measures pupil development over time. It is also important that the work already being done to plan for skills development as well as geographical knowledge is further developed. In addition, there are too few opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. The resources available to teachers are generally good.

## **HISTORY**

135. In the report of February 1997 attainment in history was seen as being in line with national expectations. The school has maintained this satisfactory attainment with pupils attaining levels that match those expected nationally at seven and 11 years of age. For pupils of seven years of age and under, progress is overall satisfactory and for older pupils it is good. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to that of their peers.
136. By the time they reach seven years of age, pupils have a sound sense of chronology through their work comparing objects in use today with those used for the same purpose in the past. They have a secure knowledge of some of the events and personalities that have influenced the history of this country. For example, they have produced work on the Fire of London and the Great Plague of the year before that demonstrates a basic understanding of the causes of both events. Some of the work on the Fire of London included some well-written accounts of its effects. They have a sound grasp of aspects of the first Elizabethan era; the voyages of discovery that took place, life in the countryside and the differences in the lifestyles of the people of the period. By the age of 11, pupils' understanding has developed satisfactorily and they have developed the ability to discuss people's motives for their actions in the past. An example of this is the work done in Year 6 on two of the inmates of Stafford Gaol in the last half of the nineteenth century in which pupils were asked to think about how they would feel in similar circumstances. This made a good contribution to their spiritual and moral development. Pupils have a sound knowledge of historical events and characters, such as the Wars of the Roses, Henry VIII, Sir Francis Drake and Florence Nightingale.
137. The quality of teaching is satisfactory for the five to seven year olds and is good for the older pupils. It is never less than satisfactory and sometimes, particularly in lessons involving the older pupils, good or excellent. Where teaching is most effective, teachers ensure that pupils start the lesson with the background knowledge they need by reviewing what has been taught previously. They ensure that pupils are clear about what they have to do and that the resources provided for the lesson are focused on what is being taught. For example, teachers used photographs and other materials from the periods being studied to develop the ability of pupils to use first hand evidence. This was particularly effective in a lesson on the Victorian era in which the teacher used a photograph of her own family taken during that period to increase pupil understanding of Victorian life. The ability of the pupils to think historically is enhanced by the emphasis put, and in some lessons strongly emphasised, on the importance of looking at the facts and not relying purely on stories and anecdotes.
138. Lessons are well planned and ensure that pupils are given the opportunity to practise their skills from other areas of the curriculum, for example, with work connected to English and art with written accounts, note taking and labelled drawings. Teachers retain the interest of the pupils by ensuring that their lessons have a brisk pace with well-timed changes of activity. An important element in the teaching of the subject is the good level of relationships between pupils and teachers that encourages pupils to express their thoughts freely and, in doing so, develop their speaking and listening skills. Pupils show an interest in the subject and co-operate well with each other and their teachers during lessons.
139. The school uses the local area well to increase the awareness of the pupils of how it has changed over time. There are visits to Stafford Castle, the ancient High Street and other areas of historical interest. The pupils studying Roman Britain are taken on a trip to Chester. The other resources available for teaching the subject are generally satisfactory and of reasonable quality.
140. A significant strength of the subject is the good leadership provided by the co-ordinator. She has a good knowledge of the subject and a clear understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards. For example, there is an understanding of the need to further develop the teaching of historical skills and to ensure that it becomes an integral part of whole school and teachers' planning. There is also an understanding of the need to raise the standard of the work produced by some pupils. As part of the development of the subject the manager has been revising the scheme of work, ensuring that learning objectives are clearer and that the curriculum is more focused generally. There is still, however, a need to ensure that the assessment and recording of the progress of pupils is used consistently across the school to inform planning to ensure that work is closely matched to the developing needs of all pupils. The work done since the inspection of February 1997 has led to an improvement in overall teaching and a more focused, but not yet completed, scheme of work.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

141. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are now making satisfactory progress throughout the school. This is a factor of improved hardware, including the establishment of a suite of 15 computers, improved allocation of time to the subject and the increasing confidence of teachers with the subject. The attainment levels of the five to seven-year-olds are now in line with those expected nationally. However, there are many gaps in the knowledge, skills and understanding of the older pupils and, overall, their attainment by the age of 11 is below that expected nationally of pupils of their age. These standards are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. There are, however, many encouraging examples of pieces of work from seven to eleven-year-olds whose standards are now broadly in line with those expected.
142. In Year 2, pupils have a secure knowledge of how to open and close programs, how to change the size and style of font and how to print their work. They use a mouse confidently but have slow keyboard skills. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use the tunes they have already composed on computers to devise lyrics. They have arranged icons correctly to compose a tune and then use the program's facility broadly satisfactorily to write in their words. Year 5 and 6 pupils build a simple program to control the actions of a screen turtle. They change the thickness and colour of the line drawn and clear the screen confidently and correctly. They use their mathematical skills soundly to decide which angles they should use to draw squares, equilateral triangles, hexagons and decagons; however, they are unable to suggest ways of changing the size of the figures they have drawn.
143. The quality of teaching is good, overall, throughout the school with examples in both key stages of lessons that are very well taught. This is an improvement on the judgement given in the last inspection report that is brought about by teachers' increased confidence with the subject, born of good levels of relevant professional development and a commitment to improve their own performance. Teachers' planning is satisfactory and draws securely on the developing adaptation of national guidance by the co-ordinator. She has already recognised that more needs to be done to secure planning at all levels throughout the school, to devise assessment procedures that identify the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils are to learn in a logical sequence and to ensure that they are used consistently to enable teachers to plan work that closely matches pupils' developing needs and aptitudes. Nevertheless, planning, both for continuity of experience and a broad progression in pupils' learning, has improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator does not have enough opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.
144. Where teaching, while satisfactory, is less effective, it is because the teacher does not provide enough challenge or insist that pupils behave well and work hard to a good level. More generally, teachers provide interesting tasks and manage pupils' behaviour very well. They have very high expectations of standards of attention and application that, because of the high standards of relationships, are fully met. Pupils generally work hard to produce good work and concentrate very well. They enjoy their opportunities to use computers and behave, generally, very well; they have very good attitudes to their work. Because the teacher's subject knowledge is good, basic skills are taught well and any difficulties pupils encounter are swiftly sorted out, enabling a good rate of progress. Resources are satisfactory, overall. All teachers make good use of the computer suite at least once a week; at the moment, further practice for pupils in class on the programs being used in the suite is not always possible because of a variety of machines throughout the school. The school has recognised that this is not good enough and has plans to lease enough further computers from the beginning of the next term to enable suitable practice to take place in every class – this is a good development.
145. The co-ordinator has worked hard and effectively to improve provision in ICT. Improvements since the last inspection have been very good. She has a very good grasp of what is needed to develop the subject further and is beginning to see the results of this effort and that of her colleagues, in rising standards of work across the subject for all pupils, particularly the oldest ones. There is a very good determination, shared by all, to improve standards and provision still further. While there are examples of the use of ICT to support the work of other subjects, this is not coherently planned in subject schemes of work, which the co-ordinator recognises as an area for development when the effectiveness of units of work is reviewed.

## **MUSIC**

146. Standards found in the last inspection have been improved. At the ages of seven, pupils' standards match those expected nationally, while, by the age of eleven, pupils' standards are above those found nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in gaining the key knowledge and skills of the subject from the age of five to seven and very good progress from the ages of seven to 11. Pupils throughout the school demonstrate good vocal skills and their singing is good.
147. Pupils make good use of their singing in many areas of the curriculum. Literacy skills in music are developed well through the acquisition of good listening skills, the understanding of musical vocabulary and performing skills. They generally pitch notes accurately and sing with an increasingly clear tone. Effective use is made of rhymes and jingles to improve younger pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils control sounds through singing and playing.
148. Year 1 and 2 pupils develop their listening skills well when trying to identify sounds heard on a tape of 'Weather' music. They match instruments carefully to the sounds they have heard and in small groups develop a piece of music that sounds like a thunderstorm. They are beginning to build up texture in their compositions. After they have refined their music, they play to the rest of the class who evaluate and comment sensibly on the performance. They hold percussion instruments, such as Indian bells, cymbals, and claves carefully and usually correctly. Their skills of working together and of listening carefully to their teacher and to each other develop well.
149. In Years 3 to 6, pupils build well on their skills and knowledge. Pupils use their voices expressively by singing, for example, 'Cape Horn'. The quality of singing is always at least good and often very good. Pupils control their voices well to match the speed and rhythm of the music and have a good tonal quality when singing, both loudly and softly. They use instruments purposefully to build up sound and respond well to the directions of the teacher. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 use different musical instruments to accompany their singing in rounds and learn to sustain rhythm pattern against another. Pupils in Year 6 listen carefully to modern music, for example Hear'Say's 'Pure and Simple'. Pupils understand and 'feel' the pulse and rhythm by walking while singing in time and clapping on the strong beats. This excellent lesson developed pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding exceptionally well. Pupils were able to explain clearly and record the meaning of pulse, rhythm and metre.
150. The quality of teaching is good, overall, with some very good teaching seen throughout the school and an excellent lesson for the oldest pupils. Where teaching is very good and excellent, pupils make very good gains in their knowledge and skills. Teachers have very good musical knowledge. This expertise and the way they use their voice expressively combines to ensure that lessons are well sequenced and tasks are reinforced well to extend pupils' learning. As a result, pupils' attitudes to music are very good. They apply creativity in their lessons, show a high degree of interest and contribute well to lessons. All pupils remain well behaved in their lessons. The most effective lessons are characterised by very good management and a brisk pace so that everyone applies creative effort, which allows pupils to extend their musical skills and knowledge.
151. The subject is led and managed well. There is a good scheme of work and the school ensures that teachers' professional expertise is developed through a nationally approved scheme, which has clearly identified the skills, knowledge and understanding required to teach music effectively. Some teaching staff are very well qualified and gifted in the teaching of music and this greatly enhances the school's provision. However, the co-ordinator has no opportunities to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning on a regular basis. Pupils have music note books and record their compositions and understanding of musical vocabulary and notation. Resources are good and pupils use and care for them with respect.
152. Peripatetic teachers come into school on a regular basis and pupils are introduced to instruments such as brass, flute, clarinet, cello and violin. Pupils are very keen to take part and work well to achieve pleasing group performances, for example, at festivals and special times in the school year. Music is incorporated into seasonal performances, such as Christmas activities.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

153. By the ages of seven and 11, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve standards expected nationally. They make satisfactory progress in their learning, overall. During the inspection, lessons were observed in games and dance in Years 1 and 2 and in games and

athletics in Years 3 to 6. No lessons were observed in gymnastic activities at Key Stage 1 and 2 or dance and swimming at Key Stage 2. A scrutiny of planning indicates these activities take place.

154. Since the last inspection the teachers have worked hard to improve pupils' ability to evaluate their own and others' performance. The quality of teaching has improved from satisfactory overall to good with instances of very good teaching in both key stages. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Planning has improved and clearly identifies learning opportunities. It is strong in athletic and gymnastic activities but does not build systematically on skills, knowledge and understanding in gymnastics and dance. Lessons are taught in class sessions rather than whole year sessions. Resources have been up-dated.
155. By the age of seven, pupils make satisfactory progress in dance. They know they must warm up before exercise and calm down at the end of lessons. Pupils stop on command and extension in movement is good when teachers emphasise this aspect. In their 'seaside dance', pupils develop their spatial awareness well as they move sideways in different directions. Higher attaining pupils move with their tummies towards the ceiling inspired by the shape of the real crab and are stimulated to produce a good range of movements as they swirl and turn, hanging onto an imaginary umbrella being blown by the wind. Pupils link movements well - they twist, turn and swerve like waves, responding to the music by Debussy, 'Le Mer'. The quality of the movement is improved because the teacher uses her voice so well and reminds pupils to use levels, different directions and to change speed. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use facial muscles because the teacher reminds them of this. Standards in games match what you would expect for pupils of this age. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to hold the stick correctly as they dribble the ball in uni-hoc. Pupils take care and work hard because teachers stress this aspect well. Sometimes the strategy used by teachers, such as having seven pupils in a team when dribbling around the slalom cones, means pupils are waiting too long for their turn and activity time is reduced. When hitting a ball to their partner, pupils co-operate well. Teachers have very good control and pupils respond quickly to the instructions.
156. By the age of 11, pupils demonstrate good running skills and knowledge of how to receive and pass the relay baton. When throwing the cricket and rounders ball, pupils are developing the correct technique well and higher attaining pupils manage to transfer their body weight properly as they throw. Opportunities are lost for pupils to develop their responsibility, for example through measuring and recording the distance of their throws. Good use of evaluation helps pupils reflect on their performance and consider how to improve, for example pupils suggest ways to improve their relay changeover techniques. Pupils have good knowledge of attack and defence strategies in invasion games and sensibly describe how to maintain possession of a ball and regain possession from an opposing team. Pupils accurately describe the effect of exercise on the body and have a sound basic understanding of the importance of activity in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Pupils make good progress in their swimming and many pupils who previously could not swim have become confident swimmers. Nearly all pupils swim a width but there are many that cannot swim the 25 metres. Pupils keep a record of their own swimming achievements; however, no one co-ordinates the keeping of swimming records or monitors the quality of the teaching and learning.
157. Pupils take part in many inter-school events, for example football and athletics and do very well. Parents and ancillary staff make a valuable contribution to the activities.
158. Teaching is good, overall, with instances of very good and satisfactory teaching throughout the school. When teaching is very good, pupils become enthusiastic and use their imaginations well. This was evident, for example, in the 'seaside dance', when pupils responded well to the atmosphere created by the teacher reading a story written by the class. At Key Stage 2 discipline is firm and teaching points are given clearly. The teacher provides effective guidelines to help pupils evaluate their own and others' work.
159. A weakness in teaching occurs where the lesson organisation means pupils stand in queues waiting for a turn and this limits the overall activity time. Pupils are often asked to perform before they have had sufficient time to practise and improve their performance. In the satisfactory, but less effective lessons in Year 3 and 4, pupils are placed into full games of skittle ball with six or five on each side. While higher attaining pupils cope in this situation, average and lower attaining pupils seldom touch the ball and do not have sufficient opportunity to develop their throwing and

catching skills. Teachers do not always give pupils sufficient time to practise their skills, for example in a Year 1 and 2 hockey lesson and also in a Year 5 and 6 athletics lesson. Pupils move onto another activity, when time spent practising would have resulted in improved learning. Teachers tend to move through the activities sticking to the lesson plan and do not always observe the children's response and progress in learning sufficiently to adapt the lesson to emerging needs of pupils. Teachers are beginning to use assessment at the end of a unit of work but this is inconsistent throughout the school. Assessment is not currently used to inform lessons. Assessment is under-developed but the co-ordinator is aware of this and there are appropriate plans to introduce assessment during the next academic year. Planning is good in games and athletics but could be better in gymnastics and dance.

160. The co-ordinator is a good role model who has worked hard and effectively to improve planning. Currently, there is too little opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning through the school. Resources and accommodation are good, overall. The school has a good size playing field and the playground is well marked out for small-sided games. Resources are good for games but are only satisfactory for gymnastics.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

161. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress throughout the school and, by the ages of seven and 11, attain the standards expected of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
162. Provision and practice in the subject have improved greatly since the time of the previous inspection and statutory requirements are now fulfilled. Standards at the ages of seven and 11 have risen as a result of a good scheme of work that makes good provision for pupils to discuss issues and to reflect upon the higher meaning of life. The scheme also provides good support for teachers in their planning and has contributed to the good quality of teaching observed during this inspection.
163. Year 2 pupils recall many stories from the Bible, including the story of Jonah and the whale, reasonably accurately. They have a sound knowledge of the main Christian festivals and of Diwali. They understand many feelings, including fear, guilt and sorrow and relate them sensibly to their own experiences, drawing on a number of Jesus' Parables. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 develop their understanding of the Bible satisfactorily through a reasonable understanding of a larger range of stories that include Jesus' baptism and the story of Jesus in the Temple. These they use well to extend their understanding of spiritual, moral and social matters, such as the unfairness of racism through the study of the life, works and death of Martin Luther King. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 extend their knowledge and understanding soundly through the study of Judaism. They realise that different faiths, such as Judaism and Christianity, have similar basic structures and ceremonies when they study the Torah and the Bar Mitzvah ceremony. They have a sound knowledge of the structure of the Bible and of the works of some of the greater reformers, such as Dr Barnado, Lord Shaftesbury and Florence Nightingale. They develop their understanding of the messages of the major faiths satisfactorily through relating Biblical stories, such as Jesus' temptation, to their own experiences of being tempted to steal or copy.
164. The quality of teaching is good, overall, throughout the school. Teachers' planning is satisfactory and their subject knowledge is never less than good and, for the older pupils, is very good. This enables them to choose interesting and meaningful activities that interest and inform pupils, ensuring that they concentrate for long periods of time. Relationships are very good, expectations are high, especially in the younger classes and teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well. Consequently, pupils are confident to express their points of view and work hard to produce acceptable work. This makes a good contribution to their personal development including their spiritual development, for example, when the teacher gave the pupils time to reflect upon how the sailors might have felt when they threw Jonah overboard.
165. Teachers now mark pupils' work regularly and, occasionally, indicate how work could be improved. This has not always been the case through the school year. There are too many examples in one class of Year 5 and 6 pupils where the teacher's marking is very cursory and fails to acknowledge that pupils' work is unfinished. That teacher's expectations of the standards, amount and quality of the work pupils were to do were poor.
166. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good, even when they are kept too long listening to the teacher. It is worth noting that the weather during the inspection was very sultry; despite this pupils were unfailingly well behaved during lessons. Acts of collective worship make a sound contribution to pupils' religious development.
167. The leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has worked very hard and effectively to effect the improvements required by the key issue of the last report. The scheme of work she has produced is a good support for her colleagues and assures a good balance between teaching knowledge and enabling pupils to understand the meaning of the life stances of a suitable range of faiths. She is well aware of the need to develop a manageable assessment system that tracks pupils' rates of progress and allows teachers to plan further work that closely matches individual pupils' developing needs. She does not have the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning regularly enough. The level of resources, criticised in the last inspection report, is now satisfactory but there are still too few visits to places of worship for faiths other than Christianity.