

INSPECTION REPORT

HARCOURT PRIMARY SCHOOL (Foundation)

Folkestone

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118871

Headteacher: Mrs C Pepper

Reporting inspector: Keith Homewood
21627

Dates of inspection: 8 -12 May 2000

Inspection number: 194554

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: Foundation

Age range of pupils: 4-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Biggins Wood Road
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. D. Smith

Date of previous inspection: 13 -16 January 1997

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Keith Homewood	Registered inspector	Music	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? Special educational needs
Michael McCarthy	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
Kevin Wood	Team inspector	Geography History	
David Benstock	Team inspector	Science Design & Technology Information Communication Technology	Pupil's attitudes, values and personal development
Michael Raven	Team inspector	Under Fives Mathematics Physical Education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? Section 11
Brian Farley	Team inspector	English Art Religious education.	Equal opportunities

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Harcourt Primary School is a Foundation school and situated in the Folkestone Cheriton ward. It is similar in size to other primary schools nationally. There are 221 pupils on roll, 116 boys and 105 girls. It provides for pupils aged four to 11. The school serves a mixed socio-economic area of local authority and private housing. About six per cent of pupils are from the travelling community and a similar percentage are refugees. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals, at 40 per cent, is above the national average. The percentage of pupils from ethnic backgrounds other than UK heritage is low. There are 17 pupils with English as an additional language. Attainment on entry for the majority of pupils is wide, but generally well below what is expected nationally. The percentage of pupils identified as having special needs is 48 per cent; this is well above the national average. Most of these pupils have either moderate or severe learning difficulties. There is a significant proportion, 29 per cent that have emotional or behavioural difficulties. The percentage of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need is three per cent and above the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school. Children under five achieve standards broadly in line with those expected of children of this age. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are well below the national average. Standards in reading are in line with those achieved by pupils in similar schools, but standards in writing, mathematics and science remain low. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are broadly in line with the national average, but high when compared to similar schools. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. A particular strength is the provision and support for pupils with special educational needs from learning support assistants. Pupils' attitudes are good and they behave well. The quality of teaching is good overall. Relationships with partner institutions are good. Provision for the care and guidance of pupils is very good. The headteacher provides effective leadership. The school has generally responded well to the issues raised in the last inspection, but not all targets have been fully achieved. The school provides at least satisfactory value for money with good and very good features.

What the school does well

- Pupils are enthusiastic about school, form very good relationships and have good attitudes to learning and behave well.
- Teaching is good overall. It promotes good learning, particularly for under fives and pupils in Key Stage 2. The shared commitment to improve and the capacity to succeed are very good
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs, asylum seekers and travellers is very good.
- The provision for music is very good and helps promote high standards.
- Learning support staff and administrative staff make a very good contribution to pupils' education and the smooth running of the school.
- Provision for moral and social development is good.
- Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good.
- Governors have very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Financial planning to support educational priorities is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 1, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- The practical use of all assessment information to help improve standards in Key Stage 1.
- The management responsibilities of members of the senior team and those with subject responsibilities in monitoring teaching, learning and curriculum provision and influencing change when necessary.
- The school development plan, which does not provide a clearly prioritised, long-term strategic view for school improvement in all areas.
- The development of new technologies including ICT

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The previous inspection of January 1997 identified a number of significant weaknesses. The school was providing unsatisfactory value for money. Since that time, the school has made significant improvements and progress has been generally good. Long and medium term curriculum planning is very thorough and ensures a good basis for teaching and learning. Thorough assessments of pupils' performances have been carried out and results analysed. Not all assessment information is used effectively to help improve standards. All pupils have personal targets which are regularly up-dated. Standards of attainment by 11-year-old pupils have improved significantly. The curriculum for children under five is firmly established and built on the Desirable Learning Outcomes. There has been a significant improvement in school management, although senior staff and those with curriculum responsibilities lack time to monitor and evaluate standards in classrooms. Considerable progress has been made in overcoming the weaknesses identified in teaching. The school's finances, delegation of budgets and monitoring of income and expenditure are now good. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards achieved by pupils in English, mathematics and science are a weakness. They are below average levels, even when compared to similar schools. The value for money provided by the school is now very much better and no longer a weakness.

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
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	E	E	C	A*
Mathematics	E	C	C	A
Science	E	C	C	A

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

Most children under five are of very low attainment on entry. The comparisons with baseline assessments show that children in Reception make good and frequently very good progress. The 1999 national tests for seven-year-olds show that they attained very low results in reading, writing and mathematics. This is within the bottom 5 per cent nationally. Compared with similar schools standards are in line with the average in reading, but still lower in writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence confirms these results. Standards in other areas of the curriculum are generally in line with national expectations and higher in music. Standards in religious education are in line with those stated in the locally agreed syllabus for the subject.

The 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds show that they attained levels in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools, standards in English, mathematics and science were well above average and within the top 5 per cent of these schools. Trends over time show an improvement each year with a significant rise in English. The school's targets in Key Stage 2 are being met and show very good improvement since 1997. Inspection evidence shows that, by the end of Key Stage 2, standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are average. In mathematics, the trend has been a rise to meet the national average. Good use is made of numeracy skills in other subjects. In science, standards of attainment have improved significantly since 1997. Standards of attainment in all other areas of the curriculum, including religious education, are in line with national expectations and higher in music. When compared to the low attainment on entry to the school and the low attainment by the end of Key Stage 1, standards are good. The external assessment of the school's value added impact on pupils' education is judged to be very good. Higher-attaining pupils are generally meeting their potential. Standards by pupils with special educational needs are appropriate to their ability. They make at least good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen and eager to come to school. They are interested in school life and participate well in all school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The vast majority of pupils behave well. A significant minority of pupils has behavioural and emotional difficulties, but they are well managed. Pupils listen well, respond well to instructions and use resources with care. They show good respect for each other and adults. Pupils play well together. They move in and around the school well.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The personal development of pupils is good and relationships between children and children and adults are very positive throughout the school
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is broadly in line with national figures. Prolonged absence by traveller children gives distorted yearly figures. Attendance by more permanent pupils is frequently good.

Pupils' attitudes towards school are good. They show enthusiasm for school life and participate well in activities. Behaviour throughout the school is good. Since the last inspection the school has replaced having two year groups in one class with one year group to each class. This change has helped to improve pupils' attitudes and behaviour. A very small minority of pupils has behavioural and emotional difficulties. Pupils listen and respond well in class. They show respect for property and equipment. Pupils' personal development is good. They form secure relationships with each other and show respect for staff. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong. Pupils are well managed by teachers. Attendance levels are in line with national figures and there have been no incidents of exclusion.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall. In 96 per cent of lessons teaching was at least satisfactory or good and very good. A very small minority of teaching in both key stages is less secure due to inappropriate expectations which result in unsatisfactory learning. Overall, teaching in English, mathematics and science is good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1, although it is unsatisfactory in science at the end of the key stage. Teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall with good features in Key Stage 2. The good features of teaching contribute significantly to the higher standards achieved by the end of Key Stage 2. Daily planning is good and the majority of teachers have good subject knowledge. However, in Key Stage 1, lessons sometimes lack excitement and challenge. There is also a lack of practical support and direction from experienced staff due to time constraints. In all classes there is good classroom management and this contributes well to pupils' positive attitudes. Teachers generally use time well to work with groups and individuals. Daily assessment is not always used to inform future planning. Not all marking is constructive with praise and targets for improvement clearly stated. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs, asylum seekers and travellers is good. Higher-attaining pupils are generally consistently challenged in Key Stage 2.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
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The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum from Reception to Year 6.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The provision of clear targets and action plans enhanced by skilled teaching and learning support has a very positive impact on progress by these pupils. Comprehensive monitoring of progress aids accurate target setting.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. The provision of regular opportunities for developing English and literacy skills enhances the progress these pupils make. They quickly become fluent in English. Good monitoring aids evaluation and target setting.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Provision for moral development is good. Provision for social development is good. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory and frequently good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. This is a caring school that ensures the general well being of its pupils. Parents are confident that their children are well looked after and that the school will respond decisively to any instances of bullying or anti-social behaviour. Learning in a caring, safe and secure environment is a fundamental aim of the school's management and governing body.

The school maintains an 'open door' policy. Generally there are good relationships between parents and the school. The majority of parents consider that the school educates their children well and promotes good values within a safe learning environment. The PTA supports the school well through successful fund raising and social events. The information the school provides for parents is good. The reports parents receive are informative and there are parents' consultations each term. There is good liaison with parents of pupils with special needs. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning at home and at school. Curriculum provision is broad, balanced and relevant and fully meets statutory requirements. Music provision is a strength of the school. Other strengths are in the provision of support for pupils with special educational needs. The literacy and numeracy strategies are implemented well. The school does not have a dedicated computer suite and this greatly limits pupils' progress in developing and using skills in this technology. The provision of a curriculum for developing pupils' personal and social skills is good. Circle time helps pupils develop thought and consideration for others and themselves. The school cares for its pupils very well. The ethos of the school ensures the general well being of all pupils. Staff are committed to their pupils and very supportive.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Strong, focused leadership from the headteacher has ensured a clearer educational direction and overcome many of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection. The role of senior staff and subject managers is underdeveloped because of time constraints.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors fulfil their responsibilities well
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall. External and internal moderation of its performance is very good and confirms pupils' attainment levels and improvements. The headteacher and governors have a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Not all weaknesses have been overcome yet, for example in Key Stage 1.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Strategic planning is effectively focused on the priorities of the school.

The match, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff to the school's curriculum is good. Accommodation is good. Learning resources are at least satisfactory. All staff work well together as a team. Partnership between the headteacher, the deputy and governors is very good. Senior staff and those with subject responsibilities do not have enough time to work alongside colleagues in classrooms. This affects their ability to monitor standards of teaching and learning and provide valuable feedback and support to staff. The school development plan lacks clear detail and lacks a long-term view of school improvement. Financial planning and monitoring is very good. The school has improved since the last inspection. The extent to which the school applies the principle of best value has ensured that the unsatisfactory judgement in the last inspection has been greatly improved. The school now provides at least satisfactory value for money with good and very good features. This is a significant achievement.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school • Teaching is good • Parents are well informed about progress • The school deals with problems or questions well • The school sets high expectations • The school helps children mature and be responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour of a significant minority of children • The right amount of work to do at home • Working more closely with parents • A range of interesting activities outside lessons

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. The school does have a minority of pupils who present challenging behaviour. The behaviour and discipline policy is applied consistently and positively. Unacceptable behaviour is not allowed and is dealt with immediately, targets set and monitored. The vast majority of pupils are well behaved, polite and courteous to adults and each other. Work to do at home is planned, but there is limited evidence of it being set or collected in. Pupils are encouraged to read every day. The inspection team does not agree that there is a lack of interesting activities outside school. The school provides a wide range of clubs, visits and visitors to the school. Pupils participate fully in these activities, although in Key Stage 1 they have less provision. The school plans to review its provision of extra curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. When children enter Reception their attainments are well below what is expected of children of this age. This is confirmed by the baseline assessments carried out by the school on entry.
2. The 1999 National tests show that, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain very low levels in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to all schools. This is confirmed by teachers' assessments including those for science. The percentage of pupils reaching level 3 is close to the national average in writing, below in reading and well below in mathematics. Results are within the lowest 5 per cent nationally. When compared with similar schools, the results are significantly better in reading, where standards are in line with the average. In writing and mathematics results are better, but still below average levels. Over the last four years, standards in English have not risen since a slight recovery in 1997. In writing, the overall trend is one of decline. Trends in mathematics have remained static until 1999, when standards fell further below the national average. The school's analysis of pupil attainment shows that the up to half of all pupils of this particular group was of very low attainment on entry to the school. Their attainment in the skills of literacy and numeracy were particularly poor. There has also been an influx of asylum seekers, including those with English as an additional language and pupils from the travelling community. The school's analysis shows that the results of these pupils do affect the overall judgement on how high standards are.
3. The 1999 National tests at the end of Key Stage 2, show that pupils attain levels above average in English and close to the national average in mathematics and science, although slightly lower. The percentage of pupils reaching level 5 is close to the national average in English and mathematics and below in science. When compared with similar schools standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average and within the top 5 per cent. Trends over time show that there has been an improvement in standards since the inspection of 1997. Improvements since 1998 reflect the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. In English, the school has set formal targets for 65 per cent of its pupils to reach, or exceed, the nationally expected level and the for 17 per cent to achieve the next higher level in the end of Key Stage 2 tests and assessments in the Year 2000. In mathematics and science, the trend in standards since 1997 has been one of a steep rise to match the national average.
4. Boys' and girls' results are not significantly different at any key stage and are, therefore, in line with national trends.
5. The comparison of the baseline assessments on entry to the school with results by the end of Key Stage 1, show that children generally make good progress in Reception from a very low base whilst in the feeder Nursery School. By the time they leave Reception to go into Key Stage 1, levels of attainment are broadly in line with those expected of children of this age. This represents a positive rise in their knowledge, understanding and skills across all areas of learning for children under five. This significant achievement is a result of good planning and teaching for these children. The end of Key Stage 1 results do not reflect such a good picture, with standards continuing to remain low. This is due to lack of experience in teaching, low

expectations, unsatisfactory ongoing assessment and therefore unsatisfactory learning. Whilst planning is generally sound in Key Stage 1, effective delivery is not. However, by the end of Key Stage 2, the focus on raising standards has resulted in better planning, better teaching, higher standards in learning and improved end of key stage results. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of learning at Key Stage 3.

6. From lesson observations and other inspection evidence, standards in English are below average by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils listen with reasonable attention and higher-attaining pupils give good detail in their responses. However, whilst most pupils speak audibly, words are not always pronounced accurately and pupils do not ask enough questions to clarify their understanding. Many pupils require support in reading to achieve greater understanding and to help them develop better reference and study skills. Higher-attaining pupils do achieve far more appropriate standards. In writing, pupils write for a range of purposes, but there is a lack of depth and breadth in what they produce. The quality of work produced by pupils of previously average ability indicates that they are not sufficiently challenged, hence low attainment; this is a weakness. Some higher-attaining pupils successfully build upon what they have learnt.
7. Inspectors' evidence shows that by the end of Key Stage 2 the current Year 6 pupils attain average standards in English. They listen well, make perceptive comments and talk confidently when exploring ideas or talking about what they have learnt. They respond well to the ideas of others. Some pupils say very little in discussions, even in small groups. In reading, higher-attaining pupils read with good accuracy, are fluent and have good expression. Most pupils read accurately from a range of texts and have sound understanding of the main points, including plot and characterisation. Whilst most pupils express preferences and discuss the authors they like, lower-attaining pupils do not readily express preferences or name authors they enjoy. Pupils' ideas develop well in their written work. Higher-attaining pupils show successful application of learned skills. All pupils write for a satisfactory variety of purposes. For example, play scripts and letters to authors. Pupils' handwriting is well formed and they use drafting books to good effect. Spelling, grammar and punctuation are developed successfully.
8. In mathematics, inspectors' findings show that by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' levels of attainment remain below average, even when compared to similar schools. This was the same judgement as in the last inspection of 1997. Pupils know the place value of numbers up to hundreds and place numbers correctly when using an abacus. They know the difference between odd and even numbers. They identify line symmetry in simple geometric shapes. However, there is very little evidence of pupils' work in their books and progress over time is very limited.
9. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is in line with what is expected nationally. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment was below the national average. The whole mathematical curriculum is given good coverage and this enables pupils to make greater improvement in their knowledge and understanding. Knowledge and use of number is sound. They have a good grasp of number manipulation, for example producing tally charts independently. They correctly use x and y axes when plotting co-ordinates. Knowledge of weight and measuring is satisfactory. Pupils estimate simple probability and know the properties of some two-dimensional shapes and polygons. Pupils understand and handle data effectively.

10. From inspectors' evidence, standards in science are below average by the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. Whilst this shows a significant improvement in Key Stage 2, standards have not improved enough by the end of Key Stage 1. Levels attained in Key Stage 1 reflect the judgements in teachers' assessments.
11. In science, by the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils understand, for example, that metals conduct electricity, but a significant number are very unsure about how lamps work in a circuit. Observation skills are poor and standards of written work are below expectations. Some use is made of computers to prepare charts.
12. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have a sound idea of the approach to investigation through prediction, careful observation and recording. A minority understand that observations can be unreliable and very few evaluate their findings. Information communication technology (ICT) skills are used with increasing effectiveness.
13. In other areas of the curriculum, standards are as expected by the end of both key stages. Exceptions are history by the end of Key Stage 2 and music by the end of both key stages, where standards are higher than would be expected nationally. In religious education, standards are in line with those expected for the Locally Agreed Syllabus with some improvement in Key Stage 2. Inspectors' findings show that there has been an improvement in pupils' ICT skills since the last inspection, when they were judged to be below expectations. Computer skills are now generally what would be expected, although, the lack of a dedicated ICT facility is limiting greater progress by all pupils. As in the last inspection, pupils' attainments in music are higher than would be found nationally. This is due to the high quality of instruction they receive, the range of musical opportunities from assemblies to productions, and their positive attitudes to all aspects of music. Music is a strength of the school.
14. By the end of both key stages, standards of literacy reflect those found in English. The development of literacy skills across the curriculum is generally satisfactory, but there are weaknesses in Key Stage 1 because of pupils' lack of progress in speaking and listening skills, reading and writing. Opportunities to broaden pupils' writing experiences are far better in Key Stage 2. ICT facilities are used effectively, but mainly to develop pupils' word processing skills. As a result, progress in the development of literacy skills through the use of ICT is limited.
15. Standards in numeracy are below average by the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. Most lessons include a satisfactory element of mental and oral skills. However, pupils in Key Stage 1 lack a full range of opportunities to apply and develop numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum. Opportunities for practical application are limited. Better standards in Key Stage 2 are enhanced by the opportunity to apply numeracy skills in science, design and technology and geography.
16. The school's targets for improvement are appropriate, but not evident within the last improvement plan. The school's Ofsted action plan, written after the inspection in January 1997, clearly sets out what needs to be improved and how it should be achieved. This is not reflected in the current school improvement plan. The school's progress towards its targets is significantly more noticeable in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. Whilst the school has satisfactorily identified the level of improvements required to reach its own and Local Education authority targets by the end of Key Stage 2, and there has been significant improvement in the core subjects, it is not

evident in Key Stage 1. Inspectors' findings agree with the school's assessments and those provided by independent external moderation of the standards currently achieved. These clearly show that pupils in Key Stage 1 are not progressing enough or attaining high enough levels, even when compared to similar schools. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are underachieving in English, mathematics and science.

17. The headteacher has thoroughly analysed all the data collected and has provided a clear assessment of pupils' results and other information. However, lack of experience and strength in teaching within Key Stage 1 has had a detrimental effect on pupils' greater progress in reaching higher standards. As a result of the data collected and the headteacher's own monitoring, she has correctly identified the need to ensure that there is a greater balance of expertise and experience within the key stage and that the data collected is used more effectively. This weakness will then be overcome. It will form a priority within the new school improvement plan so that standards achieved by the end of Key Stage 1 build on those attained by children by the age of five.
18. The number of pupils in the school with special educational needs, asylum seekers and travellers is well above the national average. Children's special needs are identified early and receive very good provision and support from the school's learning support assistants. All pupils, irrespective of their special need, make good progress in the development of their knowledge, understanding and skills. Targets set in individual education plans are relevant and achievable. Progress by these pupils is enhanced by the careful monitoring of their learning and progress against these targets. At the beginning of Key Stage 2, for example, the thorough and regular assessments, monitoring and records kept on each of these pupils ensures that targets for improvement are relevant and the right teaching support and resources can be provided. Small group and individual teaching strategies enhance progress. The school's analysis of its results show that the high proportion of pupils with special needs, including asylum seekers and travellers, does lower its results when compared with national averages. Inspectors' findings agree with this analysis.
19. The progress made by higher-attaining pupils is generally appropriate to their ability. Whilst a small minority of parents feels that their children are not being stretched enough, inspectors' findings show that there is relevant provision and extension work for these pupils in Key Stage 2, but far more variable provision in Key Stage 1. In science, for example, relatively high numbers of higher-attaining pupils attained level 5 in the end of Key Stage 2 national tests. The average level has increased significantly over the last two years.
20. Whilst the school's previous targets have been met and exceeded, when compared to similar schools at Key Stage 2, they have yet to be met at Key Stage 1. Current Key Stage 2 targets are sufficiently challenging. Key Stage 1 targets are under review and will be reflected in the new school improvement plan.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

21. Pupils, including children under five, show good, positive attitudes towards school and demonstrate good behaviour. The personal development of pupils is good. Since the last inspection, the school has replaced the system of vertical grouping with horizontal grouping. This has had a positive effect on pupils' levels of concentration in classrooms.
22. Children in Reception respond positively to their teachers and to work. They concentrate well during whole class sessions and know expected routines. Children

work well together, share resources satisfactorily and are respectful of all adults. They move orderly and sensibly around the school. Most children are enthusiastic about their work and keen to please. They respond well to encouragement and praise. Children enjoy joining in with older children, such as happened in a Key Stage 1 music lesson, and also participate with enthusiasm in Acts of Collective Worship and assemblies. Their bright and colourful singing contributes significantly on these occasions and highlights just how much they enjoy school.

23. In lessons, Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils are responsive to instruction and show respect for property and equipment. They work purposefully and are keen to participate in discussion. Pupils co-operate well on class activities, listen closely to teachers and to each other. They respond well to questions, although not all pupils are so forthcoming in asking further questions in an effort to extend their understanding. In the playground, pupils relate well to each other and show regard for the feelings of others. They play in small groups with a high degree of friendship and good humour. Relationships with learning support assistants and other adults are very constructive so that help given is effective. There is an ethos of mutual respect, which ensures a climate of tolerance and acceptance. Pupils are happy in the school and are keen to participate fully.
24. Pupils behave well in lessons and as they move around the school. Doors are held open and orderly queues are formed, for example, to go into assembly. Outside, behaviour is overwhelmingly good, but occasionally there are instances of argument and unpleasantness between pupils. These are dealt with effectively by the headteacher. Pupils are courteous to staff and visitors. Many older pupils act as monitors and all pupils are willing to help clear up after practical activities. There have been no exclusions recently.
25. The school has established a clear code of conduct, which is reinforced in assembly and lessons. Rewards are used effectively to encourage good attitudes and behaviour. Pupils are clear about procedures if any problem should arise. Opportunities are given in circle time for open discussion of any concerns.
26. Attendance has been satisfactory. In the year 1998/1999, the attendance rate was satisfactory, but lower than the national average. Unauthorised absence was higher than the average for primary schools, mainly due to a lack of notes or contact from parents of pupils allocated to the school from abroad or other communities. In some weeks the attendance rate is low, but figures are distorted by the number of traveller children away for blocks of time. Since the last inspection, the greater range of pupils in the school has affected attendance figures. They were good in the last inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

27. The quality of teaching is good overall. In 96 per cent of lessons teaching was at least satisfactory. 57 per cent of lessons seen were good and 2 per cent very good. A very small percentage was unsatisfactory. Inspectors' findings show a significant improvement in teaching since the last inspection.
28. For children under five, standards of teaching have improved significantly since the last inspection. Three years ago teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is now good, often with very good features. There is a clear and well-organised programme of study for children under five. The Desirable Learning Outcomes are firmly in place. There is structured play and a balanced curriculum for all children. Good teaching ensures they are well prepared for learning in Key Stage 1.

By the age of five, children have made marked improvements in their knowledge, understanding and skills and most attain levels in line with those expected of children of this age. Teaching and support staff work closely together and this ensures that children are provided with a very good start to their education. This is despite many children entering from the Nursery School with considerable weaknesses in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Teacher's planning is well linked to what children need to learn.

29. Good teaching for the under fives is characterised by a thorough understanding of the needs of each child. Lesson planning ensures that there is appropriate time for developing oral and mental skills. Work is balanced well between individual, group and play activities, with attention paid to the needs of lower and higher attainers. For example in one lesson, most children were developing number conservation, but a younger child was given time to organise and play with a range of wooden cars and lorries. This practical activity reinforced his knowledge and understanding of sets and that learning can be fun. Teachers regularly assess children's progress and this is recorded well. All staff in Reception, including volunteer helpers, have very good relationships with the children. This has a positive effect on their development of learning skills and their behaviour. Teacher's professional knowledge and understanding is very good.
30. Across the school, the best teaching occurs in Key Stage 2 with a high proportion of good teaching taking place at the end of the key stage, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The good quality teaching seen in Key Stage 2 has contributed significantly to the raised standards achieved by pupils and the much better end of Key Stage 2 national test results. Teachers can be justly proud of pupils' attainments in 1999 national tests for 11 year olds when compared to similar schools. They were very high in each of the core subjects.
31. Throughout the school teachers have good subject knowledge. Teachers are technically competent in teaching phonics and other basic skills. Daily planning is good and this clearly identifies learning objectives, lesson content and an appropriate range of activities for different ability groups. Whilst planning is used effectively throughout most of Key Stage 2, inexperience within Key Stage 1 means that teaching in some lessons does not enable pupils to achieve all they should. For example, in literacy, whilst at times the lessons can be exciting, it is not sustained and neither is its challenge. In literacy and numeracy, time is generally used effectively to ensure all elements of the learning objectives are given appropriate weighting.
32. Overall, teaching in Key Stage 1 is just satisfactory, although there are good and unsatisfactory features. Good features are found in science, where in about a half of lessons activities are well planned. This ensures pupils' interest is maintained and has a positive impact on standards. It is unsatisfactory at the end of the key stage in science. Teaching of English has improved since the last inspection. It was then judged to be unsatisfactory, but is now satisfactory. However, the development of sample profiles of work, to help teachers' judgements of attainment, has not been fully developed within the key stage. Therefore, this and other initiatives have not yet had the full effect of substantially raising standards in English and literacy. Teaching of mathematics was satisfactory in the last inspection. Whilst this has been maintained, there are still weaknesses at the end of the key stage. Teachers fail to make clear to pupils what they are expected to learn and do, for example when estimating weight. Pupils become confused and there is too little progress in their learning. Pupils' work is often not marked constructively with the inclusion of praise and targets for improvement. Other unsatisfactory features are the ineffectiveness of some teaching

methods, unsatisfactory use of ongoing assessment and inappropriate teacher expectations. Due to the school's timetable arrangements, it was not possible for inspectors to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching in history, ICT and religious education. However, in all other areas of the curriculum, teaching is satisfactory overall.

33. Overall, the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good. In lesson observations, there was a very small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching at the beginning of the key stage. Teaching of English and literacy was satisfactory in the last inspection; it is now good. The development of sample profiles of pupils' work has enabled the staff to work together to develop a common vision. This is enhanced by the good use of learning support assistants and the Advisory Service. An example of good teaching was seen in a poetry lesson at the end of the key stage. The teacher had good technical knowledge of poetry, conveyed it well and by enthusiastic presentation and expressive reading of the poems, caught the pupils' imagination and captured their interest. Teaching in mathematics is good; it was satisfactory in the last inspection. Good use is made of setting by prior attainment to help match teaching and learning to the needs of pupils. Teachers' good subject knowledge is evident in their planning. This helps promote pupils' learning as teachers explain learning tasks well. The organisation of mathematics teaching helps higher-attaining pupils reach the higher levels of the National Curriculum, whilst enabling all pupils to make good progress in their learning. Teachers have good knowledge of science and use this well to instill confidence in pupils. The pace of lessons is satisfactory and pupils produce a good quantity of work. In other subjects of the curriculum, teaching is good in geography and satisfactory in all other subjects. Where it is good, teachers have good subject knowledge. They use effective questioning which challenges pupils and deepens their understanding, promoting attainment and progress. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, the pace was inappropriate and pupils lost concentration.
34. In all lessons pupils are managed well and this adds greatly to their positive attitudes and good behaviour. Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and classroom assistants and other adults reinforce this. Teachers plan a good variety of activities and enhance this with visits outside school and visitors to the school. These activities encourage pupils' learning and help their motivation. Potentially disruptive pupils are managed very well, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2.
35. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language, asylum seekers and children from the travelling community is good. Learning support assistants contribute greatly to pupils' learning and this has a positive effect on the good progress these pupils make. The contribution of learning support assistants to pupils learning is a strength of the school. Teaching for these pupils is clearly focused on developing their learning skills in line with targets set in individual education plans. Targets are appropriate and the small group teaching and support they receive is of a high standard. All pupils are assessed against their targets. Frequent and informative records are kept of pupils' progress and these are used well to plan the next stage of learning. The success of this teaching was clearly highlighted when two pupils, who normally speak Albanian, were overheard arguing with each other in English.
36. In the vast majority of lessons, teachers use time well. This is highlighted in their efficient planning and effective use of balanced activities in most lessons. Resources are used well to support teaching and learning. In the best lessons teachers integrate learning experiences from across the curriculum. For example, in a Key Stage 2 history lesson, pupils developed and reinforced their knowledge and understanding of

Viking ships by making models of them. Whilst all classes have a computer, they are not always used. Teachers' planning infrequently identifies how they will use ICT to support teaching and learning. Computer resources are used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs. Many learning support assistants are skilled in their use.

37. Most teachers know their pupils well. A range of skilful questions is asked during whole class sessions. When working with groups, teachers explore pupils thinking and challenge them further. In music for example, older pupils were encouraged to expand their thinking by applying the correct answer to 'what is ternary form?' to an additional question – 'what would the term be for two part music?'. This was a clear assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding. Records of what pupils know and understand are informative, but not used sufficiently well to inform future planning, particularly in Key Stage 1 Progress of both classes and individual pupils can be monitored as they progress through the school. However, this information is not used sufficiently well to ensure pupils in Key Stage 1 attain higher levels in English, mathematics and science, particularly by the end of the key stage.
38. There is inconsistency in the quality of marking. Whilst the school has a clear and informative marking policy, it is applied better in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. Where marking is most effective, teachers give constructive comments of praise and set targets for improvement. All pupils in the school have personal targets and teachers' comments focus on these as necessary. Where marking is least effective, it does not communicate to pupils what their teacher thinks and whether they need to improve or not; the only mark is a tick or cross.
39. The school policy states that homework should be set as necessary. Generally it is used to reinforce work in classrooms and extend pupils' learning, although this was not seen consistently during the inspection. All pupils are encouraged to read each day at home. A deliberate school policy to raise levels of reading is proving successful in Key Stage 2. However, little homework was observed being set during the inspection or collected in at the start of sessions. This would confirm some parents' concerns that the right amount of work to do at home is not being set.
40. Since the last inspection, there has been a marked improvement in the standards pupils attain by the end of Key Stage 2. Progress is clearly linked to the improvement in teaching and the quality of education provided. Whilst pupils show initiative around the school and demonstrate independence, opportunities in class to develop these important skills are not always provided.
41. There has not been enough progress in Key Stage 1. This is highlighted in the consistently low levels attained when pupils are compared to similar schools and in inspectors' evaluations from the scrutiny of work. Pupils' learning in Key Stage 1 lacks challenge. The productivity and pace of work is unsatisfactory and pupils lose interest as their concentration disappears. This is mostly at the end of the key stage.

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

42. The school offers pupils a curriculum which is satisfactorily broad and balanced. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when the curriculum for Key Stage 1 was not well balanced. All statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum and religious education are met and there is a good range of extra-curricular opportunities. The curriculum for children under five is appropriately based on the national Desirable Learning Outcomes. This is an improvement, since the curriculum for these children was not appropriate at the time of the last inspection. The curriculum offered meets the needs and interests of all pupils, including those having special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, asylum seekers and pupils from the travelling community.
43. There are effective strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, appropriately based on national guidance. The adoption of the national literacy and numeracy strategies has contributed positively to the raising of standards in these skills in the Reception class and in Key Stage 2. The curriculum provision for information communication technology (ICT) is sound, but the lack of an ICT dedicated area and the lack of networked computers and Internet access are hampering whole-class and group teaching and the progress pupils make. Continuity and progression between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is now satisfactory overall and supported by the thorough planning systems used by staff. However, it is not always evident in the standards attained in some subjects, for example, writing and mathematics, where standards are still lower than average levels compared to similar schools. Pupils are not always satisfactorily prepared for learning in Key Stage 2. This is a weakness.
44. The level of equality in opportunity is satisfactory overall with good features. Where it is good, the school makes every effort to ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the whole curriculum. It ensures that pupils are not deprived because of gender, background, financial constraints or ability. The school is particularly good in ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to participate in visits outside school.
45. Some parents expressed concern about the provision of extra-curricular activities. Inspectors findings show that the school provides well for pupils outside and beyond the formal curriculum and includes in these a wide range of its pupils, including those who find learning more difficult and those from a range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. There are, for example, a recorder club, a gymnastics club, a computer club, tag rugby, drama and a book club. These activities are appropriately open mainly to the older pupils, although the book club is open to all. Sporting activities change with the seasons of the year. There is a good 'social' club, which caters by invitation for pupils who have difficulties integrating with others at lunch break.
46. Provision for pupils with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language, asylum seekers and pupils from the travelling community is very good and a strength of the school. Pupils with difficulties are identified quickly whether they are in Reception or Year 6. This means that the school is able to make very good provision for them. Asylum seekers, for example, are totally integrated into the school and receive full access to all areas of the curriculum and other activities. It is extremely difficult to identify different groups and pupils because of the thorough way the school supports and meets their needs.

47. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. An improvement since the last inspection.
48. The school provides satisfactorily for the spiritual development of pupils, mainly through religious education lessons. It has adopted an appropriate scheme for the promotion of spiritual development, based on local guidelines. Pupils learn about the beliefs and religious customs of others, for example in religious education lessons and in acts of collective worship, where they learn about major world religions, such as Islam and Sikhism. During the inspections, a good assembly was observed in which pupils learned about some of the customs and beliefs of the Sikh religion, making good use of appropriate religious artefacts, such as the kirpan and the turban. Acts of collective worship encourage pupils to reflect on the plight of those who are less fortunate than themselves. In an act of collective worship observed, for example, good use was made of Mother Teresa's Prayer to help pupils think about the poor. The school has appropriately devoted a day to learning about the plight of refugees in many parts of the world, including those among its own pupils.
49. The provision for pupils' moral development is good, an improvement since the last inspection. There is a clear set of rules in all classes and pupils, including the youngest, are appropriately involved in formulating these with staff at the start of the school year. Staff regularly refer to and use these rules in their work with pupils, and they encourage a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils are helped to gain a clear understanding of the consequences of their actions.
50. The provision for pupils' social development is good, an improvement since the last inspection. The social development of children on entry to the school is poor. Much good work is done in the Reception class to promote the children's personal and social development. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and these contribute positively to their social development. For example, pupils in all classes are responsible for taking attendance registers to the office; the older pupils set tables for lunch and help younger pupils at lunch time by, for example, cutting up their food; they ring the bell and help to organise activities for wet playtimes. In many lessons pupils, including the youngest, work together well in groups which include a mix of boys and girls, those who find learning more difficult and those from a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds.
51. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. This has improved since the last inspection, when insufficient opportunities were provided for pupils to learn about the richness of other traditions and cultures. Appropriate attention is paid to developing pupils' awareness of their own and others' cultural traditions, for example through religious education lessons, through assemblies and through the art, history and music curriculum. For instance, pupils learn about the cultures of ancient and modern Egypt and about the cultural traditions of Judaism. There are visits to the theatre, a visiting theatre group, and pupils have recently taken part in a schools' music festival.
52. The school provides effectively for pupils' personal, social and health education. The governors have adopted an appropriate policy for sex education, which is taught through the science curriculum throughout the school. In addition, the school nurse assists with sex education for the oldest pupils. Drugs awareness is promoted satisfactorily with the help of a visiting police officer.
53. There are good links between the school and the local community and these contribute well to pupils' learning. The school has good links with Age Concern and

the elderly are invited into school to attend productions, for example at Christmas time. Pupils collect food which is donated to the local homeless at Harvest-tide. The vicar and a local minister make visits to the school. Pupils visit a local supermarket and they participate in parades with other schools on Canada Day.

54. There are good relationships with partner institutions which contribute well to pupils' learning. The oldest pupils make visits to the local technical college and they regularly go in small groups to work on information and communications technology at the local high school, to which most transfer at the age of 11. Teachers from the high school visit pupils in Year 6 in the summer term and Year 6 teachers visit the high school to see how pupils are getting on after they transfer. Pupils regularly return to the school after they have left and enjoy helping, for example, by hearing younger pupils read.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

55. Overall, the school provides a very good level of welfare, sound health and safety arrangements, secure child protection measures and carefully directed teaching. Learning in a secure and caring environment is central to the ethos of the school.
56. The school shows a vigorous commitment in the care of its pupils with secure and comprehensive procedures for ensuring their protection and welfare. Its Child Protection Policy follows local education authority guidelines, but includes further detailed helpful information that enables the teaching and support staff to recognise the signs of physical, mental, sexual and emotional abuse. The headteacher is the named person for child protection purposes with the deputy headteacher as the nominated substitute. Regular training on child protection issues, together with a review of pupils thought to be at risk, is undertaken to ensure that all staff are conversant with current practice and aware of vulnerable pupils. The school has frequent contact with the Educational Welfare Officer who provides valuable assistance and advice when required. The headteacher, in her role as the child protection co-ordinator, encourages all her staff to be observant and sensitive to the physical and emotional condition of pupils and to report immediately any concerns they may have.
57. The Health and Safety Policy of the school is well met in practice. A regular review of the premises is made and matters of concern acted upon promptly. Fire notices are clear and fire drills and evacuation procedures regularly rehearsed and recorded. The caretaker makes regular checks to ensure the school building and outside areas are secure and free from hazards. First Aid provision is good with all staff members trained to a nationally recognized standard triennially. The school has a designated medical treatment room with appropriate supplies and equipment to deal with minor injuries.
58. There are a number of pupils, other than those for cultural or religious purposes, who have their ears pierced during term time and, because of health and safety reasons, the school correctly cannot allow them to participate in activities where they can cause harm to others or themselves; for example, PE and games. Taping is not safe and is against Department for Education and Employment guidance. The school has communicated clear guidance to parents, but a small minority of them continues to create a situation that deprives their children of their full entitlements within contact and physical activities.
59. There are good measures for promoting attendance. Both reward and sanction are used effectively to maintain and improve the school's attendance. Recognition of good

attendance stands alongside other conduct, effort and achievement in significance. Monitoring attendance is sound in-as-much as teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils, an awareness of their family circumstances and a policy of following up unexplained absence. Registers and registration procedures meet statutory requirements. However, whilst statistically the attendance rate was below the national average, this has to be seen in the context of the repeated absence of a number of children from travelling families.

60. The school places great importance in caring for its pupils in personal and academic matters. Parents were in general agreement that the school has a pleasing atmosphere, that it effectively helped their children become more mature and responsible and provided a good standard of education. An assertive discipline policy successfully underpins the school's commitment to the social integration of a diverse pupil population. Parents felt that the school was a caring environment free from bullying or racism although some commented on the disruption caused by a minority of pupils. Pupils are happy to approach the staff with their concerns and many instances of mutual affection were seen during the inspection. Assemblies and personal and social education lessons are used effectively to reinforce the school's core values of good behaviour and care for others.
61. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in national and internal tests, by the end of each key stage, are good. They are inconsistent and mostly unsatisfactory in subjects. In Key Stage 2, sound use is made of a range of external and internal assessment information to inform teaching, curriculum planning and meet specific individual requirements. It is weaker in Key Stage 1 and is reflected in the low levels most pupils attain. The progress of classes and individual pupils is monitored by management with precision as they advance through the school. However, this information has not been used sufficiently well by teachers to ensure pupils, by the end of Key Stage 1, attain improved levels in writing, mathematics and science.
62. Parents expressed general satisfaction with the reports they received on their children. Individual Education Plans are good with thorough reviews and assessments that relate meaningfully to pupils' needs. The school has advanced significantly since the last inspection and now has in place systems that allow appropriate remedial action to be taken in the pupils' best interests. Parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress with class teachers on a formal basis at parents' evenings that are held at the end of each full term. Additionally, the school's 'open door' policy offers parents the facility of early contact with the teaching staff in matters of concern.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

63. Overall, there has been improvement in the school's relationships with parents since the last inspection.
64. There are good relationships between parents and the school. The parents' response to the questionnaire, together with informal discussions held with them during the inspection week, show general satisfaction with the effort the school makes to maintain good standards of work and behaviour. They consider that the school educates their children very well, that it promotes good values and provides a safe learning environment for their children. Inspection findings support this positive view. The main concern of parents related to the inconsistency of homework across the year groups and the provision for higher-attaining pupils. Inspectors found that homework was inconsistently set across the school population, but appropriate work for higher-attaining pupils was in place.

65. The school has a satisfactory range of productive and consistent links with parents that help pupils learn. These links begin prior to a child being admitted to the school with a tour of the school for prospective parents, a discussion with the teaching staff and an overview of what the school offers. A home/school agreement sets out the expectations of the school concerning pupils and the school's duty of care towards them. An extensive range of meetings, both social and formal, together with a well-supported and developing parent/teacher association and committed governing body ensure effective links between the school and parents that clearly help pupils' learning and development. The majority of parents see the staff as pleasant and helpful; dedicated to the task of educating and caring for their children. Parents associated the increased confidence and self-esteem of their children to the strategy of reward and encouragement. The positive attitudes of the staff together with an effective, assertive disciplinary policy soundly influence the behaviour, values and self-awareness of the pupils giving them a sense of purpose and pride.
66. The school involves parents in its planning and target setting as much as possible. They are encouraged to become involved and their views are reflected in the decisions taken by the governing body and the school's management team. Parents are also involved through membership of the governing body, by assisting pupils in class and accompanying school trips. Additionally the parent-teacher association organises a large number of successful social events that not only raise funds for school projects, but also brings together parents, children and teachers in agreeable circumstances. The school sees parental involvement in the education of their children as fundamental to the achievement of the higher standards that it has set itself. From the formal meeting with them and discussions during the inspection, they consider they have much to offer in developing the school. Despite some comments concerning inconsistencies in homework, the school succeeds in engaging parents as much as possible in its plans and activities and the overall impact of parents' involvement with the school is satisfactory.
67. The information the school provides for parents is very good. The school prospectus is clear and informative. The governors' report to parents fulfils statutory requirements and is written with the reader in mind. Regular newsletters keep parents in touch with school events and plans. The reports parents receive about their child's progress are also good and are presented at Parents' Evenings held at the end of each term. They are discussed with staff at these formal meetings, or - in cases of concern - on an individual basis with the teacher at an appointed time. The details give a clear indication of what pupils need to do to improve their progress and what parents can do to help. All parents who responded to the questionnaire and those who attended the parents' meeting felt that they were very well informed about their children's progress. Overall, the headteacher places great emphasis on activities that strengthen relationships between the school and parents. She routinely accompanies pupils to the school exit at the end of the day making her readily accessible to parents with concerns. The school secretary plays a pivotal role in advising parents on the correct course of action in matters concerning their children and fixes appointments with the appropriate staff member. Parents are also offered training classes to provide them with the skills to assist their children with their schoolwork. These have been arranged immediately following the school day to maximize attendance and have had an encouraging response. Overall the information provided to parents about pupils' progress is good.
68. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning at home and at school. The Home/School agreement clearly sets out the informal contract between

parents and the school to maintain and promote the school's ethos. Parents are generally supportive of the school in its efforts to educate their children and over half have signed up to this agreement with the numbers increasing with each new intake. A number of parents assist in class, especially in guided reading. Evidence of their input at home is gained through comments in the home/school diary and the standards attained. Parents of children with special educational needs are closely involved with setting and achieving educational targets. Parents generally well support the traditional sports day and other events in which their children participate. The school regards the contribution that parents make to children's learning as essential in its efforts to achieve higher standards and makes every effort to encourage their active participation.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

69. The headteacher has been in post for three years and provides effective leadership and is a strong manager. She was appointed to a school with many unsatisfactory features including weak leadership. She has a very thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Her commitment to the school has ensured that considerable progress has been made in moving the school towards greater success and improving on the unacceptable standards highlighted in the inspection report of January 1997, prior to her appointment.
70. Whilst many significant improvements have taken place, greater progress towards achieving all targets has been limited by the need for the headteacher and governors to appoint and establish a strong staff team, establish secure financial planning and overcome the school's deficit budget. With the governing body, the headteacher has also had to re-establish links with the local education authority as the school was grant maintained. These priorities have now been achieved. The headteacher has clearly identified the need to improve standards by the end of Key Stage 1, improve the management responsibilities of senior staff and ensure that continued improvement in the quality of education provided and the standards children achieve are far more specifically highlighted in the next school improvement plan. Inspectors' findings agree with her assessments of the school and are reflected in the key issues for action.
71. The headteacher has carried out a thorough assessment of the quality of teaching and learning, provided staff with invaluable feedback on raising standards and in classroom organization. Standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 are now significantly better compared to those of 1997 and very high when compared to similar schools. However, standards of attainment in Key Stage 1 are still low when compared to national figures and like schools, despite children attaining expected levels by the age of five.
72. The senior management team (SMT) support the headteacher well. Opportunities for them to be more actively involved in monitoring standards are very limited and a weakness. They do not have time to work alongside colleagues in classrooms and provide the headteacher with their judgements on the quality of teaching and learning. The inherent problem concerns finding suitable supply staff to cover classes whilst SMT members are released. Challenging behaviour from a minority of pupils is well managed, but the absence of their class teacher unsettles established routines and can cause disruption to the orderly and industrious atmosphere. A similar problem affects the role of subject co-ordinators. They do not have enough time to monitor their subject and work with colleagues in classrooms. Monitoring of standards frequently takes place after school and through the staff supporting each other through staff meetings and in-school training sessions. Whilst this is proving valuable,

it is not giving co-ordinators the practical information they need to ensure standards continue to rise and affect change where necessary. This issue was highlighted in the last inspection report, but has yet to be implemented more fully.

73. Staff work well together; a significant improvement since the last inspection. They form an effective team and this has contributed greatly to school improvement. Whole-school policies are in place which link into educational improvement and ensure continuity and progress in pupils' learning, particularly in Key Stage 2 where standards of attainment are now much better in the core subjects. Long and medium-term planning is thorough and progress is being made in adapting many Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) schemes of work to the needs of the pupils and National Curriculum requirements. However, staff are unable, as yet, to use new technologies to support their planning, for example computers linked to the Internet and networked. This is making their administrative workload heavy and paperwork cumbersome. Staff expectations have been raised significantly through monitoring by the headteacher and whole staff discussions. The staff share common goals, support the school aims and share in the ethos that focuses on improvement for all. For example, all pupils have targets for improvement and staff receive valuable feedback on their own performance from the head.
74. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities effectively. Their strategic role has increased significantly since the last inspection. They are very well lead by the chairman of governors. He visits the school regularly and this has ensured a strong and effective partnership between the headteacher and himself. His knowledge and understanding of governance and the school is very good and a strength. The governors fully understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are involved in monitoring and evaluation, in ensuring secure financial planning and in initiating and supporting school improvement. Committee meetings are well focused and decisions made underpin improvement and help to raise standards.
75. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance by management is very good and enhanced by the evaluations of performance carried out by Durham University. However, the use of day-to-day assessment by many teachers is unsatisfactory. External assessment of the school's value-added aspect is very good. The data collected has been used very successfully to help target areas for academic improvement in Key Stage 2. Despite a considerable value-added aspect in Key Stage 1, academic standards have remained low due to inexperienced teaching. The gap between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has gradually widened. This is because monitoring of pupils' academic performance and teaching by senior colleagues is weak and the effective use of assessment data within Key Stage 1 to inform and guide planning is unsatisfactory.
76. Whilst targets for improvement are understood and shared by governors and staff, the school improvement plan (SIP) has yet to include clear focus for raising academic achievement, particularly in the core subjects. This is a weakness. Whilst the school has agreed targets for improvement by the end of Key Stage 2 in the core subjects with the percentage increases required, and monitors, assesses and records performance, this has not been included in the current school improvement plan. The plan does not draw together all the school has focused on for development and it does not prioritise school improvements in the long term. Its focus is too restrictive and there are no success criteria. The chairman of governors and headteacher are aware of this and a new school improvement plan is in the process of development. All staff and governors share the commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed.

77. The headteacher knows the strengths and weaknesses of her staff well. However, a school's appraisal system is not fully established; just under half of the teaching staff has been recently appraised. Learning support assistants have been recently appraised. Few senior staff are trained assessors and some staff, particularly administrative staff, have not been appraised for a number of years. This places a significant burden on the headteacher. Job descriptions are clear, informative and updated as necessary. The headteacher has been appraised and performance targets set annually. There are good procedures for the induction of new staff.
78. The match of qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff to the school's curriculum is good. The school has undergone significant staff changes since the last inspection. The arrangements for professional development are sound, but there is significant inexperience with a small minority of teachers in how best to secure higher academic achievement by pupils. Learning support staff are very good and a strength of the school. They make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, particularly those with special educational needs. Their commitment to the school and those they support is extremely high. Administrative staff are a strength of the school. They ensure its smooth running, cleanliness and efficient maintenance.
79. The accommodation is good and includes a large playing field and wild life area. There is a problem relating to information communication technology (ICT), as there is not a central teaching base. The school has a large well-stocked library, two satisfactory book resource areas and class libraries. The school has recently used a specific grant to buy nine new computers and more are planned for. They are disbursed around the school, are not networked and there is no link to the Internet other than through an inefficient laptop. The school is unable to teach whole classes or groups in up-to-date ICT skills. Good quality displays celebrate pupils' achievements. Resources are good overall. The school effectively analyses its outcomes and plans the acquisition of new resources appropriately.
80. Overall, the extent to which the principles of best value are applied in the use of resources is at least satisfactory with good and very good features. Educational priorities are now soundly supported through the school's very good financial planning. Specific grants are used effectively to support pupils' learning, although the school is unable to develop new technologies in the short term and standards remain low by the end of Key Stage 1. The support for asylum seekers, pupils with English as an additional language and pupils from the travelling community is very good. They are totally integrated into the school and fully supported; this is a strength. The role of senior staff and co-ordinators is underdeveloped and a more specific and strategic longer-term plan has yet to be finalised.
81. The school has made considerable improvement since the last inspection in January 1997. Progress has been good. Not all targets have been fully met because of the significant changes that took place in staffing and the need to restore much better financial planning. Strategies to raise standards of attainment have proved successful within Reception and Key Stage 2, but some inexperience in teaching within Key Stage 1 has meant that standards by the end of the key stage remain low when compared to similar schools, except in reading where they are similar. Co-ordinators are knowledgeable and work hard to support colleagues, although this is generally done outside the teaching day. Financial planning is very good and educational priorities are very well supported. Planning is now thorough and daily planning is comprehensive. Tasks are frequently different for ability groups and the needs of higher-attaining pupils are met in most classes. However, there are still some inconsistencies. Overall, the quality of day-to-day assessment is unsatisfactory. The

curriculum for children under five encompasses the desirable learning outcomes. The good quality of teaching ensures that most children attain levels in line with those expected by the age of five. They are prepared well for Key Stage 1. Key Stage 2 pupils are prepared well for Key Stage 3.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

82. In order to improve further the standards of work and the quality of education provided, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 1 so that they are at least in line with those achieved by pupils in similar schools by:-

- improving teaching methods to ensure standards of learning are high enough;
- raising teachers expectations of what pupils should know, understand and do, especially in English, mathematics and literacy skills in Key Stage 1, including handwriting;
- ensuring that there is a systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in classrooms by staff with appropriate subject management responsibilities to help raise standards of teaching and learning;
- ensuring a balance of expertise within the key stage;
- ensuring consistency and improvement in marking and assessment procedures and the effective use of assessment to inform planning.

Paragraphs 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 20, 32, 37, 41, 71, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 104, 106, 108, 111, 114, 115, 119, 120, 126, 128,129.

Develop further the role of staff with management responsibilities in monitoring standards of teaching and learning by:

- establishing regular opportunities for them to observe, support and work with colleagues in classrooms;
- developing their function in leading and influencing planning;
- ensuring assessment data from all sources and in both key stages is used effectively to plan the next stage of learning;
- providing an appropriate professional development programme to help develop their expertise and share good practice.

Paragraphs 20, 37, 61, 71, 72, 73, 78, 107, 117, 129, 135, 146, 153, 157, 169, 174.

Develop, through consultation, a better organised school improvement plan (SIP) that has clearer detail to influence school improvement and contains a longer strategic view which:

- ensures that the quality of education provided and the standards pupils achieve are appropriate;
- builds on the school's achievements so far;
- covers in detail all areas for school development and improvement;
- includes a longer term strategic view for school development, particularly in improving standards;
- is clearly prioritised, has action to be taken clearly targeted, includes personnel to be responsible, is costed and includes training for staff and governors as necessary, has review dates and success criteria.

Paragraphs 16, 76, 107, 135.

In addition, the school should consider the following minor weaknesses:

- The development and application of the school's ICT facilities. (Paragraph 156)
- Make effective use of this technology and monitoring standards. –paragraph:- 157
- Ensure that parents are made fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in regard to their children's entitlements to participate fully and safely in physical activities. (Paragraph 58)
- Ensure that constructive marking in Key Stage 1. (Paragraph 38,104,115,127)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2	57	36	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		221
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		88

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		105

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	17

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	31
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.5
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
	1999	14	16	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	9	11
	Girls	9	10	12
	Total	20	19	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (51)	63 (76)	77 (81)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (89)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	10	13
	Girls	9	11	11
	Total	18	21	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	60 (76)	70 (79)	80 (84)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	16	14	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	10	10
	Girls	10	8	11
	Total	22	18	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (37)	60 (47)	70 (67)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	12
	Girls	9	9	11
	Total	19	19	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (50)	63 (53)	77 (66)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	218
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.44
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	31
Average class size	31

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	20
Total aggregate hours worked per week	270

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A

Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	52, 1638
Total expenditure	499, 639
Expenditure per pupil	2, 345
Balance brought forward from previous year	(6, 040)
Balance carried forward to next year	15, 959

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

221

Number of questionnaires returned

39

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	44	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	36	10	8	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	33	26	5	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	36	26	3	0
The teaching is good.	38	49	5	3	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	41	10	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	36	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	31	5	3	0
The school works closely with parents.	49	26	21	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	44	36	10	3	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	49	10	3	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	38	26	3	5

Other issues raised by parents

There were no other issues raised by parents.

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

83. At the time of the last inspection there was no appropriate planning or curriculum for the children under five and teaching was unsatisfactory. There has been good improvement since then. The curriculum is now well planned to take account of the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children by the age of five and leads smoothly into the National Curriculum. Teaching is good, based on a good understanding of the needs and interests of children of this age. The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is very good, contributing well to the good progress, which children make by the age of five. There are appropriately high expectations of children's behaviour and achievement. Very good use is made of support staff and other helpers such as students to promote children's learning.
84. Pupils enter the Reception class with attainment which is well below that expected of children of this age, in all six areas of learning for children under five: personal and social development; language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development. They make good progress in Reception and, by the time they are five, most children's attainment meets the levels expected of children of this age.

Personal and Social Development

85. The school gives a high priority to developing children's personal and social skills. They are encouraged to have confidence and self-respect. This is reflected in the pride they take in their work, seen for example during the inspection as children proudly displayed the models of houses they had made from cardboard boxes and their maps depicting the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. The children are encouraged to behave in appropriate ways and to develop an awareness of the difference between right and wrong. For example, they are involved in the drawing up of classroom rules and these rules, together with appropriate rewards and sanctions, are consistently applied to children's conduct in school. The children learn to work well together in groups, for example as they work on their 'Goldilocks' maps, and good integration of boys and girls and of children from a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds is successfully achieved. They talk about various cultures and beliefs at 'circle time' and this helps them have good relationships with and sensitivity to others. There are good opportunities for the children to learn to treat living things with care and respect, for instance when they have visiting pets and 'mini-beasts' in connection with their 'homes and gardens' theme.

Language and Literacy

86. Language and literacy is promoted well. The children have many good opportunities to learn to listen carefully and they do so attentively, for example as the teacher reads stories during literacy lessons and at other times. They have appropriate opportunities to talk about their own experiences, for instance in religious education lessons as they talk about people who are special to them and paint pictures of their families. The 'home corner' provides good opportunities for children to take part in role-play and this contributes well to their language development and also to the development of their social skills and imagination. Adults in the class support role-play well by taking part in it. Children learn to use and enjoy books. By the time they are five, they know how books 'work' – that we read from the top to the bottom of the page and from left to

right in English, that pages turn and that print carries meaning. By the time they are five, children recognise their own names and some other familiar words; for example, they select and place their name card on the board at milk time. They recognise the letters of the alphabet by shape and sound and know what sound their name begins with, for example sometimes lining up for lunch according to the initial letter sound of their name. By the age of five all the children write their own name, mostly making appropriate use of upper and lower-case letters.

Mathematics

87. Mathematics is promoted well. Children have many good opportunities to use mathematical language, for example using positional language in their work in physical education lessons and placing their hands on, behind, under and in front of various parts of their body. They learn to recognise and recreate mathematical patterns, for instance as they look at the patterns made by pebbles, tiles and fence posts in connection with their 'homes and gardens' theme. They are familiar with many number and counting rhymes and songs, for example '10 in a bed', 'two, four, six, eight...' and 'nine hairy monsters'. Children have many good opportunities to solve 'real life' mathematical problems, for example shopping, finding how many items were bought altogether, how many are left, and so on.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

88. Children have many good opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. In connection with the theme being followed, they talk about where they live and their environment. They explore some of the features of living things, for example the visiting pets and mini-beasts, and see how sand in the sand tray changes as water is added to it. Children talk about their observations and sometimes record these in writing and pictures. There are good opportunities for the children to explore and select a wide range of materials and equipment such as scissors and glue and develop skills such as cutting, joining, folding and building, for instance as they make house models. They make appropriate use of technology, for example using the computer's 'Goldilocks' program and designing a house with adult support.

Physical development

89. The children's physical skills are developed well. They learn to move confidently and imaginatively, with increasing control, co-ordination and awareness of space and others. For example, they make imaginative use of space as they find different ways of travelling between and on a variety of large and small gymnastics apparatus, climbing and balancing with increasing skill. Their small muscle development and control is well promoted through many good opportunities to handle tools such as scissors and paintbrushes and equipment such as construction apparatus and malleable materials such as play dough. Opportunities for outdoor play enhance their physical development and co-ordination skills.

Creative Development

90. Creative development is promoted well. There are many good opportunities for the children to explore sound. They have a good regular music lesson, with the specialist music teacher when they sing and play instruments. In addition, they take part in the weekly Key Stage 1 singing assembly and they have the opportunity to play percussion instruments in class and sing with the nursery. There are good opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape, space and form in two and three dimensions, for instance as they paint pictures of their family and make models. Art, music, mime, stories and imaginative play all help children to develop their ability to listen, observe and use their imagination and express ideas and feelings

ENGLISH

91. Pupils in Year 6 achieved standards in the 1999 end of key stage tests that were close to the national average. This represents a considerable improvement on the 1998 national tests and reflects the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. It is also an improvement of standards to those reported in the previous inspection of January 1997, when attainment was also well below the national average. The school has set formal targets for 65 per cent of its pupils to reach, or exceed, the nationally expected level and 17 per cent to achieve the next higher level in end of Key Stage 2 tests and assessments in English in the Year 2000. This target represents a good degree of challenge. Test scores in 1999 were very high compared to those of schools in similar contexts.
92. The school is committed to the development of the language skills of pupils whose first language is not English. These pupils are well integrated into mainstream classes. They also receive support from specialist teachers and make satisfactory progress in their acquisition of English. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactory standards, relative to their previous attainment. No significant differences were observed between the attainment of boys and girls in both key stages.
93. In Year 2, at the end of the Key Stage 1 in 1999, pupils' attainment was well below the national average in both reading and writing. This represents a steady decline in the standards of reading since the tests in 1998 and the inspection in 1997. Writing made a slight recovery in 1997, but was still below the national average. The overall trend in the standards of writing is one of decline due to lack of opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented, but it has not yet had the effect of raising standards. The school has set formal targets for 66 per cent of its pupils to reach, or exceed, the nationally expected level and 12 per cent to achieve the next higher level in end of Key Stage 1 tests and assessments in English in the Year 2000. This target represents a high level of challenge. Test scores in 1999 for reading were close to the average for similar schools and for writing were below average for similar schools.
94. The findings of the inspection show that in Year 2 standards in speaking and listening are below average overall, although pupils listen well in music lessons. Pupils listen with reasonable attention and some of those who are higher-attaining give good detail in their response to questions, for example, by referring to the text of a story or recalling what they remember. Most speak audibly and have some degree of confidence in discussion, particularly when this is in a small group and, for example, they can express opinions concerning the major events in a story.

95. Standards in reading in Year 2 are below average although there is evidence of higher attainment by some pupils. They generally read simple texts accurately and show some competence in discussion of the text, but many require support in order to achieve a full understanding. Their work in the Literacy Hour has given them some essential skills, but these are not yet sufficiently developed to improve their overall attainment. Higher-attaining pupils use their sight vocabulary, the context of the passage and phonic skills to successfully tackle relatively difficult words. Other pupils use the same skills, but the results are less consistently successful in what they achieve. Lower-attaining pupils draw on their knowledge of the relationships between letters and their 'sounds' to read simple texts. Only higher-attaining pupils know how to locate information efficiently from non-fiction books. Pupils' reference and study skills are mostly limited to knowledge of the contents and index pages in a non-fiction book. They do not generally have a good understanding of how these are used.
96. The attainment of pupils in writing in Year 2 is below the national average. Pupils write for a range of purposes, but there tends to be a lack of depth and breadth in what they produce. Some higher-attaining pupils make appropriate progress in the acquisition of skills and build upon what they learn to communicate meaning in narrative form. Ideas are developed in sequence and spelling is mostly accurate, but handwriting is variable in quality and legibility. The quality of work produced by pupils of average previous attainment, indicates that they are not always sufficiently engaged in what they do. This results in work that falls below the standard expected. Although capital letters and full stops are mostly used with accuracy, spelling is not consistent in quality and handwriting is not always accurate. The work of lower-attaining pupils tends to be erratic in its presentation. Handwriting lacks legibility and care, while the spelling of familiar words is often inaccurate.
97. Compared to standards achieved at five, pupils at Key Stage 1 fail to maintain suitable progress. This is mainly due to weaknesses in teaching. There is unsatisfactory use of daily assessment to inform planning, unsatisfactory and uninformative marking and the lack of opportunity for senior teachers to monitor and support teaching and learning in classrooms.
98. By the age of 11, pupils attain average standards in speaking and listening. They listen well and many talk confidently. This was observed when pupils used skills of inferring meaning from a text in a class guided reading session. They made perceptive comments about the text in response to the teacher's questions about its less obvious elements. In discussion, pupils respond well to the ideas of others, for example in a poetry lesson devoted to looking at powerful poetic images. However, some pupils say very little in discussion, even when the group is small.
99. Overall, standards in reading in Year 6 are average. Higher-attaining pupils read with good accuracy, are fluent and have good expression. They discuss books they have read confidently. Most pupils read accurately and have a sound understanding of the main points. They discuss plot, make predictions about how the narrative will develop and name authors that they enjoy. Pupils refer to the text to support their views. Lower-attaining pupils use their knowledge of the relationship between letters and their 'sounds' and the context in which unknown words are used to read those that are unfamiliar. They do not, however, readily express preferences in their personal reading or name authors that they enjoy. The skills that pupils have in the use of reference material are at least satisfactory and in many cases good to very good. They use the contents and index pages in books, skim texts for essential information and make use of library resources when required.

100. Standards of writing in Year 6 are average. Higher-attaining pupils produce work that shows evidence of the successful application of learned skills. Creative writing is often lively and includes imaginative vocabulary. All pupils write for a satisfactory variety of purposes. For example, play scripts, letters to authors of books, commentaries on poems, book reviews and writing to persuade. The latter was particularly well done when pupils were set the task of writing to persuade people to visit the Millennium Dome. Most pupils write in an organised way. They write in clear sequenced sentences and choose appropriate vocabulary. Overall, pupils write in a clear and fluent style. Handwriting is well formed, but the quality of work produced by lower-attaining pupils tends to be erratic. Pupils use drafting books to good effect. Worksheets are used to help them successfully develop writing skills such as spelling, punctuation and grammar. The use of computers to aid drafting skills is sound.
101. At both key stages, standards in literacy reflect those found in English. The development of literacy skills across the curriculum is generally satisfactory, but there are weaknesses in Key Stage 1. Opportunities are taken appropriately to broaden the range of pupils' writing experiences, particularly in Key Stage 2. Pupils in both key stages use information and communications technology, but this is often confined to the word-processing of narrative. Pupils use tape recorders to support the development of listening skills
102. Standards attained by pupils with special educational needs, asylum seekers and travellers are good when compared to their prior attainment. The good quality of teaching they receive and the high level of support provided by learning support assistants and English as an additional language specialists enhance this.
103. Since the last inspection, the school has begun to use assessment data to set targets for the attainment of all its pupils. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have developed some strategies for the acquisition of independent reading skills and the learning of spelling. Pupils' creative writing has improved, notably in Key Stage 2, through the use of writing 'scaffolds' and opportunities to draft and re-draft their work. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1 and is more focused with the implementation of the Literacy Hour, but it is still not good enough to raise the pupils' standards of attainment to an appropriate level by the end of the key stage.
104. Overall, the quality of teaching and the quality of learning in English are good at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. The previous inspection reported teaching to be satisfactory at Key Stage 2 and unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1. The development of a sample profile of pupils' work has enabled the staff to work together to develop a common vision for the teaching of English. This has been enhanced by the use of the Advisory Service. However, these initiatives have not yet had the full effect of substantially raising standards in Key Stage 1. The school makes very good use of learning support assistants. They have a positive outcome upon the standards achieved by pupils with special educational needs. English is used effectively in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, in their work on Victorians in history, pupils write as if they are poor children in a 'Ragged School.' The quality of marking varies in its effect upon the work of pupils. Where it is good, there are constructive comments and guidance for pupils to improve what they do. This pattern is not typical throughout the school.
105. Strengths of the teaching of English are well illustrated in a Year 6 lesson for pupils of average and below average attainment who compared the images in the writing of different poets. The teacher had good technical knowledge of poetry, conveyed it well and by an enthusiastic presentation and expressive reading of the poems, caught the

pupils' imagination and captured their interest. This led them into lively discussion and good understanding of how language can be evaluated for its use and effectiveness in poetry. By the end of the lesson, pupils had made good progress. This lively and enthusiastic approach characterised a number of lessons, particularly in Key Stage 2. Lessons of this quality ensured that pupils made good progress.

106. In some lessons, in both key stages, less effective teaching occurred when pupils were expected to write for too long without a break. This resulted in a loss of pace and concentration. Pupils also began to lose the impetus of their work, in some lessons, when the teacher was engaged with a specific group for too long and gave others too little attention. On one or two occasions, tasks that were undemanding or too demanding and not well matched to the interests of the pupils caused them to engage in minor non-task activities. In a few lessons, teaching failed to inspire fully, challenge and motivate pupils. This affected their response and they did not produce work of the standard or quality appropriate to their ages or prior attainment. Where expectations of what pupils should or could achieve were set too low, the results were correspondingly disappointing.
107. The curriculum in English is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The Literacy Hour has been established satisfactorily and teachers are generally confident in its management. Assessment procedures are not well developed and do not have a sufficient impact in overall planning for the subject. Homework is provided for pupils in Key Stage 2. Its effectiveness is shortly to be reviewed. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership in the subject. She has provided extensive training for the literacy hour, provided training to parents and been instrumental in policy decisions. Although there is direction for the subject, strategic planning for its development is limited to only one year. The school development plan identifies priorities for development, but not clearly and specifically to raise standards and how this should be done. Monitoring in classrooms is not fully developed due to time constraints.

MATHEMATICS

108. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment in mathematics are below the national average. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of 11, standards of attainment are close to the national average
109. At the time of the last inspection standards were below average by the end of both key stages. Standards by the end of Key Stage 2 have risen since then, but there has been no improvement by the end of Key Stage 1.
110. In the 1999 national tests and assessments for seven-year-olds, standards were well below average by national comparisons and below average compared to similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching level 3 was also below the national average. These figures are confirmed by teachers' assessments. The trend in standards since 1996 has been more or less static. In the 1999 tests and assessments for 11-year-olds, standards were close to the national average and well above average compared to similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching level 5 was close to the national average. The trend in standards since 1997 has been rising steeply toward the national average.

111. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know the place value of numbers in hundreds, tens and units. They place these numbers correctly on an abacus. They put two-digit numbers in order correctly and add money to 20p. They identify line symmetry in simple geometric shapes and tell the time to the hour using analogue and digital clocks. Most pupils know the difference between odd and even numbers and that an odd number ends in one, three, five, seven or nine. There is too little evidence of work done between September and the time of the inspection in May, three quarters of a school year. This raises concern over teachers' abilities to make accurate judgements on pupils' levels of attainment and progress and in referring back to previous work to support their judgements. It also raises concern on whether pupils have done enough work or not. The lack of attainment at 7, when compared to average attainment at 5, reflects this weakness.
112. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils competently plot co-ordinates making correct use of x and y axes. They successfully convert fractions to decimals and know, for example, that three-quarters is equivalent to 0.75 per cent. They correctly read scale of weights and measures and convert, for instance, pints to litres. There is evidence of plenty of sound work in the period September to May and the whole mathematics curriculum is given good coverage, including opportunities to apply mathematical skills to 'real life' problems. Pupils satisfactorily estimate simple probability and know some of the properties of two-dimensional geometric shapes, such as a square, trapezium, parallelogram and kite. They calculate the mean, median and mode of a given set of figures. These achievements are all appropriate to their age and about a quarter of the pupils attain at the higher levels of the National Curriculum. These pupils are familiar with the term algebra and use numerical values to substitute for letters in simple equations, for example. Some good use is made of numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum, for example as pupils in Year 6 use maps to plot co-ordinates in geography lessons.
113. In both key stages, pupils with special educational needs, asylum seekers, travellers and those for whom English as an additional language achieve levels of attainment in line with their prior attainment. They develop sound knowledge of number and simple number problems, recognise pattern in small numbers and are beginning to use effective mental strategies to solve small addition, subtraction and multiplication questions. Most pupils are beginning to use basic mathematical vocabulary correctly when discussing their work.
114. At the time of the last inspection the teaching of mathematics was satisfactory throughout the school. It has improved in Key Stage 2, where teaching is now good, but it is unsatisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1. The best teaching proceeds at a brisk pace and features high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The result is that pupils respond well by working hard and behaving well. Good subject knowledge and understanding is evident in lesson planning and content and this promotes pupils' learning successfully as teachers explain things clearly in a way that pupils understand. Pupils' understanding of their own learning is promoted well as teachers share the intentions and purposes of the lesson with them at the start. Some good use is made of setting by prior attainment to help match teaching and activities more closely to the needs of pupils in Year 6. This helps higher-attaining pupils to reach the higher levels of the National Curriculum, whilst enabling all pupils to make good progress in their learning.

115. Less than satisfactory teaching, which is found in Year 2 only, fails to make clear to pupils what it is they are expected to do and learn. As a result many are confused and so make too little progress in their learning. This was seen, for example, in a lesson on the use of standard units such as kilograms to estimate and compare the weight of a number of different objects, where many pupils were uncertain about what to do and what to record and how. Class control and discipline is not fully secure at the start of these lessons and pupils' learning is hampered because they talk whilst the teacher is talking to the class and do not pay good attention. Teaching is also unsatisfactory where teachers fail to mark pupils' work carefully enough. For example, in Year 2, too little advice is given to pupils on where they have gone wrong and what they need to do to improve their work.
116. Overall, the teaching of numeracy is developing well. Most lessons include mental and oral work associated with number facts and simple calculations. This is having a positive effect on raising levels of attainment in Key Stage 2. Little progress is taking place in Key Stage 1 due to a lack of expertise by some staff of how to get the best from pupils in a balanced and constructive way.
117. The subject co-ordinator is energetic and well informed, but she has too little time and opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms. This is having an adverse effect on standards in Key Stage 1. Although there are appropriate systems in place to assess pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics, based on the National Numeracy Strategy's objectives, the co-ordinator is not in a position to assure the consistent implementation of these systems throughout the whole school, nor to ensure that assessment is consistently used to help teachers plan their next steps in teaching. The school has adopted the National Numeracy Strategy appropriately and there has been helpful training for staff, including support staff.

SCIENCE

118. When children enter the school from the nursery, their knowledge and general awareness of science is below expectations. By the start of Key Stage 1, they have begun to appreciate some basic ideas of scientific investigation and concepts and standards are average.
119. By the end of Key Stage 1, the overall attainment is below national averages. In 1999, the national curriculum teacher assessments indicated that the proportion of pupils gaining level 2, or greater, was well below the national average, although broadly in line with the average in similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching level 3 was also well below national average. The attainment was similar in experimental and investigative science and in knowledge of basic ideas. Pupils with special educational needs, however, achieved well against their targets. The reported level of attainment has remained broadly the same over the past four years since the last inspection.
120. The pupils' work seen during inspection reflects the level of attainment indicated by teacher assessments. For example, most pupils working on attainment target 4, physical processes, understand that metals conduct electricity, but a significant number are very unsure about the lighting of lamps in a simple electrical circuit. Observations are recorded poorly, although lower-attaining pupils have prepared charts. Standards of literacy in the presentation of work are below expectation. Some use is made of the computer to compare observations in bar charts.

121. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment has significantly improved. In the national tests in 1999, the average level gained by pupils was almost equal to the national average and well above the average in similar schools. Teachers' assessments also indicated that the percentage of pupils gaining level 4, or greater was close to the national average. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Girls achieved higher than boys in line with the national trend. Higher-attaining pupils achieved well, as indicated by the relatively higher number attaining level 5. The average level increased most significantly over the past two years.
122. Attainment by pupils with special educational needs is in line with their ability. Progress for these pupils and those for whom English is an additional language is sound. Attainment and progress is enhanced by the provision of skilled learning support assistants who concentrate on pupils' literacy skills.
123. The work seen in class, and in written samples, highlights the good progress made over the key stage. Most pupils in year 6 have a sound idea of the approach to investigation through prediction, careful observation and recording. Fair tests are clearly understood. A minority understands that some observations are unreliable. Only a small number of pupils attempt to evaluate their findings. Work is described well and presented clearly. Information and communication technology is used with increasing effectiveness, especially by those with special educational needs. All pupils competently use word processing skills or data presentation software in a variety of contexts.
124. Pupils' attitudes in science are good. They listen carefully to instruction and willingly respond to questions. They carry out investigation work with enthusiasm and collaborate well on observations. They are not, however, inclined to raise questions to extend their knowledge or reveal any sense of curiosity. Equally, they use little initiative to seek out information using external resources such as the library. Moral values are clearly evident in class discussions, and in their approach to work with living organisms.
125. Pupils' behaviour is good. They have due regard for safety and carry out tasks with responsibility and care. They handle equipment with thought and show respect for property. Behaviour outside the classroom, for example in using the school grounds to look at and explore habitats, was exemplary. Pupils respond well to the teachers, learning support assistants and other adults, exhibiting a high degree of courtesy.
126. The quality of teaching of science is at good overall in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. In about half of the lessons it is good. Teachers have a secure knowledge of science and use this to instill confidence in pupils. The work is planned well, provides for pupils with different abilities and identifies links to other subject areas. This ensures that pupils' interest is maintained, and expectations are appropriately high. Pupils with special educational needs have considerable support from the classroom assistants, which ensures that most are working at a satisfactory level, and reach the target set for them. The pace of the lessons is generally satisfactory, although the productivity of work in Key Stage 2 is significantly better than in Key Stage 1.
127. Teachers select a good variety of tasks, both practical and conceptual, from the national scheme of work. Pupils apply themselves well in Key Stage 2, but are not yet responding sufficiently to demands in Key Stage 1. Resources are used well, and are of good quality, although the number of modern reference books is barely adequate. Insufficient use is made as yet of information technology to enhance learning, mainly

due to the lack of a central up-to-date computer suite. Pupils are regularly assessed at the end of topics and records kept by individual teachers. The information is not used sufficiently to track progress or identify targets. Marking is only satisfactory, with levelled and graded work, but without clear guidance for improvement. Pupils are managed, in the majority of classes, with considerable expertise, so that they are quite clear about acceptable behaviour.

128. The subject is co-ordinated satisfactorily. Effective changes in the curriculum in the last two years have contributed to a rise in standards in Key Stage 2. Resources are being developed well to maximise opportunity for practical work. There is a good allocation of time to science, and the balance of topics maintains pupil interest. There is insufficient opportunity for direct monitoring of teaching by the co-ordinator and an insufficient overview of pupils' achievements in relation to national expectations. Insufficient time is given to development planning linked to raising attainment in science in Key Stage 1.
129. Since the last inspection, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been raised. Attainment and progress over Key Stage 1 remain unsatisfactory. Attitudes to learning have been maintained. In Key Stage 1, teaching has improved, and is now satisfactory overall, although there are variations in quality of contributory features. Insufficient use continues to be made of assessment data, but good curriculum development on schemes of work has been achieved.

ART

130. By the end of Key Stage 2, Year 6 pupils achieve standards similar to those expected of pupils of this age. Those with special educational needs attain appropriate standards in line with their prior attainment. Year 6 pupils produce appliqué work of good quality. They represent objects in a variety of media, for example, clay plates or close observational drawings based upon the work of Spanish artists. They learn about the way in which artists use different media to achieve different effects. They learn how to improve their work and experiment to achieve the results that they desire. Block prints are made with good use of colour and bold designs. In other years of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve good results when they work in powder paint to produce, for example, abstract pattern, or paper to produce designs after the style of Mondrian. In one class, pupils had worked on producing mythical creatures in a variety of media as part of their work linked to literacy.
131. No teaching was seen in Year 2. However, a scrutiny of work indicates that pupils reach standards broadly similar to those expected for pupils of the same age. They have worked soundly in collage and paint, and have attempted drawing, some from close observation. Work is however, of rather average standard, none was seen of high quality. Although pupils have sketchbooks they are not used with a sufficient focus upon the development of their skills and understanding.
132. There have been no significant changes in this subject since the last inspection, despite the loss of some teaching staff and less time being devoted to the art curriculum.
133. From a scrutiny of work and one lesson observed, the quality of teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall. Teachers have satisfactory knowledge of the subject, but the lack of a school-produced scheme of work hinders further development. The school is in the process of adopting the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work to rectify this. The quality of work seen indicates that in a minority of lessons, expectations of what pupils could achieve are not high enough and as a result, they present work of a mediocre standard. The use of assessment is underdeveloped in both key stages.

134. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are generally satisfactory, although very good attitudes were observed in a lesson at the end of Key Stage 2. They settle down quickly to work, are keen to participate and they concentrate well. Their positive attitude to art is used to good effect in other lessons where art and design skills are used, for example in a Viking history lesson, decorating their ships.
135. Art is not currently a focus in the school development plan. As a result of this and because a scheme of work appropriate to the school is not yet developed, progress in improving the subject is limited. The co-ordinator is unable to monitor teaching of the subject or formally assess what pupils produce. This means that curriculum planning and improvements to the skills of teachers are not sufficiently and coherently based upon the identified needs of the pupils. The management role of the co-ordinator is therefore limited in its effect upon standards. Statutory requirements for the subject are met.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

136. Due to the school's timetable arrangements, it was not possible to observe many lessons. Judgements are made from limited lesson observations, the scrutiny of work, displays, talking with teachers and pupils and school reports.
137. From this evidence base, standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are satisfactory. Pupils have periods of time allocated in rotation with art, so that the attainment targets of the national curriculum are included. In Key Stage 1, capability is limited, but developing through a simple design and make activity. For example in Year 2, pupils have carefully designed a 'Joseph's Coat', creating paper templates, and have developed skills of cutting and joining materials.
138. By the end of Key Stage 2, the extent of design activities is more varied. Pupils effectively examine and evaluate types of packaging and containers of foods and drawing materials. They design and make simple picture frames and make structures with straws. Some time is given in Year 6 to simple mechanisms to produce rotation. However, the range and diversity of skills, materials to use and techniques are basic and only just satisfactory.
139. In both key stages, attainment by pupils with special educational needs is in line with their prior attainment. Asylum seekers and pupils from the travelling community attain levels in line with those achieved by most pupils.
140. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. Tasks are taken from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority design and technology scheme of work. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is basic, but essential skills of cutting, gluing and joining are competently taught. Good opportunities are provided for collaborative work and displays in some classrooms celebrate achievement.
141. Design and technology is satisfactorily co-ordinated and the provision generally meets with national curriculum requirements. However, the allocation of time in some classes is too low to enable detailed development of skill and design and technology capability. Resources are adequate. The use of assessment is underdeveloped.

GEOGRAPHY

142. Reception provides the beginning of geographical understanding by the provision of appropriate activities promoting the idea of places important to the child, like home and school.
143. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of location and the characteristics of places. They competently explain the human and physical features of Cheriton, Folkestone and the Channel Tunnel. They understand that places have good and bad aspects, such as traffic problems in local streets. They readily identify landmarks on maps, starting to use appropriate geographical vocabulary. Pupils with special educational needs, asylum seekers and children from the travelling community attain levels in line with their ability.
144. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. Pupils are keenly engaged in geographical enquiry. They offer sound ideas and explanations in a local study of Cheriton. They have good knowledge of places further afield, such as Godstone in Surrey, or a village in India, which they contrast well with their home area. Some pupils demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of local changes that have affected the lives and activities of the inhabitants. Pupils work with increasingly detailed maps and plans so that by the end of the key stage their mapping skills are well developed. Pupils with special needs attain appropriate levels.
145. Few lessons were seen in geography to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching, but there is clear evidence of satisfactory teaching in Key Stage 1 and good teaching in Key Stage 2. Where practice is good, teachers have good subject knowledge. Planning is usually coherent and effectively draws on pupils' previous experience. Teachers know their pupils well. Their effective questioning challenges pupils and deepens their understanding, promoting attainment and progress.
146. Co-ordination and management is constrained by the lack of time to monitor teaching of the subject. The curriculum adheres to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines and is well resourced with an improving range of videos, maps and aerial photographs. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Arrangements for assessment are unsatisfactory. There is not a consistent approach to assessing pupils' attainment across the school. This makes monitoring progress and planning the next stage of learning harder. Visits and excursions into the immediate locality, and to places some distance away, such as the beach at Dymchurch, are well organised and effectively supervised. There are good links with history and mathematics, for example in their work on maps of the Aztec Empire and the use of coordinates. Such links and visits enrich the quality of the work in geography.

HISTORY

147. At the time of the last inspection, attainment and progress in history was satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 2. Judgements could not be made at Key Stage 1.
148. Due to the school's timetable arrangements, only two lessons in Key Stage 2 were seen during the current inspection, but other evidence, including a careful scrutiny of pupils' completed work, indicates that standards in the subject have clearly improved by the end of Key Stage 2 and are now slightly above expected levels. Standards, by the end of Key Stage 1, are broadly satisfactory. However, the younger half of Key Stage 2 still relies too much on worksheets, which do little to promote historical enquiry. Pupils with special educational needs, asylum seekers and travelers, attain levels in line with their prior attainment.

149. Reception lays a good foundation of historical thinking and enquiry by reminding children of their babyhood and their first days in school and how they felt.
150. In Key Stage 1, pupils are developing an understanding of the differences between then and now. Pupils remember the toys they had compared to today, and sequence seaside pictures from different times in the periods 1900, 1950 and the present day. Pupils recall stories of famous people such as Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes, and know the popular rhyme which begins 'Remember, remember'. In Key Stage 2, older pupils, in high quality work, show factual knowledge and understanding of aspects of Victorian life, especially in a local study. They make good use of a variety of historical sources including maps and computer evidence. Some pupils show empathy in writing about the circumstances of children in a Victorian Ragged school. Older pupils produce folders of factual information about the Aztec period, and younger pupils design and make models of Viking longboats.
151. In the lessons seen, pupils were keen to use reference material and to offer ideas and ask questions. They enjoy facts about Henry VIII getting rid of the abbeys and clerics, and show good understanding of the Sutton Hoo burial ship 'that was used for burying rich warriors'.
152. Few lessons were seen in history to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching, but there are clear examples of good teaching through the scrutiny of work and displays. All teachers effectively recall earlier work that supports pupils' understanding. Where practice is good, teachers have good subject knowledge. It is clear that pupils are introduced to important historical concepts such as chronology. Change and continuity are illustrated in local studies using good resources such as maps and photographs. However, work for younger pupils in Key Stage 2 is sometimes pitched at such a low level that very little historical enquiry is demanded or encouraged. Overall, pupils do begin to use relevant study skills, especially in their topics on the Vikings and the Victorians. Teachers support pupils with special educational needs well and promote good progress, providing simpler formats of the work or peer support.
153. Co-ordination and management are constrained by lack of time to monitor the delivery of the subject. Planning is coherent. Overall, the subject has developing links with literacy and good links with geography. The contribution of information technology is effective and improving. A good range of resources, including an increased variety of artefacts, effectively supports learning. History is enhanced through visits, such as the reconstruction of Henry VIII's visit at Dover Castle.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

154. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 standards of attainment in information technology (IT) are broadly in line with those found nationally. IT is taught across the curriculum by integrating the skills into different subject areas. When pupils enter the school, their level of capability is generally poor. Many pupils have had no contact with computers. By the end of Key Stage 1, they have gained some experience of word processing, for example, writing letters or accounts of historical events, and use software such as Clipart to present their work. LOGO is used to control movement of a floor turtle and investigate mathematical shape.
155. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards reached by pupils are in line with national expectations. Keyboard skills are variable, but most pupils use the computer to store

and retrieve information, present data in the form of charts and graphs, combine text and pictures and understand the use of computer control in society. Only limited skill is evident in the use of information technology to interpret or analyse data, for example in science investigations. Pupils with special educational needs effectively develop their understanding of a range of subjects using appropriate software. For example, programs in mathematical addition and subtraction provide very good support for pupils in both key stages.

156. The quality of teaching in both key stages is generally sound. Teachers have a satisfactory level of knowledge of the use of ICT in the curriculum. All teaching rooms have two or three modern computers with printer attached. A further resource within each key stage is a shared area with another five or six computers of older design. These have limited use with modern software, but are used well by pupils in the computer club. Pupils in year six have the opportunity to spend time at the local secondary school, to use 'Successmaker' in their ICT suites. Time is allocated to each class to use the computers in the resource areas. The current distribution of hardware is unsatisfactory and prevents efficient use of the software in teaching, and also impedes skilled development. The lack of an ICT suite limits teachers' ability to work with whole classes and groups teaching ICT skills and monitoring pupils' progress. This means that teachers are unable to plan ICT lessons whereby pupils access the Internet, send and receive email and produce work of an increasingly higher standard. Assessment systems are in place for each class. These are used to good effect to show what pupils have been taught and if they have acquired the necessary skills. These assessment records follow pupils as they progress through the school.
157. The development of ICT in the school is being satisfactorily managed by the co-ordinator, but little time is available for monitoring and support to colleagues. New computers have recently been purchased, with finance from specific grants; Internet connection is planned. There is a clear ICT policy, with appropriate aims for the development of skills and capabilities of pupils. Since the last inspection, the provision of information and communication technology has improved, but overall, remains only just adequate for the needs of the pupils.

MUSIC

158. Due to the school's timetable arrangements for music, it was not possible to observe pupils participating in all elements of music. Standards of attainment have remained consistently high since the last inspection. Music is a strength of the school and standards are above expectations by the end of both key stages.
159. From the available evidence and observing pupils being taught and learning, standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 are higher than national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are higher than national expectations. Standards achieved by pupils with special educational needs, asylum seekers and pupils from the travelling community are not significantly different to those achieved by other pupils.
160. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils sing clearly and with enjoyment. For example when singing 'The sails of the windmill go round and round'. Most pupils sing well from memory and this enhances their singing in acts of collective worship. They sing melodiously and in tune with each other. Expression is good and they sustain a rhythm well. Pupils follow a beat closely and concentrate intently on their teachers to ensure they start tunes and songs in the right place and finish together. Tuned musical instruments are played competently and they rehearse and play confidently

with each other. Most pupils listen well to each other when playing and this ensures the tempo is correct and they get louder and quieter in the right places. Pupils respond very well to changes in mood suggested by different types of music. Their actions change appropriately from an elephant to a robot when interpreting music through movement, for example. Pupils have good listening skills and respond positively to musical instructions. There was no evidence available to judge pupils' composing skills accurately, but through discussion with teachers and pupils they are at least in line with national expectations.

161. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils sing in unison and with tuneful enthusiasm. Their singing in assembly is clear and melodic. They sing confidently and from memory well. When playing tuned musical instruments, pupils read notes mainly accurately. They understand the difference between ternary and binary form and use this knowledge well when playing the 'New World Symphony' by Dvorak on glockenspiels. Pupils listen attentively to each other's playing and when accompanying the piano. Higher-attaining pupils are beginning to use duration and tempo confidently to add structure to their playing. Through practice, pupils develop their playing and by the end of sessions there is always a marked improvement. Pupils have higher than expected listening skills which they use effectively when following instructions. Performances are always of a high standard.
162. Overall, the quality of learning is good. It is firmly linked to the quality of instruction from visiting specialists. Progress by pupils in both key stages is good. In all lessons observed, pupils had the ability to reflect on previous lessons and use this knowledge effectively to answer questions such as 'What is ternary form?' Higher-attaining pupils demonstrated their ability to apply knowledge of vocabulary gained in mathematics to correctly state that music in two parts would start with 'bi' and be known as binary. Pupils with special educational needs, including asylum seekers and those with English as an additional language, make good progress. There is no noticeable learning difference between any groups of pupils.
163. Overall, pupils' attitudes and behaviour in music are never less than good. In Key Stage 1 they are frequently very good. This is highlighted by the enthusiasm by which they participate in lessons and sing together. Younger pupils are extremely keen on singing. At the beginning and end of acts of collective worship, pupils listen well to incidental music. Pupils' positive attitudes enable good progress to take place in hymn practices. All pupils use musical instruments with care. Pupils are keen to use instruments and demonstrate their skills when practicing.
164. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with no weaknesses. At the beginning of Key Stage 2, teaching is good. Most lessons are led by a highly skilled visiting music instructor. This provision has ensured that music is taught to the highest possible standard and that the quality of learning experiences are appropriate to the age range and abilities of pupils. A few teachers have considerable musical experience and their expertise is used effectively to support and encourage pupils. In all lessons, teaching consolidates pupils' knowledge and understanding well and provides good opportunities for pupils to make good progress when working in groups, playing musical instruments, singing together or reading a score. Combining some singing lessons as a whole key stage, for example Key Stage 1 and Reception, is an excellent opportunity for developing a sense of community and enhancing the provision for spiritual development.
165. Music is co-ordinated well. The opportunity for pupils to work with music specialists enhances learning skills and the standards they achieve. The music curriculum is

enriched by opportunities for pupils to participate in concerts, festivals and productions outside school. Resources are good, with a well-maintained stock of tuned and untuned instruments available to support learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

166. At the time of the last inspection attainment in physical education was in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and above expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Attainment continues to be in line with expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. No judgement can be offered about attainment by the end of Key Stage 2, because there were no physical education lessons at this stage during the inspection, but observation of other classes in the key stage suggests that pupils are on course to meet national expectations in each aspect of the subject by the time they leave the school.
167. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop appropriate gymnastics skills. They balance on various body parts, showing good body control and transfer their balance successfully from the floor to the large apparatus. Year 2 pupils learn some of the skills appropriate to playing traditional team games, such as rounders. They confidently practise their throwing and catching skills using beanbags and small balls. In Key Stage 2 pupils build satisfactorily on their games playing skills and go on to play the game of rounders, although the balance of time between skills acquisition and game playing is sometimes wrong, with too little time being given to practising skills. Opportunities are provided for some outdoor activities such as map reading and orienteering. However, opportunities for greater adventurous activities have not been fully developed. Pupils with special educational needs are not disadvantaged and attain levels in line with those attained by other pupils.
168. Teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. Teachers maintain good control and discipline in most lessons and good attention is given to safe working. Some good feedback is given on performance, which helps pupils know what they should do to improve. This was seen for example in a Year 5 lesson where pupils played rounders. Many good opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and small groups make a positive contribution to their social development as they learn to get on well with others including those from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Teachers make some good use of pupils to demonstrate their performance and this encourages others to try harder and improve what they do. This was seen for example in a Year 2 lesson on ball sending and receiving skills.
169. A specialist teacher satisfactorily co-ordinates the subject, but she has insufficient time to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning to raise standards. There are appropriate systems in place to assess pupils' attainment and progress, but the co-ordinator is not in a position to assure the consistent use of these systems throughout the school. The full range of the National Curriculum is planned for and the school follows a commercial scheme, which gives teachers adequate guidance and ensures the smooth progression of pupils' learning as they move through the school. Swimming takes place in Year 3 and meets statutory requirements. The school provides sound opportunities for older pupils to participate in outdoor and adventurous activities, but these are mainly limited to the local environment. Competitions against other schools are arranged.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

170. Pupils in Year 6 have knowledge and understanding that matches the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. They have studied aspects of a number of world faiths including Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism. They have a mature understanding of some of the main similarities and differences between religions, but tend to be confused sometimes about which faith has which specific practice. They believe that religion is important to people, but do not have a firm grasp of why this is so. They show a respect for the beliefs of others and have been particularly aware of this need because of the presence of refugees in the school. Pupils in other Key Stage 2 classes identify some of the key features of faith, for example, in the Sikh religion. They begin to recognize some of the events that are important in their own lives.
171. Pupils in Year 2 achieve standards broadly in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. They know something about well-known stories from world faiths such as that of Rama and Sita. They have learned about Abraham, Moses and some of the incidents in the New Testament, for example, the raising of Jarius' daughter from death by Jesus. They write about these events and show some progress in their ability to communicate what they know, but the quantity of work is not extensive and therefore the subject does not make a strong contribution to pupils' acquisition of literacy skills.
172. Some improvements have been made since the last inspection. Pupils have a greater knowledge of other cultures and faiths than formerly. Resources for the subject have been enhanced and this has helped to improve what pupils know and understand.
173. A scrutiny of the work done by pupils, discussion with some of the oldest and observation of one lesson indicate that teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' knowledge is at least adequate, and the locally Agreed Syllabus is used to plan lessons with suitable effect. Artefacts are used to help pupils acquire knowledge about religious practice in the religions that they study. Collective worship also adds a further dimension to their appreciation and understanding of religious belief. Pupils show interest in the subject and it makes a sound contribution to their spiritual and moral development.
174. The subject is not formally assessed, neither is the teaching of it monitored by the co-ordinator. This means that improvements in teaching and learning cannot be rigorously planned to improve the standards of pupils' work. There is only brief reference to religious education in the school development plan. This does not address the need to develop all aspects of the subject and strengthen the management role of the co-ordinator.