

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **SHERIFFHALES COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Sheriffhales, Shifnal

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique reference number: 123396

Acting Headteacher: Mrs A Lunt

Reporting inspector: Mrs K Rawson  
21534

Dates of inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2001

Inspection number: 194645

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Sheriffhales Shifnal Shropshire
Postcode:	TF11 8RA
Telephone number:	01952 460204
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Gordon Tonkinson
Date of previous inspection:	28 <sup>th</sup> - 30 <sup>th</sup> April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs K Rawson 21534	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Music Physical education Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How good are curricular opportunities?
Mrs J Butler 9428	Lay inspector		How high are standards – attitudes? How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr D Curtis 20893	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology History Geography Design technology Religious education Foundation Stage Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed? Assessment

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Sheriffhales Primary School is a popular school serving a small village community and drawing 60 per cent of its pupils from outside its immediate area. At present there are 72 full-time pupils, which is less than the national average. There are similar numbers of boys and girls. Four per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. Eleven per cent of pupils are on the special educational needs register, of whom three have full statements. Both these proportions are broadly average. There are no pupils from ethnic minorities. Attainment on entry is below the national average. At the time of the inspection the school was being led by an acting headteacher, appointed in January. A new headteacher has been appointed from September 2001.

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

This is a self-evaluating school committed to providing a good education for its pupils. The acting headteacher's good leadership and involvement of other staff and the governing body in identifying strengths and weaknesses have helped all to have a clear view of improvements needed. Currently, the quality of teaching and standards achieved in the school are good from reception to Year 3 and satisfactory in Years 4 to 6. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- The quality of teaching for pupils aged 4 to 8 is very good.
- By the age of 7, pupils' standards in religious education, reading and speaking and listening are very good and standards in history, mathematics, science, art, design technology and writing are good.
- Throughout the school pupils' attitudes, values, behaviour, personal development and relationships are good.
- Leadership and management of the acting headteacher are good.
- Pupils are keen to come to school and their attendance is very good.

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

- The standards pupils achieve by the time they are 11 in science, art and geography, in writing, and in aspects of information and communication technology.
- The involvement of all subject co-ordinators in monitoring and improving the cohesion of the curriculum, especially for pupils aged 7 to 11 years.
- The systematic use of assessment and target setting to raise standards and ensure all pupils make consistent progress through the school.
- Provision of support staff, especially for the youngest class.
- Provision for outdoor play for the under-fives.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in April 1997. Improvement since then has been satisfactory overall. The improvement in the quality of teaching is very good. At that time, 25 per cent of teaching was judged unsatisfactory, with particular weaknesses at Key Stage 2. Now 43 per cent of the teaching is very good, 23 per cent is good and the remaining 30 per cent is satisfactory. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Standards for pupils aged 5 to 7 have improved. The school's aims have been revised. Good child protection procedures are now in place. Subject co-ordinators are becoming more involved in the management of the school. Action has been taken on monitoring standards, but there is not yet a rigorous system involving all teachers in identifying strengths and weaknesses in all classes. Schemes of work are still being developed following the introduction of the new National Curriculum. A number of changes have been introduced recently, such as specialist music tuition and a more rigorous approach to science in Class 3. Some of these changes have already had a positive impact on standards and the quality of teaching.

## STANDARDS

Because the number of pupils in Year 6 last year was less than 10, their results are not published in this summary. The small numbers in each cohort mean that statistics have to be treated with caution. The school has set appropriate targets for Year 6 pupils to achieve. Last year the school's performance exceeded its targets for English, mathematics and science in both key stages except in science in Year 6. The inspection findings for Year 2 and Year 6 are:

- the attainment of pupils in Year 2 is very high in religious education, reading and in speaking and listening. In history, mathematics, science, art, design technology and writing, they achieve standards above those expected. In all other subjects standards are in line with what is expected nationally;
- in the current Year 6 pupils' attainment in mathematics and English is average. In science, their attainment is below average because of their lack of skills and understanding in carrying out scientific investigations. Their standards in art and in geography are also below those expected. This is because of the limited opportunities they have had in the past to develop skills and understanding in these subjects. Attainment in all other subjects is in line with what is expected of pupils of their age except for writing where standards are not high enough and in control and monitoring, which is part of the information and communication technology curriculum, where their attainment is below that expected.
- pupils make good progress in each year group up to the age of 8 in all subjects. In some lessons, they make very good progress. Over time, the progress they make in the older classes has been unsatisfactory in science, art and geography due to the lack of cohesion in the experiences planned for them and the lack of challenge in the work set. Since January this has begun to be addressed, particularly in science.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are eager to attend and keen to learn. They work well together, try hard and respond well to their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils show self-control, good manners and thought for other people. They show care and respect for property and for the environment.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils grow in confidence and maturity through the school. All adults relate very well to the pupils. The level of understanding and acceptance of pupils with very special needs is a credit to the school.
Attendance	Very good.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	very good	very good	satisfactory

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

In Classes 1 and 2, the quality of teaching in English and mathematics is very good. The teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and teach basic skills very thoroughly. They know their pupils well. This allows them to plan tasks carefully to challenge the range of abilities in their class. They have high expectations. Their pupils make good and often very good progress and achieve high standards. In Class 3 there has been a change of teachers. Teachers use the literacy and numeracy strategies satisfactorily to plan and assess work in English and mathematics. The teaching in these, and in other subjects, is satisfactory in lessons. The teachers build good relationships with the pupils and promote good behaviour, using praise well to encourage pupils to stay on task and try their best. At times the challenge is not always accurate, being sometimes too difficult and at others not difficult enough. Over time there have been weaknesses in teachers' planning for a range of experiences in art and geography and in the teaching of the skills of scientific investigation. This has led to underachievement by the time pupils are aged 11 in these subjects. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted is good in Classes 1 and 2 and satisfactory overall in Class 3. The school has already analysed past statistics to identify that the more-able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently in Years 4 to 6.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good for under-fives. Good for pupils aged 5 to 7. Sound for pupils aged 7 to 11, with weaknesses in some aspects of writing, science, art, geography and information and communication technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Sound overall. Provision for those pupils with complex needs is very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision for moral and social development. Pupils are taught right from wrong and teachers plan well for the development of social skills. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is sound. There are good opportunities for pupils to understand and learn about their own culture, for example, through the use of professional artists, but few opportunities for them to learn about non-western cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The level of care for the health, safety and welfare of pupils is good. Teachers' use of assessment to judge what pupils know – or do not know – and therefore what they need to do next in order to make good progress is not consistent in all subjects in all classes.
Partnership with parents	Sound. The new noticeboard works well. The school could improve the information that parents get about how their child is getting on at school through reports and an early meeting in the autumn term.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The acting headteacher has worked well with other staff to identify strengths and weaknesses and co-ordinators are increasingly involved in monitoring, although a rigorous system is not yet in place. The school makes satisfactory arrangements to apply the principles of best value and offers sound value for money.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors know the school well. They offer good support to the acting headteacher.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has identified most of its weaknesses and has begun to take action to rectify them.
The strategic use of resources	Sound. Specific grants are used appropriately. Subject co-ordinators are not delegated responsibility for budgets so that they can take a strategic view of resource provision.
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	The staff are keen to work as a team in taking the school forward and this is a strength of the school. There is a clear commitment to staff development. The accommodation is unsatisfactory because the school has no hall of its own and there is no secure area for outside play for the under-fives. The lack of support staff to work with the under-fives in Class 1 is unsatisfactory.



## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Eight parents attended a meeting with two of the inspectors and 24 parents (33 per cent) returned a questionnaire.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children like school and are keen to come.</li><li>• Teachers have high expectations.</li><li>• The caring and friendly atmosphere and sense of community.</li><li>• The good relationships. All teachers are welcoming and accessible to parents and pupils.</li><li>• The attitudes and values that the school promotes.</li><li>• Weekly newsletters and the parents' noticeboard.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A meeting in the autumn term to see how their child has settled in.</li><li>• More advance information about the topics their children will be learning about.</li><li>• More opportunities to understand about National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and, for Year 6, more information about the national tests.</li><li>• More clarity about their children's attainment and an indication of what they need to do to improve.</li><li>• The number and range of after-school clubs.</li></ul>

The inspection team, in the main, agrees with parents' positive views. The teachers in Classes 1 and 2 do have high expectations. Teachers' expectations in Class 3 are satisfactory overall. The team judges that the links with parents are satisfactory, but that improvements could be made in informing parents more about the curriculum. The school is already making plans to change timings of parent-teacher interviews so that one is held in the autumn term. The team considers that the arrangements for after-school clubs are satisfactory given the small teaching staff and the current workload on the acting headteacher.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

1. The school has very small numbers in each year group. There is also a significant level of pupil mobility with pupils coming to the school to join classes at times other than in the reception class. For example, only 50 per cent of the current Year 6 started their education at the school. This means that great care has to be taken when comparing the results of one year group with those of another in order to judge the progress that pupils make over time and the overall effectiveness of the school.
2. Children start school in the term that they are five. Attainment on entry to the reception class is below average. The very good teaching means that the children make **good progress**. The children in reception are on track to meet all the Early Learning Goals<sup>1</sup> by the time they are ready to join Year 1, except for physical development. This is because of the restricted access they have to outdoor play facilities and equipment.
3. The table below shows attainment in English, mathematics and science judged by the inspection team and as achieved by last year's Year 2 and Year 6 in the tests, compared to that in all schools nationally and measured by what is known as points scores. These scores take into account the performance of all pupils in the year group.

	<b>National Tests Year 2 2000</b>	<b>Inspection Judgements Year 2 2001</b>	<b>National tests Year 6 2000 (points scores)</b>	<b>Inspection judgements Year 6 2001</b>
<b>English</b>	<b>Reading</b> Well above average  <b>Writing</b>  Well above average	<b>Reading</b> Very high  <b>Writing</b>  Above average	Well above average	Average
<b>Mathematics</b>	Well above average	Above average	Average	Average
<b>Science</b>	<b>By teacher assessment</b>  Above average	Above average	Below average	Below average

#### Key Stage 1: English, mathematics and science

4. By the time they are seven, pupils nationally are expected to achieve the average level, Level 2. More-able pupils are expected to attain the higher Level 3. The trend of attainment at Sheriffhales has been consistently above average in mathematics and English for the past two years. When the school's results are compared with those in similar schools, the results for English overall are well above average and the results for writing are average. This means that pupils are performing well in reading and less well in writing, where fewer attain the higher Level 3. In mathematics, the results are average when compared with those in similar schools. This is because, although all pupils

<sup>1</sup> Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They mainly refer to achievements children make in connection with: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development.

achieved the Level 2, fewer achieved the higher Level 3. The results of teacher assessments for science are above average at both Level 2 and at Level 3.

- The inspection judgements for these subjects broadly reflect the performance shown in the table. Pupils' attainment in mathematics and science is above average. Their attainment is very high in reading, speaking and listening, and is above average in writing. This means that writing is a relative weakness within the English curriculum, something the school is already beginning to address. The above results show that the pupils make **good progress** in Key Stage 1.

### Key Stage 2: English, mathematics and science

- Nationally, by the time they are 11, most pupils are expected to achieve Level 4, and more-able pupils are expected to achieve above that. The trend of attainment at Sheriffhales has been broadly in line with the national trend over the past five years, although the year-to-year variations are often quite marked because of the small cohorts. When the school's results for last year are compared with those in similar schools, they show the school's performance as being above average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. Close examination of the statistics shows that the proportion of pupils achieving at the higher Level 5 was low in both mathematics and science last year. When compared with their prior attainment in Year 2, pupils' achievement at Level 5 was well below average in both these subjects. This means that they had not made the progress that they should have made in the four years of Key Stage 2. The acting headteacher has already identified that the level of challenge for more-able pupils is an area for school development. The inspection evidence confirms that the pupils do not always build sufficiently on the knowledge and experience gained at Key Stage 1. In the past, the more-able pupils, particularly, have not made the progress of which they are capable. Overall, the **progress made by the pupils currently in Year 6 is satisfactory in English and mathematics and unsatisfactory in science**. For example, science work from 1999 shows that, in Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils have not systematically developed their skills in carrying out scientific investigations. In reading pupils achieve above average standards, but in handwriting pupils' skills have not been sufficiently developed and this is a relative weakness in English. This is partly a result of the lack of rigorous planning in Years 3, 4 and 5 over a period of time. The school is aware that assessment has not been used properly to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses and ensure the work challenges them to achieve their potential.
- The following table shows standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

	By the age of 7	By the age of 11
<b>Information and communication technology</b>	At the expected level	At the expected level
<b>Religious education</b>	Well above the expected level	At the expected level
<b>Art and design</b>	Above the expected level	Below the expected level
<b>Design and technology</b>	Above the expected level	At the expected level
<b>Geography</b>	At the expected level	Below the expected level
<b>History</b>	Above the expected level	At the expected level
<b>Music</b>	At the expected level	At the expected level
<b>Physical education</b>	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence, except for swimming, which is above the expected level

- At Key Stage 1, pupils make sound progress in music and information technology, very good progress in religious education, in art and in design technology, and good progress

in all the other subjects except physical education, where there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement. In judging progress through Key Stage 2, consideration has to be given to the nature of the cohort because numbers are so small and each year group varies in the number of pupils of above average capability. In most subjects, the progress that the current Year 6 has made is judged satisfactory. The exceptions are art and geography, where they have not made sufficient progress over time and have, therefore, not achieved the standards expected. Pupils have also not had enough experience in control and modelling, an aspect of information and communication technology. The progress they make has been negatively affected by the lack of clear planning for each year group in the Years 4, 5 and 6 class in the past. This has led, first, to all pupils having insufficient experiences and, second, a lack of focussed challenge, often for the older or more-able pupils in the class. For example, between September and December, pupils experienced little teaching in art. There has been insufficient use of assessment and target setting to ensure that pupils and staff know what has to be done for each pupil to achieve their potential.

9. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. Those who have been identified as gifted or talented make good progress in Classes 1 and 2 because of the way in which work is set to challenge their capabilities. Over the past few years, boys have tended to do better than the girls. This is something that the school is now aware of.
10. At the last inspection attainment in English and science was average through the school. Attainment in mathematics was average for pupils aged 7 and above average for pupils aged 11 years. Writing was judged to be comparatively weak through the school. Currently attainment in literacy and numeracy is good for pupils aged 7 and satisfactory for pupils aged 11 years. The school has agreed appropriate targets for pupils' attainment with the local education authority. The school is on course to achieve these.

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

11. This aspect is good and remains one of the strengths of the school. Although pupils travel to the school from a wide area, the school community is close-knit and friendly, with pupils eager to attend and keen to learn. Parents note that their children enjoy school. Pupils work well together, try hard with their tasks and respond well to their teachers. In some lessons in Key Stage 1, pupils' attitudes to their work were excellent as they listened with rapt attention and then pursued quite challenging tasks with care and perseverance. As a result the quality of work achieved was of a high standard. For example, after a particularly effective visualisation exercise when Year 1 pupils were asked to conjure up mental images of the island of Struay that they had been studying, they were able to make good comparisons of geographical features in different locations. Older pupils also have good attitudes to school. They respond well to appropriate challenge, but sometimes appear a little reluctant to answer.
12. Behaviour is good throughout the school; at play, in the lunch hall and in lessons. On many occasions pupils behave extremely well, showing self-control, good manners and thought for other people. There is no evidence of any anti-social or threatening behaviour and pupils appear to be happy and relaxed. They show care and respect for property and for the environment.
13. Good relationships underpin the life of the school. All adults relate very well to the pupils and, especially in class, the very good teacher-pupil relationships and exchanges enable good learning to take place. The level of understanding and acceptance of pupils with very special needs is a credit to the school. Most pupils relate well to one another, but

there are sometimes occasions in Key Stage 2 where girls and boys do not support each other in class.

14. The personal development of pupils is good. They take pride in carrying out their various responsibilities in their own work and in little duties to assist in the smooth running of the school. In Class 1, pupils very often show a level of maturity beyond their years as they sensibly and efficiently prepare for and move between activities. The arrangements at lunchtime are sociable and harmonious, thanks to the mixing of pupils across all ages and the responsible attitudes of the dinner monitors. Throughout the school pupils grow in confidence and by the time they are 11 they are keen to suggest ideas to enhance school life, as well as ready to help others less fortunate in the wider world. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
15. Attendance is very good. Most pupils are punctual for school and unauthorised absence is extremely low.

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

16. Overall, the quality of teaching in lessons is good. In the school as a whole, 43 per cent of the teaching is very good, 26 per cent good and 30 per cent satisfactory. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. There is a difference between the key stages. At Key Stage 1 the teaching is very good. In Key Stage 2 the teaching is satisfactory. This is a great improvement since the last inspection, when 33 per cent of the teaching at Key Stage 2 was judged unsatisfactory and the teaching in Key Stage 1 and for under-fives was judged good overall, with some unsatisfactory teaching in mathematics. Nevertheless, the difference in teaching quality between the two key stages, which has been a feature for some time, is an issue because it has a significant impact on the difference in progress that pupils make through the school.
17. The quality of teaching for the under-fives is very good, a strength of the school. At this stage and at Key Stage 1, in 69 per cent of lessons the teaching is very good and in the remaining 31 per cent it is good. At Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is satisfactory in 70 per cent of lessons with a further 30 per cent being good or better. Literacy and numeracy are taught well in Classes 1 and 2 and computer programmes are often used to enhance the pupils' learning. In Class 3 the teaching of these key skills is satisfactory overall, but with some weaknesses that slow pupils' progress, especially in the development of their writing skills.
18. All teachers build good relationships with the pupils, which means that the pupils feel valued and able to ask for support when they need it. Teachers manage the pupils well, particularly in teaching different age or ability groups within the mixed-age classes. For example, pupils in Year 6 appreciate the way in which all pupils are equally encouraged to contribute in class question-and-answer sessions. They perceive this as fair.
19. In lessons where the teaching is very good, there are four key contributory factors:
  - teachers' very good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are teaching and of the needs of the age groups in their class;
  - very good teaching of the basic skills in literacy and numeracy in Key Stage 1. The teachers make good use of question-and-answer sessions to probe the pupils' understanding and to challenge them to move forward in their thinking;
  - very good planning linked to very good day-to-day assessment so that the teachers plan carefully to match the learning requirements of the pupils. For example, the teacher in Class 1 plans carefully for pupils of differing ability and for those with special educational needs to cover the same topics, but at different levels of challenge

in their science work, through providing them with different tasks. This maintains all pupils' interest and motivation;

- very high expectations. This is particularly evident in Class 1 in all subjects and in religious education and history in Class 2. Teachers challenge pupils to work at a good pace. They introduce new ideas and new vocabulary in a structured way, then expect pupils to use and apply the ideas taught. For example, pupils in Year 1 have been taught the word 'partition' to mean separating tens and units in numeracy. They use this term confidently to explain how they have worked something out in their heads.

20. Although there was no unsatisfactory teaching in the lessons observed, relative key weaknesses in the teaching are:

- teachers' subject knowledge and expectations in Years 4 to 6;
- challenge and pace in lessons in Years 4 to 6.

These are interrelated. The insecurity of teachers' subject knowledge at Key Stage 2, compounded in some cases by a lack of schemes of work to support them, means that their expectations of what pupils can do is not always accurate. This, in turn, means that the pace and challenge in lessons are not always well matched to the pupils' needs. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 4 the teacher's expectations did not match the range of abilities in the group. The pace was often slow, which meant pupils were not fully engaged in the work. The more-able pupils finished their tasks quickly and wasted time in chatter. In a Years 5/6 lesson on ratio, the introductory session was too short for the pupils to understand fully the difference between ratio and proportion. The individual work set was quite challenging, especially for the Year 5 pupils in the class. This meant that they needed a lot of individual input from the teacher for them to be able to tackle the task set. Teachers do set targets for pupils, but as yet this is not sufficiently well established for pupils to be intimately involved and aware of what the targets mean and to know what they have to do to improve their work and achieve them.

21. From a scrutiny of pupils' work, aspects of teaching at Key Stage 2, particularly the level of challenge and the use of assessment, including marking, have been weaknesses for some time. This has had a negative impact on the progress that pupils make. For example, in science, pupils have not consistently used subject-specific language when writing scientific reports. This compares unfavourably with work in Year 3, where pupils have been encouraged to use correctly quite advanced terms, such as 'constant' and 'dependent' factor, when writing up experiments. Across the school weaknesses in marking are apparent in pupils' books. Few books in English contain comments to help pupils know what their weaknesses are and what they might do next to improve their written work. The use of assessment in reading is not always sufficiently rigorous in Class 3 to identify those pupils not making the progress they should. A lot of autumn term work in science and mathematics in Class 3 is unmarked, with the result that in many cases pupils have not taken care to present their work well or to finish tasks set. Over time, the work that pupils have covered in Class 3 has not consistently followed the school's planning documentation, which has led to gaps in their experience; for example, in some aspects of science such as magnetism. This demonstrates a previous weakness in monitoring.

22. In summary, the suggested areas for development are:

- improve the level of challenge in Years 4 to 6 by raising teachers' expectations of what the pupils can do;
- improve planning at Key Stage 2 so that pupils build on what they already know and can do;
- share targets with pupils.

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

23. The school meets statutory requirements for teaching the National Curriculum, religious education and collective worship. The coverage of the areas of learning for under-fives is good, with the exception of outdoor play. As a result the children make good progress and by the end of their time in reception the majority achieve the Early Learning Goals. The range of activities taught to pupils in Years 1 and 2 in all subjects is good. Teachers successfully ensure that pupils have rich and varied experiences in all subjects, with the result that pupils make good progress and achieve good standards. In Years 4, 5 and 6, although the time that the school allocates for the teaching of each subject is satisfactory, in practice these times have not been strictly adhered to. Pupils have had too little experience of art. There has been insufficient rigour in the teaching of subject-specific skills and understanding in geography and science. As a result, the standards pupils attain in these subjects by the time they are 11 are below national expectations. In other subjects, pupils do not build successfully on work they have completed to a high standard in Classes 1 and 2. Recently attempts have been made to address these weaknesses and notable progress has been made, but there has not been enough time to raise standards to the expected level.
24. Satisfactory policies are in place for most subjects. Policies for art and music are in the draft stage and the school has appropriate plans to move forward on these in the near future. The lack of schemes of work was an issue at the last inspection. Some action on this has been undertaken and this has had a positive impact on teaching and learning in Classes 1 and 2, especially. There is a good progression of lesson plans for French, which shows a good sequence of activities to develop pupils' speaking skills. It is taught to Year 6 and makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural understanding. The school is still developing schemes of work for some subjects. Co-ordinators are aware that, since the new curriculum changes in September 2000, there is more work to be done, particularly in incorporating information and communication technology opportunities into all subjects and planning explicitly for spiritual and cultural development. The school development plan identifies art as an area needing development and the art co-ordinator is already poised to work with staff on a draft scheme in the second half of the summer term. An unusual, and very good, feature of the curriculum is the involvement of an artist in the life and work of the school. Her input enhances the pupils' understanding of art and artists and makes an excellent contribution to their cultural development. The school has satisfactory arrangements for the teaching of health education, including sex education and drugs' awareness.
25. Teachers' planning systems have been reviewed and some very good systems are now in place. However, these are not consistent through the school, partly because of the sharing of the older class between three teachers. In Classes 1 and 2 the planning is very good. Teachers are conscientious and plan effectively, matching activities and experiences well so that they meet the needs of all their pupils, including those with special educational needs, the gifted and the able. The result of this, together with the good and very good teaching, is the good standards achieved. In these classes, the teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is good, although with some room for improvement in the teaching of writing in order to enable the more-able pupils to achieve higher standards in this aspect of English. Again, this is something the school has itself recognised. In the past, the planning for Years 4, 5 and 6 has not been as rigorous. The result has been a restricted curriculum and a lack of challenge in the work undertaken. For example, the work in science and art has not built successfully on what pupils have learned in Key Stage 1 and in Year 3. Consequently, pupils in Key Stage 2 have not made sufficient progress compared to their prior achievements. The current teacher has attempted to address this, with some success, but has not had enough time to

significantly affect the standards achieved by Year 6 in all subjects. When Year 4 pupils are taught separately the work planned is insufficiently challenging for the more-able pupils in the group.

26. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Satisfactory systems are in place. The integration of these pupils is very good. Teachers have been given training in the use of equipment and in the specific requirements of individuals with more complex needs. Appropriately, class teachers are involved in writing individual education plans. All teachers plan for different activities to help these identified pupils in their class to make progress to meet their targets. Some pupils have made very good progress. However, there is some lack of communication with new teachers about the needs of pupils with special educational needs, how these have been met in the past and how they should be addressed at the current time. This means a mismatch at times between the activities planned and the learning that the pupils need to make. Some pupils have support assistants who work with them on specific tasks, but in general the provision of support staff is insufficient, given the mixed-age classes and numbers of pupils with specific needs. The school has made budget provision for more support staff time to be available to support the under-fives from September.
27. An analysis of the school's results shows a significant gender difference, with girls performing less well than boys over a period of years in the national tests in Year 6, especially in science. From discussions with pupils it emerged that there has been in the past a culture which did not promote equal opportunities. This has begun to be addressed. In classes, no preferential treatment in terms of questioning of boys and girls is apparent, although the girls generally lack confidence and are not as forthcoming as the boys in class discussions or in answering questions in whole-class sessions. The school had identified the discrepancy in the data, but has yet to monitor equal opportunities systematically.
28. Through the questionnaire, a significant number of parents expressed concern about the school's provision for extra-curricular activities. Given the size of the school, the number of staff, and the management tasks currently being undertaken, the provision is sound. The school arranges for Top Sport and Top Play sessions, an artist works with pupils in all classes on specific projects through the year, and a residential visit is organised biennially, which contributes well to pupils' social development. Links with the local community are good. The vicar makes a very good and imaginative contribution to assemblies on a regular basis. Members of the community are involved in regular lunches and the garden club. Community funding has provided playground equipment that enhances opportunities for the pupils' to develop their skills in climbing and balancing. The school has sound links with local playgroups and with its secondary schools. With its immediate partner secondary school there are very good links, particularly for sporting activities. This has helped the school to overcome the difficulties of offering a broad physical education programme in its current accommodation.
29. The school places at its heart the personal development of each individual child and its provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is good overall. This is highly valued by parents. Particular strengths lie in the ways in which pupils are taught to appreciate the difference between right and wrong, and how their behaviour can affect others, both in the school community and in the wider world. In Classes 1 and 2, teachers and classroom assistants give very clear guidance, in unobtrusive and sensitive ways, which encourages the youngest children to develop self control, to apologise for misdemeanours, and to learn to share, work and play together. Throughout the school all adults provide very good role models, impressing pupils with their sense of fairness and understanding. The acting headteacher identified a need for pupils to have greater



ownership of the school's behaviour policy, and has successfully implemented a new code of conduct with the full consultation of pupils.

30. There continues to be a good range of opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills, not least at lunchtime, when the seating arrangements encourage good all-age mixing and give responsibility to older pupils. This 'family style' atmosphere spills over to the playground and helps to give the youngest pupils confidence and a feeling of security. Special occasions, like the luncheons held for senior citizens and fund-raising initiatives for charities like UNICEF, give the pupils a greater understanding of the need for social awareness in the outside world.
31. The provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory overall. There are some real strengths, like the opportunities for artistic expression which arise from working with a professional artist and the chance to reflect on feelings through Circle Times<sup>2</sup> and assemblies. The school's provision for collective worship meets requirements and makes a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Teachers are successful in creating a sense of wonder when considering aspects of nature, or works of art, but there is no planned provision for spiritual development in daily lessons. Whilst the pupils' awareness of their own culture is very well developed, preparation for life in a multi-cultural society is less thorough. Lessons in French for Year 6 pupils encourage an awareness of language and some aspects of life in France. Millennium celebrations and projects provide a rich diet of local community awareness, but work to develop pupils' awareness of Britain's minority ethnic groups and the contribution to art and music made by non-western cultures is limited.
32. Suggested areas for development:
- improve the consistency of teachers' planning in Years 4 to 6 so that pupils of all abilities are properly challenged to develop skills, knowledge and understanding so that standards improve in all subjects;
  - ensure that opportunities for developing pupils' spiritual and cultural development are consistently identified in teachers' planning.

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

33. The level of care for the health, safety and welfare of pupils is good. Since the last inspection, procedures for ensuring child protection have been formalised and now follow a written policy and local area guidelines. First-aid provision is good and the care of pupils with special medical needs is very good. Since Christmas the formal monitoring of health and safety has improved and day-to-day response to issues is good, but the school's approach to risk assessment is an area for improvement.
34. Although the school successfully promotes good attendance, it is not sufficiently rigorous in recording reasons for absence. Class teachers are not consistent in their use of conventional marking symbols, and there is evidence of some discrepancies in the distinction between authorised and unauthorised absence.
35. The promotion of good behaviour and monitoring of anti-social, oppressive or disruptive behaviour is good. Systems are fairly discreet, but the use of praise and merit stickers to reward good behaviour or good effort is a feature of many lessons. The accolade of being named a 'STAR' pupil at the special assemblies, and subsequent reporting in the newsletter, are effective incentives valued by pupils and parents alike.

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<sup>2</sup> Circle Time – During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur and, therefore, pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

36. The successful monitoring and support of pupils' personal development is based on the fact that class teachers know their pupils very well and, in the caring ethos of the school, tailor their support and guidance to individual need and experience. The school makes very good arrangements for pupils with complex special educational needs and pays due regard to the requirements for those pupils with a statement of special educational need. Pupils identified as having specific learning difficulties have appropriate individual education plans drawn up between the co-ordinator and the class teacher. This process ensures that the class teachers are aware of specific needs and class teachers are often very good at supporting these pupils; for example, by designing different tasks related to the work experienced by the rest of the year group. Some pupils have made very good progress as a result of targeted support in lessons and from outside agencies, such as the hearing-impaired support teacher. Pupils identified as gifted often make excellent progress because of the way in which they are offered challenging tasks. However, the targets set for some other pupils are not always specific enough to show whether the pupil is making progress in achieving them. Often the same targets are repeated in several reviews.
37. The school's arrangements for assessing pupils' learning are satisfactory. It complies fully in carrying out all of the required statutory assessments at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In addition, it carries out non-statutory assessments in Years 3, 4 and 5 as well as regular reading tests for all pupils. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress in the foundation subjects and the use of assessment to set targets for, and to plan, pupils' future learning are unsatisfactory. There are some good examples of teachers using tests to diagnose areas of weakness, in mathematics for example. However, the information gained from the results of assessments is not used consistently through the school to identify gaps in pupils' previous learning or to successfully address weaknesses that are identified. There is insufficient monitoring and recording of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding as they move up through the school. This is particularly the case in science, geography and art and in handwriting and presentation, where standards are not high enough. Assessment information is not used effectively to support pupils who are in mixed-age classes by ensuring that work is matched sufficiently well to all their individual learning needs.
38. In summary, the suggested areas for development are:
- improve the use of assessment so that work is carefully matched to what pupils need to learn next;
  - risk assessment;
  - maintenance and monitoring of attendance records.

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

39. This aspect of the school's work is satisfactory. Parents have a good opinion of the school and many choose to drive considerable distances to bring their children here. Some parents express concern at the disruptive effect on pupils of recent staff changes this year, particularly in Class 3. The majority of parents are very supportive of the school and its policies, but a significant minority feel that the school does not work closely enough with them in support of their children's education. In this regard the effectiveness of the partnership is satisfactory, but the inspection team agrees with those parents who feel that they could receive better information about how their children are getting on.
40. Information provided by the school is satisfactory overall with some strengths, particularly the very useful parents' notice boards and daily bulletin board, as well as the regular newsletters. Parents appreciate the way class teachers are very approachable and make time to discuss any problems when they arise. However, there is no planned opportunity for parents to discover how well their children have settled into each new class in the first

term. Pupils' annual progress reports are not sufficiently clear when describing attainment, nor do they consistently draw attention to areas for improvement in which parents could be involved. At the moment parents do not know in advance the topics covered each term in order that they may help their child at home.

41. The school values its good relationship with parents and acknowledges the good impact on the life of the school made by the involvement of parents, both in support of learning and in fund-raising generously for extra resources. Most parents are happy with the level of homework. They encourage their children by hearing them read at home as well as assisting them with research topics. A few parents make very good contributions to work in class by helping voluntarily in school and the teachers are keen to encourage this support.
42. In summary, the suggested areas for development are:
  - consider changes to the school's calendar of meetings with parents;
  - include targets for improvement in pupils' annual reports.

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

43. The acting headteacher is providing good leadership and management for the school during the two terms of her appointment. Despite having a significant teaching commitment, she has managed the school on a day-to-day basis effectively and efficiently with the able support of the school's administrative assistant. Since taking up her appointment, the acting headteacher has identified the following as areas for improvement in the school:
  - behaviour, including a code of conduct to be drawn up with pupils and staff;
  - the professional development of staff;
  - developing teamwork;
  - recognising contributions made by staff to the work of the school;
  - developing a sense of ownership amongst staff to evaluate performance and to identify areas for improvement and training needs.
44. The acting headteacher has been successful in implementing the new code of conduct for pupils' behaviour and this has resulted in an improvement in pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Pupils comment that they consider the new systems to be fair and that they promote equality of opportunity because all pupils are encouraged to be involved and they are supported when they have difficulties. Good progress is being made in carrying out the other improvements. Teachers are very supportive of the professional development interviews they have had and feel that their work is valued and recognised. Progress in addressing the key issues from the previous inspection is satisfactory, although the action plan was the responsibility of the previous headteacher. The quality of teaching has improved significantly, with no unsatisfactory teaching seen during the inspection, compared with the 25 per cent identified previously. Monitoring of teaching and learning is now satisfactory, although subject co-ordinators have insufficient opportunities to observe teaching and learning in other classes. Schemes of work to identify the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils should acquire as they move up through the school are still not fully developed or matched closely enough to the requirements of Curriculum 2000. The school's aims have been revised, although they do not 'stand out' as a focal point in the school's prospectus.
45. The monitoring of teaching and learning by the acting headteacher and subject co-ordinators is satisfactory. With only three teachers in the school, including the acting headteacher, each has a heavy commitment in terms of subjects to be managed. Monitoring takes place mainly through looking at planning and interpreting results of assessments of pupils' work, which is appropriate given the lack of non-contact time for

teachers to watch each other teach. This has yet to be developed into a system involving feedback so that weaknesses are shared and action taken; for example, the weaknesses in pupils' handwriting and presentation not being addressed by the English co-ordinator. The school has yet to establish a regular programme of meetings for staff to look at a small sample of pupils' work in order to monitor progress through the school.

46. The acting headteacher is also the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs. She carries out these duties effectively. The school's systems are good and follow national guidance. The school meets the needs of those pupils with statements of special educational needs well and all relevant pupils have individual education plans. In these, the targets are sometimes not specific enough for teachers and pupils to be able to assess the full extent of progress made when the targets are reviewed.
47. The acting headteacher has introduced a good performance-management system that complies fully with the new regulations for the performance management of teachers. The system is based on professional development interviews that first and foremost identify strengths and positive aspects in teachers' work. Arising from these interviews, areas for in-service training are identified in addition to the setting of targets for pupils' progress.
48. The governing body is committed, hard working and effective in its work in supporting the school; it is particularly supportive to the acting headteacher. The chair of governors has a long-standing association with the school and is totally committed to its future as the heart of the village community. Governors have been very active in promoting the school in the wider community, with the result that nearly half of the pupils come from outside the village. A sound committee structure is in place and governors take up the good range of training opportunities offered to them. Governors visit the school whenever possible, with each governor having a link to a specific subject. The governing body is aware of improvements needed in the school, particularly the need to maintain and improve standards in literacy and numeracy. Governors are aware that standards of handwriting and presentation need to be improved.
49. The school improvement plan contains clear targets and is costed to enable the school to meet its targets. The plan includes useful criteria against which the success of meeting its targets can be measured. Subject co-ordinators have recently started to identify priorities for action and spending, although they do not yet have control over the funding for their subjects. Funding has been awarded on a historical basis rather than based on the needs of a specific subject, with the result that there is an imbalance of resource provision, particularly for outdoor play for the under-fives.
50. Within a very tight budget, the acting headteacher and governors apply the principles of best value effectively. They are conscious that the majority of funding in a small school goes on staffing and they take sufficient care in seeking best value for provision of other resources. The school makes satisfactory use of additional grants and government funding to support pupils' learning.
51. Currently, the school does not receive students on initial teacher training, although it has the capacity to do so, particularly with the strengths of teaching in Key Stage 1. The arrangements for introducing new teachers to the school work effectively.
52. There are sufficient teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum, although none have specific training qualifications to teach pupils in Key Stage 2. This results in there being a degree of lack of expectation of what older pupils, particularly those in Year 6, can achieve in their learning. The acting headteacher is aware that there are currently too few support staff, especially for children under five, and has set aside money to address

this for September. Resources are adequate for teaching and learning, except for children under five, who have insufficient large-wheeled toys to push and ride on. Accommodation in the school is inadequate because the school has no secure outdoor play area which the under-fives have access to. In addition, it has no hall for the teaching of physical education and in which to hold acts of collective worship. However, the school uses the church hall on the school site, which is suitable if the weather is fine. In addition, it uses facilities in other local schools for teaching physical education.

53. Taking into consideration children's standards on entry and the variations in the quality of teaching between key stages and weaknesses in the curriculum, the school provides satisfactory value for money.
54. In summary, the suggested areas for development are:
- continue to build teamwork in managing the curriculum and in identifying and sharing strengths and weaknesses;
  - develop further the role of co-ordinators so that they have greater influence through the school, particularly in monitoring;
  - consider establishing regular meetings to monitor small samples of work from all year groups for a subject.

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

55. In order to improve the school's provision the governors, incoming headteacher and staff should address the following key priorities:
- 1 improve standards attained by pupils by the time they are 11 in science, writing, art, geography, and in control and monitoring in information and communication technology by:
    - improving teaching and learning in Years 4 to 6 through raising teachers' expectations of what the pupils can achieve and through rigorous planning so that the work planned builds consistently on what pupils have been taught previously;
    - the monitoring of pupils' work by all subject co-ordinators to regularly evaluate that the teaching is effective in ensuring that pupils are making progress;
    - more systematic use of assessment and target-setting involving pupils in all classes to help make teachers and pupils aware of what they need to improve in order to achieve higher standards, particularly the more-able pupils;  
(Paragraphs 6-8, 66, 86, 91, 100, 108)
  - 2 involve all subject co-ordinators in monitoring and improving the cohesion of the curriculum, especially for pupils aged 7 to 11, in order to use the experience and enthusiasm of the existing staff team and to:
    - take a complete overview of the curriculum at each key stage to identify breadth, links to other subjects, and the incorporation of opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual development and their multi-cultural understanding;
    - identify priorities for developing schemes of work where these do not exist, ensuring that at Key Stage 2 these build effectively on the work done at Key Stage 1, for example in art;
    - establish subject portfolios so that teachers and pupils can identify how their skills and understanding can improve year on year;  
(Paragraphs 23-27, 31-32, 46, 54)
  - 3 improve the number of support staff, especially for the youngest class;  
(Paragraphs 52, 63)
  - 4 improve the provision for outdoor play for children under five.  
(Paragraph 52)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	23
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	43	26	30	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	72
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	16

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.4
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.03
National comparative data	0.5

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

### **Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	6	7	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	13	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (82)	100 (91)	100 (82)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	13	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (91)	100 (82)	100 (91)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. \* Means that there are fewer than 11 pupils in this category and therefore results are not reported.*

### **Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2**

Statistics for Key Stage 2 are not reported because there were fewer than 11 pupils in this group at Sheriffhales.

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	72
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)	3.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	24

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

Total number of education support staff	4.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	55

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	145,220
Total expenditure	147,910
Expenditure per pupil	1,973
Balance brought forward from previous year	5,183
Balance carried forward to next year	2,493



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	73
Number of questionnaires returned	24

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	42	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	33	58	8	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	63	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	54	16	0	0
The teaching is good.	54	46	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	21	58	8	13	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	37	63	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	8	92	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	4	74	9	13	0
The school is well led and managed.	22	48	17	0	13
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	54	4	4	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	0	42	33	13	12

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**

56. Children enter school at the beginning of the term in which they reach their fifth birthday. The number starting school in any one term is small and standards on entry vary considerably. However, the trend shows that children start school with standards below those expected for the local education authority.

**Personal, social and emotional development**

57. As the result of very effective teaching, children make good progress in their personal and social development and they meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the time they start Year 1. Children settle quickly and happily into the day-to-day life of the school and into the regular routines of the classroom. They mix well with older children and with fellow pupils from Year 1, who are in their class. Children enjoy playing with each other at playtimes and they join in happily in games with older pupils in the school. At lunchtimes, they sit and chat happily with groups of pupils from across the school, including Years 5 and 6. Children relate very well to their teacher and, when the opportunity arises, to classroom assistants and parent helpers. In lessons, they work hard and learn to organise the equipment and resources they need for their daily activities, including 'plan, do and review'.

**Communication, language and literacy**

58. Children make good progress in this area of learning and, by the time they start Year 1, they meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Teaching is very good, particularly in the key skills of reading and writing. Children make very good progress in learning their letter sounds (phonics) and initial blends, for example 'st' and 'bl', and they apply these skills successfully in their reading. By the time they start Year 1, children are well established on the school's chosen reading scheme. They write their names unaided and most write simple sentences for themselves, which are mainly spelt and punctuated correctly; for example, 'I am playg in the sand with the animals'. Children make good progress in speaking and listening. They are confident in asking and answering questions. When reading, they talk excitedly about the pictures.

**Mathematics**

59. Progress in this area of learning is good and, by the time they start Year 1, children meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Teaching is very good, particularly in the key skills of number recognition and counting. Children read, write and order accurately numbers to 10. They join in confidently during registration when the teacher asks them, "How many children are having cooked dinners?" and "How many are having packed lunches?" Children recognise and name accurately common two-dimensional shapes, including squares, rectangles, triangles and circles. They learn to sort, for example, by eye colour, hair colour, hair length and height, and they use computers successfully to make graphs showing, for example, hair colours in the class.

**Knowledge and understanding of the world**

60. Children make good progress in this area of learning and meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the time they start Year 1. Teaching is very good, with strengths in the use of computers to support learning. Children learn to use computers quickly and they are confident, for example, in using the mouse to 'click and drag' items across the screen to dress a teddy bear in a variety of outfits. They develop geography skills successfully in work where they start to compare life in their own village with that of children on the Isle of Struay. In science, they learn to predict, for example, who will be fastest in a race.

### Physical development

61. Children's progress is restricted in this area of learning as there is no secure area for outdoor play and children have insufficient opportunities for climbing, tunnelling and riding tricycles and other large-wheeled toys. However, they do have regular opportunities to take part in lessons in the church hall; for example, in dance. Good teaching provides children with regular opportunities to develop their skills through using small and large construction kits. In addition, they have good skills in cutting and sticking. By the time they start Year 1, they do not meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals because they do not receive their full entitlement to this area of learning.

### Creative development

62. Progress in this area of learning is good and children meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the time they start Year 1. Teaching is very good. The teacher ensures that the children have many opportunities to work creatively in two- and three-dimensional forms, including paint and collage. Children act out stories, with puppets for example, in a lesson where they retold the story of *Farmer Duck*. They enjoy singing familiar nursery rhymes and performing accompanying actions.
63. Currently there are insufficient support staff (teaching assistants and/or a nursery nurse) to support the teaching of children in the Foundation Stage. In addition, resources and accommodation for regular outdoor play are inadequate

### ENGLISH

64. Standards are judged in different ways. The tables below show the main judgement for the school.

AT AGE 11	Tests 2000 National comparison	Inspection judgement	Comments
Level 4, the expected level	Well above average	Average	Standards in reading are above average, but those in writing are average.
Level 5, above the expected level	Above average	Average	A very small year group, with fewer more-able pupils.

AT AGE 7	Tests 2000 National comparison	Inspection judgement	Comments
<b>Reading</b>			
Level 2, the expected level	Well above average	Well above average	Basic skills are taught very well, high expectations of all pupils.
Level 3, above the expected level	Well above average	Well above average	Good level of challenge in lessons, with reading skills used effectively in other subjects.

<b>Writing</b>			
Level 2, the expected level	Well above average	Above average	Spelling and grammar taught very well. A good range of writing styles are produced.
Level 3, above the expected level	Below average	Below average	Lower expectations of individuals across all aspects, particularly in handwriting.
<b>Speaking and listening</b>	2000 Teacher assessment		
Level 2, the expected level	Well above average	Well above average	All pupils are confident in asking questions and in speaking to an audience.
Level 3, above the expected level	Average	Above average	More-able pupils are challenged successfully.

65. Inspection findings confirm that standards in reading by the **age of 7** are well above average as a result of very effective teaching of key reading skills, particularly the knowledge of letter sounds (phonics). Standards in writing are not as high as they should be for more-able pupils. Insufficient emphasis is placed on pupils producing a well-formed style of joined-up writing. In addition, they are not always reminded to apply their key skills of grammar and punctuation when writing in other subjects. Most pupils make **good progress in reading and in writing**, but more-able pupils should make better progress in writing.
66. Inspection findings show that, by the **age of 11**, standards in English are average. The main factor for the apparent decline is the nature of the year group, which the school recognises has fewer more-able pupils than in previous years. However, standards in writing are not high enough, particularly in handwriting. Standards in reading are above average. Most pupils continue to make **good progress in their reading**. Most make **sound progress with their writing** except for the element of handwriting, which shows insufficient improvement over time.
67. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. Throughout the school, the teaching of reading is good, from the effective teaching of letter sounds (phonics) in Year 1 to the good teaching of higher-order reading skills in Year 6. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to apply speaking, listening and reading skills in all subjects. The successful teaching of the literacy hour is having a positive impact on standards in reading and the grammatical elements of writing. However, teachers are not insisting on high enough standards in handwriting. Throughout the school, standards in speaking and listening are high as a result of teachers providing pupils with regular opportunities to both ask and answer questions. Teachers use questions effectively at the start of lessons in order to assess pupils' previous learning by getting them to recall key facts. For example, in a history lesson in Years 2 and 3, the teacher asked, "How do we know so much about Tudor times?" Pupils responded enthusiastically and knowledgeably, with a good understanding of sources of historical evidence. In whole-class introductions and in the final or plenary sessions, pupils are

confident in answering questions and they listen politely and attentively to each other. They respect and value the opinion of others.

68. As the result of the effective teaching of key skills by the end of Year 2, pupils' standards in reading are very good. Pupils enjoy reading and build on the love of reading that they develop when they start school. They read clearly and fluently, with good expression and understanding. They successfully use their knowledge of letter sounds (phonics) and picture clues to read new and unfamiliar words. Pupils know the terms 'author', 'illustrator' and 'publisher' and know and explain the difference between 'fiction' and 'non-fiction'. They talk confidently and excitedly about their favourite books and authors.
69. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 build successfully on these key reading skills so that, by the time they are 11, pupils achieve above average standards. Pupils talk confidently about the plot and characters when discussing what has happened in a story so far and they make realistic predictions of how a story might end. They express preferences for fiction or non-fiction books and for particular styles; for example, "I really enjoy all adventure books as long as they interest me" or "It's adventurous, it's got cliffhangers, it makes you want to read on". They recognise the use of dialect; for example, when reading *The Secret Garden*, a pupil knew that Martha speaks in a Yorkshire accent. Pupils are confident in using the index, contents and glossary in a text; for example, in researching the climate in India as part of their geography work. Pupils know how to use the school library, which has a colour-code index. They are not confident in explaining the Dewey system.
70. The teaching of writing is good overall, but not as strong as the teaching of reading. By the time they are seven, pupils' standards in writing are good, although the more-able pupils do not consistently apply their literacy skills when writing in other subjects. Because teachers do not consistently reinforce the importance of handwriting and presentation, pupils' standards in these two areas are inconsistent. Skills in spelling and punctuation are mainly accurate and pupils know that proper nouns begin with capital letters. They write successfully for a range of purposes, both within English and in other subjects, particularly in history and design and technology. Pupils successfully apply what they have learned in the literacy hour in their writing. For example, after a lesson on similes, a pupil in Year 2 wrote:

*'She seems as tall as a skyscraper  
I feel as small as a slug  
She seems as frightening as a bear  
I know I'm shaking like lightning  
She seems to roar like a tiger  
I sound as quiet as a gentle breeze  
But I hope she's really as gentle as a guinea pig  
Because I sometimes behave like an elephant  
Who is she?  
She's my new teacher!'*

71. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards in writing are average, but they are not high enough in handwriting and presentation, both in English and in other subjects. Pupils write satisfactorily for a range of purposes, including stories, posters, lists and letters. Some of the letters of complaint written about the state of the toilets at Manchester Airport are of good quality, as are examples of pupils' persuasive writing. Pupils show a satisfactory understanding of how to use paragraphs and speech marks, including their own playscripts of *Theseus and the Minotaur*.
72. Across the school, teachers teach relevant word-processing skills so that pupils make effective use of computers to word-process their writing. In Year 2, pupils make good use

of fonts and colours to present their simile poems on 'Who is she?' In Year 6, pupils word-process recipes for making peanut cookies, showing accurate use of layout, including titles. In work linked to history, they produce effective 'newspaper reports' of the death of Joan of Arc.

73. Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs effectively so that they make satisfactory progress in their learning. These pupils play a full part in lessons, with teachers using effective questioning skills in order to involve them fully in question-and-answer sessions.
74. Suggested areas for development:
- improve standards in writing for the more able through the school;
  - improve standards in handwriting and presentation.

## MATHEMATICS

75. Standards are judged in different ways. The tables show the main judgements for the school set against the national benchmarks:

AT AGE 11	Tests 2000 National comparison	Inspection judgement	Comments
Level 4, the expected level	Well above national average	In line with the national average	Compared with their prior attainment Year 6 pupils have made sound progress.
Level 5, above the expected level	Well below the national average	In line with the national average	

AT AGE 7	Tests 2000 National comparison	Inspection judgement	Comments
Level 2, the expected level	Very high	Above national average	Numeracy strategy used well. High expectations of all abilities. Good progress
Level 3, above the expected level	Average for all schools; below average for similar	Above national average	Good level of challenge in lessons. Good progress.

76. **For pupils aged 7**, when the school's results are 'benchmarked' against those in all schools nationally, the standards are very high. When the results are compared with those in similar schools, the standards are above average. The inspection confirms this. Pupils attain well in all the aspects of mathematics because of the very good range of topics covered. This means that pupils make **good progress** over time at Key Stage 1. This is a result of the very good teaching.
77. **For pupils aged 11**, when all the pupils' results are calculated together and compared with those in other schools (the 'points score' method) the school's results are average overall. When looking at the pupils' prior attainment, that is how well they performed in the national tests when they were in Year 2, the statistics show that the more-able pupils' results were well below the national and similar schools' averages in the 2000 tests. This

indicates that the school is accurate in identifying that the more-able pupils should be challenged more. This year's cohort is very small so comparisons year on year have to be treated with caution. The inspection judges that pupils' attainment is average at Level 4 and Level 5. The current Year 6 pupils attain better in number than in understanding shapes and measures and data handling, particularly probability. Their attainment in using and applying mathematics is average. Pupils tend to be reliant on the teacher to teach them a method rather than exploring ways of solving problems using the knowledge they have. This is an area for development. When the current Year 6 were in Key Stage 1 their results were average overall. This means that they have made **satisfactory progress** over the four years.

78. At the last inspection, in 1997, standards by the end of both key stages were judged to be in line with the national average. This means that there has been a notable improvement in the performance of pupils in the tests taken when they are seven. The teaching at that time showed a variation between good and unsatisfactory at both key stages, with weaknesses in pace, challenge and teachers' expectations. Teaching is now very good for Years 1 and 2, Key Stage 1, and sound overall for Years 3 to 6, Key Stage 2. There is a slight difference in the performance of boys and girls at Key Stage 2, where girls have performed less well than the boys over a three-year period. In lessons in all classes, girls are less willing to offer an answer in whole-class sessions, but the teachers are all good at involving them. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson, there was a lack of challenge for the more-able girls, which resulted in them chatting and doodling on their work. The school does not yet target and monitor the attainment of the more-able pupils in each year group.
79. The quality of teaching for the pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 is very good. This is reflected in the pupils' very good attitudes and commitment to learning. This is a strength of the school and has a positive impact on the standards pupils achieve. The teachers have very good subject knowledge. This enables them to plan very effectively to meet the needs of all abilities in the class and they challenge all children to achieve their best. Teachers ensure that strategies are shared with the class. They encourage pupils to 'use what you know' when solving problems. Where necessary, different activities are planned for pupils with special educational needs or for the more able. Teachers take good note of pupils' responses to questions in the mental session and note their responses in consolidation work in the main teaching session. As a result, the pace is always very brisk. Pupils enjoy the challenge and quickly learn to apply new ideas in a different context. For example, pupils in Year 1 made rapid progress in a session on using coins of different values when calculating how to make 14p using the fewest numbers of coins and then to make the same amount using four coins. They went on to use a computer programme where they had to compete with each other in a game of strategy, choosing coins of different value to 'buy' items costing up to 69p. In Year 2, the pace and challenge of a lesson on co-ordinates were excellent. Pupils very quickly absorbed the newly introduced words 'horizontal' and 'vertical' – through the teacher's excellent use of a plumb line and spirit level - and moved swiftly into activities using co-ordinates. Teachers introduce and use the language of mathematics very well and expect the pupils to use it correctly too. This makes a very good contribution to pupils' speaking skills and general literacy development. For example, pupils in Year 1 use the term 'partitioning' when describing how they would mentally calculate the addition of two numbers over 10. The teachers make very good use of resources, including computers and mini-whiteboards. The pupils enjoy showing their answers as quickly as they can. They are confident at offering answers and stay focussed. Teachers' expectations of work and behaviour are high and are understood by the pupils. Pupils know that they are expected to stay on task and complete the work that is set for them. Extension activities are prepared in advance and pupils concentrate well on their own work as the teachers focus on working with a small group.

80. The quality of teaching for the pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 is sound. Overall, compared to their previous attainment, pupils make satisfactory progress over the key stage, but the level of challenge is not sufficient to raise their attainment, particularly that of the more able. Currently two teachers split this class between them for two days a week to allow for more focussed input, particularly for Year 4. This arrangement has only been in place for four weeks. In the one Year 4 lesson seen, the teacher explained the objective clearly and had prepared different tasks for the different abilities in the group. However, the pace of the lesson was slow and this contributed to a lack of interest among pupils. The more-able pupils in the group were not clear about what they were expected to achieve in the lesson. A planned extension task was not immediately available, with the result that their work rate was only satisfactory. The less-able pupils were supported well by the class teacher and made progress in solving a problem involving fractional parts of a pizza. All the pupils are not confident at using and applying the four rules of number and are not confident in deciding whether a problem requires them to add or subtract. The attainment of this group of pupils is below that expected by the end of Year 4.
81. In the Years 5 and 6 class, the pace of the introductory session is brisk. The teacher ensures that all pupils are involved by targeting questions at different groups, rather than just at those pupils who volunteer an answer. The pupils consider this a good strategy because they think it makes them all involved equally in the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well into the lesson. The teacher has established good working routines with which the pupils are familiar so that they work individually and quietly on a set task as she teaches a group. However, the lesson is long, more than the hour recommended, and too much time is allowed for the consolidation session so that the pace drops and some pupils lose concentration. The summing-up session at the end of the lesson is good. Pupils enjoy the brisker pace and demonstrate what they have learnt. They are not confident in explaining their methods when they are solving written problems. The teacher encourages individuals and small groups to share their methods as she moves around the groups, but this is not a part of the whole-class session. The level of challenge is satisfactory for the Year 6 pupils, who make satisfactory progress overall in the lesson. Year 5 pupils are challenged well and make good progress.
82. At Key Stage 2 teachers' subject knowledge is sound. Tasks are planned in line with the National Numeracy Strategy and the teacher appropriately uses the 'pupil outcomes' for each year group as a measure of how well they are achieving. This is a useful tool because it can be applied to all the year groups in the class. Targets have been set for pupils, but they are not intimately aware of them. Teachers in Years 4 to 6 do not sufficiently explore and explain the links between different aspects of mathematics. For example, in a lesson on ratio and proportion the link with fractions was not fully established. There is a lack of balance in the teaching of different aspects, with pupils attaining very high standards in the use of co-ordinates using all four quadrants, whilst not showing confidence in using inverse operations to check answers, particularly using division.
83. In summary, the suggested areas for development are:
- make provision for teachers to share their knowledge and the experience they have of the pupils so that they work as a team on planning and target-setting to raise standards through the school;
  - develop further the newly introduced target-setting system so that pupils are aware of their targets and know what they have to do to achieve them;
  - ensure that pupils are taught systematically to explain their mathematical thinking in Years 4 to 6, in the mental starter and in the plenary sessions, using mathematical language and building on the good practice in Key Stage 1.
- NB. The acting headteacher has already identified this as a weakness;



- ensure that planning and assessment systems are consistent between different teachers to allow a clear overview of what pupils have learnt in different aspects of mathematics so that teachers know what pupils have done previously and can encourage them to make links with their previous knowledge when tackling new work;
- use assessment effectively in Years 4 to 6 to ensure that the tasks set challenge pupils of all abilities, particularly the more able. This has also been identified by the acting headteacher.

## SCIENCE

84. The tables show the main judgements for the standards the pupils achieve:

AT AGE 11	Tests 2000 National comparison	Inspection judgement	Comments
Level 4, the expected level	Average	Below average	An issue: pupils have not been systematically taught the skills of scientific investigation.
Level 5, above the expected level	Below average	Below average	More-able pupils have not been challenged sufficiently.

AT AGE 7	Teacher assessment in 2000 National comparison	Inspection judgement	Comments
Level 2, the expected level	Very high	Above average	Very good planning and focussed teaching.
Level 3, above the expected level	Above average	Above average	Work well differentiated so that the more able are challenged. Gifted pupils achieve very high standards.

85. When the school's results are compared to those in similar schools, the standards for **pupils aged 7** are very high at Level 2 and above average at Level 3. The inspection judgement, based on lessons and a scrutiny of work from the past year, is that the pupils attain above average levels in all the different aspects of science. They are rigorously taught how to carry out a scientific investigation. More-able pupils are challenged to a very high level, whilst pupils with special educational needs are supported well so that they experience the same range of work at a level which they understand and at which they can sustain their own progress. The work in pupils' books shows that they have made **very good progress** over the past year.
86. For **pupils aged 11**, when the school's results for 2000 are compared to those in similar schools, the results are below average. When looking at the pupils' prior attainment, that is how well they performed in the national tests in Year 2, the statistics show that these results were below average for those of average ability and well below average for the more able. This year's cohort is very small so comparisons year on year have to be treated with caution. The inspection judges that Year 6 pupils are attaining below average standards at Level 4 and at Level 5. Attainment in the development of their

investigating skills is a particular weakness and shows **unsatisfactory progress** since these pupils were in Key Stage 1. They have made satisfactory progress in their acquisition of scientific knowledge, mainly through the work carried out in their revision lessons.

87. From lessons observed and from a thorough scrutiny of pupils' past work, it is clear that the teaching in Years 1 to 3 is very good. In Years 4 to 6, pupils' work shows that the teaching has been unsatisfactory in the past because their experiences have lacked structure and coherence, despite the school having a very clear and helpful scheme of work. The co-ordinator had identified the under-performance of girls at Key Stage 2 as an issue, but no analysis of why this might be happening has yet been undertaken. In the one lesson observed, the teaching was satisfactory. The girls were more passive than the boys in the lesson and rarely volunteered an answer in whole-class discussion. The acting headteacher identified attainment in science, particularly in the pupils' understanding and use of scientific methodology, as a weakness when she joined the school in January. She took purposeful steps to address the problems in the teaching. She introduced a more rigorous approach to carrying out scientific investigations and a more careful approach to the written work that the pupils produced. Work is now better presented and the approach when carrying out an investigation is more methodical. Pupils show interest in the work they are doing and talk about it in a lively way. They are more consistent in predicting a possible outcome before carrying out an experiment. The teacher has introduced useful prompt sheets of 'questions to investigate this session' to model the sort of thinking that pupils need to do. As a result of this more coherent approach, the Year 6 pupils have made progress good enough to demonstrate average attainment in most areas of science. Their understanding of how to carry out a scientific investigation has improved, but is still underdeveloped. They know that when testing a hypothesis they need to carry out the test more than once, but they do not systematically consider all variables, make predictions or match conclusions to the original hypothesis or to existing scientific knowledge. The standards they demonstrate in this aspect of science are lower than those shown by some pupils of high ability in Year 3.
88. The very good teaching in Classes 1 and 2 promotes high standards for all pupils and very high standards for gifted pupils. Pupils in Class 1 are absorbed and interested in their lessons. Year 3 pupils enjoy working in groups to test their hypothesis that people with longer arms throw further. In both classes, pupils present their work very well and this aspect of recording contributes very well to the development of their literacy skills. The teachers have high expectations. Different work is set for pupils of differing abilities and ages within the classes. Teachers plan clearly so that pupils make very good progress through a careful sequence of lessons. Teachers consistently use and develop the pupils' scientific language. This is also picked up in the marking and makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy and speaking skills. For example, Year 3 pupils are introduced to the notion of 'constant' and 'dependent' factors. The teachers support pupils' understanding of how to be scientists through using structured prompts so that the pupils always consider what they are doing, and what might happen. They consider how to make their test fair: "All jump from the same place. Don't cheat", and whether what did happen matched their original ideas. For example, when testing different papers to see which is best for writing on, "The writing bounced off the wrapping paper because it was shiny". Teachers ensure that pupils present their findings in a range of different formats. They make good use of mathematical skills as they count and measure carefully and present their findings in graphs and venn diagrams. Pupils produce Carroll diagrams using digital photographs of the class showing the distribution of hair colours. They put the results of experiments into finding which materials conduct electricity into a grid. Less-able pupils make drawings and more-able pupils give a written explanation of their tests and results.

89. The last inspection found standards average at the end of both key stages. Teaching was judged as good at Key Stage 1 and sound at Key Stage 2. The school is very aware of the current issues in science. The co-ordinator is very keen to support teaching in upper Key Stage 2 and to become more involved in planning, monitoring and assessing so that the good work in Classes 1 and 2 can be built upon.
90. In summary, the suggested areas for development are:
- involvement of the co-ordinator in planning work at Key Stage 2 so that the teaching builds consistently on what pupils have learned and the skills they have developed in previous classes;
  - regular monitoring of pupils' work at Key Stage 2 to ensure that the work they experience is coherent and matches the scheme of work, and that the challenge is sufficient to promote high attainment, especially for the more able.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

91. By the time they are 7 years, pupils' attainment in art is above that expected. Pupils in Classes 1 and 2 have a rich experience of art and make good progress in developing their skills and understanding. Until recently, art has not been experienced on a regular basis in Class 3 and pupils have not had the opportunity to practise and improve their art skills through a coherently planned sequence of activities. Consequently, they have not made sufficient progress over the four years in Key Stage 2 and the standards attained by pupils aged 11 are below those expected. Only one lesson, at Key Stage 1, was observed. The quality of teaching was very good.
92. For pupils in Years 1 and 2, Key Stage 1, some of the work, in Year 1 in particular, is inspirational. This is a result of very good teaching in Class 1, where the teacher, also the art co-ordinator, has excellent subject knowledge and very high expectations. The pupils enjoy focussed and purposeful teaching and pupils of all abilities make excellent progress. Artists' work is used very effectively to demonstrate techniques and these are learnt and practised before the pupils are encouraged to make their own pictures. For example, the teacher used a painting by Modigliani and a drawing by Holbein to demonstrate how artists draw portraits and to show how they represent skin colour and indicate where light falls on the face, before the pupils worked on self portraits using mirrors. As a result, the pupils observed very carefully, selecting their pastels to represent a range of skin tones and using techniques of smudging and layering to blend their colours on the page. Class portfolios demonstrate a range and quality of work that are exceptional for Year 1 pupils. They use a range of media and techniques to draw fruit and flowers, producing high-quality work illustrating corn-on-the-cob or leeks. They observe winter landscapes by Monet and Pissarro and then paint the winter view outside their classroom window, showing very good control of paint and good compositional skills. In Class 2, the teacher is aware of the pupils' previous experiences. She encourages them to consider all the different shades of green when representing blades of grass using pastels and then applying small patches of paint colour in their impressionist paintings of a field of flowers.
93. In Class 3, the pupils have covered a good range of work since January and in this short space of time the progress they have made is good. They have enjoyed activities involving observational drawing using pencil and then pen and ink and pastels, as well as making clay models based on their drawings of local buildings. This work shows a good development of ideas and is evidence of good planning by the teacher. They have made bookmarks with the textile artist and have experienced printing 'to make our art books special'. They have enjoyed art lessons, but the level of skill they demonstrate and their overall knowledge of art are limited by their previous lack of experience.

94. An artist has a studio on the school premises and all classes have blocks of time each term when she leads the art teaching. The pupils gain a lot of expert knowledge and understanding from this contact. They produce weaving in different forms and are encouraged to be aware of the history and technological development affecting weaving through the past. This contributes very well to their cultural understanding; for example, they are made aware of the ways in which Ancient Egyptians wove their cloth.
95. At the last inspection standards were judged to be in line with national expectations at both key stages. The report noted that these standards were significantly enhanced by the work of a professional artist working with the pupils before the inspection.
96. In summary, the suggested areas for development are:
- continue the development of a scheme of work which identifies the progression of skills and understanding, and make explicit opportunities for cultural development;
  - further develop the use of portfolios to support progress through the school;
  - make optimum use of the co-ordinator's expertise and enthusiasm;
  - ensure that all pupils experience a full allocation of time for art over the year.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

97. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils make sound progress through the school. No judgement was made on standards or progress at the time of the previous inspection because of insufficient evidence.
98. No teaching was observed during this inspection, but evidence is consistent with teaching being satisfactory and pupils enjoying their learning. Work on display and in pupils' books indicates that they work hard, particularly in making their designs, with the safe and correct use of tools. Resources are satisfactory and teachers plan carefully to ensure that pupils receive the range of experiences to which they are entitled.
99. By the time they are 7, pupils use their literacy skills effectively in their designs and evaluations of their marionette puppets, with particularly good labelling of their designs and accurate instructions for making the puppets. Pupils' making skills are satisfactory, as in their choice and use of materials in making their finished designs. Eleven-year-old pupils build successfully on their skills in designing, making and evaluating. They produce well-labelled designs for their cam mechanisms, with good diagrams showing the construction process and the tools to be used. Pupils' evaluations are good, including how they solved problems. In food technology, pupils show a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of analysing biscuits as a product and they show good imagination in designing packaging for a new biscuit. Teachers ensure that pupils successfully apply their literacy skills, particularly in their planning and evaluations. There was little evidence of the use of numeracy skills. From discussion with pupils, it is clear that they have only limited opportunities to use computers in designing and evaluating.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

100. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve standards that are in line with those expected nationally. The standards achieved by Year 6 are below those expected for pupils of this age. The progress they have made is unsatisfactory as a result of them having insufficient experience in developing their geographic skills and understanding consistently over the key stage. Standards have been maintained in Key Stage 1 since the previous inspection, but have declined in Key Stage 2 for this reason.
101. In the one lesson observed during the inspection, in Class 3, the teaching was satisfactory. The teacher planned the lesson effectively, including the use of a support

teacher to work with pupils in Year 4. She provided good resources, especially a wide range of photographs showing day-to-day life in a village in India. She made effective use of a CD-ROM to encourage pupils to research the climate in India according to the seasons in the farming year. The pace of the lesson was slow, with pupils in Year 5 taking a long time to complete a task where they had to match pictures to the farming year. From the beginning of the current term, pupils have developed satisfactory skills in geographical investigation and enquiry through the study of Chembakolli (a village in India). The school is aware that as pupils have moved through the school from Years 3 to 6 they have not consistently built on their geographical knowledge, skills and understanding as a result of the lack of a structured scheme of work.

102. In Year 1, the teacher ensures that pupils make a very good start to their knowledge and understanding of places through planning very effective work on looking at the Isle of Struay and comparing it with Sherriffhales. Pupils are successful in locating key features on a map. In Year 2, pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of the wider world through the study of 'Holidays'. They use atlases and keys correctly to compare environments in Europe, Asia and Africa. They select carefully which clothes should be worn depending on climate and they make good choices of holiday locations for different groups, including young children and teenagers.
103. Teachers ensure that pupils apply their literacy skills successfully in geography lessons. Pupils make good use of atlases, reference books and the Internet to research information. Pupils' writing skills are satisfactory, although handwriting and presentation are inconsistent. There are opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills effectively; for example, in the use of co-ordinates and in comparing temperatures in London and Bangalore. Year 6 pupils have used spreadsheets in their study of the local environment.
104. In summary, the suggested areas for development are:
- improve planning in geography so that skills are consistently developed in Years 3 to 6;
  - ensure that the experiences that the pupils have is monitored closely by the co-ordinator.

## HISTORY

105. By the time they are 7, the standards pupils achieve in history are good and are above those expected nationally. As a result of good teaching, pupils make good progress in their learning, particularly in their recall of historical events. The standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 are in line with what is expected nationally. The progress that this group of pupils has made over time is satisfactory. No judgements were made on standards at the time of the previous inspection because of insufficient evidence from lessons and pupils' previous work.
106. Teaching in the one lesson observed was good. The teacher effectively assessed the pupils' previous learning through questions such as, "Who can think what might be happening here?" when showing pictures of Tudor times. Pupils show a good understanding of the importance of historical evidence, including artefacts, portraits, the 'Mary Rose' and the local manor house. Through effective prompting and the use of role-play, the teacher enabled pupils to make significant progress in understanding how archaeologists work. They showed real enthusiasm and a love of learning, especially when the teacher asked questions in the role of a television reporter investigating the story of Henry VIII. The level of resources is good and teachers use them very well, bringing lessons 'alive', so that pupils are totally absorbed and fascinated. In the lesson, pupils made good progress in understanding the role of archaeologists as a result of the

teacher providing an exciting range of Tudor artefacts. Pupils enjoy discussing in pairs and with their teacher what the artefacts were made of and how they would have been used. By the end of Year 2, pupils show a thorough and detailed knowledge of Tudor times, particularly of Henry VIII and his six wives. Pupils use their speaking and listening skills very effectively when they recall Henry's wives and what happened to each of them. By the end of Year 6, pupils show a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the Ancient Greeks. They use their literacy skills successfully to research the Greek gods and goddesses and they show a satisfactory understanding of the City States. Pupils understand the importance of historical research and enquiry, including sources of evidence, particularly from archaeology.

107. Teachers ensure that pupils apply their literacy skills successfully in history lessons. By Year 6, pupils are confident in using reference books to research information. They know how to use the contents, index and glossary to help them locate the information they need. They are confident in using the Internet as a means of researching information. Pupils write satisfactorily for a range of purposes in history, although their handwriting skills are not used consistently to present their best work. Pupils' experience of history is enriched by the input of visitors and from organised visits. For example, the school organises a 'Tudor Day' when the 'Living History' team visits the school and pupils spend a day learning how life was for a maid in Victorian Times.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

108. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, the standards pupils achieve meet national expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning, although they have insufficient opportunities to work with the controlling devices from a computer. Standards have been maintained in Key Stage 1 since the previous inspection. They are not as high in Key Stage 2, as pupils do not have sufficient experience of all aspects of the subject, particularly control and modelling.
109. Teaching in the one lesson observed during the inspection was good. The teacher had good knowledge of the subject and had prepared resources well so that the pupils made good progress in their editing skills as they worked on a piece of text she had specially prepared. The text included well-planned opportunities to test and assess pupils' application of key literacy skills, particularly punctuation. Inspection evidence is consistent with the quality of teaching being good in Years 1 to 3 and satisfactory in Years 4 to 6. Evidence is consistent with there being more regular and planned use of computers to support pupils' learning in Classes 1 and 2, including within the literacy and numeracy hours. For example, in a numeracy lesson in Year 1 the teacher had previously taught the pupils how to use a particular computer programme so that they were able to reinforce and develop their understanding of money.
110. In Year 1, the teacher plans carefully and ensures that the pupils develop good skills in loading, saving and printing their work. They are confident in the use of word-processing, including changing font sizes, styles and colours. Pupils, in their factual writing about the Isle of Struay, combine clip-art successfully with their text to create imaginative posters advertising the attractions of the island. These skills are developed successfully in Year 2, where pupils use word-processing skills successfully to write, for example, poems using similes. Pupils are confident in rearranging and editing their text using the 'return', 'backspace' and 'enter' keys. When editing sentences, pupils remember to use their knowledge of capital letters and full stops and know that names of people begin with capital letters because they are 'proper nouns'.
111. By Year 6, pupils are confident in using CD-ROMs and the Internet, particularly using and applying their literacy research skills. Pupils use their reading skills of skimming and

scanning particularly well to identify key facts. They are successful in using a graphics program to design packaging for biscuits in work linked to design and technology. Pupils apply their numeracy skills well and are confident in using the computer to produce graphs linked to their work in mathematics and in science. However, they have insufficient opportunities to develop skills in the use of multi-media presentations and in using the computer to control external devices, for example model traffic lights. Pupils apply successfully their literacy skills in using computers, especially in word-processing, where their computer skills are stronger.

112. In summary, the suggested area for development is:
- ensure that pupils are given the full range of experiences as outlined in the National Curriculum.

## MUSIC

113. By the end of both key stages, standards in music are in line with those expected nationally. Since January a specialist music teacher has visited the school once a week to teach all classes. The quality of teaching is very good and pupils of all abilities make very good progress in the lessons.
114. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and uses this to plan activities that challenge the pupils to develop their music skills in a sequential way. In Class 1, pupils are enthusiastic about creating a rising and falling volume with their instruments to imitate the sounds of a storm. The teacher uses subject-specific language well, encouraging pupils in Years 2 and 3 to remember that *pp* means very quiet and using the term 'dynamics'. She uses resources well and teaches the pupils the correct way to hold and play the classroom instruments; for example, Year 3 are shown how to hold a pair of claves correctly. The teacher uses questions well to establish what the pupils know. Year 1 pupils remember their 'timbre' groups. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 use the time names 'ta' and 'ta-te' and relate these to musical symbols. They clap and say rhythms in 4/4 time and then enjoy writing their own, applying previous knowledge well. Over the lesson they gradually improve their skills in clapping these rhythms with a steady sense of beat. The teacher has good relationships with the pupils. She uses praise very well and this motivates the pupils to try hard. They enjoy sharing how they might improve their work and listen well to each other as the different groups perform their rhythm patterns.
115. The teacher plans well for the different ages and abilities of pupils and selects activities to interest them. Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils very much enjoyed a lesson on rhythm, where she introduced syncopation. The teacher's good pace and selection of resources – she had chosen a good piece of recorded music for the pupils to respond to and analyse – maintained pupils' interest and concentration. They worked hard to identify the pattern of beats in a piece of music in 7/8 time and then clap different accented patterns. They listened intently to try to identify the bass note 'ostinato' and then all were eager to have a turn playing the 'ostinato' on the tuned instruments. The teacher is enthusiastic about her subject and this inspires the pupils. Pupils of all abilities become involved in stamping and clapping rhythms and their behaviour, turn taking and listening skills are very good.
116. The school is aware that the funding used to support this project may not continue so the class teachers are always involved in lessons in order that they can use the experience as in-service training. The school currently has no scheme of work, but is considering adopting the local education authority's scheme that is being used effectively by the specialist teacher. The school collaborates with other local schools in a music workshop for all pupils and there is a music recital each year. The teacher in Class 1 incorporates music well into other activities. She uses songs and sung rhymes to develop pupils' understanding in other subjects, such as mathematics. Pupils' singing in assemblies

shows clear pitch, but little enthusiasm and not the vitality seen in music lessons. Recorded music is not a feature of assemblies or played at other times of the school day to give listening to music a higher profile. In the last inspection, attainment in music was judged to exceed national expectations for pupils aged 7 and to be in line with expectations for pupils aged 11 years. At that time the availability of tuned instruments was judged unsatisfactory. This has improved and the new instruments were used well in the lessons seen.

117. In summary, the suggested area for development is:
- establish a scheme of work and consider how to enhance pupils' skills and understanding by using music at times other than in music lessons.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

118. Two lessons in physical education were observed, one on dance and one on games. This is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on overall standards of attainment or progress in the school. The school has no scheme of work to ensure coherence and the progressive acquisition of skills in all the areas of physical education. Records of pupils' swimming achievements show that attainment is above that expected by the time pupils are 11 years. On the basis of the evidence seen, the quality of teaching in lessons is good overall. All pupils, including those with complex special educational needs, are involved in lessons, often through the very good use of support assistants. Teachers are confident in the subject and plan sequences of activities well. In the dance lesson, a very good warm-up session ensured that the pupils listened carefully and responded well to the teacher's instructions. The teacher used praise and well-timed interventions well to promote a good level of effort from the pupils. They demonstrated good awareness of space and good balancing skills. The games lesson included a good warm-up session and pair and group work to practise skills in different types of throwing, such as chest passes, bounce passes and lobs, and the opportunity to experience applying the skills learned through a modified competitive game, which pupils really enjoyed. Pupils demonstrated an appropriate level of skill in these activities. The teacher used praise well to improve their performance. She kept up a good pace, allowing short bursts of activity followed by short discussion and demonstration involving pupils and leading on to the next task.
119. The school enhances the curriculum for physical education through its very good links with the local secondary school that has sports college status. Pupils are taken to the secondary school for a sequence of lessons with older students there. This allows them good access to much better facilities. The school is currently developing a scheme of work in liaison with its secondary partners. Pupils participate in cluster-school tournaments and have opportunities to be involved in extra-curricular activities, such as table tennis and cricket, provided through 'Top Play and 'Top Sport' initiatives.
120. Possible area for development:
- establish a scheme of work.



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

121. By the time pupils are 7 years old the standards they attain are very good and exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils in Years 1 to 3 make very good progress in their learning as a result of very good teaching that stimulates their interest and enthusiasm for the subject. From Years 4 to 6 the pupils make satisfactory progress overall and, by the end of Year 6, their standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
122. Teaching in the one lesson observed during the inspection was very good. The teacher's knowledge of the subject is very good. She used resources very well by providing an interesting range of artefacts that captured the pupils' interest and imagination. She successfully used the artefacts, representing the five Ks of the Sikh religion, to develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding of symbols in religion. She built on pupils' previous knowledge through careful explanation and demonstration, with the result that they made significant progress in their learning. Earlier in the lesson, the teacher effectively recalled pupils' previous knowledge through questions, such as "What did the dove bringing back the leaf tell Noah and his family?" Through such questions, the teacher assessed pupils' previous learning as well as developing their speaking and listening skills.
123. Evidence from pupils' work is consistent with teaching in Years 1 to 3 being good, and with that in Years 4 to 6 being satisfactory. It is not possible from the evidence to determine what aspects of the teaching are less effective in Class 3. By the end of Year 2, pupils show very good knowledge and understanding of religious symbols. They know that the cross is important to Christians and that it is seen in Christian churches because, "Jesus died on the cross". Pupils understand the importance of the 'Seder plate' in the Jewish faith and how it relates to the Passover. They recall, for example, that the salt water represents the "tears of the slaves". Pupils have a good knowledge of the Old Testament, including the story of Noah, and know that the rainbow is a symbol of God's promise that he will never send a flood again. By the end of Year 6, pupils show a satisfactory understanding of Islam, including the importance of the Quran. They retell successfully the 'Creation Story' using a 'comic strip' style and they have a satisfactory knowledge of the key Christian festivals, in particular Christmas and Easter. Pupils develop their knowledge of other festivals through, for example, the study of 'New Beginnings' where they compare the New Year celebrations in Britain with those in China and Japan.
124. Teachers ensure that pupils have the opportunity to apply their literacy skills. Pupils use their reading skills effectively, including the use of the Internet, to research key information on other faiths. They make effective use of their writing skills; for example, in Year 6, where pupils retell the 'Creation Story'. In Years 2 and 3, pupils use their speaking and listening skills well when they recall the key symbols of the major world religions. From looking at pupils' previous work, it is evident that teachers do not consistently reinforce their expectations of how pupils should present their work, particularly with handwriting. Marking is inconsistent and does not guide pupils to improve their work.
125. Since the previous inspection, standards have improved for pupils aged 5 to 7, Key Stage 1, and have been maintained for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. The improvement in Key Stage 1 is the result of effective teaching.
126. Possible area for development:
- improve the consistency of marking and pupils' presentation skills.

