

INSPECTION REPORT

Woodrow First School

Redditch

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116730

Headteacher: Barry Newton

Reporting inspector: Michael J Cahill
19623

Dates of inspection: 21 –24 May 2001

Inspection number: 194804

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Longdon Close Woodrow South Redditch Worcs
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Philip Mould
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Michael Cahill 19623	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Helen Barter 9052	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Glenys Bramley 22902	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Art Music	How well is the school led and managed?
Will Gale 21317	Team inspector	Religious education Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Sanchia Pearse 4787	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs English Physical education	Attitudes, values and personal development

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The number of full-time pupils on roll is 291 (159 boys and 132 girls); the nursery has 30 boys and 32 girls attending part-time and 15 of the full-time pupils in the reception year are under five years of age. Pupils are taught in 14 classes, two of which have pupils from more than one age group. There are 105 full-time pupils on the school's register of special educational needs. This number represents a proportion, 36.1 per cent, which is well above the national average of 23.2 per cent. The attainment of many children on entry to the nursery is well below what is expected for their age. One hundred and twenty-eight pupils claim their entitlement to a free school meal; at 36.3 per cent this is well above the national average. Five pupils are learning English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good and improving school with many very good features. The school is very well led and managed and the headteacher and governing body are very clear about the priorities for improvement and how to achieve them. The quality of teaching is high; pupils benefit from very good educational support and guidance and develop very good attitudes to learning. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership and management directed towards raising the level of pupils' achievements.
- The quality of teaching is high. The school offers good opportunities for learning and makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
- The nursery gives children a good start to their education.
- The school is highly successful in promoting very good attitudes to school and very good behaviour and relationships among the pupils.
- There is a very pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere and the school provides very good educational support and guidance for its pupils, including those with special educational needs.
- Pupils throughout the school achieve above average standards in physical education and religious education.
- The school works well with parents, the local community and other schools.

What could be improved

In the context of its many strengths and its existing agenda for development, the school recognises the need to continue to improve:

- pupils' attainment in speaking and writing by spreading the best practice already in the school;
- progress in developing children's skills in literacy and numeracy as they move from the nursery, through the reception year, into Key Stage 1 and the National Curriculum;
- the tracking of pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and science and using the information to plan the next area of teaching and learning;
- the attendance of children whose parents keep them away from school for no good reason.

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 March 1997. Since his appointment in September 1999, the headteacher has continued the good work of his predecessor in dealing with the key issues from that time. In addition, he has led substantial improvements in the school's relationships with parents, the management of pupils' behaviour and in the accommodation. The strong partnership between the governing body, headteacher, staff and parents provides a very good basis for further improvement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
Reading	C	C	E	E	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	D	C	E	E	
Mathematics	C	D	E	C	

Schools are described as similar when they fall into the same band for free school meals, in this case between 35 and 50 per cent (the current figure is 36.3 per cent). The test and assessment results in 2000 were not as good as those in 1998 and 1999 and the school has identified the high proportion (around 50 per cent) of pupils in that year group who had special educational needs as a significant factor. Inspection evidence supports this view. The provisional end of Key Stage 1 results for 2001 and the evidence from lessons and examination of pupils' work, suggests that standards are now close to the level set in 1999.

Attainment is in line with national expectations for 7-year-olds in art, design and technology, geography, information and communication technology and music. In history, physical education and religious education, pupils exceed expectations. The attainment of the pupils now in Year 2, at the end of Key Stage 1, is judged to be below the national average in speaking and writing and in line with it in reading. In mathematics (including numeracy) and science their attainment is in line with national expectations.

The attainment of the current Year 4 pupils is in line with what is expected of their age group in reading, mathematics (including numeracy) and science. Attainment in speaking and writing skills remain below the national expectation. Levels of attainment in art, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology and music are in line with national expectations for their age group. In physical education and religious education, pupils exceed expectations.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils show a keen interest in their lessons and in the other activities that the school provides. They work hard and try their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; pupils are polite and co-operate well with the adults in the school. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good in response to the encouragement and expectations of staff.
Personal development and relationships	Good; pupils learn to take responsibility for their own actions and readily show initiative when given the opportunity. Pupils' relationships with each other and the adults in the school community are very good.
Attendance	Below average; however, the school's very good procedures are helping to reduce the number of unauthorised absences. Some parents do not recognise the importance of regular attendance and punctuality for their children.

Relationships are a considerable strength of the school. Pupils have very good attitudes to each other and to their work and this owes much to the good example set by the staff.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

The overall quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection when only 12 per cent of lessons were judged to be very good and 7 per cent were unsatisfactory. **None of the lessons observed during this inspection was unsatisfactory.** Seventy per cent of lessons were at least good, including 22 per cent that were very good or excellent. All the lessons observed in the nursery were of at least good quality and this makes a major contribution to the good start to their education that children receive.

The teaching of English, including literacy, was excellent or very good in 19 per cent of the lessons observed and good in a further 37 per cent. The teaching of mathematics, including the skills of numeracy, was at least good in 90 per cent of lessons, including 60 per cent in which it was very good or excellent.

Features of the better teaching observed, included clear identification and telling pupils exactly what it was intended they should learn in the lesson, very effective use of questions to help pupils to improve their knowledge and understanding and high expectations of work and behaviour. Weaknesses in some lessons included too slow a pace or insufficient time allocated to the lesson or parts of it and a lack of precision about what pupils were to learn or not making it clear to them.

From the time that they enter the nursery children are very effectively encouraged to work together and, when appropriate, independently of adults. Most pupils respond well to encouragement to work hard and often concentrate on their tasks for long periods of time. Although progress is slow for some, particularly in speaking and writing, most pupils are confident in their ability to learn and willing to have a go.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a well-balanced curriculum with suitable emphasis on literacy and numeracy. The planning of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection and now includes arrangements to provide the full range of opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; teachers plan in detail to match work carefully to individual needs. Teachers work effectively with the strong team of learning support assistants who work closely with individual pupils to help them to achieve their targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory; teachers know their pupils well and take care to include all of them in all aspects of lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good; the school has very good arrangements for developing pupils' spiritual awareness, including well-organised collective worship. There is very good provision for promoting pupils' moral and social development through the behaviour code and opportunities for working and playing together. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well; pupils benefit from very good educational support and guidance, including very effective promotion of good behaviour and help for those with behavioural problems. The school keeps good track of pupils' progress towards their individual targets in English, mathematics and science but this is less well done in other subjects.

The school has very effective links with parents and as a result, parents have very positive views of the school and its work.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good; the headteacher provides strong, purposeful and caring leadership directed towards raising pupils' attainment through improving the quality of education that the school provides. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher, the governing body and staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; the governing body is knowledgeable and very supportive of the school. Governors are actively involved in the school and are committed to supporting its programme for improvement. Statutory requirements are fully met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher has established very good procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. The senior management team and governing body keep all aspects of the school's performance under continuous review.
The strategic use of resources	Good; the school manages its budget well and makes good use of specific grants in order to achieve improvement. It makes good use of its resources, monitors spending well and seeks best value for the money it is allocated.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good overall. The accommodation, particularly the library, has been improved and is now a good feature of the school. There are a good number of learning support assistants across the school. Particular strengths of the school's leadership and management are the vision and drive of the headteacher and the good partnership between him and the governing body.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The views of the 94 parents who returned completed questionnaires and of the four who attended the pre-inspection meeting with members of the inspection team were taken into account.

What pleases at least 90 per cent of parents	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress. • Teaching is good, the school has high expectations of children and sets the right amount of homework. • Behaviour is good and the school helps children to become mature and responsible. • They are comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. • The school works closely with them and keeps them well informed about their children's progress. • The school is well managed and led. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of extra-curricular activities offered (23 per cent of parents).

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views of the school and recognises the very good links that have been developed to encourage involvement in their children's learning. Inspectors judge that the range of extra-curricular activities is good, particularly with the lunchtime clubs provided by staff.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The attainment of most children on entry to the school is well below what is expected for their age, particularly in speaking, reading, writing, knowledge and understanding of the world and social development. Most children make substantial gains in these and other areas in their nursery year and these are maintained in the reception year of the Foundation Stage¹. However, attainment on entry to Key Stage 1 is still below national expectations for many children.
2. The school's 2000 national test results show that at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment was well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher than expected Level 3 was close to the national average in mathematics and in speaking and listening. When compared with those of similar schools, these results are well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. In science, the proportion of pupils achieving at least the national expectation was well below average while the proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was well above average. There were no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls.
3. The test and assessment results in 2000 were not as good as those in 1998 and 1999. The school has identified the high proportion (around 50 per cent) of pupils in that year group who had special educational needs, as a significant factor. Inspection evidence supports this view. The school responded positively to the drop in results with a sharp focus on writing, which has led to the provisional results of 2001 improving to the level of the better results that were recorded in 1999. In mathematics, the school has built clear targets into its planning, against which pupils' progress is carefully monitored and provisional results show improvement. The school has successfully introduced the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and sets appropriate targets for improvement.
4. Inspection evidence indicates that levels of attainment are in line with national expectations for 7-year-olds in art, design and technology, geography, information and communication technology and music. In history, physical education and religious education, pupils exceed expectations. The attainment of the pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 is judged to be below the national average in speaking and writing and in line with it in reading. In mathematics (including numeracy) and science, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. They make at least satisfactory progress over time throughout the key stage; in reading, mathematics and science, the progress of many pupils is good. During the inspection, pupils in Key Stage 1 made progress that was good rather than satisfactory in nearly three-quarters of the lessons observed.
5. Inspection evidence shows that the attainment of the current Year 4 pupils is in line with what is expected of their age group in mathematics (including numeracy) and science. In English, (including literacy) skills are below average in speaking and writing and in line with expectations in reading and listening. Levels of attainment in art, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology and music are in line with national expectations for their age group. In physical education and religious education, pupils exceed expectations. In more than two-thirds of the lessons

¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and finishes at the end of the reception class year. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; [and](#) physical and creative development.

observed during the inspection, pupils made progress that was at least good. For further details of pupils' progress and achievements in the Foundation Stage and in the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, see paragraphs 66 – 174.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. There is early identification and progress is carefully monitored on a regular basis. Pupils with special educational needs have clear individual education plans with specific targets, which are checked and changed at least termly. These pupils are fully included in all lessons, as teachers know their pupils well and plan for their differing needs. During many lessons, especially literacy, mathematics and science, experienced and well-trained learning support assistants work closely with the teachers. They provide good support by ensuring that all pupils concentrate and by extending the learning with well-targeted activities aimed at small groups or individuals.
7. The small number of pupils with English as an additional language play a full role in all lessons. The clear focus on speaking and literacy skills, needed by all pupils, ensures that they receive the necessary repetition and expansion of vocabulary. They make similar progress to other pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. As in the previous inspection report, this is a strength of the school. Pupils show very good attitudes to their learning and behave well both in and out of the classroom. This is a significant tribute to the adults in the school, who insist on high standards through a consistent and fair application of positive behaviour strategies. Pupils enjoy very good relationships with all the adults in the school and with each other. The warm and welcoming atmosphere contributes significantly to the pupils' positive attitudes to school life and learning.
9. Of the parents who filled in the questionnaire, 97 per cent believe that behaviour is good and report that their children like school. Ninety-nine per cent agree that the school helps pupils to mature and become responsible. This overwhelming support for the good job done by the school was evident in the interactions seen with parents during the inspection.
10. Pupils are keen to be involved in tasks both in and out of the classroom. They pay attention in lessons, being well motivated by good teaching and the concern shown for them as individuals. They enjoy taking an active part in lessons, for example in physical education or in practical numeracy or science. Their confidence and self-esteem are heightened by the many positive reinforcements they receive when sharing their work with the class, as in literacy lessons and history, where they take part in roleplay or talk about their research. There is full involvement of pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language in all lessons. The good patterns of concentration and work established in the lessons where they receive well focused additional support, has a positive effect on pupils' participation in all lessons.
11. All pupils behave well, despite having a considerable number of special educational needs that are linked to behaviour. They try their best and co-operate with each other and the adults in the school. The teachers and learning support assistants ensure that all pupils work hard. This minimises the risk of pupils misbehaving. Pupils respond very positively to the praise and awards gained during the school day and to the recognition of achievements in the praise book and assemblies. Behaviour during break and lunchtimes continues to be very good. This is greatly helped by their active involvement in the games and activities that the midday supervisors organise. As most of the midday supervisors are also learning support assistants, they know the pupils well and pupils feel

able to turn to them if they need to. There have been no exclusions over the past 18 months, which is a further reflection of the success of the sharp focus on improving behaviour.

12. Pupils make good progress in terms of personal development. They learn to take responsibility for their own actions and to respect people and property. They discuss issues, such as recycling and bullying, seriously. Older pupils relish opportunities to help, for example in sorting out books in the new library area. All pupils benefit from the mature and respectful relationships that they enjoy with all adults in the school. From this firm foundation, pupils are now ready to have still more opportunities to take responsibility and show initiative.
13. Pupils' level of attendance is below the national average. The school has very good procedures for monitoring attendance and these have reduced the number of unauthorised absences. However, there is still a high percentage of authorised absence. A few pupils have poor attendance records and this has a serious impact on their learning. Although most pupils come to school on time, there are a few who are frequently late. This disrupts the beginning of lessons for the teacher and those pupils who have arrived on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching is high. Of the lessons observed, 22 per cent were judged to be very good or excellent, a further 48 per cent were good, 30 per cent were satisfactory and none were unsatisfactory. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection.
15. Examples of very good or excellent teaching were observed in all three key stages. In the Foundation Stage, more than half of the lessons were good or very good, including all those observed in the nursery. For example, very clear demonstrations, task setting and organisation of the apparatus led to good learning and progress in a physical education lesson in the hall for nursery children. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the proportion of lessons that were judged to be at least good were 77 and 71 per cent respectively. Teaching was very good or excellent in 30 per cent of lessons in Key Stage 1 and 20 per cent of those in Key Stage 2. This overall high quality of teaching makes a very important contribution towards promoting the pupils' very positive attitudes towards their work and learning. For example, in an excellent English lesson focused on *oo*, *u*, and *ou* sounds, all pupils responded well to the teacher's high expectations, very good planning and highly skilled questioning. They made very good progress in spelling and recognising words that included these sounds. One pupil spelt *food* and *spoon* correctly and announced delightedly, 'I spelled it out'.
16. The teaching of English (including literacy) was excellent or very good in 19 per cent of the lessons observed and good in a further 37 per cent. The teaching of mathematics (including the skills of numeracy) was at least good in 90 per cent of lessons, including 60 per cent in which it was very good or excellent.
17. There are a number of features common to the good or better teaching seen during the inspection and these include:
 - clear identification of what pupils are to learn and telling them;
 - very good use of questions to maintain attention and promote understanding;
 - high expectations of behaviour, which is managed well through the interest and pace of the lesson and consistent application of the school's behaviour code;
 - tasks that are clearly set and focused well on promoting learning;
 - enthusiasm and good subject knowledge on the part of the teacher;

- a good mix of demands on pupils in terms of speaking, listening, writing and practical activities;
- a good balance of whole-class, group and individual work;
- good organisation of classrooms and resources to encourage pupils to work independently.

Areas for further improvement

18. Where teaching was less stimulating or successful, although still satisfactory, the reason was often the absence of some of the above qualities. In particular, the aims of the lessons were not always clear from teachers' planning or clearly explained to pupils. Sometimes, although it was clear what the pupils were going to do, it was not clear what they were intended to learn as a result. In some instances, there was not enough time allocated to the lesson or the pace was too slow, with the result that the concluding session was rushed or omitted. In a few instances, inaccurate oral answers or poorly written work was too readily accepted. In some cases, teachers' comments on written work refer only to the presentation and opportunities for pointing out to pupils how they might improve their learning are missed.

Learning and progress

19. The progress that pupils make and the quality of their learning closely reflects the quality of teaching that they receive. In two-thirds of the lessons observed, pupils made progress that was at least good. Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to learning owe much to the quality of teaching that they receive. In 83 per cent of lessons, attitudes and behaviour were judged to be good, including 34 per cent in which they were very good or excellent.
20. Pupils pay attention well in lessons, often concentrating for long periods. They are very willing to offer answers and suggestions because their teachers are very encouraging and supportive. Pupils work well on their own or in groups when they are required to do so.

Special educational needs

21. Teachers plan carefully for the wide range of differing needs within the class. This ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, are fully involved throughout the lesson. The close liaison between teachers and learning support assistants is impressive and leads to a very efficient use of time. For example, during whole-class sessions, learning support assistants check that pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language understand the work and concentrate fully. Working in small groups, pupils with special educational needs respond positively to the carefully chosen tasks that help them to make good progress with basic skills and understanding.
22. Homework is regularly set and is making an important contribution to raising standards. The inspection team agrees with the vast majority of parents who said that the quality of teaching is good and who are happy with the amount of homework set. Further information about teaching and the learning and progress of pupils can be found in each of the subject sections (paragraphs 66 - 174).

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

23. The school provides a broad range of opportunities for all pupils. The full programmes of study of the National Curriculum are provided and the school works hard to make sure that all pupils have access to all the opportunities that are offered. The school makes good use of recommended schemes of work and has adapted them to suit the school's circumstances. Sufficient time is allocated to each subject area in Key Stage 1. This

includes music and religious education, which were given too little emphasis at the time at the last inspection. The curriculum for children at the Foundation Stage is well balanced, with programmes designed to lead to learning across the full range of early learning goals². At Key Stages 1 and 2, the school has followed the guidance of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and provided extra time for these areas, which dominate the morning timetable. The school is particularly aware of pupils' weaknesses in speaking and writing, and teachers' planning in a wide range of subjects shows that extra opportunities are being provided for pupils to practise these skills.

24. There has been considerable discussion about how best to provide time for subjects other than English and mathematics, and this has led to the development of half-termly themes for science, geography and history. These themes are designed to enable pupils to develop a better range of skills in science and one of the other subjects during each half term. During the week of inspection, science and history themes were being taught and it was not possible to observe the teaching of geography. All other subjects are taught separately, outside the themes. This is a substantial improvement on the arrangements during the last inspection, when too many subjects were taught as themes. Sensible decisions about the curriculum have been made recently, such as ensuring that design and technology is taught as a separate subject, because of the crucial importance of the weekly practice of skills in that subject. However, too little time is allocated to this subject in Key Stage 2 (see paragraph 136). Class teachers working in liaison with year co-ordinators are responsible for most of the subject planning, which could lead to year groups working in isolation. However, subject co-ordinators provide guidance on developing subject skills across the school and their position is gradually being strengthened to make them better able to monitor pupils' progression.
25. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs have clear targets. All adults, including the parents, are aware of these targets and use them as a basis for ensuring that individual learning needs are met. Pupils with special educational needs are usually taught within the classroom area, albeit in small groups. On the rare occasions that they are withdrawn, it is always for a specific purpose, such as using the information and communication technology room or reading in the library area. The arrangements to ensure equal opportunities are good. All pupils are included in the full range of activities. Classroom assistants are well deployed to provide additional instruction and assistance for pupils who find some tasks difficult. Curriculum planning usually provides work of varying levels of difficulty to meet the full range of pupils' levels of ability. The planning skills that have been acquired in the teaching of the literacy and numeracy strategies, are now being applied in other subjects, especially in providing relevant reading and writing activities for all pupils.
26. The school has good arrangements for the teaching of personal, social and health education. Although the revised policy, including a section on drug education, is still in draft form, class teachers have a good understanding of the essential elements of the programme and incorporate it into whole-class sessions throughout the week. This is well supplemented by specific personal, social and health education sessions in Years 3 and 4, and by the coverage of important issues during assemblies. The governors' statement on sex education has not been updated since the last inspection, but it has been discussed at a recent meeting of the governing body and is due to be revised in the near future.

² Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with the following six areas of learning: communication language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning; for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

27. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. There is a busy atmosphere at lunchtimes, with a range of clubs and other activities. These provide pupils with a good choice, ranging from drama to sport. Very good use is made of the space available in the school halls, the playgrounds and the field. More formal clubs are supplemented by informal games, run by lunchtime supervisors. Although there are fewer activities after school, pupils have access to well-established activities such as the Jigsaw Club.
28. The school has satisfactory links with the local community. School teams take part in local sports and musical events. Representatives of the local community, ranging from the police to religious groups, make regular visits to the school. A successful family literacy group has been established. Local businesses sponsor events and equipment. Community groups, such as Guides and Brownies, use the school's premises. There are good relationships with other schools. The school has been a participant in the pyramid of 'feeder' schools to the local secondary school and is looking forward to being an active member of new arrangements as soon as reorganisation is completed. Staff benefit from their membership of the Redditch Schools Groups, which enables managers and co-ordinators to share experiences and develop best practice.
29. The arrangements the school makes to develop pupils' spiritual, moral and social awareness are very good. In a wide range of subjects, pupils are encouraged to appreciate the thoughts and feelings of others. Pupils' achievements are well celebrated in assemblies and lessons and the majority of pupils show a genuine appreciation for other's work, encouraging them with frequent applause and congratulations. Pupils are helped to understand the beliefs of people from different societies and past times in their work in religious education and history. They know of some of the wonders of the natural world through their investigations in science. Older pupils express their enjoyment of poets' descriptions of beauty and wish that they were able to compose such meaningful phrases. There are very good efforts to help pupils to understand the significance of important events in people's lives and how they cope with successes and disappointments. They know of the powerful impact of birth and death and can explain their feelings about how these have affected them.
30. Pupils' spiritual awareness is well developed through the good arrangements for collective worship. Assemblies include suitable themes, such as the importance of memorials and gravestones in helping people to remember. Pupils are given time to discuss and reflect on these issues. Spiritual and moral awareness is encouraged by discussions about the 'inner person'. Pupils are reminded to be tolerant of one another and recognise that everyone has worthwhile ideas. They are provided with a very good sense of the rules that should govern their behaviour. As they move through the school, pupils develop a good awareness of right and wrong and adopt their own moral code, which is not so dependent on reminders from adults. The school provides them with a very good idea of the importance of honesty, which is demonstrated by pupils' ready apologies and willingness to take responsibility for their actions.
31. The school is very good in its development of pupils' social skills. In all school situations, pupils are expected to understand group rules. They know they must wait patiently and be prepared to share. Frequent reminders and practice of these skills helps even the youngest children to benefit fully from social situations. Pupils are happy to sit together on the floor and do not demand too much space. The rare incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with promptly and pupils' positive reactions show how well they understand how to behave in class. The school has well developed rules for arrivals and departures from classes and assemblies and pupils know the importance of waiting their turn. In less formal situations, pupils play well together and staff work hard to encourage friendly competitiveness. Pupils understand the importance of including all members of the

group, regardless of their strength and skills. Relationships throughout the school are very good and the staff's approach, with its emphasis on reason and tolerance, provides a beneficial role model for all the pupils.

32. The school has satisfactory arrangements for developing pupils' cultural awareness. Pupils are encouraged to develop knowledge of their local area and the facilities it offers. They are given opportunities to listen to local residents and their experiences of the area. Pupils' understanding of the region beyond their locality is restricted by their lack of opportunity to travel outside Woodrow. There are relatively few school trips to galleries and museums because the school has had to restrict, for funding reasons, the number of annual educational visits. The school provides resources in art, music, geography and history to help pupils to understand cultures from different parts of the world. Some particularly good work takes place in developing pupils' knowledge of the beliefs of the Ancient Egyptians. Pupils have relatively low levels of general knowledge about the breadth of culture in their own country, although there is evidence of suitable planning for the development of their understanding of multi-cultural Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained a caring atmosphere in which pupils are secure and happy. The school is a friendly community where pupils and adults enjoy very good relationships and staff care for pupils, all of whom they know well. Overall, the provision made for pupils' educational and personal support and guidance is very good and is a strength of the school. Parents appreciate the pastoral care that is provided for their children and say that the support given to pupils by all staff, including learning support assistants, helps them to make progress. Individual parents praise the way in which the school supports them through family difficulties.
34. There are good arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of pupils and staff. The headteacher and members of the governing body carry out regular checks of the premises and complete risk assessments for specific areas of the school, such as the swimming pool. Pupils are well supervised at play and lunchtimes and are provided with a range of games and activities that keep them busy. Staff who are trained in first aid, care sensitively for pupils who hurt themselves or feel unwell.
35. There are very good procedures for dealing with issues relating to child protection. Staff are aware of pupils whose welfare may be a cause for concern. The headteacher, as child protection co-ordinator, ensures that all staff are kept up-to-date with current practice and that they know how to report concerns. The school has developed good links with outside support agencies, including that which supports pupils who are in the 'looked after' system of care. The school provides very good support to families who are experiencing crises that affect their children's lives at school.
36. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and improving pupils' attendance. The school is very well supported by the educational welfare officer and works closely with her to monitor individual pupils and set targets for overall attendance. As a result of the school's work with parents and support for individual families from the educational welfare officer, the school has been successful in reducing the number of unauthorised absences. It recognises the need, however, to continue to emphasise to parents the importance of regular attendance at school for their children.
37. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' behaviour. Staff have worked together to devise a positive behaviour policy that is consistently applied across the school. Pupils are praised for their positive attitudes towards others and their efforts at improvement and, as a result, pupils understand what is expected of them. The adults in the school community provide very good role models in their attitudes towards

pupils and each other and pupils clearly follow their example. The school has made very good use of advice from the local authority's behaviour support service to introduce strategies for supporting pupils who have specific behavioural difficulties. All staff, including learning support assistants, are aware of pupils' individual behaviour plans and apply the planned strategies very well. There are well-established procedures for recording and dealing with any incidents of bullying. The school is active in its support for parents who are experiencing difficulties with their children at home. It has provided a 'parenting' course to help some parents manage their children's behaviour.

38. The school's procedures for assessing and identifying pupils with special educational needs are well established and effective. All staff understand these clear procedures. The co-ordinator for special educational needs uses efficient systems to record and review the particular needs of each child. Outside agencies are fully involved and find the school a welcoming place that takes on advice quickly and effectively.
39. The school monitors and supports pupils' personal development well from the time that they start school in the nursery to when they move on to the middle school. The knowledge that staff have of pupils and the use that they make of this to help them to develop and mature is a very good feature of the school. The school uses its assessment procedures well to identify where pupils are having difficulties in their learning, behaviour or social development, and ensures that support is provided, where necessary, so that pupils are helped to improve. Good use is made of rewards such as stickers and achievement certificates to encourage pupils to improve. The sharing of these awards in assemblies helps to raise pupils' self-esteem. Pupils' personal development is recorded clearly in their end of year reports. Pupils contribute their own assessments, which helps them to understand how they have improved and develops their own awareness of what they need to aim for next.
40. The school has developed reliable assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science, and for measuring children's progress towards early learning goals. Pupils' progress is measured against a good range of individual targets, which give a clear idea of their level of understanding. These targets are regularly updated to take account of pupils' achievements. There is regular analysis of class and group progress in literacy and numeracy, in line with the recommendations of the national strategies. This analysis has helped teachers to plan for extra practice and support for pupils in areas of weakness, such as writing and speaking. Pupils are given accurate information about the skills they have mastered and what they need to do to improve, although this is only occasionally reinforced by detailed, written comments in their books. There are good arrangements throughout the school for retaining key pieces of work to contribute towards pupils' Records of Achievement.
41. Assessment procedures in other subjects are much less well developed. Only in information and communication technology are there arrangements for regular assessment of pupils' progress and these have yet to be fully implemented. In the remaining subjects, the staff compile an annual portfolio of pupils' work that provides a summary of the levels reached, but there is a lack of regular, ongoing assessment. As a result, staff cannot always be sure of the range of skills pupils have acquired when they are planning their next series of lessons. Given the considerable fluctuations in levels of ability between years, this can lead to a lack of continuity in planning. The appointment of key stage managers has encouraged a greater focus on monitoring pupils' progress. There is now considerable discussion between key stage managers and subject co-ordinators on the best ways of improving assessment information.
42. The monitoring of the progress of pupils with special educational needs is very good. There is regular assessment of pupils' progress towards the targets in their individual

education plans and frequent checks that pupils are provided with the means to benefit from the full curriculum. Classroom assistants make a substantial contribution to the monitoring of progress by taking note of significant achievements. The information presented in annual reviews gives a clear idea of the standards being achieved by pupils in all major subject areas, but is particularly clear on their progress in literacy.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. The school has an established and important role in the local community and, since the last inspection, has further strengthened its very effective links with parents. As a result parents are becoming more involved with their children's learning and this has a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
44. In the questionnaires, parents expressed very good views of the school and, in particular:
- they say that their children like school and are making good progress;
 - they feel that teaching is good, the school has high expectations of children and sets the right amount of homework;
 - they say that behaviour is good and that the school helps their children to be mature and responsible;
 - they feel that they can approach the school with any questions or problems, the staff work closely with them and they are well informed about their children's progress;
 - they are pleased that the school is well managed and led.
45. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views of the school. In the questionnaires, some parents were critical of the range of extra-curricular activities on offer. However, the inspection team finds that the range of activities provided is good overall, particularly taking account of the clubs that the staff run at lunchtime.
46. The quality of information provided for parents is good. Parents say that they appreciate the regular, weekly newsletters that help them to know what is going on in school. They say they are given plenty of information about what is being taught and that the notices on classroom windows ensure that they are reminded about activities taking place. Pupils' end-of-year reports give parents good quality information in all subjects of the National Curriculum. There is detailed information about pupils' personal development and the targets for improvement are clear for those parents who wish to support their children's learning at home. Many parents contribute their own written comments to reports and express satisfaction with the information that they receive. The school's prospectus is satisfactory overall. Parents are given good information about the organisation of the school although some curriculum information is rather brief, particularly for English and mathematics. The governors' annual report to parents lacks sufficient detail to inform parents about the development of the school, although there is a good commitment from governors to a positive partnership between home and school.
47. The school encourages positive relationships with parents in its home-school agreement and begins the partnership with home visits by nursery staff. Staff are readily available to speak to parents at the end of the day and the headteacher is very visible around the school. This helps parents to feel comfortable about speaking to staff about any concerns they may have as they arise. Parents of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need attend the annual reviews and are kept well informed of their child's progress. Teachers discuss individual needs, which may have arisen during the day, informally with parents or carers when they collect the pupils. Individual targets are discussed at parent interviews, as well as informally as the year progresses. Reading diaries and homework books are used well by staff and some parents to communicate regularly about pupils' progress. Parents are encouraged to help in the classroom and with activities such as swimming and operating the 'Schoolwatch' rota. They are invited

to open evenings, tea days and class assemblies and these are usually well attended. The Friends of Woodrow First School has recently been re-started and their fundraising events are well supported by parents.

48. The school is developing a range of initiatives to involve parents as much as possible in their children's learning and school life. The 'Share' programme provides parents with activities to share with their children at home. Other parents are involved in a family literacy group (Chipmunk Club) and some have joined laptop computer and Internet courses along with members of the local community. Parents who are part of the Chipmunk Club say that they are delighted with the support that they have received, and have already noticed the improvement in their children's learning as a result of their involvement.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. This is a very well managed and organised school. It is led by a headteacher, in post since 1999, who gives strong, purposeful and caring leadership. The staff respond positively to his enthusiasm. A team approach is fostered throughout the school and this helps to promote a shared understanding of its aims and values.
50. The previous inspection in 1997 reported that the former headteacher provided strong and purposeful leadership and that the governing body was actively involved in the school.
51. Key issues from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. The school is reviewing and updating its schemes of work in the foundation subjects following the introduction of Curriculum 2000.
52. On his appointment in 1999, the headteacher identified priorities for action that included behaviour management, improving pupils' self-esteem and raising the level of attendance. There has been outstanding success in the first two areas. A new positive behaviour management strategy was successfully introduced together with an effective programme for personal and social education. Substantial improvements to the school environment have also been carried out. There is still further work to be done regarding attendance, particularly with respect to term-time holidays.
53. The headteacher has developed clear structures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of education provided and raising pupils' levels of attainment. Procedures for assessment, test analyses, target setting, lesson observations and work sampling contribute significantly to the school's improvement.
54. The management structure has been in place for a year. The new posts that have been established provide sound development of management skills for the staff concerned. They support the systems of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning that take place in the school.
55. The headteacher is well supported by his deputy. With the headteacher, she is directly involved in lesson observations in numeracy and literacy. Subject co-ordinators have begun to monitor and evaluate standards in their subject areas so that improvements can be made. Such monitoring is achieved largely by analysing, planning and examining pupils' work. There has not been any evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning in lessons except in numeracy and literacy.
56. The school has an effective improvement plan arising from shared discussion of the priorities amongst staff and governors. The plan identifies targets such as the continuing improvement in the provision for information and communication technology and its use,

performance management, the school premises and the continuing development of literacy and numeracy.

57. The headteacher is ably supported by a knowledgeable and active governing body. Governors are conscientious in discharging their responsibilities. The governing body makes a significant contribution to the quality of education through involvement in all areas of the work of the school. The governing body is kept well informed of developments and fulfils its statutory responsibilities. It gains first-hand knowledge of the school's progress through regular reports and visits and the involvement of some governors in classroom activities. Appropriate committees have been established, including a recently introduced self-evaluation working party, designed to contribute to the governors' annual monitoring plan and to give governors clear guidelines regarding their responsibilities. Governors attend a variety of relevant training courses.
58. Special educational needs are a clear priority for the headteacher and governors, who do their utmost to ensure that all needs are fully met. Despite their best efforts, the school has not been successful in gaining sufficient support from speech therapists for the significant number of pupils in the school who have speech difficulties. This support is particularly needed in the early years in the reception classes. The co-ordinator for special educational needs, as part of the senior management team, is central to decision-making and makes an effective contribution to the management of this important aspect of the school. The learning support assistants are well trained and experienced. They are highly committed to meeting the individual needs of pupils. They make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning and play a vital role in raising standards.
59. Staff, governors, pupils and parents are aware of the school's central aim of providing opportunities for all to achieve success. The importance of equal opportunities is reflected in the inclusion of this issue in school policies and guidelines. Throughout the school there is an emphasis on developing good relationships with the community. To this end the school offers a basic literacy course for parents and a laptop and Internet course has also been initiated. Parents' views of the school are very positive and they appreciate the efforts that the school makes to work more closely with them and involve them in their children's learning and progress.
60. The school continues to provide good value for money. It has used a large carry forward figure to improve significantly its accommodation and resources through its Year 2000 project. The headteacher and governing body manage the budget well. Spending is closely linked to the priorities identified in the school development plan and is carefully monitored to ensure that the school keeps within its budget. Although the school is rightly committed to retaining high staffing levels, governors are well aware of the possible impact on pupil numbers as a result of local restructuring. This may adversely affect future budgets. The school makes good use of specific grants in order to achieve improvement. For example, funding to initiate strategies for improving pupils' behaviour and attendance is clearly having a good impact as pupils' behaviour improves and the number of unauthorised absences reduces. The school makes good use of its resources and applies the principles of best value well.
61. Office administration and day-to-day financial control are good. The office staff provide good support to the headteacher and staff and are an important link with parents. Satisfactory use is made of new technology to support management and administration. Since the last inspection, the school has computerised its financial and attendance systems. However, it does not yet use the Internet or e-mail as part of its administrative procedures and a part of the budget is still managed on a manual system by the deputy headteacher.

62. The school has a good number of teaching staff who are assisted very effectively by learning support assistants deployed across the school. The quality of support given makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning and school life. The effectiveness of staff is well supported by the good procedures in place for professional development and performance management. Professional development and staff training, including the induction and support of newly qualified teachers, is well managed and has a high priority in the school. Training needs are clearly linked to the priorities identified in the school development plan and there are good opportunities for staff to share what they have learned. There are good arrangements for the appraisal of teaching staff under the new performance management structure but the school has not yet developed such systems for its learning support and other staff.
63. The school's accommodation is good and has been improved since the last inspection with the addition of an information technology room, a new library and ongoing work to replace pupils' toilets. Classrooms have attractive displays of pupils' work. Pupils are used to the open plan classrooms and there is very little disturbance. The two halls are used well for drama, physical education and assemblies. The library is a particularly good feature of the school. High quality shelves, tables and chairs, plants and displays make this area attractive to pupils and encourage them to use the library. The book stock is good and is being continually developed. The school has good outdoor facilities although it is presently concerned about the state of the swimming pool and its building, both of which are in urgent need of repair and significant capital investment. The outside play area for children under five years of age is stimulating and has been further developed with a covered area for outdoor activities. The internal quadrangle has been attractively renovated for use as a quiet play area.
64. The school's learning resources are good and there are none of the deficiencies reported at the last inspection. Information and communication technology resources have been improved with the installation of the computer room although there are still some older computers in classrooms. Resources are well organised and easily accessible to staff and pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. In accordance with the existing agenda for school development, the headteacher, with the governing body and staff, should:

improve pupils' attainment in speaking and writing by:

- continuing to share the best practice of encouraging pupils to:
 - give full answers orally in all lessons;
 - use more imaginative vocabulary and grammatically correct speech across all subjects;
 - improve presentation skills;
 - recognise different styles of writing and use these in their own work.
- making sure that sufficient time is allocated in the teaching of subjects other than English for pupils to write full accounts of their work, for example evaluations in design and technology and accounts of investigations in science;
- agreeing on what is a sufficiently high standard of work for individual pupils and insisting on it.

(see paragraphs 87 - 100)

improve the progress that children make in developing the skills of literacy and numeracy as they move from the nursery, through the reception year, into Key Stage 1 and the National Curriculum by:

- making sure that lesson planning aims to build securely on what children already know, understand and can do;
- making clear what is to be learned in lessons and telling the children;
- developing further the present team work between teachers from the nursery through to Key Stage 1.

(see paragraphs 17, 18, 75 - 80, 90 - 91, 93)

improve the tracking of pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and science and using the information to plan the next piece of teaching and learning by:

- making sure that schemes of work identify clearly what pupils are supposed to learn in each year group;
- identifying clearly what pupils are intended to learn in a lesson, judging their success and recording that information;
- subject co-ordinators monitoring teachers' planning and the making and recording of assessments.

(see paragraphs 18, 24, 41, 134, 136, 145, 167)

improve the attendance of children whose parents keep them away from school for no good reason by:

- impressing on parents the importance of their children attending school regularly;
- continuing to work in collaboration with other agencies to make sure that irregular attendance is carefully monitored and speedily followed up.

(see paragraphs 13, 36)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	83
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	64

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
5	17	48	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	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	31	291
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	26	102

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	83

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	27
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	34

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.2
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	35	28	63

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	24
	Girls	22	21	22
	Total	38	37	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	60 (85)	59 (85)	73 (87)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	26	26
	Girls	23	22	26
	Total	38	48	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	60 (85)	76 (87)	83 (97)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	0
White	234
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	1	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)	15.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.4
Average class size	22.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	202.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	31

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.3
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	649,156
Total expenditure	679,445
Expenditure per pupil	2,110
Balance brought forward from previous year	73,451
Balance carried forward to next year	43,162

Substantial refurbishment work has led to further significant reductions in the carry forward figure.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

27 per cent

Number of questionnaires sent out	353
Number of questionnaires returned	94

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	23	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	73	23	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	71	26	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	58	32	7	2	1
The teaching is good.	76	23	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	38	6	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	22	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	27	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	52	41	6	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	70	27	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	72	27	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	36	21	2	12

Because of rounding some rows do not add up to 100

Other issues raised by parents

Some concern about the perimeter fence and security.

Parents are enthusiastic about the school and the improvements instigated by the new headteacher.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

66. At the time of the inspection there were 62 children, aged three or four, who attended either morning or afternoon sessions in the nursery. In addition there were a total of 18 children under five years of age in the three reception classes.
67. Children enter the nursery at the age of three, with few skills and most are well behind the majority of children of their age in terms of knowledge and understanding, especially in literacy and numeracy. Many children have social skills and knowledge and understanding of the world that are also well below what is expected for their age. Although children make substantial gains, attainment is still below average in these areas when they enter Key Stage 1.
68. The nursery is a strength of the school. It is very well managed by a teacher and two nursery nurses. They are knowledgeable and dedicated to giving the children a safe, secure and happy start to school life. Most children make good progress in the development of their skills, knowledge and understanding
69. The high quality curriculum, based on the national guidance for the Foundation Stage, covers all areas of experience. It fosters and promotes individual curiosity. In both the nursery and reception classes, there is a well-managed balance between teacher-directed and pupil-chosen activities.
70. Assessment, soon after entry into the nursery and reception classes, enables staff to gather accurate information about individual levels of attainment. These assessments are repeated at the end of the children's time in the nursery and reception classes. Children with special educational needs are identified, but specialist support for them is insufficient, particularly in the very important area of speech and language. Attainment in most areas of learning is still below expectations when pupils move into Key Stage 1.
71. Record keeping and assessment procedures are good and used effectively in both nursery and reception classes. Records of achievement and folders containing children's work provide substantial evidence of their attainment and progress. The smooth transition between the nursery and reception classes is carefully planned and contributes to the quality of learning for the children in the Foundation Stage.
72. The previous inspection was critical of the outdoor area for children in the nursery. Since then, the area has been improved and the children have the benefit of a covered play space and security from the new fencing that has been erected.

Personal, social and emotional development

73. Children's personal, social and emotional development is given high priority in the nursery and reception classes. Most children enter the nursery and reception classes with skills that are well below the expected levels. Progress is variable and depends on the maturity and needs of individual children; despite having made good progress, many enter Year 1 with skills below what is expected for their age. Most children respond positively to the well-established routines of the classrooms. The expectations of them are consistent across the classes and most children play, work and learn together well. They share equipment and apparatus and learn to take turns and share fairly, particularly in the role-play vet's clinic and café, where they act out the characters of chef, waitress and customer.

74. Children are encouraged to develop self-confidence and act responsibly. In the nursery they show developing independence in selecting from a good range of prepared activities. Although some children only concentrate for a short while, others remain on task for a worthwhile length of time. Very good relationships between teachers and children foster positive responses. Planned discussion times provide opportunities for children to share feelings and ideas in a structured way.

Communication, Language and Literacy

75. On entry to the nursery, many children's speaking skills are well below average for their age. Many respond to questions by using a single word and the speech of a sizeable minority is unclear. The development of language and literacy is given a high priority and children make good progress. However, by the age of five their levels of attainment are still below those expected. Most children listen quite attentively. They speak in simple sentences and respond enthusiastically to songs, rhymes and stories. For example, children relished the opportunity to explore the feel of a bug's coat in a book shared with the teacher and responded with 'furry' when asked to describe how it felt. Children made marks like writing when asked to write a story about mini-beasts.
76. In the reception classes, children continue to show an interest in books. During a session where the class teacher reads from a big book, the children's participation is good. The teacher uses good questioning and as a result, the children observe more closely and start to describe the character. Some know initial letters. A more able child knows the title, author and illustrator and points out the question mark. Children benefit from the very good support given by the learning support assistant when writing. This is focused on correct letter formation and the use of spaces and punctuation. Nevertheless, children are encouraged to be as independent as possible. They show real enjoyment in reading together and respond well to rhymes. They take books home and reading diaries are completed. Some children are reading confidently and independently. However, by the end of the Foundation Stage, few pupils achieve the expected level.
77. A very large proportion of children in the reception classes have special educational needs and although some make good progress, others find it difficult to concentrate for extended periods. Some children's speech is indistinct with many words missing, for example 'tortoise slow'.
78. Children use the computer successfully to support their learning. For example, they operate the mouse successfully to click on letter sounds and words based on their book.

Mathematical development

79. In the nursery, opportunities to develop early mathematical concepts are planned so that learning is reinforced by several different activities. For example, children count the spots on the backs of the ladybird cakes during the cooking activity. Children play games to establish number recognition. Some count competently to five, others to ten. Children sort and match shapes. Some name and match circles and triangles. Children look at the different sizes of mini-beasts and correctly use the language of comparison, 'bigger', 'middle-sized' and 'longer' or 'shorter'. By the time they move to the reception year some children who are still under five can count to ten.
80. In the reception classes, some pupils recognise and use numbers to ten and count well beyond with confidence. They count in twos and more able children find doubles and count back from ten. Some children identify numbers coming before or after others. Children investigate size, weight and quantities as they handle and weigh vegetables. Teachers exploit opportunities where addition and subtraction can be used in practical ways, with the result that children have a sound grasp of the processes. Children make good progress, but a significant number do not achieve the early learning goals in this area.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

81. Children enter school with a knowledge and understanding of the world that is well below expectations. In the nursery, mixing cornflour is an activity well designed to develop children's understanding of changes. Investigation based on using a pipette to squeeze colour into water tanks of differing depths, is very well planned to promote scientific discussion. Children explore the features of living things as they learn about mini-beasts and care for Stuart, the mouse. Children in reception classes use their sense of taste to record their likes or dislikes of different foods. They are encouraged to observe their immediate environment as they walk to the library. They draw simple maps of the locality and indicate special features that they have noticed. Water and wet or dry sand are used for investigation and exploration. Children make use of information and communication technology and are beginning to control the mouse. By the time they are six years of age, many children have made good progress. However, a significant number of children do not reach the expected early learning goals.

Physical development

82. Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress in their physical development. Most achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning, partly because all children in the Foundation Stage have access to a spacious and secure outdoor area. Children use wheeled toys and many ride bicycles confidently with a good awareness of space and the needs of others. They use the hall apparatus to practise climbing and balancing. Some children develop grace and agility in their movements. Children use the 'parachute' in physical education. This encourages them to work as a group successfully, to their obvious delight. In this lesson the teacher very effectively reinforces the children's speaking, listening and numeracy skills as they listen to instructions and discuss the shapes they make with the parachute. Children handle construction kits, tools and materials with increasing control. Children in the reception classes benefit from early opportunities to use the learner swimming pool.

Creative development

83. Children enter school with skills that are generally underdeveloped. They are provided with good opportunities for improvement. In the nursery, children use different media to create attractive displays. They create butterfly prints. They use junk material to make models of creatures, carefully painting features and using glue to join. They are proud of their art gallery where drawings and paintings are displayed to good effect. Children make good progress in developing their skills. In the reception classes, children experiment with clay to make tiles. They choose their own materials to make monsters and experiment with paint to make bubble pictures. Children use musical instruments in planned activities to accompany songs and nursery rhymes. They develop an awareness of long and short sounds and use woodblocks to maintain the beat as they sing *Hickory Dickory Dock*. Children make good progress and many are on target to achieve their early learning goals.

Quality of teaching

84. The quality of teaching is good and often very good in the nursery; of the lessons observed, 60 per cent were good and the other 40 per cent were very good. The quality of teaching in the reception classes is never less than sound and is often good; of the lessons observed, 38 per cent were good and the rest were satisfactory. In the best lessons in literacy and numeracy, teachers make good use of practical activities; lessons match the planning and achieve the objectives. The pace and duration of tasks match the needs and abilities of the children. These attributes promote good learning and progress. In the less successful lessons, more able children are not sufficiently challenged when too much time is spent reinforcing concepts that they know and

understand. Some children with lower attainment and those with special educational needs find it difficult to maintain their concentration for extended periods of time.

85. Teachers' plans, although sound in many respects, contain learning intentions that are sometimes too broad. There is an insufficiently sharp focus on what the children are intended to learn in some lessons and this lessens their impact.

Induction arrangements

86. Induction arrangements to the nursery are very good. Nursery staff visit children's homes by arrangement and parents visit the nursery during an open week. The school holds a meeting for parents and children before they enter the reception classes. Play sessions in the reception classes are arranged for the children before they transfer. These arrangements make an important contribution to helping the children to settle.

ENGLISH

National test results

87. The school is keenly aware of the need to raise standards in English. Pupils enter the school with below average skills in English, especially in speaking. In 1998 and 1999, the results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 showed attainment in English as being in line with the national average. There was a dip to below the national average in the 2000 national test results, largely due to the well above average numbers of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. Many of these pupils had difficulties with English. The school responded positively to this decline with a sharp focus on writing, leading to the provisional results of 2001 improving to the level of those attained in 1999.

Standards and progress

88. Teachers and pupils work hard to improve skills in English and this results in clear improvements as pupils move through the school. Pupils make good progress in reading and attain levels in line with national expectations. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. They make sound progress in speaking and writing skills but these still remain below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be broadly in line with national expectations.
89. The lowest attaining pupils make good progress because they receive good quality support. All pupils benefit from small class sizes and the good teaching provided by teachers and learning support assistants, including the use of the additional literacy strategy in Key Stage 2. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need are well supported and totally included in all aspects of English. They receive very good support, which enables them to benefit from working in the class without disrupting other pupils' learning.

Speaking and listening

90. The rich and stimulating work provided in the nursery helps to significantly improve pupils' speaking skills but these remain below average throughout the school. Teachers and learning support assistants are well aware of the limited vocabulary that most pupils have, therefore, they make sure that pupils understand new words, and deliberately repeat words and phrases. They wait for pupils to express their ideas more fully and offer good oral models to help pupils with correct grammatical structures and pronunciation. For example, pupils in reception tend to leave off the ends of words, which makes their speech indistinct. They have difficulty in remembering and repeating words such as 'vegetables', even though this is part of the week's topic. By Year 2, speaking becomes more distinct but there are still difficulties for some pupils in hearing the correct sounds.

For example, one boy talks of 'Buckington Palace' during roleplay in history. There is a strong tendency in all years to offer brief answers. Once again, teachers insist on full answers and encourage pupils to use more complex sentences but this does not come easily to most of them. Confidence in speaking grows as the pupils move into Year 2 and then on into Key Stage 2.

91. Through the very good training given in school, pupils listen attentively to adults and to each other. Pupils respond quickly to group instructions and show that they have been listening when talking about stories they have read. However, they do find listening for precise sounds difficult, for example when asked to distinguish between a short and long 'ow' sound in Year 3. They are keen to achieve and with perseverance on their part and that of the teacher, they eventually hear the difference and enjoy giving a range of examples to create their word bank.

Reading

92. It is a credit to the school and the support of parents, that pupils love reading. They talk with pleasure about their reading books, although they sometimes struggle to find the exact language to explain the meaning or show their understanding. By the end of Year 2, pupils read well together in class and are aware of the impact of punctuation on expression. The careful analysis of text, for example, when reading *Letters from Lucy* helps pupils to identify different styles of writing that they can then use in their own work. The middle and higher attaining pupils read fluently and with expression, showing good skills for tackling unfamiliar words. They discuss favourite parts of stories and show an enjoyment of the humour or the use of language. For example, one girl reading *Philippa and the Dragon* loved the repetition and the implied humour in, 'But Philippa, quiet little Philippa, went on reading.' Lower attaining pupils also enjoy reading and often choose books that they can relate to personally, such as, *The Wobbly Tooth*. In Years 3 and 4, pupils start to appreciate a wider range of books. Many express interest in information books and know how to use an index. Higher and middle attaining pupils read accurately and with good expression, and recognise why the author has, for example, written 'amaazing'. This is a result of detailed textual analysis in the literacy hour that is evident from Year 2 onwards. Lower attaining pupils have gained the confidence to attempt unfamiliar words and have clear strategies that are helpfully reinforced in the additional literacy group sessions. All pupils have useful reading records, with regular assessments of their progress. The older pupils' records show that they have experienced a reasonably wide range of reading, including the usual favourite authors. Pupils throughout the school have a clear understanding about their own progress in reading.

Writing

93. The below average speaking skills have a significant impact on pupils' writing. Pupils benefit from regular handwriting lessons and spelling tests, as well as the opportunities for writing at length in lessons that are additional to the literacy hours. However, pupils do not find it easy to put their ideas on to paper. Teachers work hard to ensure good discussion prior to writing so that pupils build up a range of more imaginative vocabulary and phrases. They reinforce the use of punctuation through the literacy hours and display key words for spellings. Pupils benefit from being given clear structures. For example, Year 2 pupils create a plan for a lost toy story. They write about a soft toy on their table that they can handle and describe, further stimulating the less able pupils. This means that pupils with learning and emotional needs can take full part and produce their own description such as, 'He has got bracw spks' (brown spikes). The encouragement to use unusual words, motivates one lower attaining pupil to attempt 'dechrictit' for distracted. Higher and middle attaining pupils benefit greatly from a brief checklist of reminders, such as 'Have you checked your writing for spellings; capital letters and missed out words? Can you find more interesting words?' This encourages pupils to use dictionaries and thesauri. Older pupils use more complex sentences and are beginning to

understand that different writing requires different styles. In Years 3 and 4, pupils enjoy writing a letter to the newspaper about a Bully Club and then writing an article about it. The higher attaining pupils manage to convey a journalistic style and use paragraphs correctly in a way that is in line with national expectations. There are good examples of pupils writing in different ways in other subjects, such as writing up experiments in science or evaluating design technology work. The strong focus on writing is improving standards.

Pupils and English

94. Pupils behave well in lessons and are keen to contribute ideas. They listen carefully to the teacher and to each other, for example during the concluding sessions of the literacy hour, when they are recapping on the key elements of the lesson. They take pleasure in their work and engage in the group tasks with enthusiasm and independence. Pupils know what they need to do to improve their work but find it hard to achieve. As in the previous report, pupils' attitudes and behaviour continue to be a very positive aspect that contributes well to their learning.

Teaching and learning

95. Teaching is good or better in three quarters of the literacy hours and two thirds of the total number of English lessons seen. There is some excellent teaching in Key Stage 1 and some very good teaching in subsequent years. This high proportion of good or better teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' learning.
96. Where teaching is good or better, teachers increase the pupils' confidence and skills by offering positive encouragement and pursuing ideas in different ways until the pupils fully understand. Through good questioning techniques, combined with high expectations, teachers elicit fuller answers than the pupils would naturally give. The planning, especially for the literacy hours, is very thorough, with tasks carefully matched to the pupils' needs. All pupils are fully included. This is made possible by the very good, consistent, application of the positive behaviour strategies and the very good teamwork between the teachers and learning support assistants, all of whom know the pupils' individual needs in detail. For example, pupils with the highest levels of special educational need in Year 3 produce alliterative faces, which they proudly display in the classroom, thanks to strong support from the very experienced learning assistant and the creative planning of the teacher. In the good or better lessons, teachers use a wide range of resources and approaches to stimulate and maintain pupils' interest. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 love to use the whiteboard and rubbers to practise their spellings, whilst pupils in Key Stage 2 respond well to tape-recording tongue twisters. The good or better concluding sessions in the literacy hours provide good reinforcement of the clear aims, which are shared with pupils. For example, at the end of an excellent Year 2 lesson, the teacher consolidated the 'oo' sound with an enjoyable word game of mouse and cheese that kept the pupils fully engaged in their learning up to the very last minute.
97. Where teaching is satisfactory, some parts of the lessons overrun and this leads to pupils' concentration flagging. On occasions, group work or the concluding session is curtailed, which means that the key elements of the lesson are not sufficiently reinforced. There is also less variation in activities leading to a more passive response rather than full involvement on the part of the pupils. In a few lessons, the aims, although shared with the pupils, are not sufficiently explained, or are expressed in language that they do not understand. Overall, as in the previous report, good teaching is enhancing pupils' learning. There were few examples of the skills of information and communication technology being used to support and extend work in English.

Assessment

98. There are sound assessment procedures including some good marking that clearly indicates how pupils can improve as well as praising achievements. The overall analysis of results has led to the clear identification of writing as a focus for improvement. Individual progress is tracked through regular testing and this helps to pinpoint particular needs.

Leadership and management

99. As noted in the previous report, the co-ordinator provides good leadership with a clear overview of the strengths and weaknesses within English and offers a very good role model for other colleagues. There is a strong commitment in the school to improving standards in English and a determination to focus carefully on key skills in English across all subjects.

In summary

100. In order to improve standards further, the school needs to continue to share the best practice of encouraging pupils to:
- give full answers orally in all lessons;
 - use more imaginative vocabulary and grammatically correct speech across all subjects;
 - improve presentation skills;
 - recognise different styles of writing and use these in their own work.

MATHEMATICS

National Test results

101. At the time of the last inspection in 1997, the percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected level of attainment or above was in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4. In 1998, the results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 showed an improvement in relation to national averages.
102. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 indicate that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 and above was well below the national average. The results were also below the average for schools in similar contexts. This particular year group contained a well above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The evidence from observing lessons with the current Year 3, confirms that a significant number of pupils have special educational needs in terms of numeracy.
103. The school has responded to the dip in National Curriculum test results since 1998 by building clear targets into its planning, against which pupils' progress is carefully monitored. The co-coordinator provides good leadership in evaluating planning, analysing test results and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The provisional National Curriculum test results for 2001 indicate an improvement and the school expects its results to move closer to the national average.

Standards and progress

104. Inspection evidence based on lesson observation, discussions with pupils and examination of pupils' work indicates that levels of attainment in Key Stage 1 and in Year 4 are broadly in line with national expectations. Although no national averages are available for the 2001 tests, indications are that the proportion of pupils who achieved at least the expectation of Level 2 has increased. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
105. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall. They made good or very good progress in 90 per cent of the lessons observed during the inspection and at least satisfactory progress in the remainder. Pupils in Year 1 make

most progress when they have the opportunity to investigate and carry out activities of a practical nature. For example, pupils work conscientiously to select strips of paper to make triangles. They explore the properties of shapes. Higher attaining pupils realise that all squares have four equal sides and that a triangle is a 'flat' two-dimensional shape with three sides and three corners. All pupils recognise circles and triangles. Others know that a hexagon has six sides and an octagon has eight.

106. Pupils develop their skills in addition and subtraction. They are encouraged by the daily mental mathematics sessions. They develop, through daily practice, a sound capacity for mental arithmetic and are beginning to make use of number skills in solving simple problems and matching patterns. Examination of pupils' work shows sound progress throughout the year. For example, higher attaining pupils in Year 1 successfully double numbers and use addition and subtraction to find missing numbers.
107. As they progress through the school, most pupils' speed and confidence in mental calculations improve. For example, pupils in Year 2 are eager to give the corresponding subtractions to $6 + 3 = 9$ and maintain their eagerness as the questions become more difficult. Higher attaining pupils mentally calculate large numbers and explain their methods. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported to practise and consolidate their number recognition and calculating skills.
108. Year 3 pupils locate right angles in two-dimensional shapes and the environment. Most understand the relationship between 90 degrees and quarters. Pupils are highly motivated to find co-ordinates on treasure maps. They respond accurately and speedily when adding three single-digit numbers during a number game. Those with special educational needs are skilfully helped by learning support assistants. Pupils are given the confidence to participate and succeed.
109. Pupils in Year 4 interpret data using bar charts and graphs. They multiply and divide accurately and successfully carry out work on fractions and time. They understand and use multiples of 100. Higher attaining pupils handle large numbers easily. For example, one pupil doubles 2,100 and reasons that 4,200 is a multiple of 100. Another, doubling 500, explains that it is ten hundreds and that is 1,000. Pupils explore lines of symmetry and make good progress in their understanding.

Pupils and mathematics

110. Pupils show high levels of interest and involvement. They benefit not only from well-focused teaching and clear expectations of standards and conduct, but also from the effective individual help from the teachers and support assistants. Most pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy the subject. Behaviour is never less than good and is often very good.

Teaching

111. Overall the teaching of mathematics is very good. Twenty per cent of the lessons observed were excellent, 40 per cent were very good, 30 per cent were good and the remainder were satisfactory. Work is carefully matched to pupils' needs and abilities. The careful explanations and instructions given by teachers enable most pupils to work with a degree of independence.

112. Other features of the best teaching, which lead to pupils making good or very good progress include:
- clearly focused and well resourced tasks for pupils of all abilities;
 - good use of questions to hold pupils' attention and promote understanding;
 - high expectations of behaviour, which is well managed through the interest and pace of lessons;
 - enthusiasm and good subject knowledge;
 - clear identification of what pupils are to learn and telling them.
113. Where teaching is less effective, this is usually because of one or more of the following factors:
- the pace of the lesson is slow;
 - opportunities for reinforcement are missed;
 - materials for pupils to use are not entirely appropriate;
 - too ready acceptance of inaccurate work.
114. Strengths of the subject are :
- good quality teaching;
 - setting of curricular targets;
 - detailed monitoring and analysis of test results by the co-ordinator and headteacher.
115. What could be improved:
- the use of information and communication technology to support and extend pupils' learning within the classrooms;
 - results in the national tests;
 - presentation of work in books;
 - the marking of pupils' work so that it specifies targets for improvement.

SCIENCE

National test results

116. The 2000 Key Stage 1 teacher assessments show attainment to be well below the national average for all schools and below average for similar schools. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher than expected Level 3 was well above the national average for all schools and similar schools.

Standards and progress

117. At the time of the last inspection, standards of attainment were judged to be above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with it in Year 4. Because science is taught every other half term, it was not possible to see work in progress in either Year 2 or Year 4. On the evidence of the lessons observed, examination of pupils' work and discussions with them, it is judged that attainment is broadly in line with national expectations both at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
118. Teachers create good opportunities for developing the skills of literacy through pupils writing their own accounts of investigations and this is valuable. However, the knowledge and understanding of many pupils is greater than they can readily communicate in writing. Numerical skills are used in science lessons although there is little evidence of planned connections between what is being taught in mathematics and science. Planning shows clearly that Information and communication technology is used to support and enrich learning in science, although no actual examples were observed during the inspection.

Science in Key Stage 1

119. The books of pupils in Years 1 and 2 show a sound coverage of the content of the curriculum and evidence of early investigational work and recording. Immediately before the inspection, pupils from Year 1 had been learning about how people change over time, including library-based work involving looking at pictures of young and old people. During the inspection, pupils looked at similarities and differences between people as part of a well-planned unit of work. Their teacher skilfully built up a list of common features and differences from the pupils' contributions, using the presence of twins to identify uniqueness. The main task of preparing individual passports containing special information, a photograph and fingerprint, was chosen well to promote interest and learning. The topic is linked well to work in personal, social and health education and will offer good opportunities for extended writing.
120. Pupils in Year 2 have investigated whether tall candles have brighter flames than small ones and whether flame colour varies with the colour of the candle. The important ingredients of prediction, observation and recording in their own words were all present. The recording by higher attaining pupils was clear and accurate. Recording by other pupils rarely conveyed what had been done. Pupils have also explored the notion of a fair test through finding out which materials cast a shadow. They have also engaged in practical activities with mirrors, for example mirror writing and completing reflections.
121. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make progress that is at least satisfactory throughout the key stage.

Science in Key Stage 2

122. Pupils in Year 3 were learning about light and shadow during the inspection. Staff in the year group, with the support of the co-ordinator, had planned a good sequence of lessons together effectively. Pupils were observed learning the correct use of 'opaque', 'translucent' and 'transparent' as part of their preparation for making a shadow puppet. Most pupils clearly understand that shadows do not show detail and higher attaining pupils show substantial knowledge of the size and direction of shadows. Most pupils know that when the sun is low in the sky the shadow is longer although several find it difficult to explain this concisely.
123. Pupils made good gains in their knowledge and understanding of reflecting surfaces in well-prepared practical lessons. Teachers had organised a sequence of five investigations. They made very sure that pupils understood what they had to do in each of them, for example to represent the images of themselves as seen in convex and concave mirrors. Good intervention by teachers meant that pupils' understanding was continually challenged and extended. Learning support assistants accompanied groups of less able pupils from task to task thereby making sure that they had full access to what was provided. The concluding parts of these very good lessons were used well to consolidate pupils' learning through well-chosen and directed questions. The level of pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding was in line with expectations for their age group and the quality of their learning was good.
124. Examination of the work carried out by pupils from Year 4, shows sound progress in the development of experimental skills. For example, they have explored coffee granules dissolving in hot and cold water and devised a test to establish which material would make the strongest trousers. There is clear evidence of understanding of what makes a test fair and of improvement in the quality of written accounts. At best, teachers' written comments are directed towards extending scientific learning, for example 'Can you remember what humus is?' and 'What makes the pebbles and stones smoother?'. In addition, pupils are shown how to improve the quality of their accounts, for example by replacing *it* by *the experiment* in 'This is how we did *it*' or replacing *what* by *the information* in 'This is *what* we found out.' On the other hand, there are instances where

no reference is made to the scientific learning and comments relate only to the 'lovely handwriting'. Interactive and directed marking is not being fully used to raise standards in science.

Teaching and learning

125. The quality of teaching in science is never less than satisfactory, two of the lessons observed were very good, one was good and two were satisfactory. Teachers plan carefully, usually with a sharp focus on the scientific learning objectives for the unit and for individual lessons. Opportunities are taken for linking the work to the 'real world', for example in identifying where and when mirrors are used and what other objects, such as a television set and a spoon, reflect light. Links are made with other areas of the curriculum, for example design and technology and personal, social and health education, and these links often enhance learning. However, it is important that a sharp focus is kept on the scientific objectives, given that science as a subject is taught for only one half term in two.
126. Pupils clearly enjoy their science lessons, most particularly when they are practically based. They work well together on tasks and behave responsibly. They show a lot of interest and concentrate well. Most willingly offer answers and suggestions and their positive attitudes contribute to the generally good quality of their learning. Overall progress is at least satisfactory throughout the school and for many higher attaining pupils it is often good, both in terms of acquiring scientific knowledge and in being able to communicate it orally and in writing.

In summary

127. The school is making good progress in raising levels of attainment in science. The assessments, usually of an investigative nature, at the end of each unit of work, are used well to identify the next steps for learning. The co-ordinator, who provides enthusiastic and effective support to colleagues, sees the assessment organisation as crucial to improving progress as pupils move through the school. Weekly homework tasks related to a scientific theme also contribute well to pupils' learning, as when a pupil from Year 2 recorded that he has found out that 'Plastic is mainly made from chemicals. Chemicals come from oil. Most plastics have no colour of their own so coloured dyes are added'.

ART AND DESIGN

128. During the inspection only a few lessons were observed. All were of at least satisfactory quality, including one that was very good. There was insufficient evidence on which to base a firm judgement about the impact of teaching on the quality of pupils' learning. Judgements about pupils' attainment are also based on scrutiny of their work in progress, talking to them about their work and looking at the significant amount of work displayed around the school. Throughout the school, the levels of attainment are in line with those expected of pupils of their ages, with some pupils achieving higher levels. The previous inspection reported that attainment was above average in both key stages.
129. Some particularly good work is seen in Year 2 where pupils demonstrate their knowledge of pattern in their work based on the designs of William Morris. They use chalk, pastels and charcoal carefully to produce striking colour combinations. The pupils show a good understanding of the particular style. The high quality teaching enables pupils to evaluate their work and make very good progress in their understanding of the use of different techniques to achieve varied effects. Pupils work in various media. They use brushes and other tools carefully. They identify the particular skills, techniques and colour tone preferences of famous artists and work in their styles by using similar techniques. For example, pupils explore the uses of lines to produce bold paintings in the style of Paul Klee and Mondrian.

130. Pupils in Year 1 record observations of fruits in detail and work with accuracy using pens and thin paint. In Years 1 and 2, pupils cut and tear paper effectively to create different lines. They experiment with clay to explore the use of line by twisting, rolling and bending the material. Work in clay and other aspects of three-dimensional work are of a sound standard, sometimes good. Pupils weave using a variety of fabrics, producing pleasing results.
131. In Years 3 and 4 pupils have a good understanding of primary colours. There are good examples of pupils mixing paint to control tone and shade. For example, pupils identify complementary colours in their paintings of leaves. They use the computer to create pictures from poems.
132. Pupils with special educational needs participate fully in the activities. They are appropriately supported in order to experience success and consequently make sound, and sometimes good, progress. Throughout both key stages most pupils approach their work positively and are keen to try out their new skills. Pupils talk only briefly about their work, but they show pride in what they have achieved.
133. Art is used widely throughout the curriculum to support theme work. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 make very detailed and accurate drawings of artefacts and pictures based on their study of Ancient Egypt. They decorate their work in religious education with colourful illustrations.
134. Lessons are planned conscientiously, but the scheme of work has yet to be fully implemented. An effective assessment policy has yet to be developed in order to record pupils' progress as they move through the school. There are a variety of resources, although limited use is made of the wider community as a stimulus for art making. The school recognises the need to use sketchbooks consistently in both key stages in order to develop the pupils' personal response to art.
135. Throughout the school, artistic creations are displayed to good effect. They provide focal points for discussion and reinforce the sense of pride that pupils take in their work. The school recognises the need to make sure that lessons are planned to always include the development of art skills as well as the use of art to support learning in other subjects.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

136. At the time of the last inspection, attainment was judged to be in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The scheme of work lacked 'a detailed progression of skills to be taught and more detailed assessment procedures to help teachers with future planning'. The school is currently trying out ideas from recent government guidelines alongside well-established school units and sees this as a good way of improving skill development. The co-ordinator provides active and effective leadership of the subject and recognises that there is more to do to ensure that what is taught in each year group builds securely on what has already been learned. She is rightly concerned that the allocation and distribution of time for the subject is not always appropriate. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 now receive the equivalent of 30 minutes per week for work in this subject and this is clearly inadequate.
137. On the basis of one lesson observation, examination of work in progress and on display, conversations with pupils and teachers, attainment is judged to be satisfactory in both key stages. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding of the design process and in their skills of making. The quality of their learning is good where they have been given both adequate time and encouragement to experiment and refine their work.

138. Whole-school projects, for example the construction of Millennium clocks, make an important contribution to raising the status of the subject by giving pupils time and support in designing, making and evaluating significant articles. Pupils also participate in projects to enhance the school environment and their experience of it. Pupils from Key Stage 1 make games for wet playtimes whilst those from Key Stage 2 make games and also designs for re-painting playground markings. Projects of this sort enable pupils of all abilities to make good progress in the development of their skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject.
139. Pupils experience a satisfactory range of activities and media. In Key Stage 1, for example, pupils have designed and made vehicles, exploring how to combine fixed and moving parts in the process. During the inspection, pupils from Year 1 were working within the school's own unit on textiles. The project has been well planned and resourced with the result that pupils are gaining good, early experience of the design process. In addition they are developing their skills of marking, cutting, joining and sewing when they complete their fruit appliqué embellished with a running stitch. The lesson observed had been well prepared and was organised well so that all pupils developed skills and contributed to the decoration of a wall hanging related to the story that they were enjoying. Other good features of the lesson included the good management of time with clear limits set for tasks and the good focused help given to individual pupils by both the teacher and the learning support assistant.
140. In Key Stage 2, pupils from both Years 3 and 4 have worked successfully through a unit of work on sandwich snacks, related to healthy eating. During the inspection they were designing and making shadow puppets, a task closely related to their science work on light. They showed a sound understanding of the basic design requirements.
141. Teachers use lessons in design and technology well in developing and using the skills of literacy through discussion and planning, although opportunities for improving written evaluations are not always taken. The skills of numeracy, most notably estimating and measuring, are deliberately promoted but there is little evidence of the use of information and communication technology to support and extend learning in the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

142. Owing to the organisation of themes throughout the school, it was not possible to observe any teaching of geography during the week of the inspection. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' written work and discussions with staff and pupils.
143. At both key stages, standards are similar to those at the last inspection and there has been satisfactory development of the subject since 1997. The standards of pupils' work are in line with expectations at the age of seven. They recognise the main features in a plan of the school and identify how they might travel from one room to another. Pupils are aware of some of the main features of their locality and can speak about where they live in relation to the school and Woodrow Centre. They use simple coordinates to locate objects on a grid, such as when hunting for 'buried treasure'. More able pupils give examples of aspects of the local environment they like. They enjoy talking about the open space and trees of the school field. They dislike litter and badly parked cars. Less able pupils find it more difficult to express their opinions and need considerable prompting before they will talk about the attractive features of where they live. All pupils make direct comparisons between their daily lives and those of people in developing countries. Most pupils explain why the range of food and its preparation is different.
144. By the time pupils leave the school, at the age of nine, their work continues to be in line with expectations. They are able to describe their route to school and the main

landmarks they encounter, although some pupils become confused about the relative situation of each landmark. Most pupils can write about the shops and other facilities in Woodrow Centre. The majority can name the countries of the British Isles and identify them on a map. They know that there are different types of maps and the more able pupils can explain why different maps are needed. All pupils know the purpose of a key and recognise some of the most common symbols used by the Ordnance Survey. They know how major developments such as the construction of buildings and roads affect the environment, and some pupils refer to the benefits as well as the disadvantages of these developments.

145. The co-ordinator took over the management of the subject at the beginning of the school year. She has formulated an action plan for future developments, but has had limited time in which to implement improvements. A new, rolling programme of themes has been introduced and the Redditch geography plans, agreed by the co-ordinators in all the schools, has been introduced in Years 3 and 4. This is designed to ensure continuity between the first and middle schools. Areas where the school is short of resources have been identified and some purchases made, although there is a need for further software in support of the new themes. The subject policy, devised by the previous co-ordinator before the last inspection, is now out-of-date and does not incorporate recent national recommendations. Subject planning, including schemes of work, meets the new national requirements. This has been compiled by year team managers, but the co-ordinator is keen to have an input in developments for the next school year. There have been some initial discussions about the major strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work across the school, although the annual compilation of a portfolio only provides a very limited range of information about their progress.

HISTORY

146. Pupils make good progress and achieve levels above expectations by the time they are seven. Their knowledge of the lives of famous people of the past is particularly good and all pupils have developed a good sense of chronology. By the time they leave the school, pupils' achievements are in line with national expectations. They compare and contrast information from a variety of historical sources and respond to questioning with a good recall of essential factual information. However, their relatively weak writing skills often prevent them from explaining their full meaning on paper. Overall standards are similar to those observed at the time of the last inspection. There has been satisfactory development of the subject in line with national recommendations.
147. At Key Stage 1, good teaching ensures that pupils gradually develop their sense of the past. The youngest pupils describe some examples of old-fashioned toys and associate older members of their family or their teachers as having played with them when they were children. By the age of seven, all pupils make comparisons between past and present, such as comparing household practices and implements in Victorian Britain with those in use today. Historical artefacts, pictures and photographs are used well to stimulate curiosity. They help pupils to become used to considering different sources of information. More able pupils explain why two newspapers might have slightly different accounts of the same event: 'They were made by different people in another factory'.
148. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the themes being studied and make frequent use of dates and timelines. As a result, pupils are aware of broad periods of time and can, for instance, put pictures related to transport into the right chronological order. Pupils know that dates have meaning and most can distinguish earlier dates from later ones. They enjoy the lively question and answer sessions at the beginning and ends of lessons and take pride in demonstrating their factual knowledge. When comparing British monarchs, most pupils can distinguish between the essential facts in the lives of

Elizabeth I, Victoria and Elizabeth II. Pupils enjoy simple role-play activities and are enthusiastic about 'who am I?' games. Staff manage these lively sessions very well, encouraging pupils' good humour and enthusiasm, but providing quick reminders of how they are expected to behave. All pupils are involved, including those with special educational needs, and care is taken to develop pupils' speaking skills, giving time and guidance to those who have more problems with their speech.

149. Teaching is good at Key Stage 2. Good factual knowledge ensures that teachers' explanations about complex periods of history, such as the Ancient Egyptians, are confident and fluent. This encourages pupils to ask questions and develop their level of curiosity. Pupils are interested in why people in the past acted as they did. They know that tombs were often broken into in Egypt because of the vast wealth they contained. Lessons are well structured with a good balance between whole-class discussion and follow-up written tasks, which are designed to help pupils to improve their writing and presentation from previous low standards. Most tasks are suitable for the range of ability in classes, although some of the less able pupils need simpler written tasks, which could be designed to help them to start writing immediately rather than waiting for prompts from adults.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

150. At the time of the last inspection, attainment was judged to be broadly in line with national expectations. Several of the computers were described as outdated and some software used in Key Stage 2 was judged to be more appropriate for younger pupils. Since that time the school has improved its provision considerably, including the creation of a computer room. Each classroom has a computer as well, although these are not always compatible with those in the computer room network. Teachers are using the National Curriculum guidelines effectively to support their planning. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and support for colleagues. She actively encourages the use of information and communication technology to support and extend learning in other subjects through identifying appropriate software for each theme. She has produced a very good policy and development plan for the subject.

Teaching and learning

151. The quality of teaching in the subject is at least satisfactory, in fact, three quarters of the lessons were good or better, including one that was very good. In all the lessons observed during the inspection, pupils' interest in their learning, their attitudes and behaviour were good, in response to the stimulating work prepared for them. They remained focused on their work and supported each other's learning well. These positive responses enhance the quality of pupils' learning. Pupils of all abilities make progress that is at least sound and the quality of their learning is often good.

Key Stage 1

152. Pupils from Year 2 were learning how to plan and give instructions to achieve a desired result in the context of programming a floor robot. Lessons were planned well and very appropriate tasks devised to promote understanding. Both lessons were successful but one was more successful than the other. The reasons for this were that the teacher of the more successful lesson had been able to allocate 60 minutes for it and had a learning support assistant throughout, whilst the other lesson lasted for only 30 minutes and the teacher was unaided. In both cases the lesson started with very good questioning to check up on earlier learning in terms of the meanings of the instruction symbols and the need to clear the memory. The lessons were organised on the basis that half of the class would be working with the floor robots whilst the other worked on board games that simulated the robot's movements. This worked extremely well where there was enough

time for all pupils to visit all activities with adult support, but less successfully in the other case.

153. Examination of earlier work carried out by pupils in Years 1 and 2 shows that they have developed good mouse skills. For example, they can pick up and drop parts of the body to make a figure and then select words from a word bank to label their picture. Some pupils have very successfully entered data relating to favourite colours and have created a graph that they have then saved and subsequently retrieved. More able pupils achieve in excess of the national expectation. The attainment of Year 2 as a whole is in line with what is expected of pupils their age.

Key Stage 2

154. Pupils from Year 3 have developed their skills to include adding pictures to text and have also used CD-Rom and Internet based information sources to find out about Britain since the 1930s. During the inspection, pupils from Year 3 were learning how to send e-mails to another class. In response to their teacher's good example they used the correct vocabulary. They demonstrated that they could log on, open a simplified e-mail program, and complete the address, subject and message boxes in readiness for sending. This represented good progress in the lesson as a result of their teacher's good preparation and clear instructions. There are gaps evident in pupils' knowledge, for example finding the shift key and recognising that the cursor needs to be in the box before you start typing. Overall, however, attainment is in line with national expectations.
155. Pupils from Year 4 enjoyed a good lesson that was clearly planned to develop their skills and give them confidence in finding information on the Internet – in this case looking at gods and goddesses in relation to their work in history on the Ancient Egyptians. Pupils confidently log on to the website, find the appropriate page, scroll down and click on their selected god, downloading the thesaurus in order to look at the glossary connected to the page. During the lesson they make good progress in browsing a website and copying and pasting text into a word file.
156. In the recent past, these pupils have used keywords and hotlinks to navigate through CD-Rom based information on the Ancient Egyptians. They are familiar with using the templates in a desktop publishing package in order to produce their own, customised, bookmarks and gift tags, involving importing pictures from a clip art file. The attainment of pupils in the year group as a whole is in line with national expectations with a significant proportion of pupils producing higher quality work.

MUSIC

157. All pupils are taught music in class lessons and the standards that they achieve are in line with expectations for their ages. Insufficient lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 to report fully on pupils' attainment and progress. In Year 4, attainment was in line with expectations and progress was good. In the lessons observed there was insufficient opportunity for pupils to sing. Judgement is therefore based on a limited number of lessons focused on composing and performing in both key stages. Pupils make sound and often good progress in these aspects of the subject. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well in music sessions and often enjoy achievements, which help to enhance their self-confidence and self esteem.
158. The quality of teaching is good. There is an appropriate emphasis in lessons on pupils using instruments, although during the inspection this did not include tuned percussion. In Year 1, the teacher gives pupils time for practice and improvement as they clap and later play untuned percussion instruments. They follow simple musical instructions. Most develop a good understanding of tempo. In Year 2, using a 'Journey through Space' as a

stimulus, pupils respond enthusiastically to the challenge of creating the story using untuned instruments. They work collaboratively in groups to create the desired sounds and effects. They appreciate that different instruments make different sounds and use them to compose sequences to signify the journey through space. They use musical terms such as 'crescendo' and 'diminuendo' correctly. The teacher plans effectively to meet the needs and abilities of different pupils and this has a positive effect on their learning and progress.

159. In Key Stage 1, pupils begin to learn to recognise high and low sounds and changes in rhythm. In Key Stage 2 they develop a further understanding of the structure of music as they explore the characteristics of traditional singing games. Pupils adapt the lyrics. They observe the rhythm and the repeating patterns of the games and reproduce them in their own compositions. The suitably chosen activity encourages pupils to respond with enthusiasm. In discussion, pupils say that they enjoy music. They work productively in groups, offering constructive criticism when composing.
160. Pupils in both key stages have limited knowledge of composers and the music that they have written. Opportunities for listening to and appreciating music are under-represented in the music curriculum. The school has no music specialist. However, the pupils benefit from the high commitment of the teachers. One member of staff provides guitar accompaniment to the singing in daily assemblies and the co-ordinator leads the subject with enthusiasm and dedication. She has compiled guidelines and documentation that are helpful to other teachers. Strategies for using assessment in planning future work are not yet in place.
161. Resources are adequate and accessible. A choir meets weekly and the school participates in concerts. There are plans to form a recorder group. There is a suitable amount of time allocated to music for each class. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

162. As at the time of the last inspection, standards in physical education are above national expectations throughout the school. Progress in dance, games, and gymnastics continues to be good. From reception onwards, pupils benefit from the learner swimming pool, which is on the site. This experience builds confidence in the water and provides a good start to their swimming.
163. Pupils benefit generally from the good facilities and equipment. There is plenty of room both indoors and out to pursue a wide range of activities. The carpeted area is ideal for dance and offers an additional space to the large hall. The sizeable playground and playing field are used well for games and athletics.
164. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and, as in the previous report, is good or better in most lessons. Teachers plan carefully and take a full part in the lessons themselves, offering good role models for the pupils. They make the purpose of the lesson clear to all pupils and expect high standards of participation and performance. They use pupil demonstrations well to highlight good practice and encourage pupils to observe each other carefully and comment constructively on good points and points for improvement. When available, learning support assistants play an active role in supporting pupils with special educational needs. Adults show an enthusiasm for healthy exercise that is conveyed to the pupils. Pupils understand the importance of warming-up and cooling down and at both key stages are encouraged to note the effect of exercise on their bodies.

165. In Key Stage 1, pupils are confident in their approach to gymnastics. They have a good sense of balance and enjoy travelling in different ways. They develop specific skills both with their own teachers and through the specialist instructors who come to the school regularly. During these sessions, pupils demonstrate their capacity to do somersaults and use springboards. They confidently imitate different foot patterns as well as creating their own landing positions. In dance, they interpret the music through suitable movements. For example, Year 2 pupils create dances representing different mini-beasts. They use different speeds and levels, slithering slowly on their stomachs as snails and flitting lightly with quick hand movements as butterflies. Games lessons provide good opportunities to develop ball skills. Pupils control large balls well and use smaller ones with a range of bats. They understand the basic rules of games and take turns in a sensible fashion.
166. In Key Stage 2, pupils show good body control and make good progress in a wide range of skills in dance, gymnastics, games, and athletics. Pupils show good stamina in relay races, passing batons accurately and efficiently, when given the opportunities to do so. In Year 4, pupils make good progress in throwing skills, using a range of equipment, including polystyrene javelins and discuses. They pay close attention to advice offered, as they have a strong desire to succeed and improve their performance. Pupils enjoy playing games and benefit from extra opportunities during the lunchtimes to play a range of sports, including cricket and rounders. Likewise with dance, where pupils enjoy taking part in festivals for country dancing, for which they practise at lunchtimes.
167. Although there is informal assessment, there is a lack of regular assessment, either in the form of checklists or diaries, or measuring and tracking pupil performance in a systematic way. As many pupils succeed well in physical education, this is a missed opportunity to boost self-esteem and confidence further by providing hard evidence of improvement and progress.
168. The structural problems with the swimming pool are a major concern. The school is doing its utmost to fund a renovation programme in order to return this vital facility to an acceptable level. As the only learning pool in the area, it provides pupils from Woodrow and neighbouring schools with an invaluable opportunity to go swimming from an early age. Most pupils do not go to the public swimming pools and rely on this pool to gain confidence in the water.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

169. Pupils are achieving well at both key stages, above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. There has been good improvement in the amount of curriculum time allocated to the subject and in the standards achieved since the last inspection.
170. By the age of seven, all pupils know some important *Bible* stories. Pupils know the structure of the *Bible* and that it is divided into Old and New Testaments. More able pupils are aware that there are separate books in each Testament. They know the events of John the Baptist's life and his importance in relation to Jesus. Most pupils can understand the significance of forgiveness in the story of The Prodigal Son. Pupils can draw the main early Christian symbols and more able pupils can explain their meaning. Pupils describe the flight of the Israelites from Egypt and know of the main events of Moses' life. Pupils know that these events are very important in Judaism and can link them to the Passover. They know that foods are often used as symbols in religious celebrations and the majority of pupils can, for example, describe the main Pesach foods and what they represent. Pupils are making good progress in their ability to understand important feelings and emotions, such as anger. More able pupils give good examples of their feelings and explain how they come to terms with them. The majority of pupils have

a much deeper understanding than they are able to show in their written work, which is often limited to very straightforward descriptions.

171. By the time they leave the school, pupils know of the importance of religious beliefs in the major events of human lives. They know that the messages on gravestones are a source of comfort to many people and provide a means of remembering the dead. They understand that memorials are important ways of recognising the achievements and sacrifices of people in the past. Pupils talk about some of the main features of the interior and exterior of churches. They know that Easter is a very important Christian festival. All pupils can describe the events of the Last Supper and they have a good knowledge of the role of Judas. Many pupils can make good attempts at describing the importance of the Resurrection. Pupils have also developed a detailed knowledge of other major world religions. They have a good understanding of the main features of the naming ceremony of a Hindu baby. They can describe the Hindu marriage ceremony. Well run discussions about morality show that pupils have a good understanding of the need for rules in society, especially when they are able to relate it to school or home situations.
172. Teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers plan carefully in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus and the subject co-ordinator's guidelines. They ensure that activities, especially those involving written work, are planned to cater for the full range of ability, including those pupils with special educational needs. Classroom assistants are well deployed to prompt less able pupils during whole-class work and to provide support for their reading and writing. Good use is made of written tasks to contribute to the development of pupils' literacy skills. Whole-class introductions are well conducted and provide pupils with a good awareness of the purpose of lessons. Teachers are clear in their descriptions of religious events and respond quickly to questions from pupils. They carefully check on pupils' understanding by asking frequent, well constructed questions, which helps to ensure that pupils' attention is maintained. Lessons are conducted at a good pace with a good mix of whole-class discussions, individual writing tasks and more informal sessions. Good adjustments are made to take account of particular circumstances, for example providing a game of 'hunt the matzo' at the end of the day when pupils' attentions were flagging. Teachers' knowledge of religious facts is good and is clearly the result of careful research before lessons. It helps them to be confident in responding to pupils' good levels of curiosity. A few teachers are less comfortable with aspects of faith and belief, which are sometimes underdeveloped in lessons.
173. Classes are well managed. Pupils are encouraged to listen to the teacher and each other's contributions. As a result, they benefit from the good suggestions of other members of the class. They have a good understanding of class routines, which leads to a prompt start to all activities. Teachers make good links to the themes developed in assemblies, which helps provide regular reinforcement of key religious and moral ideas. Good use is made of recently purchased religious artefacts to provide extra interest for pupils. Teachers have a good informal knowledge of the progress pupils are making and provide good suggestions in class about how work might be improved. By comparison, written comments in pupils' books tend to be brief and relatively infrequent.
174. The subject is well led by a co-ordinator, who has considerable enthusiasm for religious education. He has ensured that staff have a good understanding of the main elements of the locally agreed syllabus, although the school's own policy is now out of date. The co-ordinator responds quickly to requests for advice and this has helped to improve class teachers' confidence. Sensible actions have been taken to strengthen the subject, such as purchasing new resources to support the teaching of particular topics. The co-ordinator has ensured that the subject has a high profile in the school and has realistic plans for future development. The procedures for monitoring the progress of pupils throughout the school are underdeveloped and heavily reliant on an annual 'trawl' of work

suitable to make up pupils' records of achievement. This does not provide the co-ordinator with the information needed to identify particular strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work and to take appropriate action.