

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **PARK COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Boston

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120501

Headteacher: Mr P Harmsworth

Reporting inspector: Kathryn Taylor  
22424

Dates of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> June 2000

Inspection number: 195962

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Robin Hoods Walk Boston Lincs
Postcode:	PE21 9LQ
Telephone number:	01205 368 805
Fax number:	01205 361 826
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Tharby
Date of previous inspection:	May 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Kathryn Taylor	Registered inspector	Mathematics	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management Key issues for action
Janet Butler	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
Martin James	Team inspector	English Information technology Physical education Equality of opportunity English as an additional language Special educational needs	
Julia Elsley	Team inspector	Science Religious Education Music Foundation stage for the under-fives	
Eric Steed	Team inspector	Art Design and technology Geography History	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

The inspection contractor was:

J&M Inspection and Education Services  
31 Innage Road  
Northfield  
Birmingham

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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Park Primary School is situated in the market town of Boston in Lincolnshire. There are currently 232 pupils aged between four and eleven years old on the school roll, which is an average number for a primary school. Numbers of pupils entering the school each year, however, do vary considerably which makes planning the organisation of classes and staffing levels each year somewhat problematic. Pupils are currently arranged into nine classes and some of these are mixed-age classes. Pupils start school in the September after their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection, five children attending the school were still under the age of five. The school does not have its own nursery. The majority of pupils entering the school have little or no pre-school experience. Pupils' overall attainment on entry to the school is below average and a significant proportion of children have skills in speaking which are well below average. Currently 48 pupils attending the school are identified as having special educational needs, three of whom have a statement of special educational need. The proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register is about the same as that found in many other schools. Inspection evidence shows, however, that the distribution of pupils across the school is not necessarily even. Some year groups have significantly more pupils with additional learning needs than others. The vast majority of pupils at the school are of white ethnic origin. Seven pupils speak English as an additional language. Nine and a half per cent of all pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. However, as no cooked meals are on offer this may well deter some parents from applying. The social and economic background of pupils attending the school is quite diverse and is broadly average overall.

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

Park School is an improving school. Standards, although not yet high enough, are nevertheless improving. The majority of teaching is at least satisfactory. Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to school and learning. The headteacher provides very good leadership and since joining the school has developed very effective working relationships with parents, staff and governors. There is a shared vision for the school's future development and a firm commitment to developing and improving the school. Staff morale is high. The school now has a good capacity to improve further. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

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

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and a very clear educational direction.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school and behave well.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Relationships between pupils and with the staff are good.
- There is good provision for pupils' social and moral development.
- Staff and volunteers provide a good number and range of extracurricular activities for pupils.
- Links with other schools and with businesses are very good.

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

- Standards of work although improving are not yet high enough, especially in English, information technology, science and music.
- Curriculum plans need to state the specific skills which pupils need to acquire, and some improvements to assessment are still needed.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils' spiritual and creative development.
- The quality of teaching can be strengthened and improved further.
- Subject co-ordinators do not check on standards and teaching effectively.
- Financial planning and monitoring; too much money has been carried forward from one year to the next and governors have not been sufficiently involved in monitoring the budget.
- Resources for several subjects and for the under-fives are unsatisfactory.

*The areas for improvement have already been recognised by the school and are included in the draft school development plan. They will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Although progress since the last inspection is only just satisfactory, good progress has been made in the recent past, since the appointment of the current headteacher. Standards in design and technology have improved. Although attainment in information and communications technology remains below average, there have been improvements to standards and work in the subject. Attainment in science remains below average with only minimal improvements to standards. Some improvements to the curriculum and assessment have been made but there is more still to be done. The staff have worked hard to improve pupils' behaviour and there are good improvements. The quality of teaching is improved, however more still needs to be done to challenge pupils and extend their learning. Good improvements have been made to the provision for pupils with special educational needs. Not enough was done in the past to establish an effective school management structure, to develop subject management or to improve school development planning and financial planning, but there have been very good improvements recently.

## STANDARDS

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

KS2 Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	B	E	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A	E	D	D	
Science	B	E	E	D	

*Similar schools refers to schools nationally where pupils are from similar backgrounds and is based on the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.*

This table shows that in the 1999 tests at age eleven standards in English overall were in line with those nationally average. In mathematics they were below average and in science were well below the national average. Standards in comparison with similar schools are average in English and below average in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence shows that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level at age eleven varies considerably from one year to the next, as does the proportion of pupils in each class with special educational needs. Significant differences in the number of pupils in Year 6 each year also makes it difficult to determine trends in performance in the tests. Scrutiny of the work of those pupils currently in Year 6 indicates pupils attaining standards which are broadly average in mathematics, English, science and religious education. Attainment in some aspects of information and communications technology is however, below average. Standards of work seen throughout the school are improving particularly in literacy and numeracy where teachers' planning is effective. Throughout the school overall standards can be improved further.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The vast majority of pupils have good attitudes to learning and school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well in class, in the playground and around the school. They are polite and friendly and get on well with each other.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are good. Pupils of different ages and backgrounds relate to each other well and to the teaching and support staff. All staff provide good role models for pupils.
Attendance	Satisfactory attendance. Parents confirm that their children enjoy school and are keen to attend.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory in ninety-two per cent of all lessons seen. In forty-two per cent of all lessons teaching is good or better. In eight per cent of lessons teaching is, however, unsatisfactory. While much of the teaching is satisfactory and there is a fair proportion of good and better teaching, there are however, some overall weaknesses. These relate particularly to the planning for some subjects, the pace of some lessons and lack of variety in teaching methods used, which limits pupils' progress and opportunities to develop independent learning skills. There is a lack of expertise in the teaching of music and further advice and support is needed to improve aspects of the under-fives teaching. In most classes, literacy and numeracy are taught at least satisfactorily and a fair proportion of the teaching is good. Further training in teaching aspects of information and communications technology is planned to take place in the near future.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Improvements are needed to the curriculum for the under-fives. At Key Stage 1 and 2 all subjects are given appropriate attention. The provision of extracurricular activities is good. Curriculum plans need to be improved to provide more detail about the skills to be learned.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils are well supported by class teachers and support assistants.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are supported well and the planned work is well matched to pupils' individual needs. Pupils' progress is monitored very effectively. Support assistants make a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. The school has a strong moral code and pupils' social development is given high priority. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for carrying out tasks around the school. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. Opportunities for their spiritual development are limited.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. There are good procedures for promoting and monitoring good attendance and behaviour and pupils' welfare is a high priority. Arrangements for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress can be improved.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong leadership and a clear educational direction. The key stage co-ordinators provide valuable support and the recent appointment of a deputy headteacher to the school offers the opportunity to strengthen the management structure. The management of subjects is unsatisfactory overall.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive and interested and they give very generously of their time. Their role has been strengthened and extended in the recent past and governors are now more involved in evaluating the school's work and setting priorities for the future. Their role in monitoring the school's performance is an identified area for development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher has worked very well with staff, parents and governors to review current provision and how things might be improved. Priorities for development are very relevant and have been set out clearly in the new school development plan.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning has been weak with too much money from the annual budget being carried forward from one year to the next. Despite the weaknesses in the management structure being highlighted in the last report, it is only recently that the finance has been directed to addressing this. Appropriate use is made of specific grants.

There are enough teaching and support staff. The accommodation is good. The quantity and quality of resources is unsatisfactory

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents say their children enjoy coming to school.</li> <li>• Their children are encouraged to work hard and they make good progress.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school is well managed.</li> <li>• Parents feel the school helps their child to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Most parents feel the school achieves good standards of behaviour.</li> <li>• Parents feel welcome at the school and find staff are approachable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistency of homework and the amount given.</li> <li>• Some feel the range of activities outside of lessons could be extended.</li> <li>• Some feel that more able pupils could sometimes be better challenged.</li> </ul>

Inspection findings mainly support parents' positive views. The number and range of extracurricular activities, however, is judged to be good and the school is keen to extend the range available to the younger pupils. Parents' views about the appropriateness of homework do vary considerably. When written homework is set, sometimes only a very small minority of pupils complete this work. Inspectors judged that all pupils, and not just the potentially higher-attaining pupils, could sometimes be better challenged.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When children start school, although the range of attainment is very broad, overall levels of attainment are below average and a high proportion of pupils have poor speaking skills. During their time in the reception classes, the children who are under the age of five make satisfactory progress overall. Good attention is given to their personal development and early reading and writing skills and children make good progress in this area. The children's progress in mathematics and in their knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory overall and children attain broadly average standards. Their progress in creative development and aspects of physical development is unsatisfactory.
2. In 1999, in the National Curriculum tests taken at the age of seven, the percentage of pupils reaching or exceeding the expected Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is well below the national average. The percentage gaining the higher Level 3 is below the national average in mathematics and writing and is well below average in reading. When pupils' results overall at age seven are compared with those in similar schools, attainment in reading writing and mathematics is below average. In science, based on teacher assessment, attainment at age seven is well below average.
3. In the tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, the percentage of pupils achieving or exceeding the expected Level 4 in English is close to the national average. In mathematics the proportion is below the national average and in science it is well below. The percentage gaining the higher Level 5 is average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. When pupils' results at age eleven are compared with those in similar schools, standards in English are average and in science and mathematics are below average. When these same results are compared with the same pupils' standards when they sat the Key Stage 1 tests in 1995, pupils' progress since that time is satisfactory.
4. When comparing pupils' results in the tests each year, these vary considerably with no distinct pattern emerging. This is to some extent affected by the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each of the year groups, which varies considerably. It is also important to take account of the school's fluctuating cohort size, which makes statistical analysis and comparisons somewhat problematic. For example, in Year 6 in 1997 as there were 23 pupils taking the test each child's results represents just over four per cent, while in 1999, with 47 pupils, each child's results represent just over two per cent. The school's targets for the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics in the current year are appropriately challenging. The school recognises that much work still needs to be done to develop an effective system for school target setting and this is linked to the need to develop teachers' skills in accurately assessing pupils' attainment against National Curriculum levels.
5. Work seen during the inspection indicates that current standards in Year 2 are broadly average in mathematics and science and below average in English. In Year 6 standards are broadly average in English and mathematics and below average in science. However, at both key stages the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels is below average. Pupils' throughout the school are currently making satisfactory progress in English and mathematics and there is good progress in some lessons. The school's implementation of the strategies for literacy and numeracy are clearly helping to raise standards. Throughout the school more attention needs to be given to extending pupils' speaking skills and to increasing the opportunities for pupils to develop their reading and writing skills across the curriculum and to developing independent research skills. In science, progress is broadly satisfactory except in using and applying scientific knowledge and understanding, where pupils make unsatisfactory progress because they have insufficient opportunities to plan and carry out experiments either independently or as part of a group.

6. In information technology, progress is satisfactory; however, standards, although improving, remain below average by the end of each key stage, as the school as yet does not have the full range of equipment needed to teach the full range of skills. In religious education, attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of each key stage and progress is satisfactory.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets set for them. On those occasions when they are withdrawn from the classroom to work in groups pupils are provided with good support from the assistants. Pupils' targets are regularly evaluated and reviewed, and new targets are appropriately set to aid progress. In class, pupils receive suitable support from both the teaching and support staff, with work that is generally matched to their individual needs. The few pupils who speak English as an additional are also well supported and they make good progress in the acquisition of English.
8. In work and lessons seen in all other subjects during the inspection, pupils' standards are broadly average and progress is satisfactory, except in music where they are below average. Although standards in the work seen are satisfactory overall, they can be improved; more needs to be done to challenge pupils and to extend their learning across the range of subjects.

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

9. In all lessons seen, the pupils' response was always at least satisfactory and, in more than four out of every five lessons, was good or better. Since the last inspection, the school has made a significant improvement in managing and promoting good behaviour. Pupils have been involved in drawing up the new 'Stop, Think and Remember' (STAR) scheme. Pupils' response to this has been very good and, as a result of the higher expectations of staff and the incentives built into the scheme, behaviour throughout the school is now good. Indeed, when teaching is particularly stimulating and well matched to pupils' needs, the response in lessons can be excellent, with pupils totally engrossed in an activity and working as hard as they can.
10. Pupils have good attitudes to school. They are keen to attend, listen well and show interest in their lessons, particularly when they are actively involved. They take care with their work and are often proud of the results, none more so than those whose efforts are celebrated in the monthly 'Good Work' assemblies. Pupils are eager to participate in school clubs and sports teams. Pupils with special educational needs pay close attention to adults, and they persevere with their tasks. They are well behaved, and get on well with other pupils.
11. Behaviour around the school at break and lunchtimes is good overall, with evidence that pupils are very responsible in ensuring a litter-free environment, and that they respect property and resources. There are occasional instances of over-zealous play, particularly amongst the boys, but these are dealt with fairly and after a cooling-off period harmony is restored. Parents and pupils say that instances of bullying are very rare, and that these too are dealt with effectively. There have been no exclusions in the last year indicating that the behaviour policies are effective.
12. Relationships in the school are good, with pupils relating well to one another and to adults. A strength in the support provided by classroom assistants and volunteers is the good-natured relationships, which they form with the pupils. There is a happy mix of pupils of different ages playing together in the playgrounds, and pupils from different social and cultural backgrounds relate well to each other.
13. The personal development of pupils is good. Children under the age of five make good progress in their social development. For example, they help each other to tidy things away, and share resources sensibly. They behave well and have good attitudes to learning and to school and they develop good relationships with other children. Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils are keen to carry out tasks and to take responsibility, although the opportunities for this are rather limited. Some pupils in Years 5 and 6 are very reliable and useful assistants during the Key Stage 1 lunch-break, and they clearly enjoy their work with younger children. Although there are too few opportunities for pupils to express themselves creatively, when they are given the chance they do so with sensitivity. This was

seen, for example, when Year 1 pupils confidently and convincingly acted out the story of 'Goldilocks' as part of a lesson based on stranger dangers. Older pupils have in the past taken part in a school council and this opportunity is to be offered to a wider age group in the future. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils are thoughtful, considerate and confident members of the community, but they have not had sufficient opportunity to develop the independent study skills which help prepare them for secondary education.

14. Attendance is satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average. Most pupils attend school regularly. However, there are some pupils for whom family circumstances create problems of non-attendance and this limits the progress they make at school. Unauthorised absence is low and punctuality is good. The satisfactory attendance levels identified in the last inspection report have been maintained.

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

15. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In 92 per cent of lessons seen, teaching was at least satisfactory and this represents a good improvement since the last inspection when teaching was unsatisfactory in one lesson in five. Teaching in just under a third of all lessons is good and in one lesson in ten teaching is either very good or excellent. Teaching in eight per cent of lessons is, however, unsatisfactory.
16. The teaching of the children who are under the age of five, although satisfactory overall, has a number of significant shortcomings. Reading and writing are given good attention and are taught well. The teaching of mathematics and knowledge and understanding is satisfactory overall, although one mathematics lesson had a number of shortcomings. Teachers and support staff give good attention to children's personal and social development. Too little attention is given to promoting children's creative and physical development and these areas of learning are not sufficiently well planned for. On a number of occasions during the inspection, there was inappropriate use of 'free choice' activities. In these sessions children worked on activities of their choice with insufficient adult direction and supervision and a lack of intervention to ensure that new learning takes place. Too little attention is given to assessing what pupils are learning or how well they are progressing.
17. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and is good or better in half of all lessons seen at Key Stage 1 and in just over forty per cent of lessons at Key Stage 2. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of most subjects is at least satisfactory, except in the teaching of music and some aspects of information and communications technology, in which additional training is needed. In English lessons the basic skills of reading and writing are given good attention and this is having a positive effect in raising pupils' standards. Good attention is being given to developing and extending pupils' vocabulary, not only in literacy lessons but also in numeracy and science lessons. In general, however, more attention needs to be given to developing pupils' speaking skills and their confidence to volunteer answers and contribute to discussions. In a number of lessons, it was noted that teachers tend to be satisfied when only a small minority of pupils volunteer to answer questions and they give too little attention to checking that all pupils understand and contribute. Too little attention is given to developing and applying pupils' reading and writing skills in lessons in subjects other than English.
18. The quality of teachers' planning, particularly for lessons in subjects other than mathematics and English is an area needing improvement. While plans outline the content to be covered, they infrequently state clearly what it is that pupils are expected to learn. Making learning intentions clear and sharing these with the pupils would give a sharper focus to teaching, and provide clear criteria on which to assess the extent of pupils' learning and progress. This is particularly important given the fact that in some subjects there is currently an absence of detailed curriculum plans which outline the relevant skills to be taught. Work samples show that too often tasks set for pupils to do after the teacher input, especially in subjects such as science, religious education, history and geography, consist of pupils copying information from the blackboard or completing undemanding worksheets; activities unlikely to facilitate new learning.

19. In these lessons where teaching is good or better, teachers demonstrate high expectations of pupils and lessons are conducted at a good pace with lively delivery. This ensures that all pupils are concentrating, contributing and understanding. In these lessons questioning is often good and teachers ensure those pupils not volunteering to answer questions are specifically questioned to make sure they are understanding and staying on task. The tasks set during these lessons are often interesting and open-ended.
20. Throughout the school pupils are consistently well managed. Teachers and support staff treat pupils firmly and fairly, with kindness, patience and respect. This contributes to the good relationships between staff and pupils and encourages children to behave well and develop good attitudes to school. The teaching methods used are satisfactory overall with some strengths and weaknesses. An area for development is that more thought needs to be given to varying the methods used in teaching the range of subjects. Teachers are also inclined to over-direct pupils' work. This limits pupils' creative development and their opportunities to provide a personal response to their learning and results also in insufficient opportunities for pupils to discuss their work with each other, for example in pairs or in groups.
21. In lessons where teaching is unsatisfactory, the reason is sometimes that teachers do not have the necessary specialist knowledge and skills, such as in music lessons. On other occasions, teaching is unsatisfactory because neither the planning nor the teachers' input into pupils' activities ensures that the majority of pupils make sufficient progress.
22. The specific teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs in withdrawal groups is good. The support assistants have a clear understanding of the needs of the pupils, and arrange a most suitable range of activities and work for them. Positive relationships are established, and help and support are constantly provided. In class lessons pupils are also well supported by the teaching and support staff.
23. The teaching of English is satisfactory overall and there is some good teaching. Lessons are well planned and well organised. Extra time is given to writing, which is an identified area of weakness. Mathematics teaching is satisfactory overall and there is good or better teaching in half of the lessons. Teachers have made a good start in implementing the Numeracy Strategy and in the best lessons teachers are providing a good challenge of work for pupils. The teaching of information technology is satisfactory and further training for teachers is planned in the near future to extend their skills. In all other subjects seen, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, except in music where teaching is unsatisfactory.

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

24. The curriculum for the children under the age of five pays due attention to the children's personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world; however, opportunities for their creative and physical development are not sufficiently well planned for. There is a satisfactory transition to the National Curriculum when children either reach their fifth birthday, or achieve the targets set out in the curriculum for children under five.
25. The curricular opportunities at Key Stage 1 and 2 are broadly satisfactory. The school provides a curriculum that includes all subjects of the National Curriculum together with religious education, health, personal and sex education and a drugs awareness programme. The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced although aspects of information technology are omitted due to lack of equipment at the present time. Better use could be made of the natural links between subjects when planning work.
26. The timetable has been modified in order to allow for the introduction and development of the literacy and numeracy strategies. These are now fully in place and are bringing about an overall improvement in both subjects. The core subjects of English and mathematics currently receive time allocations that are well above the national average. This is appropriate in order to allow additional opportunities for the implementation of the strategies in order to raise standards. However, this has led to less time being available for other subjects; science, for example, is

allocated time well below the national average in most classes. Making better use of the opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills through lessons across subjects would also maximise the time available for other subjects. In Key Stage 2 the weekly taught time is slightly less than that recommended nationally. The present headteacher and the governing body have recognised the need to adjust the timing of the school day and have already begun the process of negotiating with parents. Although a two-year rolling programme for the curriculum ensures that pupils in the mixed-age classes do not repeat the same work content, there is no tracking system in place to ensure that they do not cover skills and concepts again at the same levels as in the previous year.

27. Daily acts of corporate worship satisfy statutory requirements; they contribute to pupils' moral development, but make an insufficient contribution to pupils' spiritual development. A good range of extracurricular activities, including visits and visitors to the schools, is provided and this remains a strength of the school. Members of staff, some parents and members of local sports clubs give generously of their own time during the mid-day break and immediately following the end of the school day. Activities include seasonal sports, aerobics, art, cycling proficiency training, and a range of subject-based clubs. Whilst all pupils have opportunities to participate in activities as they move through the school, the headteacher is keen to provide additional provision for the younger pupils. Systems to ensure equal opportunities are fully in place with the exception of the occasional withdrawal of some pupils from collective acts of worship to receive additional tuition in literacy. Members of staff act as good role models in promoting equality of opportunity by encouraging both boys and girls to carry out tasks. Both boys and girls take part in each of the extracurricular activities and clubs.
28. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, which is an improvement since the time of the last inspection. Clear procedures are in place, and they closely follow the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of pupils. The staff carry out diagnostic tests on pupils, and identify their particular needs. The information gained is put to particularly good effect in providing work for pupils in withdrawal groups. Individual education plans are provided by the special educational needs co-ordinator for all pupils who are at Stage 2 and beyond on the school's special educational needs register, and these are of good quality. They are reviewed each term. Pupils at Stage 5 on the special educational needs register are provided with most suitable support in line with the requirements of their statements. Their statements are reviewed annually.
29. Since the last inspection, policies have been written for the foundation subjects and these are subject to regular staff review. The reported gaps in the provision of schemes of work have been satisfactorily addressed by the production of new schemes. The school has recently adopted the subject guidelines provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The most successful elements of the school schemes are being meshed into the adopted guidelines, which is good practice. Links with the local community are constantly being developed and extended. For example, the recently introduced 'Stop, Think and Remember' (STAR) behaviour modification programme is sponsored and endorsed by over twenty local businesses. A link with a golf club has given older pupils opportunities to explore leisure facilities and aspects of mathematics. There are good links with two local Christian churches, whose ministers take collective acts of worship in the school. The school choir performs in senior citizens' residential homes.
30. Very good links with partner institutions have been put in place since the arrival of the current headteacher. There are now links with six other primary schools operating as a mutually supportive cluster of schools. Pupils from one of these schools accompany Year 5 and 6 pupils on the residential trip to France and this provides good opportunities for pupils to mix with children from other schools. Equally good mutually supportive links have been forged with a local high school. This school's information technology suite is made available and negotiations have been completed which will enable Park pupils to have some use of the sports centre. The head of music, a governor of the school, is released from Haven High School on Friday mornings to enable pupils to benefit from his expertise. In return for these services, Park School hosts work experience pupils from the high school.

31. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. However, opportunities for pupils' spiritual development are unsatisfactory. The school has also failed to develop opportunities to enable pupils to gain knowledge and understanding of the cultural diversity of modern British society; a weakness mentioned in the last report.
32. Whilst acts of collective worship comply with statutory requirements, opportunities are missed to guide pupils' spiritual development. Insufficient time is allowed for reflection on the themes introduced through the stories and prayers used during the worship. The music that accompanies entry to the hall is not explained in terms of title, composer or the mood that it strives to evoke. The curriculum as a whole also needs to provide more planned opportunities for pupils' spiritual development. For example, providing more opportunities for pupils to explore poetry, art and music would improve opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own and other's thoughts and feelings.
33. Provision for pupils' moral and social development are both good; this represents good progress since the last report. All adult members of the staff provide good role models within an ethos where there is an expectation of good relationships, behaviour and co-operation. From an early age pupils are helped to recognise the difference between right and wrong. During lessons, breaks and the mid-day period, pupils of all ages interact amiably together. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for keeping the school and grounds tidy and litter free. All pupils have opportunities to carry out tasks around the school and they volunteer readily when requests for help are made. Older pupils volunteer to look after younger pupils during the mid-day period, for which duties they arrive promptly and carry them out conscientiously. There are, however, insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their personal study skills or to show initiative. The 'Stop, Think and Remember' initiative has aided the improvement of behaviour and pupils are appreciative of, and understand, the rewards and sanctions associated with it.
34. The school makes overall satisfactory provision for cultural development, as was stated in the last report. Pupils gain satisfactory knowledge of local and western European culture through studies in geography, history and art. Music is not employed to equal effect and opportunities are missed to implement fully studies of non-European cultures. Pupils learn of other world faiths in religious education lessons. The last report mentioned the need to develop the means to enable pupils to learn about and to understand the rich cultural diversity of modern British society. This requirement has not been addressed sufficiently and remains a weakness in provision. The present headteacher is aware of this need and has begun the process of inviting into the school members of ethnic communities and other world faiths.

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

35. The steps taken to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are satisfactory. The concern regarding hygiene in food technology at the last inspection has been remedied. All the teachers and ancillary staff are vigilant, and give high priority to the safety of pupils. Pupils are taught safe practice and through the personal and social education programme, they learn about issues concerning their personal safety. Child protection procedures follow the local area guidelines and staff are aware of the system but full training has not yet been undertaken.
36. Teachers and non-teaching staff know pupils well and provide clear guidance to promote their personal development. Younger pupils receive particularly good support. The 'Stop, Think and Remember' scheme acts as a very good incentive to promote both good behaviour and attendance throughout the school. Absences are monitored regularly and the educational welfare service investigates problems of poor attenders. The personal and social education programme, sometimes delivered through 'Circle Time', is an effective means of guiding pupils to become more self-confident, assertive, and able to make informed choices which may affect their well-being.
37. The assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance have improved since the last inspection and there are some strengths and weaknesses in the provision. The school has responded to the key issue by improving the procedures for assessment and providing consistency throughout

the school. There is now a range of tests in use, which provides some useful data about what pupils can do. The school has also recently introduced a system of setting end-of-year targets for each pupil in the core subjects. However, teachers are not as yet skilled in assessing pupils' attainment in terms of the National Curriculum levels although training is currently taking place. What is also lacking is clear information about what pupils are learning in the shorter term. This occurs not least of all because teachers do not state clearly enough in their lesson planning what it is they want pupils to learn. It is therefore difficult for teachers to ascertain whether pupils have achieved the desired learning or to provide feedback to pupils about what exactly they need to do next to improve and extend their work, although this is achieved effectively in English at Key Stage 2. The marking of pupils' work is sometimes too bland.

38. The educational and personal support and guidance provided for pupils is satisfactory overall, with some strengths and some areas for improvement. The support provided for pupils with special education needs is good, and here the individual education plans give clear guidance on the next targets to be achieved and how they might be done. This approach is not used widely enough, with the result that other pupils are often unsure how to improve their work and fulfil their potential. The academic challenge provided for pupils is also limited by the lack of opportunities for them to develop independent study skills. In contrast, the reading support given to pupils on the OWLS scheme, a scheme to support pupils experiencing difficulty with reading, is so successful that some pupils make very good progress over a relatively short space of time. The recent introduction of assessing pupils' academic ability to use as a reference point when looking at pupils' potential, achievements and progress is a positive step.

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

39. The school values and encourages a good relationship with parents, and successfully provides various mutually supportive activities. Parents' opinions of the school are good. They value the standards of work and personal development of pupils, and feel that the teaching and management are good. Parents say that they feel the school is very approachable. However, some parents feel that more could be done to challenge the more able pupils, and a significant proportion, twenty-five per cent of all parents who responded to the questionnaire, feel that there are still problems with the amount of homework and how consistently the homework policy is implemented. Some parents also have concerns about mixed-age classes.
40. The school responds well to parental requests, for example after a request by some parents the school set up a lunchtime table-tennis club, and parents are involved in the setting up and evaluation of the new 'Stop, Think and Remember' behaviour policy. Unfortunately the response by some parents is not always very supportive, for instance when set homework is not returned, or when attendance at parents' information meetings is low. In this respect the partnership between home and school can be improved.
41. The quality of information provided by the school is satisfactory, with a balance between real strengths and areas for improvement. The monthly newsletter and Annual Governors' Report to parents are well-designed, interesting and informative documents. The style is friendly and welcoming. The formal documents omit some information and requirements, the details of which the school was notified about at the time of inspection and is taking steps to address. The pupils' annual progress reports are generally clear about what pupils do well, but are not sufficiently detailed about actual attainment, nor do they suggest any suitable targets for improvement in which parents could support their children at home. The school has designed new end-of-year reports for the current year, which should give the parents a clearer idea of how their children are getting on. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed of the reviews of their children's individual education plans, so that they are fully aware of the provision being made for them. Parents of pupils with statements of special educational need are invited to the annual review meeting.
42. Parents' impact on the school's work is satisfactory. Most parents are supportive of the school's aims and many volunteer to help either in school or with specific events. Regular support for reading at home helps many pupils to make good progress. The OWLS reading support scheme makes very



effective use of parent volunteers, and there is also a successful Parents, Teachers and Friends Association. Parents played a significant part in finding sponsors for the school's good behaviour scheme. However, there remains a proportion of parents who fail to see the full value of their child's education, and who sometimes condone absence from school or from examinations for their own reasons. For these parents the school is seeking ways to encourage more involvement in their children's education and achievements.

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

43. Despite the fact that the last report identified the need to improve the school's management structure and to extend the role of the subject managers, it is only recently, under the leadership of the new headteacher, that these weaknesses have really begun to be addressed.
44. The headteacher took up his post at the school last September and he has achieved much in a short time. He provides very good leadership and a clear educational direction and has a strong commitment to developing staff and improving pupils' rates of progress and standards of work. The headteacher is well respected by the staff, parents and pupils, and has worked hard to effect improvements and to extend the role of staff and governors in school management decisions and in planning for the future. Recognising the current weaknesses in the management structure, the headteacher has worked with staff and governors to draw up a new and improved plan. This has resulted in the decision to employ a deputy headteacher from next September and to extend the number of responsibility points available to the teaching staff. Teaching is well supported and is monitored regularly and the headteacher's own teaching provides a good role model for staff.
45. The two key stage co-ordinators, one of whom is carrying out this role temporarily, provide valuable support to the headteacher and staff, and carry out their roles effectively. The management of special educational needs is good. Pupils are identified promptly through a variety of procedures. Pupils at Stage 2 and beyond are provided with individual education plans, which set clear targets for improvement. These plans are reviewed each term, with new targets being set as appropriate. The special educational needs co-ordinator keeps extensive records, and the progress made by the pupils is carefully monitored. The governor appointed to support the provision for pupils with special educational needs carries out her responsibilities effectively and efficiently. The role of most subject co-ordinators in developing, although monitoring work in their subjects is currently unsatisfactory and is an identified area for development. Co-ordinators need to be provided with the relevant training to help them understand the requirements of their role and develop the necessary skills to carry them out.
46. The school development plan for April 1999 to March 2000 is weak. Targets are very broad and the plan lacks specific detail about how the developments will take place and in what timescale. It does not provide any information about costings nor about the success criteria against which developments might be measured. The headteacher has worked very effectively with the staff and governors to develop an improved school development plan based on a whole school review in which parents' and pupils' views have been sought and taken into account. This new plan is linked to very clear educational priorities.
47. The school aims have recently been reviewed providing the opportunity for staff and governors to reflect on what the school sets out to do and to thereby make a statement about their shared vision.
48. Since the last inspection, some new governors have been appointed, strengthening and bringing additional and valuable skills to the governing body. Governors are very interested and supportive of the school and they give very generously of their time. Their role and involvement is being extended and governors have the potential to provide good leadership. Governing body meetings and those of sub-committees take place regularly and governors fulfil most of their statutory responsibilities. In the past, the governors' role in strategic development and in monitoring the school's work has not been as good as it should have been, especially in relation to financial planning and monitoring. Good improvements have been made recently and some monitoring visits now take place. The monitoring aspect of the governors' work still needs to be developed further and this is an identified area for development.

49. The staff are a dedicated and enthusiastic team. The number of teachers and support staff is satisfactory in relation to the demands of the curriculum. Staff training and recent appointments have addressed some of the imbalance in staff expertise cited in the last inspection report. The lack of expertise in music is to be addressed from September, when the newly appointed deputy headteacher, who has some skills in the subject, takes up his post in the school. There are some temporary teachers and a higher percentage of inexperienced staff at the school than that usually found. This places some constraints when allocating school and subject responsibilities and some staff, including the headteacher, are currently carrying a fairly weighty number of subject responsibilities. There is the potential to improve the distribution and to make a better match of skills to the task for the next academic year.
50. The number of support staff has been increased and is approaching the level found in most primary schools. The school has responded to the key issue regarding focused staff training and development by ensuring that all teachers are monitored and offered professional development opportunities. Support assistants work closely under the guidance and supervision of teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator when planning work and supporting pupils. They provide good support for pupils are patient and encouraging, and make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
51. The accommodation is good, offering a pleasant and very well-maintained environment for teaching and learning. Good use is made of the classrooms and practical areas, allowing for teaching of small groups when withdrawn for special support. The spacious school grounds provide plenty of opportunities for sport, play and work in science and there is a suitable secure outdoor play area for the under-fives.
52. Since the last inspection there has not been sufficient improvement in the provision of learning resources and these remain unsatisfactory. There has, however, been a significant improvement in the resources for information technology, with further resources to arrive in the near future. The resources for art, music and for children under five are particularly poor. In science, design and technology, geography and in history, resources need to be updated and extended. The school has recently changed the procedure for reviewing and upgrading its learning resources and through the new systems there are plans to make significant improvements to the resources, in particular those for literacy and numeracy.
53. The previous report identified that links between the budget and the school development plan were not sufficiently clear. This is an area where improvements have only very recently been made. Governors in the past have not always been provided with enough information about the school's finances and spending. This is apparent from discussion with governors about the budget and was an item also raised in the school's most recent audit report in March of 1999. The school has also for a long time been carrying forward far too much of its money from one year to the next. The carry-over by the close of the 1999/2000 financial year is by far in excess of the recommended five per cent of the schools overall annual budget. Meanwhile the school has continued to operate without a deputy headteacher, with insufficient incentive points being offered to the staff for developing certain aspects of the school's work, and spending on learning resources has been too low. While fluctuation in the number of pupils entering the school each year may have led the governors to be cautious about spending, such matters need to be addressed through effective, long-term financial planning. It is not acceptable however to hoard significant sums of money to cushion the school against the possibility of a fall in income.
54. There are effective systems in place to ensure that value for money is obtained when ordering goods. However, sometimes in the past relatively large sums have been spent on certain items, a mathematics scheme for example, while other curriculum areas have been neglected. The improved school development and budget planning should now enable the school to ensure that spending decisions are linked to the identified educational priorities. The school makes appropriate use of specific grants. The school has yet to receive its grant from the Department for Employment and Education's funding in relation to information and communications technology and the school has set aside some of its own money to enhance this. The headteacher has identified that work needs to be done in relation to the application of the principles of best value.

55. The office staff are conscientious and efficient, ensuring a good standard of day-to-day administration and control of the school's budget. The work of administrative staff supports the work of the headteacher, and class teachers, and they provide a useful contact point for both pupils and parents. The most recent auditor's report also identified a number of procedures which required improvement, and these are being addressed. Pupils enter the school with below average attainment levels overall. They make broadly satisfactory progress. Pupils behave well and develop good attitudes to learning. The cost per pupil is average. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory. When consideration is given to these factors, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

1. Raise pupils' standards of attainment in information communications technology by:
  - providing pupils with access to more computers and to a wider range of software when the school receives the additional funding being provided to all schools;
  - carrying out the staff training in using this new equipment.(Paragraphs 6, 25, 109, 110, 112)
  
2. In order to raise pupils' standards of attainment further, improve the overall quality of teaching by:
  - ensuring lesson planning identifies not just the content to be covered, but also clear learning intentions against which pupils' progress can then be assessed;
  - improving the pace of some lessons, varying the teaching methods used and providing more interesting and open-ended activities for pupils to do;
  - providing more opportunities in all lessons for pupils to develop their spoken skills and their independent learning skills;
  - providing support and training in the teaching of music;
  - sharing the good practice, which exists within the school.(Paragraphs 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 33, 37, 38, 58, 62, 63, 71, 79, 80, 87, 88, 91, 101, 105, 106, 111, 115, 127)
  
3. Develop the curriculum to:
  - improve planning for the under-fives and ensure that all areas of learning and resources are given sufficient and focused attention; (Paragraphs 24, 64, 65)
  - in Key Stage 1 and 2 ensure continuity in the development of pupils' skills within each of the subjects in Key Stage 1 and 2 supported by sufficient resources particularly in science;
  - provide more opportunities to foster pupils' spiritual and creative development and their understanding of the rich cultural diversity of British society.(Paragraphs 26, 27, 31, 34, 95, 98)
  
4. Improve school management by;
  - providing training for the curriculum co-ordinators so as to ensure that they understand the requirements of their role and develop the necessary skills to perform them effectively;
  - extending and further developing the governors' role in monitoring the school's work and in ensuring that financial planning and the monitoring of spending is rigorously and regularly carried out.(Paragraphs 45, 48, 52, 53, 93, 99)

**Minor key issue**

- ◇ Review the allocation of subject and management responsibilities and reduce the number currently being covered by the headteacher. (*Paragraph 49*)

*Many of these issues have already been identified by the school and are included in the new and very recently implemented School Development Plan.*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	60
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	7	31	50	8	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	232
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	48

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	28

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	17	18	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	13
	Girls	12	13	12
	Total	23	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	66	71	71
	National	82(80)	83(86)	87(89)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	13	12	13
	Girls	14	13	12
	Total	27	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	77	71	71
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	23	24	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	15	13	16
	Girls	19	15	13
	Total	34	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	72(43)	60(39)	62(50)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	12
	Girls	13	11	11
	Total	26	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	55(64)	49(64)	49(82)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

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

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	232
Any other minority ethnic group	4

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

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

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

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

### *Teachers and classes*

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	25.7

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

Total number of education support staff	7.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	72

### *Financial information*

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	415,652
Total expenditure	359,990
Expenditure per pupil	1,552
Balance brought forward from previous year	45,680
Balance carried forward to next year	66, 124

*Results of the survey of parents and carers*

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	192
Number of questionnaires returned	99

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	31	8	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	45	43	10	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	46	10	5	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	43	15	10	0
The teaching is good.	49	43	6	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	36	15	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	29	6	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	33	5	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	39	48	7	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	58	37	0	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	49	2	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	39	7	8	9



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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

56. There are currently 39 children in the reception year, five of whom at the time of inspection were still under the age of five. Twenty-five children are taught in a dedicated Reception class and the oldest fourteen children in a mixed-age class of Reception and Year 1 pupils. All children start school at the beginning of the academic year in which their fifth birthday falls. A small minority of children have had some pre-school experience. The results of the assessment tasks that the children performed on entry to the reception classes show that attainment in reading and writing are below average. Speaking skills are, however, well below average.

#### **Personal and social development**

57. The children have a good start to their schooling and most children enjoy coming to school and behave very well. Teachers give good attention to pupils' personal development and children make good progress so that by the time they are five children have developed good skills. For example, most children can dress and undress themselves independently. The children have established good relationships outside their family and gained experience of learning to work with other children in a group. They are developing an awareness of, and sensitivity to, the needs and feelings of others. For example, they learn to listen to each other when giving answers to questions at group time and to show respect for each other's responses. They share amicably and ask politely when they want a book or a piece of equipment to support their work. The organisation of most activities allows the children to explore and to develop some independence in their learning. Through the daily routines, the adults demonstrate a strong commitment to developing the children's ability to take responsibility. There are however, missed opportunities for adults to engage with pupils in some of the practical activities and to extend their learning and for children to report back on what they have learned. All staff work well together, are very caring and sensitive to the children, which provides good role models.

#### **Language and literacy**

58. A significant majority of children start in the Reception classes with poor speaking skills. Good attention is given to developing speaking and listening. The teaching of language and literacy in the lessons seen is good. Adults place an appropriate emphasis on listening to stories, but when asked questions the children's response is limited, both in terms of vocabulary and grammatical structures. Teachers give suitable attention to the development of spoken English during the literacy sessions and through the provision of role-play experiences. However, adult involvement interaction whilst children are engaged in their role-play activities would provide opportunities to extend children's speaking skills.
59. Children with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, are well supported by adults to ensure they can participate fully in the literacy sessions. All pupils enjoy looking at books. They find stories a source of pleasure, and have a growing understanding of the stories read to them. A significant minority of the children are beginning to read some words, and know some of the initial letter sounds. The adults' skilful and sensitive questioning is encouraging them to understand that we read from left to right and that print conveys meaning. Children can recognise the main ideas in a story and can relate to the central character. Many have learned the punch line at the end of a story and are eager to join in. All children for example could recall what happens to the 'Hungry Caterpillar'. The subsequent work on phonics shows that children are learning to grasp the sounds that letters make individually and when combined with others. Greater use, however, could be made of information technology to support learning in this area.
60. Many children are confident in their early attempts at writing and they are encouraged to write random letter shapes and to write their own names. A small minority of children can copy simple words using correctly formed upper and lower case letters which are consistent in size and used appropriately. Higher-attaining pupils are able to write simple sentences. Some know that they must also use a

capital letter in the sentence if they are writing someone's name. The introductions to new activities during literacy sessions are clear and precise: learning points are highlighted well.

## **Mathematics**

61. Children make satisfactory progress in mathematics and some children are on course to reach the appropriate levels by the time they enter Year 1. Through activities such as sorting and matching and work in the numeracy lessons, children are supported well in their mathematical development. They are learning to sequence numbers to 10 and sometimes beyond. A small proportion of higher-attaining children is able to add sets of number up to ten. Most children are confident with numbers to five and can write their numbers correctly.
62. Many activities are linked to other areas of learning and there are also opportunities to develop mathematical concepts through practical experiences, such as the use of sand and water, and through outdoor activities. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. However, teachers do not plan or target sufficiently the use of play and practical experiences to extend pupils' learning. When staff do use mathematical terminology in its appropriate context this helps the children to acquire and use mathematical vocabulary. This was seen for example, during the mental mathematics part of a numeracy lesson when the children were developing an awareness of the terms 'heavy, heavier than, light, lighter than'. The session was well paced and focused. The work was suitably followed through using practical equipment. During the activities in one numeracy lesson however, inappropriate methods were used and children were over-directed in their work on shape rather than learning from real life situations and practical activities.

## **Knowledge and understanding**

63. Children attain average standards in their knowledge and understanding of the world by the age of five. Staff use good questioning to promote enquiry and discover how well children understand. For example, some good questioning skills by the teacher demonstrated that children had understood the life cycle of the butterfly. Children have clearly learnt scientific terms such as 'cocoon' and 'eggs' and are beginning to understand how things can change over time, grow and develop. When children were talking about their sunflowers they demonstrated their knowledge about the need for the seeds to have water in order to grow. The children are able to sequence a series of events, for example by placing pictures in the correct order. Teaching has important shortcomings and is unsatisfactory in some lessons because children are left to explore on their own with little or no support from the teacher or other adults to extend or challenge their curiosity or interests. For example, the children help each other in using the computer programs to support their learning. They follow the instructions, and have begun to see how the computer can help them. There is however insufficient intervention by adults and a lack of planned opportunities for the teaching of basic computer skills. Children work with a limited range of construction and modelling materials and are suitably developing their cutting and sticking skills. The poor resources provided and the lack of staff input into activities fails to challenge the children.

## **Creative Development**

64. The provision for children's creative development is unsatisfactory and pupils make unsatisfactory progress. Too little attention is given to planning for this aspect of children's development and to checking whether any new learning is taking place. Tasks provided for children limit their opportunities to be creative and imaginative, and do not relate to any clear learning intentions. For example, in a number of sessions during the inspection, when the majority of the class was engaged in 'free choice' activities, the class teacher and support assistant worked with a group of children on an activity or with individual readers. The children partaking in free choice activities were not checked to make sure all of them had a turn to learn from each of the activities. Furthermore, for the most part children were left to work totally unsupervised without adult interaction and sometimes outside the view of an adult. Teachers' planning made no reference to what the purpose of the free choice activities was, or about the desired learning to take place. Children do not have sufficient or regular opportunities to listen to music, explore musical sound, or have access to tuned

or unturned percussion instruments to 'spontaneously sing, listen or make music'. Resources to support this area of learning are poor.

### **Physical development**

65. Children are given regular opportunities to develop their physical and practical skills. Although children attain broadly average standards by the age of five, their progress could be better with better planning and adult interaction in some of the activities. Children learn to use and handle simple tools safely and manipulate construction equipment and smaller items. Most enjoy setting themselves challenges and show pleasure in their achievements, for example when successfully pedalling and steering the bicycles or when using the scissors to cut out a drawing. Too little attention is given to ensuring that all pupils have opportunities to practise and develop their skills. For example, in a session when children were using large equipment outside, the large wheeled toys were monopolised by the boys during the whole session and the girls had no opportunity to use them. The adult working with the children did not intervene to ensure all children had the chance to practise these skills. In specific physical education lessons, however, teaching and learning is better because there is a specific focus on the development of both gross and fine motor skills. Skills of throwing and catching, for example, were being suitably developed in a lesson seen during inspection and children had the opportunity to improve on their performance. Children co-operate well during activities and are willing to share equipment and initiate their own games. Their behaviour is good. Appropriate support is given to children with special educational needs.

### **ENGLISH**

66. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with skills in reading and writing which are below average. Their speaking skills are well below average. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 or above, both in reading and writing, was well below the national average. The percentage reaching the higher Level 3 was also well below average. When compared with the results achieved in similar schools results were below average. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' overall attainment was close to the national average. The proportion reaching the higher Level 5 was, however, below the national average. When compared with similar schools, results were broadly average. Taking the results for the four years from 1996 to 1999 together, pupils' overall performance at age eleven has been close to the national average. During this time, girls have generally performed better than boys, although this difference is not significant.
67. The evidence from pupils' present work shows that at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is below average, although standards are better than those in the previous year. This has been achieved by clearly focusing on reading and through providing more time for writing. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is similar to the national average, except for pupils' speaking skills which are below average.
68. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' listening skills are broadly average, whilst their speaking skills are below average. Pupils usually listen attentively to their teachers, and most show an understanding of what they have heard. A minority of pupils are able to speak clearly and confidently, and a small number feel able to provide extended answers and comments. The majority of pupils, however, speak either in single words or in short phrases, often lacking the vocabulary or the confidence to express themselves at length. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' listening skills are also average, and their speaking skills are below average. A small number of pupils produce answers and observations confidently and concisely. The majority of pupils, however, are not keen to speak at any length in front of their classmates.
69. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' standards in reading are below average. A significant minority of pupils read their texts accurately, introducing some expression into their reading, and confidently explaining what they have read. The majority of pupils read their books successfully, but with little expression or fluency. Most have appropriate phonic skills that enable them to attempt to read words that they do not know. Some of these pupils, however, have limited word comprehension, so that even when they read a portion of text correctly, they are unable to explain clearly the

meaning of what they have read. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' reading skills, overall, are as expected. Whilst some pupils still find reading difficult, most read fluently and accurately, with many producing good expression into their work. In talking about what they have read, pupils make appropriate reference to characters and events in the story. Pupils are generally confident in finding information using reference books, and many have successfully mastered the skills of skimming and scanning.

70. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' standards in writing are below average. Most pupils successfully write portions of text, including stories, news and poems. A significant number of pupils, however, do not use capital letters and full stops consistently correctly or independently to add structure to their writing. Many pupils find spelling difficult, but although only a minority spell all their words correctly, the majority produces spellings that are phonetically acceptable. Pupils' handwriting skills are appropriately developed, with higher-attaining pupils joining their letters successfully. Most other pupils produce letters that are well formed, and of a consistent size, although a minority of pupils finds this aspect of work difficult. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in writing are broadly average. Most pupils successfully write factual information as well as producing imaginative writing, in the form of stories and poems. Higher-attaining pupils produce extended pieces of writing, and this often shows interest and depth, through the use of appropriate language. On occasions, pupils draft their work, to help improve its quality. Many pupils join their letters in a clear and neat handwriting style, although a significant number of pupils do not maintain this quality of handwriting when writing in other subjects. Pupils' spelling is generally satisfactory, and they confidently use dictionaries to help them improve their work further.
71. The quality of teaching in lessons is satisfactory overall, with good teaching also taking place in a number of classes at both key stages. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Lessons are well planned and well organised, with teachers following the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. Emphasis is being placed on the development of writing and additional time is given to it. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to listen to stories and various forms of instruction, and they make good use of intonation in their voices, as well as humour, to help maintain pupils' interest. Where teaching is good, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to speak at length and develop their speaking skills, for example by making good use of questioning. In many lessons, however, teachers do not provide pupils with enough chances to speak, and pupils' low attainment in this area is not being adequately tackled. This weakness in teaching was also noted at the time of the previous inspection.
72. Teachers are careful to provide appropriate reading books for pupils, and nearly all pupils have books suitable to their needs. Careful records are kept of the books read, and pupils are regularly provided with new ones. Pupils, generally, are keen to read, and even when they find reading difficult they are prepared to 'have a go'. Teachers provide an appropriate range of writing activities and opportunities during English lessons. However, opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to develop their writing skills in other subjects such as history, science and religious education.
73. Pupils respond appropriately to the opportunities provided in all aspects of the subject other than speaking, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and skills. Good relationships are developed between teachers and pupils, and teachers provide appropriate support during lessons, as well as adding helpful comments to pupils' work in their exercise books. Pupils' attitudes are consistently good. They generally behave well and set about their various tasks with good concentration. They work well on their own, and in groups when required, and they persevere with the work set. They generally know what to do, but readily turn to adults if necessary. Most pupils are keen to produce a neat and careful standard of presentation in their books, although a minority takes less care. They appreciate the work of other pupils, and in some classes they are quick to show that appreciation by applauding.

74. The school uses the National Literacy Strategy as its scheme of work and all the various aspects of work are suitably covered. The co-ordinators provide sound leadership, are hard working, and in analysing the results achieved by pupils, they have identified writing as a particular area for development. The strategies they have implemented have helped to raise standards, especially at the end of Key Stage 1. Through studying teachers' plans they are aware of the work that is being covered throughout the school, but at present they have little opportunity to monitor that work in the classroom. This detracts from their overall effectiveness in identifying good practice and in strengthening the teaching and extending learning. This was a weakness identified at the time of the school's previous inspection and it has not been addressed. A satisfactory range of assessment procedures is in place, but at present recording arrangements are inconsistent. The information which is recorded is inadequate to clearly identify pupils' current attainment, the progress they have made or to help the planning of appropriate future work for individual pupils. Resources are generally satisfactory and put to appropriate use, although the school is short of reading books for pupils at Key Stage 1. Limited use is made of other curricular subjects to help develop pupils' literacy skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

75. When pupils start Key Stage 1 their attainment levels in mathematics are generally below average. In the National Curriculum tests in 1999 at age seven, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level and higher levels is well below the national average. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 the proportion of pupils gaining the expected Level 4 and the higher level, Level 5, are both below average.
76. Work seen during the inspection indicates that for the current Year 2 and 6 cohort attainment is broadly average. These improved results occur firstly as the current groups have fewer pupils with special educational needs and secondly there is some evidence that the booster groups in Year 6 and the introduction of the Numeracy Strategy throughout the school, are having positive effects on raising standards. By age eleven most pupils have a secure understanding of place value including decimal notation and calculation of percentages. They are able to interpret a variety of charts, tables and graphs and calculate area, perimeter and volume correctly. In the current Year 6 class pupils' skills in applying and using their mathematical knowledge are good. For example, pupils were confident in tackling the interpretation of a variety of charts and tables in some travel brochures when working on a task to plan a holiday, finding the cost, travelling times and flight availability.
77. By age seven, average and higher-attaining pupils are confident to use and explore number. They understand place value of tens and units and can order numbers to 100. They practice counting in twos, tens, threes, and fives and many pupils know these number facts by heart. Higher-attaining pupils have a good knowledge of most of the multiplication facts when compared with pupils of a similar age. They recognise flat and solid shapes and can divide these into halves and quarters. They measure objects using standard and non-standard measures and construct bar charts to represent information. Lower-attaining pupils work at a simpler level but their attainment in mental mathematics is about average.
78. Work in books and evidence from lessons shows pupils currently making steady progress overall with some good progress in mental mathematics. Pupils' agility with number and their skills in mental mathematics are developing well. For example, many of the children in the Reception year can count to 20. Most pupils in Year 1 count confidently in 2's to 20 and 30 and higher-attaining pupils are able to count to 50 and sometimes beyond that. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils know that there are a number of ways to arrive at an answer and pupils can explain fairly confidently how they went about calculating answers to problems set.
79. Pupils' response in lessons is good. Pupils listen well to their teachers and concentrate well. Occasionally when pupils become restless, this occurs because children are expected to listen for too long before applying what they have learned to their own work. When set tasks to do, pupils work sensibly and they co-operate well with each other, helping and supporting each other and

sharing equipment sensibly. Pupils are confident to answer questions and to ask for clarification when they are not sure. Pupils respect each other's contributions which is why pupils are willing 'to have a go' even if they are not absolutely certain of the answer.

80. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In half of lessons teaching is good and in one lesson it is very good. However, the teaching was unsatisfactory in one lesson. This occurred because the teacher does not understand the principles of the Numeracy Strategy and its method and teaches to a published scheme without identifying precisely what she wants pupils to learn. Teachers' weekly planning is satisfactory overall although learning objectives could sometimes be clearer and more detailed. Some plans do not state what pupils are expected to learn from the mental mathematics session each day. Learning objectives are infrequently shared with pupils; doing so would provide a sharper focus. Teachers are well prepared for lessons ensuring that activities, equipment and materials are prepared and are easily accessible. Teachers' subject knowledge is at least secure, and often good, and pupils are managed well. In the main what distinguishes good and very good teaching from that which is satisfactory, is the pace of lessons and teachers' expectations of pupils. Some of the satisfactory teaching would be good teaching if the pace of lessons were increased and teachers demanded more of the pupils. This would also enable a more lively delivery and ultimately for pupils to increase the amount of progress they make in each lesson.
81. Most teachers have made a good and confident start in implementing the Numeracy Strategy. The mental mathematics sessions are conducted well in a number of classes with some good questioning and exploration of the mental methods and strategies pupils are using. Explanations of tasks and concepts are usually good which means pupils know what to do. The written tasks are well differentiated to match the needs of different groups of pupils, and pupils with special educational needs are supported well both by class teachers and support assistants. The plenary sessions in general need to be developed further. Some teachers make good use of these to round off the lesson, to consolidate learning or to introduce new ideas. In other classes there are missed opportunities as the plenary is used more as a sharing of work activity.
82. An overall weakness in a number of lessons is that some of the teacher input relates too much to showing pupils how to do the page in the textbook or workbook, rather than explaining mathematical concepts. The staff as a whole need to give more thought to how commercial schemes should be used to support work in the Numeracy Strategy.
83. The school has adopted the National Numeracy Strategy and teachers are gradually building up the short term planning from this. The strategy's learning objectives potentially form the basis of teacher assessment, assessing whether pupils have learned what they have been taught. In those classes where learning objectives are not sufficiently detailed, assessing pupils' progress is difficult than it needs to be.
84. The staff have received the appropriate training in the implementation of the strategy; however, staff turnover and teacher absences mean that some teachers have not received all of the training. In the absence of a mathematics co-ordinator, the headteacher is overseeing work in mathematics. He is providing as much support as he can, in view of the many other curriculum responsibilities and whole school priorities he is currently overseeing. However, co-ordination of the subject needs to be given some quality time and focused attention in the future to ensure that what is working well is extended to all classes and the overall weaknesses are addressed. The resources have been supplemented recently to take account of the strategy. The school at the same time purchased and introduced a new commercial mathematics scheme. The scheme, however, needs to be used as a teacher resource rather than as a focus for what is taught. In general, the resources need to be extended and some need to be replaced. More thought also needs to be given to the appropriateness of some purchases and whether the goods purchased represent the best way of using available money. Planned expenditure includes the purchase of additional teacher materials; this should support the teaching by providing a range of different materials and ideas for developing pupils' problem solving and investigations.

## SCIENCE

85. The results of last year's National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds show that standards are well below the national average and are below average when compared with similar schools. Results fluctuate from one year to the next because of the size of cohort and the number of pupils within each cohort with special educational needs. However, though results are well below the national average, in 1999, the percentage gaining the expected level is higher than in the previous year. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls in the tests or in the work seen.
86. Inspection evidence shows that attainment levels for those pupils currently in Year 2 is close to that expected although there is less evidence of pupils attaining the higher Level 3. The work of pupils currently in Year 6 indicates that more than sixty per cent of the pupils are on line to achieve the expected level although few are likely to reach the higher Level 5. These results are an improvement on the previous year but still indicate below average attainment. Improvements occur partly because the school has begun to take steps to analyse assessment data, identify the gaps in what is taught and to address this.
87. Pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in the acquisition of knowledge and understanding in the key areas of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. They use charts and tables appropriately to record their findings and in some cases good use is made of the computer to collect data and record the information. Pupils' achievement and progress in investigative science, however, is a weakness across the whole school. The majority of pupils lack confidence in establishing an investigation without considerable support from the adult. This is because staff do not give sufficient attention to the teaching and development of scientific skills, an item also raised in the previous inspection report.
88. The excellent teaching in a lesson about different types of soils demonstrated that pupils are capable of planning, collecting materials and equipment together and carrying out a fair test, when required and challenged to do so. For example, when pupils were explaining what they thought might happen, the teacher would not accept two or three word answers and pupils were encouraged and able to provide extended answers. Because the teacher kept up a very brisk pace and asked probing questions which made the pupils think, reflect, and reason the 'how, why, what, and because' elements, they were able to apply these skills to their experiment successfully and to draw some good conclusions from their results. This excellent teaching could usefully be deployed to support other staff in their delivery of a science lesson, raise the level of pupil attainment and the quality of science teaching throughout the school.
89. The curriculum is satisfactory overall although more attention needs to be given to investigative science. Work at both key stages covers most aspects of the science curriculum, but pupils' recorded work lacks depth partly because of the teachers' over-reliance on worksheets and too much copying of text from the board. Emphasis is placed on providing accurate factual knowledge and appropriate scientific vocabulary in its appropriate context and teachers explain and discuss the scientific content of work so that pupils can understand. Nevertheless, this approach limits pupils' opportunities to learn from practical activities and to record independently their own understanding and findings. This also limits opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their literacy skills through work in science.
90. The pupils show a positive attitude in lessons. Most are interested in the subject and keen to learn. When given the opportunity to carry out practical activities, they enjoy them. Most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, co-operate well with each other and handle equipment carefully and safely. In a class of Year 3 and 4 pupils, for example, pupils showed a great respect for the mini-beasts and were very careful to ensure that they disturbed the habitats as little as possible. In pupils' recorded work, handwriting and presentation of work is often unsatisfactory, possibly because the tasks are undemanding and too often require pupils merely to copy from the board.

91. The quality of teaching in those classes seen during the inspection was sound with good teaching in some lessons. Teachers prepare appropriately for lessons and use the school's limited resources reasonably effectively. They identify the content of the work to be covered and this provides an appropriate focus to the lesson, although more attention needs to be given to the skills to be developed rather than the content to be taught. Attention is being given to developing pupils' understanding and their use of the correct scientific vocabulary. Classroom management is good and staff have positive and friendly relationships with pupils. The classroom assistants provide very good support which enhances pupils' learning and achievements, especially that of pupils with special educational needs.
92. Teachers' planning and assessment procedures are in need of improvement and are currently under review. The school has very recently begun to implement the national guidance to ensure a greater consistency between lessons and across the year groups so that children's knowledge, skills and understanding can be progressively taught. Being clearer about the skills which teachers aim to develop in lessons would enable them to assess pupils' attainment and progress more effectively.
93. The headteacher and science co-ordinator are aware that work in the subject needs to be improved. Improving the curriculum, extending the teaching and learning and the management of the subject are areas for improvement identified in the school development plan.

## **ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

94. The satisfactory standards in art identified in the last inspection have been maintained. Standards in design and technology have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, attain standards in line with their peers.
95. In Key Stage 1, pupils achieve a satisfactory level of cutting, placing and sticking skills that they apply successfully when following instructions. In Year 2 pupils complete simple design sheets that outline the materials needed, a sketch of the proposed artefact and some indication of the proposed means of construction. Pupils utilise a range of finishes and evaluate the finished results. In painting, they learn to mix a range of colours, tones and shades; they apply paint accurately but do not yet apply it freely and with verve. By the end of the key stage some figure drawings are beginning to acquire individual characteristics.
96. In Key Stage 2 additional attention is properly given to the designing process so that by the end of the key stage pupils are sketching plan, side and front elevations for their artefacts. In Year 4, for example, the use of templates made individually by pupils aided the quality of the final versions of 'coats of many colours'. Designs for musical instruments in Year 5, and of slippers in Year 6, demonstrate an increasing ability to produce individual work. This gradual move towards pupils developing personal styles is also evident in pencil drawings of objects and landscape throughout the key stage. Whilst studies of famous painters has resulted in copies, rather than in pupils' work influenced by the painters studied, collages and montages are often of good quality. Little three-dimensional work was available during the inspection, but photographic evidence shows satisfactory work.
97. Pupils' attitudes to their work, in the lessons seen, were always at least good and, in one lesson, response was very good. They concentrate hard and try to achieve well. Behaviour is good – this was particularly noted in two lessons where messy materials were in use. Pupils co-operate effectively in sharing equipment and materials, willingly help to clear away and evaluate their work honestly.
98. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen during inspection is satisfactory overall and is good in half of the lessons seen. In Key Stage 1 teaching strengths lie in ensuring that pupils acquire the necessary skills that can be built upon as they move through the school. This results in work often looking much the same when displayed, but provides a solid skills base. The last report stated that good teaching occurred when expectations are high; this remains the case. Expectations overall



could be higher and pupils need to have more opportunities to express their own ideas in their work. Pupils' work is carefully displayed and labelled, giving the subjects status in the school.

99. The present amended curriculum for both subjects has enabled pupils to acquire basic skills, some of which, for example observational drawing, have been developed effectively. The range of resources available is limited and needs to be extended to enable a full programme of study to be accessed from September when relaxed requirements in relation to the foundation subjects ends. The co-ordinators are aware of this challenge and have begun to consider how the successful elements of the school's schemes of work may be integrated into the national guidelines. The co-ordinators' role in monitoring standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning needs to be developed and extended.
100. The use of sketchbooks is being developed in all classes, but there is need for guidelines to ensure good and consistent practice. The last report stated that the food technology area was unhygienic; this space has been abandoned in favour of a suitably hygienic area. Whilst pupils benefit from studying the works of famous, mainly western European, painters, there is little study of artists other than painters to add breadth to their understanding. Similarly, studies of the works of artists working in the traditions of a range of world cultures would develop understanding of art worldwide. The school-produced scheme of work for art properly includes a progression checklist of the media used and skills that pupils are expected to acquire as they move through the school.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

101. The last report stated that in both subjects attainment was in line with that expected nationally. Overall this remains the case, showing that the school has broadly maintained standards rather than enhancing them. Pupils' written work is in too many instances copied from the blackboard and is identical for all pupils within the class. This does not reflect accurately the quality of teaching in the lessons seen during the inspection, nor the pupils' capabilities and their actual knowledge of the work covered. When pupils were interviewed, their knowledge and understanding expressed orally is significantly better than that which may be judged from inspection of pupils' written work. Pupils' progress, including those pupils with special educational needs and pupils for who English as an additional language, is satisfactory and can be extended.
102. Those pupils interviewed in Key Stage 1 displayed sound basic historical understanding of the development of transport expressing ideas associated with change over time, cause and effect, and similarity and difference. In geography they have sound knowledge of the countries of the British Isles; they offer examples of directional language when describing their journeys from home to school and use the vocabulary needed to describe features within a landscape. They talk knowledgeably about the effects of the seasons and weather on people's lives.
103. Pupils in Key Stage 2 use similar ideas to describe contrasting areas and they have a developing idea of location as a geographical concept. For example, they explain people's life styles, the seasons, weather and agricultural practices in St. Lucia in relation to its climate and geographical position when making comparisons with the British Isles. They have satisfactory knowledge of continents, oceans and their positions on a globe. They find principal cities using the index in an atlas and state the difference between human and physical features on maps. In history their use of knowledge and concepts, to explain events and the actions of historical characters, is sometimes good; for example, as they state reasons for rationing and child evacuation during the Second World War. They have sound recall of the topics studied and, when questioned, can talk in simple terms about which things have changed over time and which have remained the same.
104. In lessons observed and during interviews pupils' attitudes to both subjects were good. They generally behave well in class, listen attentively and are often eager to answer questions and offer their own views.
105. The quality of teaching seen is satisfactory overall and some was good or very good. Teachers display at least sound subject knowledge; most use open-ended questioning effectively and plan interesting subject matter. However, scrutiny of pupils' work reveals an over-use of commercial

worksheets. This is a weakness in teaching which limits pupils' attainment and denies pupils the opportunity to express opinions and to give their interpretation of events. In addition, there is too much time-wasting where pupils spend time in colouring in illustrations which adds nothing to their understanding.

106. Written evidence strongly suggests that neither subject is routinely used to develop literacy skills beyond the practising of handwriting. There is no evidence, for example, of pupils researching information, making notes and writing their findings in their own words. Planning is not well expressed in terms of class or group learning objectives that include skills and concepts to be learned and against which pupils' progress can be assessed. This type of planning is also difficult to achieve because the school has no checklist of the skills and concepts which pupils are expected to aim to achieve as they move up through the school. The co-ordinators do not yet monitor the standards of teaching and learning in their subjects. The headteacher is aware of the need to put in place the necessary training to enable co-ordinators to perform their role better.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

107. Attainment is below national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils' attainment has, however, improved since the time of the school's previous inspection, when standards were reported to be low.
108. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils confidently name items of computer equipment, such as mouse, keyboard and printer. Most pupils successfully use a keyboard to type text, such as shopping lists and simple sentences. They confidently place gaps between words using the space bar, and many pupils are able to introduce capital letters and full stops into their writing. A significant minority, however, needs support in identifying the correct punctuation to include. Higher-attaining pupils successfully use the backspace key to correct mistakes in their spelling. Using an appropriate paint package, pupils produce an interesting range of pictures, such as geometrical patterns and houses. Pupils confidently access the menu to print their finished work. With help from their teachers, pupils can give instructions to a floor turtle to produce straight line movements over varying distances. At present pupils have few opportunities to undertake modelling activities, nor are they able to store and retrieve information.
109. At the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils show sound skills in word processing, being confident in changing the font, colour and size of their work. A significant minority, however, shows a lack of confidence and independence in carrying out changes to the presentation of text. Pupils are able to retrieve a spreadsheet from their machines, insert appropriate information, for example about the sales of drinks and snacks from a shop, and then save their work on disk. Most pupils can use the mouse accurately to produce various forms of artwork, and many pupils can merge pictures into their text. Pupils successfully print the work they have produced. Pupils continue to have some experience in using a floor turtle, but they have little chance, as yet, to extend their knowledge of control technology further, such as providing instructions, through the computer, to control lights or vehicles. Pupils at present have little opportunity to develop skills in modelling or in monitoring external events.
110. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers are keen and enthusiastic. Now that the school's information technology suite is in use, they are able to provide a good range of resources, as well as regular class lessons. At the moment, a number of teachers readily admit to a certain lack of confidence in teaching the subject. However, through careful preparation of lessons, together with on-going training, teachers are providing pupils with appropriate learning experiences, in line with their present knowledge and understanding. Teachers usually provide clear and careful instruction on how to use items of hardware, as well as word processing and art packages. As a result all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, are able to make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding.
111. Pupils respond by showing very good attitudes to the subject and behaving well. They normally listen carefully and settle well to all tasks, with high levels of concentration and developing levels of skill. Very occasionally, a small number of pupils lose concentration, when introductions are

over-long. They clearly enjoy the subject, however, and they work well, both alone and with a partner when necessary. Relationships are good, and pupils ask teachers for help when required. They share computers amicably and are careful in handling all forms of equipment. Teachers provide appropriate help and advice throughout, enabling their pupils to make progress.

112. The school's provision for information technology has improved since the previous inspection. The new suite was opened recently, and it is being put to regular and effective use. A good range of software is now available, also an improvement since the time of the last inspection. The school is also awaiting delivery of extra computers and equipment to provide for the teaching of more advanced control technology, as well as modelling and monitoring. The provision of computers in classrooms will also allow the development of skills and knowledge, learnt in the information technology suite, to be continued and reinforced through the rest of the week. The school has introduced the national guidance for information technology as its scheme of work, and is in the process of implementing it. The co-ordinator is keen and enthusiastic, and he has worked hard, with a clear vision, to begin raising the standards. He is fully aware what needs to be done to implement the subject fully, and to raise standards further. The co-ordinator supports his colleagues informally, and he assists them when they take their classes to the local comprehensive school to use their computer room. He has no further opportunity, however, to observe lessons being taught or to work alongside teachers. Teachers keep informal notes to record their assessment of pupils' skills in the subject, but this information is not yet used to provide specific work for individuals. Through the work in word-processing, the subject is beginning to make a limited impact on pupils' literacy skills. At the moment, it is having little effect on the development of numeracy skills. Many pupils find the use of computers exciting.

## MUSIC

113. No teaching was seen in Key Stage 1 and only three lessons were seen at Key Stage 2. Judgements are therefore based on the examination of teachers' planning, discussions with staff, music tuition with a peripatetic instructor, and pupils' performance in singing during assemblies. Since the last inspection, the quality of the music in the school has deteriorated. The overall standards are below average and teaching is unsatisfactory overall.
114. In the lessons observed at Key Stage 2, pupils do not receive a suitably broad and balanced programme, including singing, performing, listening and appraising music. There are also, for example, missed opportunities for pupils to learn something about a piece of music, who wrote it and the instrument being played or for them to reflect upon the mood or character of the pieces played during assemblies. A significant minority of children, when singing in assemblies can pick up the words of the song and the general contour of the melody quickly, although most of the time, pitch and rhythm falters.
115. In the teachers' plans the learning objectives are brief and generally unclear, and this demonstrates their very limited knowledge and understanding of how to teach basic musical skills. This had been an issue raised at the time of the previous inspection and has not been sufficiently addressed in order to help and support all the teachers in the delivery of a music lesson. Consequently, there is no progression in pupils' learning either across year groups or in the lessons observed. For example, the pupils could not identify accurately or play with reasonable competence the tuned percussion instruments. No attention was given by the teacher to help the pupils improve their skills. She was not aware that what they were doing was inaccurate. In another session the work planned was a very low-level task for the age and ability level of the pupils. To clap the rhythm associated with words, such as, glow-worm, grasshopper, took the pupils less than a minute. They responded promptly to the rhythmic beat given by the teacher and tried to take the initiative by giving ideas of how they could build on the simple pattern. They were not given that opportunity or freedom to do so and as a result, became restless, inattentive and no real musical learning took place.
116. Where a lesson was planned well, the teacher tried to develop the pupils' understanding of structure in song. Using her own resources and songs that pupils could relate to, she tried to develop the pupils' listening skill and understanding of form. The teacher was using suitable questioning

techniques that are directly related to what you could hear in the music. As a result, pupils listened carefully to the songs and had begun to see that a song can have elements such as chorus, verse, and an introduction. However, most pupils found difficulty in recognising and sequencing these elements. This is because they have had insufficient prior knowledge. A significant number of pupils demonstrated their enjoyment and interest in the music.

117. Opportunities are available for pupils to take individual tuition in instrumental playing. At present there are only five children who have taken up this, offered by a local music organisation. In one session observed, the teaching was good and consequently enhanced the pupils' learning and progress in the mastery of the instrument and her basic knowledge of musical skills and understanding of basic rudiments of music. The pupil read notation from the stave very competently and obviously enjoys playing her instrument.
118. At present, there is no music co-ordinator. This issue has recently been addressed by the appointment of a teacher with music expertise from September 2000. The school is aware that music is a weak subject and has prioritised this area for development in the light of Curriculum 2000 and the need to support and train the classroom teacher in the delivery of the music curriculum. The resources available in the school to support the teaching and the pupils' learning in music are very poor, which also impacts on pupils' learning.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

119. The average standards reported at the time of the school's previous inspection have been maintained. At Key Stage 1, pupils move confidently around the hall or yard, showing clear awareness of space and of other pupils. In Year 1, pupils successfully throw and catch balls and beanbags, and many pupils show confidence in catching with one hand, as well as two. Pupils in Year 2 successfully carry out the basic gymnastic actions of jumping, skipping and hopping, showing appropriate control of their movements. The majority of pupils also show confidence in using skipping ropes.
120. At Key Stage 2, pupils successfully throw, hit, kick and catch a variety of balls, and pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, confidently improve these skills, when taking part in cricket, rounders and football activities. Pupils in Year 6 develop their gymnastic skills, producing, for instance, a variety of symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes, using both the floor and an appropriate range of apparatus. Whilst pupils carry out the activities correctly, however, few attempt to produce quality in their movements. Pupils successfully link a short sequence of actions, which they then practise and repeat. Pupils in Years 1, 2, 4 and 5, attend swimming lessons and all pupils develop appropriate confidence in the water. By the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2, at least 90 per cent of pupils can swim 25 metres or more unaided, a proportion which is close to the national expectation.
121. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of good teaching in some classes in Key Stage 1. Teachers provide sound planning, clear instruction, a good range of resources and enthusiasm, allowing all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, to make satisfactory improvements in their skills. Pupils at Key Stage 1, often make good improvements during individual lessons. All members of staff change appropriately, and they join in and demonstrate skills for pupils. They have sound subject knowledge and make suitable demands of the pupils' performance. They do not, however, always challenge pupils to introduce a high standard of performance in their work, which limits progress.
122. Pupils join in appropriately, enjoying themselves and usually making a good physical effort in their work. Where teaching is good, lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, with pupils being kept busy throughout. Teachers usually show good control and management skills, especially where a wide range of activities is being undertaken. Occasionally, a small minority of pupils do not give their full attention to their teacher, either not listening carefully, or preferring instead to carry on with their activities. Teachers often take the opportunity to use pupils to demonstrate good practice, but opportunities are missed, in some classes, to discuss the quality of the work seen, and give pupils the chance to identify where they might improve their own work. Teachers provide help and

support to pupils in all aspects of their work, and in particular they emphasise the need for safety. In turn, pupils show good and sometimes very good attitudes, generally behave well, work well alone and with a partner or group, and carry equipment carefully and safely.

123. The school has an appropriate scheme of work, and the two co-ordinators have drawn up a detailed long-term plan, to ensure that all aspects of work are covered. The co-ordinators have only recently taken on the post, and although they are enthusiastic and keen to support their colleagues, they have no opportunity as yet to undertake any monitoring of the work being carried out. No formal assessment procedures are in place, and although some informal assessment takes place during lessons, little is recorded, other than some details of work in athletics, and any information gained is inadequate to accurately identify pupils' current skill levels, or to help provide suitable future work. Activities involving counting and measuring, especially in games activities, give support to the school's initiative in numeracy. The school makes good arrangements for the provision of extracurricular sporting activities for older pupils and these arrangements also enhance the pupils' social development.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

124. By the end of both key stages, pupils' knowledge and understanding in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Throughout the school progress is satisfactory.
125. Teaching in the lessons seen during inspection is satisfactory and there is also some good teaching. Lesson plans have clear objectives and where the teaching is good the purpose of the lesson is shared with the pupils, which helps the pupils to understand what they will learn. For example, in a lesson in Year 3, pupils were told why they were going to listen to the story of Zacheus and how this might have relevance to their lives today. This lesson also provided good opportunities for pupils to consider and reflect on the story and contribute to the discussion. The teacher's sensitivity and good questioning skills when leading the discussion enabled the pupils to share their thoughts and respect the contribution of others. Some pupils could confidently suggest why Jesus behaved towards Zacheus as he did and what might have happened had Jesus merely challenged Zacheus, demonstrating that the pupils had understood the significance of the planned learning.
126. In a Year 2 class, the majority of the pupils, both boys and girls, could articulate clearly and confidently their thoughts and feelings about what makes some days special. They related this to their own personal experiences of family celebrations and special occasions. This was built on by the class teacher in order to explore the significance of special days in religious traditions. Pupils learned that Sunday is a special day for Christians and Saturday for Jews. Teaching in both these lessons had a good pace and rigour. The pupils' literacy skills, for example in the Year 3 lesson are well deployed in the follow-up written work. The behaviour, attitudes, and the levels of enthusiastic participation of all pupils during the course of lessons, were good.
127. The curriculum for religious education is sound. Pupils' response and written work shows a good coverage of Bible stories, celebrations, events and practices in other faiths. Pupils' work is mostly well presented and also demonstrates that pupils are developing respect for, and an understanding of, the values and beliefs of other world religions as well as Christianity. However, there is in general an over-reliance on worksheets and of copying text from the blackboard. This does not allow pupils sufficient opportunities to express their own ideas and feelings through their writing. Although some headway has been made in improving the planning of the curriculum to ensure all aspects of the locally agreed syllabus are covered systematically, there is still some way to go in both monitoring the curriculum and the assessment of pupils' learning.