

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **RURAL VILLAGES' SCHOOL, BUCKNALL**

Bucknall, Woodhall Spa

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120443

Headteacher: Mrs. I. Casey-Evans

Reporting inspector: Mrs. K. Charlton, 1718

Dates of inspection: 5 to 7 February 2001

Inspection number: 196272

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Main Road Bucknall Woodhall Spa Lincolnshire
Postcode:	LN10 5DT
Telephone number:	01526 388233
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. D. Hoyes
Date of previous inspection:	3 March 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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1718	Kay Charlton	Registered inspector	English Science Design and Technology Information communication technology Physical Education Foundation Stage Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9091	Guy Hirst	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1516	Mike Warman	Team inspector	Mathematics Art Geography History Music Religious Education Special Educational Needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well does the school care for its pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Bucknall Villages' School is a small rural primary school catering for girls and boys aged four to eleven. There are forty-four pupils on roll. The school mainly serves villages of Bucknall, Horsington and Stixwould but children from Minting, Edlington, Roughton, Bardney, Coningsby, Market Stainton and Horncastle also attend. The school operates as two classes, one of which provides for Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils and the other for Key Stage 2 pupils. Children start school at the beginning of the year in which they become five. On entry, the children display a wide range of attainment. There are significant variations from one year to another but generally attainment is slightly below average for children of this age. The children come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. Although few are eligible for free school meals there are many pupils from families with low income. A higher than average proportion of pupils has been identified as having special educational needs and there are two pupils with statements of special educational needs. No children speak English as an additional language. A significant percentage of pupils move to and from school other than at age four or eleven. Since most year groups consist of fewer than ten pupils, the school is not required to publish its end of key stage test results.

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

Overall, this school provides a sound education for its pupils and there are a number of good features. The headteacher and key staff give clear educational direction and they ensure that pupils of all ages and abilities are making satisfactory progress. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The progress made by pupils in English, mathematics and science has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Curriculum planning is detailed and ensures that pupils with a wide range of age and ability in the class are learning effectively.
- The personal, social and health education programme is good and pupils make good progress in this area.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the targets set out in their individual education plans.
- Support staff make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

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

- The way in which the final part of lessons is used, particularly to ensure that pupils are fully involved in reviewing their learning and that they are clear about the ways in which they might improve.
- The strategies through which the school promotes its image, and identifies and responds to parents' concerns.
- The systems through which the governing body checks the effectiveness of the provision.

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

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

Overall, the school has made good improvement since the last inspection when a number of serious weaknesses were identified. The standards attained by pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2 are much improved in English, mathematics and science. The planning of the curriculum has improved and it now ensures that all pupils have equal access to the provision and that there is continuity for pupils through the school. The quality of teaching has improved significantly and there is now no unsatisfactory teaching. Pupils' behaviour has improved and is generally good. The provision for personal, social and health education is now good and the procedures for assessing and teaching pupils with special educational needs are also good. There is now clear educational direction, improved financial planning and the governors are much more involved with the work of the school. The information for parents is improved and is satisfactory overall.

### **STANDARDS**

As the 1998, 1999 and 2000 Year 6 cohorts were fewer than ten pupils, the school was not required to publish its key stage results. The following is a summary of the inspection findings.

Overall, in the Foundation Stage pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning and most attain the nationally expected standards at the end of their year in Reception.

By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are in line with those normally expected of seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds respectively. Overall, in both key stages pupils are achieving satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. Through the school, pupils make satisfactory gains in speaking and listening, and writing. There is good emphasis on the teaching of reading and many pupils make good progress in this area.

Overall, pupils make satisfactory gains in learning in mathematics. They generally make good progress in developing their mental skills, particularly in Key Stage 2.

In science, pupils develop sound knowledge and understanding of the subject as well as developing the necessary skills to undertake simple scientific investigations.

The last inspection highlighted the need to improve standards in many areas, particularly in Key Stage 2. There has been significant improvement since that time in the standards attained by pupils of all abilities and the progress they make. Nevertheless, more can still be achieved especially through improvements to the final part of lessons, particularly in the daily literacy and numeracy lessons.

The school has met the targets which it set in English and mathematics for the year 2000 and has set realistic and challenging targets in these subjects for 2001 and 2002. It has also set similarly realistic and challenging targets for science. All these targets show continued improvement on those set for 2000 and the school is well placed to meet them

#### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to their learning. The youngest children settle into school very well and quickly establish friendships. Throughout the school almost all are keen to attend and they show enjoyment in their activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Around the school and in lessons, behaviour is good overall. A small percentage of pupils with identified behavioural needs have made good improvement since joining the school and rarely show inappropriate behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils make good gains in their personal development. Older pupils react well to the opportunities for them to take responsibility. Relationships are good. The school has a strong family atmosphere and pupils of all ages mix happily. Pupils work positively with each other and with adults.
Attendance	Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence has reduced since the last inspection and punctuality is good. Registration, recording and reporting of attendance meets requirements.

#### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged up to 5 years</b>	<b>aged 5-7 years</b>	<b>aged 7-11 years</b>
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.*

Overall, teaching is satisfactory and there is a direct relationship with pupils' learning which is also satisfactory. Fifty-eight per cent of teaching seen was satisfactory and forty-two per cent was good. There was no

unsatisfactory teaching and no significant differences between the quality of teaching in different subjects or in different key stages. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. In each of these subjects nearly half of the teaching is good. Throughout the school staff work well as a team with support staff making a significant contribution to pupils' learning. There has been good improvement in teaching since the last inspection when twenty three per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory.

There have been clear improvements in staff's knowledge and understanding in English and mathematics through specific developments that have taken place in these areas and there is now a systematic development of pupils' basic skills of literacy and numeracy.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is appropriate and ensures that pupils in all year groups within the mixed aged classes are effectively provided for. It is broad and balanced, and covers all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. The school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice and statutory reporting requirements.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. A moral code is positively and sensitively encouraged throughout the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school's provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good and there are good procedures to monitor their personal development. The school has appropriate procedures to monitor pupils' academic progress. However, the use of assessment during the plenary at the end of lessons is not always effective. Consequently pupils are not sufficiently clear about how they might improve their learning.

The links with parents are satisfactory overall.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and key staff provide effective leadership. They work together well and give clear educational direction to the work of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are fulfilling their role satisfactorily. They have a clear commitment to the school and have worked hard to achieve improvement since the last inspection.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good evaluation by the headteacher and key staff but the governing body's systems to check on the school's strengths and weaknesses in terms of the standards the pupils achieve and the quality of teaching and children's learning, are not sufficiently developed.
The strategic use of resources	There is suitable financial planning and the school makes effective use of its available resources. Spending decisions are linked closely to educational priorities. The school appropriately applies principles of best value.

The school is adequately staffed and well-resourced. The accommodation is adequate for the effective delivery of the curriculum. There are difficulties in providing facilities for physical education but the school has overcome these well and pupils in both classes have two sessions per week when they can use the local village hall.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The progress made by pupils.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard.</li> <li>• The school provides well for children with special educational needs.</li> <li>• The quality of teaching.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their child does not like school.</li> <li>• Behaviour in school.</li> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• The information about how their child is getting on.</li> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• The leadership of the headteacher.</li> <li>• The working relationship with themselves.</li> </ul>

The majority of parents are satisfied with the school's provision. However, a significant minority have concerns, about particular aspects of school life.

Virtually all parents are happy that their child is expected to work hard and is making progress, and many indicate that their child is becoming mature and responsible. The majority are pleased with the quality of teaching. Parents of children with special educational needs are very pleased with the provision. The inspection findings confirm these views.

The inspection findings also show that most children like school and are keen to learn, that pupils' behaviour is good overall, and that homework is undertaken in line with the national guidelines. In addition, the annual reports which the school provides about the progress made by pupils meet requirements and the school has suitable arrangements for parents to keep updated about their child's progress. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory for a school of this size and the headteacher and key staff provide effective leadership. However, the school does not monitor parents' concerns effectively and therefore is not able to respond to these. This adversely affects the working relationship between the school and a significant minority of parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. *The school has not published end of key stage results for 1998, 1999 and 2000 since the number of pupils in the Year 6 cohort in each of these years was fewer than ten.*
2. On entry to school the children display a wide range of attainment. There are significant variations from one year to another but generally attainment is slightly below average for children of this age.
3. Overall, in the Foundation Stage, pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning and most attain the nationally expected standards at the end of their year in Reception. Girls and boys settle well and make satisfactory progress in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative development, and physical development. They make good progress in personal, social and emotional development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Reading is also developed well.
4. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are in line with those normally expected of seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds respectively. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 and pupils are now making satisfactory progress overall. Effective planning is now in place and this ensures that the work set matches the age and ability of different groups of pupils. This is having a positive effect on pupils' learning.
5. Pupils make satisfactory gains in speaking and listening through the school. In the Foundation Stage children learn to speak and listen in both small group and whole class situations. They suitably develop their vocabulary and use talk to sequence their ideas. As they move through Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils listen carefully in lessons and contribute ideas with confidence. By the time they leave the school many can describe clearly their knowledge of a subject, and express their opinions and ideas openly.
6. There is good emphasis on teaching reading and many pupils make good progress in this aspect. In the Foundation Stage, children develop good understanding about the ways in which to approach a book and the sounds and shapes of the letters of the alphabet. They effectively learn to recognise sounds within words. They enjoy listening to stories. Encouraged by staff, who themselves show appreciation of the importance of literature, pupils in Key Stage 1 continue to develop a sense of enjoyment in reading. By the age of seven most read simple text accurately and with understanding. They understand how books are organised, and they make good use of letter sounds and the pictures in the book to help them read new words. The more able pupils read fluently and with expression. By the age of eleven, most show good levels of comprehension and are developing clear ideas about their favourite authors. All indicate that they like reading stories and can use a library effectively to find information from books. The more able appreciate the underlying ideas in the text and can understand subtleties, for example, when they explain why something is humorous to one person but not to another.
7. Writing is developed satisfactorily through the school. Children in the Foundation Stage learn to write using a consistent letter formation. They suitably learn to write their names and simple sentences, for example about things they have done in the recent past. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils suitably develop understanding about the need to write in different styles for different purposes. They develop satisfactory understanding of spelling and punctuation, and usually apply this in their work. Care is taken with presentation and pupils effectively learn to write using a legible joined script.
8. Overall, pupils make satisfactory gains in learning in mathematics and they generally make good progress in developing their mental skills, particularly in Key Stage 2. In the Foundation Stage many children learn to count to ten and beyond and are able to work out the answers to questions which require them to use simple mathematical operations, such as addition and subtraction. They learn the names of basic two-dimensional shapes and can describe the difference between those which have similar properties, for example squares and rectangles. By the age of seven, most pupils develop a satisfactory level of understanding of numbers, and can recognise number patterns and produce some of their own. They acquire a sound base of skills in using shape, measures and data handling. By the age of eleven, many can add, subtract, multiply and divide both in their head and on paper and can effectively use

calculators for multiplying large numbers and checking their answers. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 quickly give answers to mental questions, such as “find the ‘multiples’ of a number” or “give me a ‘prime’ number”, and they show suitable understanding of mathematical vocabulary. Throughout the school most pupils demonstrate satisfactory understanding of problem solving and with the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy they are gaining confidence in being able to explain the ways in which they arrived at their answer.

9. In science, pupils develop sound knowledge and understanding of the subject as well as learning the necessary skills to undertake simple scientific investigations. Throughout the school they effectively develop their observational skills since there are appropriate opportunities for them to work practically and note their findings. As they move through the school they are developing a clear understanding about the use of number, tables, bar charts and graphs to present their results. Pupils are beginning to make use of information and communication technology as part of science lessons but this aspect of their work is not well established. Pupils are keen to talk about their work in science and indicate that they enjoy the types of activities they do in their lessons; for example, pupils in Key Stage 1 said that it was interesting to test out different materials to find out if they were magnetic.
10. By the age of seven, standards in information and communication technology are broadly in line with those expected. By the age of eleven pupils attain average standards in many aspects of the subject but in common with many schools, pupils attain below the expected levels in control, monitoring and modelling. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall although more can still be achieved, particularly in Key Stage 2. The resources for information and communication technology have recently been much improved and many pupils are now starting to make good progress using the new equipment. This area of the curriculum has been highlighted as a priority for development and work is taking place in the school to ensure further improvement in the standards pupils achieve.
11. In design and technology, history, geography, art, music and physical education, pupils generally attain what is expected for their age by the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall.
12. In all subjects, pupils’ work is usually well presented, clean and tidy. They take care with their writing and the way in which they present any ‘working out’, for example in mathematics and science. They learn to use pens at an early stage and this has a positive impact on the quality of presentation.
13. Pupils with special educational needs are suitably identified and receive good quality support. These pupils make good gains in their learning against the targets set out in their individual education plan.
14. There are no significant differences in the standards achieved by either boys or girls in any of the subjects in the school.
15. The last inspection highlighted the need to improve standards in many areas, particularly in Key Stage 2. There has been significant improvement since that time in the standards attained by the pupils of all abilities and the progress they make. Nevertheless, more can still be achieved especially through improvements to the final part of lessons, particularly in the daily literacy and numeracy lessons.
16. The school has met the targets which it set in English and mathematics for the year 2000 and has set realistic and challenging targets in these subjects for 2001 and 2002. It has also set similarly realistic and challenging targets for science. All these targets show continued improvement on those set for 2000 and the school is well placed to meet them.

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

17. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning. The youngest children settle into school very well and quickly establish friendships. Throughout the school almost all are keen to attend and they show enjoyment in their activities. Pupils are attentive in class and respond well to questions and opportunities to explain what they know. They concentrate well and are prepared to try again if at first they do not succeed, for example, when pupils in Years 3 and 4 worked at building up a database using the new computers.
18. Around the school and in lessons, behaviour is good overall and much improved since the last inspection. A small percentage of pupils with identified behavioural needs have made good improvement since

joining the school and rarely show inappropriate behaviour. Pupils behave well in formal settings, such as assembly, and at play. They are almost always co-operative and helpful and older pupils are friendly and supportive towards their younger friends. Pupils suitably learn to appreciate the difference between right and wrong.

19. Relationships are good. The school has a strong family atmosphere and pupils of all ages mix happily. Pupils work positively with each other and with adults. They help each other well in class; for example, during the paired reading in Key Stage 1 English sessions. At lunch time older pupils mix with younger friends and groups chat together happily. Older pupils are always careful to take account of the younger ones, for example when the older ones play football.
20. Pupils make good gains in their personal development. Older pupils react well to the opportunities for them to take responsibility and they show maturity, for example when they organise the tuck shop. There is an atmosphere of respect for others in all aspects of school life and the work done in personal and social education and the willingness of pupils to discuss theirs and others' feelings are having a positive impact.
21. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence has reduced since the last inspection and punctuality is good. Registration, recording and reporting of attendance meets requirements.

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

22. Overall, teaching is satisfactory and there is a direct relationship with pupils' learning which is also satisfactory. Fifty eight percent of teaching seen was satisfactory and forty two percent was good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching and no significant differences between the quality of teaching in different subjects or in different key stages. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science the overall quality teaching is satisfactory. In each of these subjects nearly half of the teaching is good. Throughout the school staff work well a team with support staff making a significant contribution to pupils' learning. There has been good improvement in teaching since the last inspection when twenty three percent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory.
23. In the Foundation Stage, staff are secure in the knowledge of the early learning goals. Effective planning, which reflects the early learning goals and also the school's whole school planning framework, is in place. A good range of topics is undertaken which effectively broaden children's understanding of the world about them. All adults, including support staff, are clear about the purposes of the activities and their roles and responsibilities. Careful account is taken of individual children's needs and activities are set up so that they effectively match the children's levels of understanding. Good relationships are established and children's behaviour is managed well. Resources are good and used effectively to engage children's interest. Routines are established and these are well known so that the children feel safe and secure. However, time is not always used to advantage. There are occasions where the first part of the lesson is too long for children of this age and as a result those times which are planned to review children's learning become rushed and lack clear purpose. Sometimes play situations are not maximised to extend children's learning.
24. Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, the staff are mainly secure in their subject knowledge although there is still some uncertainty in aspects of teaching information and communication technology. There have been clear improvements in staff's knowledge and understanding in English and mathematics through specific developments that have taken place in these areas and there is now a systematic development of pupils' basic skills of literacy and numeracy. In all subjects planning is detailed and ensures that the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities are taken into account. Staff are confident in working with pupils of this age, some of whom have both behavioural and learning difficulties, and they use the school's reward system well to reinforce learning.
25. Lessons are generally well organised but there is not always best use of the plenary session. They start promptly and staff use the beginnings of lessons well to ensure that pupils are clear about the overall purpose of the session. This part of the lesson usually consists of a question and answer time with the whole class involved. At this stage staff present information clearly and usually question the pupils well so that the pupils make clear gains in their knowledge and understanding. This is particularly noticeable

in some of the introductions to numeracy sessions in Key Stage 2 where learning is good and pupils effectively develop their mental skills. Activities follow which are well matched to the pupils' understanding in the subject. These are carefully thought through so that they interest and motivate the pupils, for example, when older pupils used the library to find information about Victorian times. However, the final part of lessons, known as the plenary, is not always used well. There is a tendency for this part of the session to become rushed and pupils are not sufficiently engaged in reviewing how well they have achieved the objectives of the lesson or how they might further improve their work.

26. Staff mark the pupils' work regularly and make suitable comments, often praising their efforts. However, assessment information such as this is not used sufficiently in the final part of lessons to indicate to pupils where they might improve. Staff make effective use of resources to support children's learning, particularly good use is made of some of the three-dimensional displays in the younger class. Visits out of the school are also used well to stimulate learning.
27. Different types of homework, such as reading and learning of tables, are given and these suitably reinforce the pupils' learning. The school's homework policy meets the expectation set out in the national guidelines. Pupils asked were clear about the policy and indicated that work is set in line with it.
28. Pupils identified as having special educational needs often receive good quality support from teaching and support staff as well as from outside agencies and this enables them to achieve good gains in their learning. This work is well organised so that all adults work with a common purpose to ensure these children meet their individual targets.

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

29. The curriculum is appropriate and ensures that pupils in all year groups within the mixed aged classes are effectively provided for. It is broad and balanced, and covers all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. All subjects are given sufficient time. Overall, and particularly in Key Stage 2, the curriculum is much improved since the last inspection.
30. The curriculum is effective in promoting pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. It ensures equality of opportunity and suitably prepares pupils for the next stage in their education. School policy documents and schemes of work are in place for all subjects. Since the last inspection, good progress has been made in the planning of the curriculum, which helps to ensure that it now meets the needs of the different year groups in each class and gives all pupils access to work that is suitable for them. It also provides for greater continuity and progression in pupils' learning.
31. Curriculum planning for children in the Foundation Stage is securely based on the early learning goals recommended by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Through use of the school's curriculum framework it makes suitable reference to the National Curriculum.
32. Since the last inspection, the introduction of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies now ensures a systematic approach to teaching literacy and numeracy through the school. The literacy hour is helping to improve standards, particularly in reading. The school has effectively introduced the National Numeracy Strategy and again standards are improving, particularly in pupils' mental skills.
33. The personal, social and health education provision is good and pupils make good progress in this area. A well thought out programme helps pupils to understand their rights and responsibilities and explore important concepts such as friendship. A strong emphasis is given on building pupils' self-esteem and this was done well in a Key Stage 2 'circle-time' when each pupil said something good about the person next to them and also about themselves. The programme effectively covers sex education, health education and the misuse of drugs.
34. The school's links with the community make a good contribution to pupils' learning. There are well established links, for example with the local church, the local rest home for the elderly and the village playgroup. Members of the community are welcomed into the school for events such as sports day and the pantomime.

35. The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. The school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice and statutory reporting requirements. Individual education plans contain suitably challenging targets and are regularly reviewed. Support staff know the pupils well and offer good support within the classroom. When necessary they help to keep the pupils on task and provide positive reinforcement and encouragement. Teachers ensure support staff are well briefed, and provide work appropriate to pupils' specific needs.
36. The provision for the spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory. They acquire knowledge and insight into Christian values and beliefs, and those of some of the world's other great religions, in religious education lessons. There are examples of a spiritual dimension being introduced into lessons, for example when children in Reception wonder at the way magnets work. The provision for collective worship is carefully planned and covers appropriate areas. It includes time for prayer and reflection and meets statutory requirements. There are appropriate links with the local church, which add to the spiritual dimension of the school, these include the local clergy taking assembly on a regular basis.
37. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. A moral code is positively and sensitively encouraged throughout the school. The school effectively applies a positive behaviour management policy. Rewards are given to support self esteem and these are valued by the pupils. Pupils are effectively taught the difference between right and wrong. A small number of pupils with identified special educational needs find it difficult to manage their behaviour. These pupils are well managed by staff so that there is little impact on others' learning.
38. The provision for the social development of pupils is good. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively by working in pairs or small groups, sharing ideas and equipment. Pupils willingly accept responsibility in class and around the school. For example, older pupils take responsibility for supporting younger ones and pupils give out books and equipment at the beginning of lessons without being asked. Pupils are involved in and contribute positively to charity events, for example they have recently raised money through a non-uniform day for UNICEF. Day visits to places of interest extend the curriculum appropriately and pupils effectively learn about the lives of others. Visitors with special interests or experiences are invited to share their knowledge and skills with the pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are considered to be important members of the community and are well integrated into the school.
39. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils' awareness of their own culture and other cultures is acquired through visits to places of educational interest related to the curriculum, such as museums, art galleries and studies of the locality. The pupils effectively find out about their own and of other faiths through their studies in religious education, which includes Christianity, Hinduism and Islam, and also by the use of resources, for example, Asian music is used in the programme for dance. The provision is further enhanced by visitors, such as poets and musicians, who work with the pupils. The mobile library comes to the school each fortnight and provides a good selection of books and these help to widen pupils' perspectives.
40. Pupils are offered suitable opportunities to extend their learning through extra curricular activities, for example the 'Watch', games and chess clubs. The school has achieved a good level of success at county level in the Junior Chess tournament. Suitable arrangements exist for the introduction of new pupils and the smooth transfer to secondary education. Particularly good links have been developed with the local playgroup and this helps to ensure that children are keen to start school.

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

41. The school's provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good.
42. Appropriate measures are taken to ensure the security of all pupils. There is a detailed health and safety policy and there are regular risk assessments of the premises. The procedures for reporting hazards and carrying out fire drills are clear. The designated person for child protection has received appropriate training, as have the all members of staff.

43. The school has appropriate procedures to monitor pupils' academic progress. These are improved since the last inspection. Staff know the pupils well as individuals and maintain suitable records. Regular assessments take place and these are used to inform the next stage of curriculum planning. The results of national assessments and pupils' annual reports describe their progress more formally. However, the use of assessment during the plenary at the end of lessons is not always effective. Consequently pupils are not sufficiently clear about how they might improve their learning.
44. Pupils' personal development is well monitored as part of the personal, social and health education programme. The great majority of parents indicate that their children become mature and responsible during their time in school.
45. The school has established good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance, resulting in the average levels of attendance being sustained over recent years. These procedures include regular reminders to parents about their duty to ensure good attendance. There are also good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour which are effective. Pupils are encouraged to develop self-discipline and realise their responsibilities towards others. The system of rewards works well and pupils try hard to achieve these.
46. There are good procedures to monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Suitable individual education plans are drawn up and these include clear targets. Annual reviews are well organised and along with termly meetings provide an effective forum for checking the progress that the child is making. Overall, the school meets the requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice.

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

47. The majority of parents are satisfied with all aspects of the school's provision. However, a significant minority have concerns, particularly with regard to their children not liking school, pupils' behaviour, the amount of homework, the extent to which parents are informed about their child's progress, the range of extra-curricular activities and about the leadership of the headteacher. Also not all parents feel that there is a close working relationship with them. Virtually all parents are happy that their child is expected to work hard and is making progress, and many indicate that their child is becoming mature and responsible. The majority are pleased with the quality of teaching. Parents of children with special educational needs are very pleased with the provision. The inspection findings confirm these views. The inspection findings also show that most children like school and are keen to learn, pupils' behaviour is good overall, homework is undertaken in line with the national guidelines, pupil annual reports meet requirements and the school has suitable arrangements to update parents about their child's progress. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory for a school of this size and the headteacher and key staff provide effective leadership. However, the school does not monitor parents' views effectively and therefore is unable to respond to these. This adversely affects the working relationship between the school and a significant minority of parents.
48. The links with parents are satisfactory overall. The range and quality of information given to them is satisfactory. Curriculum evenings, for example on the National Numeracy Strategy, are held, and pupils' annual reports cover all the expected areas and are informative. Regular letters are sent out giving details of forthcoming events and the information in the school prospectus and the most recent Annual Governors' Report meets requirements. The home/school diary also provides an important means of ensuring there is a flow of information between school and home. However, the school does not give sufficient attention to celebrating its achievements. For example, there is little in the recent Governors' Annual Reports about the success the school has had in implementing the action plan following the last OFSTED inspection report where a number of serious weaknesses were highlighted. The procedures for meeting with parents of those pupils identified as having special educational needs are improved since the last inspection and are working well.
49. A number of parents make a very active contribution to the work of the school. They help in school, act as governors or help on visits. The school is very good at helping parents to develop their skills so that they can support pupils in the classroom and parents effectively support pupils with their homework. There is an active parents' group, known as The Friends of Bucknall School, which makes a significant

contribution to school life, for example, by organising fund raising events. Overall the contribution of parents to pupils' learning is good.

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

50. The headteacher and key staff provide effective leadership. They work together well and give clear educational direction to the work of the school. Since the last inspection they have been instrumental in developing policy and practice and ensuring that particular initiatives, such as the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies, have been implemented successfully. Suitable policies and schemes of work are now in place in all subjects and these ensure breadth and balance in the provision. Detailed planning of the curriculum is undertaken to ensure the wide range of pupils' needs in each class are effectively met. The school's performance is being appropriately monitored by these key personnel. They make effective use of data relating to pupils' attainment and progress and they suitably track the standards pupils achieve. In this way they are clear about the strengths and weaknesses in the overall provision in order to ensure continuing improvement. The school improvement plan reflects this clarity of purpose and gives a clear focus to further raising standards. There is a strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and achieve their best.
51. Governors are fulfilling their role satisfactorily. They have a clear commitment to the school and have worked hard to achieve improvement since the last inspection. They are closely involved in the life of the school and meet their statutory duties. Since the last inspection they have developed systems to ensure that meetings and procedures are generally effective. They are aware of current requirements for schools; for example, they are fully aware of the need to implement a system of performance management and they have made appropriate decisions about doing this. In relation to financial matters, they are now well informed about the budget and make appropriate decisions which take account of projected outcomes and whole school priorities. For example, the recent spend on computers takes account of a slightly improved budget and coincides with the introduction of the National Grid for Learning initiative which the school is to benefit from during the forthcoming year. However, the systems to check on the school's strengths and weaknesses in terms of the standards the pupils achieve and the quality of teaching and children's learning, are not sufficiently developed.
52. The aims, values and policies of the school are suitably reflected in its work. There is a strong commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity, particularly to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum, and this is evident in practice. The school follows the Code of Practice concerning Special Educational Needs and children with special educational needs are valued members of the school community and well integrated into the school. Effective support is provided to ensure that they make good progress towards the targets set out in their individual education plans.
53. There is suitable financial planning and the school makes effective use of its available resources. Spending decisions are linked closely to educational priorities and overall the school is well resourced particularly in those areas where there has been a priority development such as in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. Specific grants, such as the one to introduce performance management, are used effectively. The school suitably works to the principles of best value; for example, comparisons are made with other schools in terms of spending and a range of different tenders is considered before major decisions are made. There is appropriate financial control and administration and the recommendations of the last auditor's report have been acted upon appropriately. Suitable use is made of new technology to support the overall management of the school and the school runs smoothly.
54. The number, qualifications and experience of the staff effectively match the demands of the curriculum and they are deployed well. The arrangements for the professional development of staff are good overall. The support staff have undertaken a significant amount of training and this has had a very positive impact on their practice. The school benefits from links with other local schools.
55. The accommodation is adequate for the effective delivery of the curriculum. There are difficulties in providing facilities for physical education but the school has overcome these well and pupils in both classes have two sessions per week when they use the local village hall. The school is clean and cared for well. Outside there is suitable area for outdoor play and in the warmer weather there is a good-sized



playing field. The outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage has been significantly enhanced since the last inspection. A science area has also been developed.

56. Overall, the school has made good improvement since the last inspection. The standards attained by pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2 are much improved in English, mathematics and science. The planning of the curriculum has improved and it now ensures that all pupils have equal access to the provision and that there is continuity for pupils through the school. The quality of teaching has improved significantly and there is now no unsatisfactory teaching. Pupils' behaviour has improved and is generally good. The provision for personal, social and health education is now good and the procedures for assessing and teaching pupils with special educational needs are also good. There is now clear educational direction, improved financial planning and the governors are much more involved with the work of the school. The information for parents is improved and is generally satisfactory.

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

*The numbers in brackets after each key issue indicate the paragraphs in which the weaknesses are discussed.*

1. Ensure that the final part of lessons is used more effectively by:
  - fully involving pupils in reviewing their learning to check that they have met the objectives of the lesson
  - making it clear about the ways in which they might improve in future, particularly by making better use of assessment
  - ensuring that there is sufficient time for this part of the lesson.

*(15, 22 – 28, 43, 61, 62, 70, 82)*

2. Improve the way in which the school promotes its image, and identifies and responds to parents' concerns.

*(47 - 49)*

3. Ensure that there is a more systematic approach by the governing body to check the effectiveness of the provision.

*(51)*

*In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in the paragraphs in brackets.*

In line with the school development plan further improve standards in information and communication technology. *(10, 102 - 106)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	26
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	72

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	42	58	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	44
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	9

#### **English as an additional language**

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

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

***Attendance***

**Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.1

**Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.0
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***

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

Since most year groups consist of fewer than ten pupils, the school is not required to publish its end of key stage test results.

***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	44
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

***Teachers and classes*****Qualified teachers and classes: Y1 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	22

**Education support staff: Y1 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	63

***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	44
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.*

***Financial information***

Financial year	1999 - 2000
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	£
Total income	120990
Total expenditure	124960
Expenditure per pupil	3048
Balance brought forward from previous year	8290
Balance carried forward to next year	4320

**Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	45
Number of questionnaires returned	40

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	35	48	15	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	40	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	32	12	10	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	45	25	5	0
The teaching is good.	55	30	5	8	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	28	18	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	50	35	2	10	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	38	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	57	22	10	10	0
The school is well led and managed.	35	30	18	12	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	42	8	5	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	33	8	13	0

**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**

57. Provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is in the mixed Reception and Key Stage 1 class. Children are admitted to the class at the beginning of the academic year in which they are five years old.
58. In general, children's attainment on entry to the school is slightly below the average expected of four-year-olds. Overall, there is a wide range of attainment with a few children who have poorly developed personal and social, language and literacy as well as mathematical skills but there are also a few who have well developed skills in these areas. In the Reception Class the children settle well, they quickly gain in confidence and make a sound start to their school life. Overall, they make satisfactory progress in all the areas of learning and they are well on course to attain the early learning goals by the time they enter Key Stage 1. In personal, social and emotional development and in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world they make good progress. They also make good progress in reading.
59. Since the last inspection improvements have been made in developing curriculum planning so that appropriate account is made of the early learning goals which lead into the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. There are better opportunities for children to initiate their own learning and improvements in the outdoor area has also had a positive impact on provision.

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

60. Teaching is good and children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. The children's attitudes to their learning are good, they are keen to come to school and respond well to adults and each other. The staff effectively encourage the children to feel at ease in their surroundings and this enables them to contribute their ideas and express their feelings. For example, they happily tell their news and talk about what makes them sad or happy. The staff provide good role models for the children to follow and teach the children to be caring and considerate towards one another. Relationships are good and children behave well. Staff make consistent use of the school's behaviour policy and children are taught about what is right and what is wrong. The children learn sensitivity, for example, in learning how to care for plants and animals. They wait patiently in order to take turns to use equipment and they show respect for each other and property. They concentrate and persevere well when completing tasks, as was seen when they were completing their written work and in learning to read. Children co-operate well in groups and are taught good manners and social skills. They effectively learn about different cultural and religious events, such as Poppy Day, and learn respect for those of different backgrounds from themselves. The children are taught many prayers and say them reverently. They make good gains in personal independence and choose activities and resources with confidence. They learn to wash their own hands, go to the toilet and dress and undress themselves.

**Communication, Language and Literacy**

61. Teaching is satisfactory overall and there is a direct relationship with children's learning in this area. They make good gains in learning to read. The children suitably learn to communicate with others and develop their skills in writing. They enjoy sharing their experiences and also participating in role-play, for example, in the stone-age cave where they use their imagination and make up their own stories. This effectively encourages the children to develop their conversational skills and broaden their understanding of vocabulary. Occasionally these opportunities could be maximised to extend the overall purpose of the session. Children listen attentively to well-told stories such as 'The Three Little Pigs' and enjoy whole class story time using 'Big Books'. Strong emphasis is placed on the children learning to read. Staff clearly have a love of literature and this motivates the children. All enjoy looking at books and sharing them in whole group situations as well as on an individual basis. Most develop a good knowledge of the sounds and letters of the alphabet and they are able to recognise rhyming words such as 'look' and 'cook'. They effectively read simple text, pick out familiar words, follow the story and make a good attempt to work out new words for themselves. They use the pictures in the story to help them to predict what might come next. Children develop writing satisfactorily. They learn to write their names with good letter formation and they write simple sentences about their news. They complete worksheets with a good level of accuracy showing that they have understood different letter sounds. Taken overall, staff have implemented the National Literacy Strategy with suitable account taken for the Reception children

but there are occasions where the first part of the lesson is too long for children of this age. As a result, those times which are planned to review children's learning become rushed and lack clear purpose.

### **Mathematical Learning**

62. Teaching is satisfactory overall and children make satisfactory progress. They respond well to the introductory stages of lessons where effective use is made of the National Numeracy Strategy. Regular practice in counting numbers both forwards and backwards has enabled the children to quickly gain confidence in using numbers from one to ten with a significant number of children who can recognise and use numbers beyond this. The children know the basic shapes and can compare the sizes of different things, for example when they measure the height of the plants they are growing. Early capacity is clearly understood through the children's investigations in sand and water so that all the children can identify containers which are 'full', 'empty' and 'half full'. The children successfully make repeated patterns, for example, by using pegs and threading beads. They are able to sort objects into sets by size, colour and shape and make simple block graphs to record data. Good opportunities are provided for them to develop mathematical language such as 'more than', 'less than' and 'longer' and 'shorter'. They undertake problem solving and learn simple mathematical operations such as addition and subtraction. In the main, staff challenge the children well but there are occasions where play activities are not used sufficiently to extend this understanding and also the final part of sessions becomes rushed and not used to advantage.

### **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

63. Teaching is good and children develop a good understanding of the world about them. Good use is made of a wide range of topics and a good range of resources to develop children's ideas. The children enjoy exploring the features of living things, and natural and man made objects through carrying out experiments. For example, when growing beans and when comparing the properties of different materials used to build the houses of 'The Three Little Pigs'. They learn the days of the week and effectively note similarities, differences, pattern and change in the weather. Children use magnifying glasses, mirrors and magnets to help them question why and how things happen and this is supported by the careful questioning of the staff who encourage the children to extend their learning through investigation. Their skills in cutting, joining, folding and building techniques are successfully developed through the use of a range of materials and equipment. For example they have sewn calendars and made models from a good range of construction and junk materials. The children's skills in information communication technology are good. They are able to use the computer, they have good mouse control and can operate a number of programs, for example, to paint pictures and match words. They effectively operate a programmable toy. The children can distinguish past and present, for example, when they discuss how they have developed since being babies. This learning was made very real for them since one of the parents brought a baby to the class for them to compare with themselves. Effective use is made of the locality so that children learn about the immediate environment and they also learn about the wider world.

### **Physical Development**

64. Progress in children's physical development is satisfactory overall based on satisfactory teaching. The children learn to move their bodies imaginatively and with increasing control through music and movement sessions. They demonstrate co-ordination and can, for example suitably stop and start their movements. Children have developed an appropriate awareness of space and others and can explore different ways of travelling such as rolling, sliding and jumping. During outdoor activity there is a good balance between those activities initiated by the adult and those initiated by the children. In indoor sessions, because of the constraints of the accommodation, there is a tendency for the activities to be over-directed for children of this age. When making objects, children are able to manipulate tools and malleable materials with an appropriate amount of control. They use modelling tools, for example to shape the play dough. The children are able to cut shapes accurately with scissors and handle these and other tools safely. They can build a variety of models by fitting together different types of construction materials. Fine manual skills and hand-eye co-ordination are practised regularly through the use of small equipment and the children demonstrate suitable control of objects such as pencils, crayons and paint brushes.



## Creative Development

65. The progress children make is satisfactory and this is the result of satisfactory teaching. The children explore sounds by playing percussion instruments and by using body actions such as clapping when they are responding to music. They listen carefully and can copy loud and soft sounds and they develop a good sense of rhythm. Staff effectively teach the children a good range of songs and nursery rhymes and the children sing them confidently. Good opportunities are provided for the children to use their imagination in role play, for example when they pretend to be in a stone age cave. They learn about the colours of paint and can mix them appropriately to produce different colours for their pictures. Different techniques, such as printing are effectively taught and a range of media is used, such as cloth and paint to make pictures which enables the children to express their ideas. Children respond well to what they hear, touch, smell and feel such as when they 'rubbed' different textures to create a picture. They use an appropriate range of tools to make models and shape and mould clay. Staff encourage the children well and organise a range of interesting and worthwhile experiences. The best progress is made when children freely explore the materials to create their own designs but there are some limitations in this respect.

## ENGLISH

66. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, standards in English are in line with those normally expected of seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds respectively. Overall, in both key stages pupils making satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the targets set out in their individual education plans. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in English. The school has introduced the National Literacy Strategy and there is now a much more systematic approach to teaching literacy through the school.
67. Pupils' speaking and listening skills improve satisfactorily as they move through school. They listen carefully in lessons and contribute ideas with confidence. They show respect for each other's ideas. By the time they leave the school many pupils can describe clearly their knowledge of a subject, for example, when describing what they know about gases in science. They are prepared to express their opinions and ideas openly; for example, in Assembly when older pupils explain how disagreements and quarrels can cause upset. The best progress seen in speaking and listening was when pupils gained good understanding in appreciating other's points of view in 'circle-time' which is organised as part of the personal, social and health education programme.
68. A strong emphasis is given to reading and many pupils make good progress. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop a good sense of enjoyment in reading. They learn to read simple text, such as 'The Surprise Birthday Cake' with accuracy and understanding. They understand that different books are organised in different ways and can explain that some are story books and others give information. They learn to use a range of strategies to help them make sense of the text including using letter sounds and the pictures in the book. The more able pupils read fluently and with expression and are good at predicting what might happen next in the story. By the age of eleven, most show good levels of comprehension and are developing clear ideas about their favourite authors. They can explain clearly why they like certain books. Many like reading Roald Dahl and can explain why they have enjoyed the Harry Potter series. Pupils use a library, indexes, glossaries and contents pages effectively to find information from books. The more able appreciate the underlying ideas and subtleties in the text. They can refer to what they consider to be successful use of writing techniques by the author, for example when one boy explained why he thought a particular simile had been effective.
69. Writing is developed satisfactorily through the school. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop sound understanding of writing in simple sentences. Most pay good attention to letter formation and start to use pens to help present their work effectively. Throughout the school pupils suitably develop understanding about the need to write in different styles for different purposes. Progressively they learn to draft and redraft their work in order to achieve a final copy. Pupils of all ages develop satisfactory understanding of spelling and punctuation, and usually apply this in their work. Care is taken with presentation and pupils effectively learn to write using a legible joined script. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have written some good poems inspired by a visit from a professional poet.
70. Teaching is satisfactory overall. There is generally good teaching of reading with a good focus given to this in all lessons. Pupils' learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers build their planning appropriately on

the National Literacy Strategy and all lessons are carefully planned. Staff are secure in the subject and use the technical vocabulary associated with it well, for example when describing parts of speech. The introduction to lessons is usually good and pupils benefit from what is often a pacy question and answer session. Effective use is made of resources, especially the 'Big Books'. Good attention is paid to the wide range of levels of understanding in the classes and activities are set which are well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. There is, however, a tendency for the final part of lessons to become rushed and pupils are not sufficiently engaged in reviewing how well they have achieved the objectives of the lesson or how they might achieve further improvement.

71. Teachers and support staff work very well together. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class and make good progress towards the targets in their individual learning plans. Pupils know that teachers and other staff expect good behaviour and almost all pupils, including those with identified special educational needs for behaviour, maintain positive attitudes to their work throughout the whole lesson. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and pupils want to do well.
72. The management and co-ordination of the subject is effective. Both teachers work together on subject development. They have achieved good improvement since the last inspection and have clear ideas about the next steps forward. These include making observations of lessons and scrutinising pupils' work more systematically as part of the school's commitment to improving the quality of teaching and the standards pupils achieve. Resources are good and the library is used effectively to support learning.

## **MATHEMATICS**

73. Standards in both key stages are average and pupils make satisfactory progress overall. They often make good progress in developing their skills in mental agility, especially in Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against their targets, as a result of the good support they receive. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
74. During Key Stage 1, pupils are developing confidence in using numbers and recognising patterns. The pupils acquire a sound base of skills and understanding in numeracy, shape, space, measure and data handling. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are increasing in confidence and competence in numeracy. They accurately add and subtract numbers to 10 in their heads and can double numbers and many learn to do this quickly and with confidence. Some pupils can do calculations with larger numbers on paper. A few pupils understand place value and numbers in the hundreds. They are beginning to systematically learn mathematical tables. They apply their skills to everyday situations such as the giving of change. They recognise and name regular shapes and are able to make comparisons of their properties, including the number of sides and vertices. They are increasing their accuracy in the estimation and measurement of length using standard and non-standard measures. They use their knowledge to solve simple problems, such as those involving addition and subtraction.
75. Satisfactory progress by the pupils is maintained throughout Key Stage 2. Pupils' mental skills are developing well. By the age of eleven pupils effectively add, subtract, multiply and divide in their head. They show that they understand these processes as they work on paper. They can solve problems using larger numbers and recognise patterns in number. They are aware of place value and are conversant with fractions, percentages, symmetry, drawing and measuring angles, area and volume, and recording data using charts and graphs. They show a developing understanding of mathematical vocabulary, for example what a prime number is. They can use and apply mathematics effectively and are able to estimate calculations with increasing accuracy including those involving percentages and fractions.
76. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching in both key stages particularly in teaching mental skills. Where teaching is good, the teachers have a clear understanding of the needs of the whole class and plan appropriately for different groups of pupils. The pupils are well organised and the range of activities maintains their interest well. The use of their time is well managed and a good pace to the lessons is maintained. Overall, teachers have a secure knowledge of the mathematics being taught and lessons are well prepared. Clear explanations are given and questioning ensures that learning is extended. Opportunities are provided for pupils to find their own methods and explain their thinking and reasoning. Appropriate resources are used to ensure understanding. When homework is set, it is a good influence on learning. Although plenary sessions are planned for, these are not usually as successful as other parts of the lesson. They usually take the form of reinforcement of the work carried

out in the session rather than identifying how pupils might have improved what they set out to do or suggest targets for future work.

77. A good start has been made on the National Numeracy Strategy and this is having a positive effect on pupils' attainment especially the development of their mental skills. Numeracy is extended and appropriately reinforced through other subjects, for example, in the drawing of line graphs in science.
78. Improvement since the last inspection has been in the implementation of a scheme of work based on the National Numeracy framework. This has improved the teaching of mathematics and raised standards generally especially those of mental mathematics and provided a clear structure to lessons. The regular mental mathematics time given each day has encouraged pupils to learn their tables and learn number patterns so as to be able to recall with speed answers to questions asked. The use of support staff to deliver the mathematics programme to specific groups of pupils has enabled activities to be more effectively planned to match the needs of the different age groups. Resources in the subject are good.

## SCIENCE

79. Standards in science are average by the end of both key stages and overall pupils make satisfactory progress. There has been good improvement since the last inspection when there were many pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, who were making unsatisfactory progress.
80. By the age of seven, pupils have covered a suitable range of topics and they have established a sound scientific knowledge. They know the names of body parts and can describe their senses. They know about the optimum conditions for growing plants and can explain what happens if bulbs are without either water, soil or sunlight for a period of time. They have developed understanding about forces at the expected level and can describe the effects of these, for example when they describe what happens when they attempt to bend different materials. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 are gaining suitable knowledge that certain materials are magnetic and others are not. Older pupils in the Key Stage give reasons why they think particular objects are attracted to a magnet and can explain their reasoning. A few more able pupils are able to give good reasons for their prediction based on their previous experiences. By the end of the Key Stage 1, pupils use simple equipment and conduct investigations in a systematic way. They use their observational skills well.
81. By the age of eleven, pupils have acquired a suitable scientific vocabulary and most have sound skills in experimental and investigative science. The majority of pupils are able to appreciate the need for a test to be fair and many can describe the range of factors they need to take account of when setting up an investigation. Earlier in the key stage pupils effectively learn about what constitutes a balanced diet and can describe the types of food it might include. They can name different types of teeth and explain their different functions. They further develop their understanding of forces and have successfully completed an investigation to find out which was the best material for mopping up spills. Later in the key stage, pupils have learned about different types of circuits and how electricity works. They have used a 'control' effectively in order to compare the rates of growth of plants. They have studied materials and almost all pupils can give examples of liquids, solids and gases and a few of the oldest pupils can describe how the particles are arranged in different materials. Throughout the key stage, pupils make sound gains in developing their understanding of scientific investigations. Most apply their mathematical thinking effectively in their science work.
82. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Some good teaching was observed in Key Stage 1. Pupils' learning is a direct reflection of the quality of teaching. Planning is conscientiously undertaken. Teachers identify the key vocabulary which is to be taught and in lessons repeat these words regularly to ensure pupils have a clear understanding. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and activities are carefully matched to the pupils' needs and levels of understanding. Expectations of pupils' behaviour are good and the pupils respond well to these and undertake their investigations enthusiastically and with confidence. Pupils use equipment with care and pay due attention to safety factors when necessary. Teachers use a satisfactory range of strategies. The majority of lessons begin with a suitable recap of previous work and provide opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas, there is also practical work and opportunities for pupils to record their findings. Most lessons end with a useful review of work undertaken but this is not of a consistent quality. In the better teaching this was used well to extend pupils' thinking. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. There is effective teamwork between teachers and classroom support staff and this contributes well to the level of support pupils' receive. It

makes a positive contribution particularly to the progress made by pupils with special educational needs. Throughout the school pupils are only just beginning to make use of information and communication technology as a regular part of their work in science.

83. Co-ordination is effective. The planning is much improved since the last inspection and effectively takes account of the wide range of age and abilities in the classes. There are improved opportunities for practical work. Resources are generally good. The subject provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils' social development when pupils are encouraged to work together, to share and to take turns. The subject has a good range of resources. The outdoor science area is used well as part of the science curriculum.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

84. Only a small number of lessons were observed during the inspection. The scrutiny of work on display, discussions with pupils and an examination of teachers' planning allowed a judgement to be made. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils attain standards that are typical of this age and they make satisfactory progress.

In Key Stage 1, pupils have appropriate opportunities to paint, draw, print and use collage materials. They have access to chalks and pastels and working with clay to produce patterned tiles. Pupils also produce some good work when looking at texture using different types of paper. Colour mixing is encouraged, and there is good evidence of observational drawing, for example, drawing plants, insects and wooden objects, using a variety of media.

85. Work on developing techniques and imagination continues in Key Stage 2. Pupils are also being taught the technique of illustration when they illustrate a poem. They also design a piece of headwear for a special occasion for a character in a story using a range of textiles. There are good links with literacy as pupils write about their character. The use of sketch-books is enabling pupils to try out new techniques, plan and evaluate designs and plan improvements.
86. Pupils have opportunities to examine different styles of art and they apply these effectively to their own work, for example, when painting sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh and designing and printing curtains in the style of William Morris.
87. In the small number of lessons seen teaching and learning was satisfactory. The quality of the work shows that staff have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding. They employ a suitable range of techniques and resources are generally good and used well. The curriculum covers all the expected areas and suitable attention is given to the work of different artists. Continuity across the school is achieved by following the whole school curriculum framework.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

88. During the inspection it was not possible to observe any teaching of design technology and therefore judgements about the provision and standards pupils achieve are based on samples of the pupils' work, display, scrutiny of planning and through talking to pupils and teachers.
89. Standards throughout the school are broadly average in relation to pupils' age. There are examples of good work on display in Key Stage 2. The pupils' ability to formulate ideas for designs and to assemble, refine evaluate objects are in line with that expected of pupils of their age. The standards pupils' achieve, particularly in Key Stage 2, have improved since the last inspection.
90. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are able to assemble materials, based on their own designs to produce items such as calendars and greetings cards. They make models of vehicles with moving parts built with different types of construction materials. Currently they are experimenting to find out about the ways to use different materials to make houses for 'The Three Little Pigs'. Pupils use a basic range of tools satisfactorily and suggest ways of improving the things they make and then carry out the necessary adaptations. They suitably develop their ideas about food technology, for example, when they made Christmas cakes and used their own designs of marzipan to decorate their cake.
91. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to gain confidence in working with different materials, for example, when finding ways to make 'money containers'. Pupils responded well to this task by producing their own

designs and lists of possible materials to be used. They developed an action plan and then produced a range of well-finished final products. Suitable attention is given to the evaluation of the product. Other work on designing and making slippers in this key stage also shows pupils have understood the design process and have achieved some good outcomes.

92. Teachers plan carefully and present pupils with interesting and worthwhile projects. The pupils show obvious enjoyment and are pleased with the things they have made and their achievements in this subject. There is a good range of materials and resources for pupils to use. Much has been done since the last inspection in providing staff with appropriate guidance for teaching the subject through producing a suitable policy and through introducing a new scheme of work as well as useful ideas for class activities. Displays resulting from the pupils' work help to create an imaginative and stimulating school environment.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

93. No geography lessons were observed during the inspection so judgements have been made from an examination of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of teachers' planning and assessments.
94. Throughout the school standards in geography are average and pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress.
95. Pupils in Key Stage 1 can recognise the features of the school environment, the local area and places further afield. By the end of Key Stage 2 they are familiar with the features of villages and towns and can identify the case for and against a bypass of a local town. Pupils also study mountain regions of the world and their effect on tourism. Younger pupils in key stage 2 have completed a survey of leisure time of themselves and their families and produced the results on graphs and pie charts. They also show their knowledge of maps using symbols and grids. They can also interpret aerial photographs identifying the features shown.
96. The geography curriculum gives pupils appropriate experiences and the opportunities to develop geographical skills and knowledge. The school makes good use of visits in the locality to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding. Continuity in pupils' learning across the school is achieved by following the whole school curriculum framework.

## **HISTORY**

97. During the inspection, only one lesson was seen which was in Key Stage 1. Judgements of pupils' attainment are based on talking to pupils and a scrutiny of their work. Consideration was also given to teachers' planning and assessments.
98. Standards for all pupils are average in both key stages and they make satisfactory progress.
99. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop their understanding of change over time through a study of equipment old and new. They consider how kitchens have changed and realise that many improvements are due to the invention of electricity. Older pupils research famous people, such as Guy Fawkes, and talk about stone age life with the opportunity to handle stone tools and axe heads.
100. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop an understanding of chronology and key events of particular periods through topics on Ancient Greece, Tudor England, studying famous people such as Drake, and the history of North America. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 study Ancient Egypt, Saxon life and Roman Times. They show a suitable understanding of the key events and how we learn about the past.
101. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The history curriculum is well planned and provides an interesting and worthwhile programme for pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. The way in which the school has planned the units of work for pupils of different ages and abilities ensures that there is continuity in pupils' learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

102. By the age of seven, standards in information and communication technology are broadly in line with those expected. By the age of eleven, pupils attain average standards in many aspects of the subject but in common with many schools, pupils attain below the expected levels in control, monitoring and modelling. Most pupils make satisfactory gains in word processing and desktop publishing skills and in using databases and spreadsheets. More can still be achieved, particularly in Key Stage 2, in control, monitoring and modelling. The school has the development of this subject as high priority in the school development plan.
103. Pupils in Key Stage 1 demonstrate that they are confident in using the computer 'mouse' and also computer tools and icons to make and save well presented pictures. They know how to erase parts of the picture they no longer want and to select different colour options. Skills in word processing are sound and most pupils can use them to support their written work. They can arrange text so that it is in the correct order. Most pupils are able to use a suitable range of programs to support the development of their mathematical skills. They suitably use a programmable toy, known as a Roamer, and give it commands which take it in particular directions.
104. In Key Stage 2 pupils successfully extend their word-processing and desktop publishing skills. They are able, for example, to select and change fonts and alter the size and text to write and add graphics to present work which is on display in school. By the end of the key stage, pupils successfully enter information into a database and can produce different types of graph to illustrate trends, for example to show the most popular sweet sold in the tuck shop. Pupils clearly enjoy using information and communication technology and talk knowledgeably about their findings. They are building up suitable awareness about how to use the Internet.
105. Overall the quality of teaching and learning in both key stages is satisfactory. As staff are improving their skills there are lessons in which the teaching is good but these have not yet had sufficient impact on pupils' learning. In both key stages, work is well planned, prepared and organised and resources are carefully chosen. Staff have generally satisfactory knowledge of the subject but there is still some uncertainty in aspects of the subject. Good use is made of support staff who are well briefed and make a significant contribution in the development of both skills and knowledge in the subject. Pupils have positive attitudes and persevere well in trying to complete their set tasks.
106. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory overall. Clear and appropriate developments are outlined. Good improvements are now taking place as the school becomes involved in the National Grid for Learning initiative. The quality and quantity of resources for the subject are good. There is a very good ratio of computers to pupils.

## **MUSIC**

107. Overall, standards are average and all pupils including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. They sing tunefully and respond well to the rhythm, mood and beat of music.
108. In Key Stage 1, pupils build appropriately on their earlier musical experiences. They sing tunefully and enthusiastically. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, clap out the beat of their names and show clear understanding of beat. Older pupils are learning to play the recorder and use this well to play the pulse of sequences of notes. They are learning to compose their own sequences and to use simple notation.
109. By the time they are in Key Stage 2 pupils recognise the change of tempo in a piece of music and follow simple notation composing a piece of music to accompany an advert. They accompany their own singing with instruments, identify different types of music and begin to use their voices and instruments to create harmony. Pupils demonstrate the ability to write their feelings about pieces of music such as The Blue Danube, Mars from the Planets suite and Morning from the Peer Gynt suite.
110. The small amount of teaching seen was satisfactory and there are some good features. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and plan an appropriate and interesting programme for music which provides pupils with the expected skills and knowledge. Support staff make a significant contribution to

the provision, taking small groups for different activities. Good use is made of the work of a range of composers to support pupils' learning.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

111. In both key stages, pupils make satisfactory progress overall and standards are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. There have been improvements at both key stages since the last inspection. There is some good progress in pupils learning to evaluate their own work in Key Stage 2.
112. Pupils have opportunities to undertake all the areas of activity outlined in the National Curriculum and overall they achieve satisfactory gains in learning. Most have established a suitable level of co-ordination and control of their movements at both key stages and show good awareness of space and others. In most physical education lessons pupils sustain a reasonable level of energetic activity and many are able to explain the effects of exercise on their bodies. By the end of Key Stage 2 they are developing sound knowledge and understanding of a range of games activities and can explain, for example, the importance of marking an opponent and using different techniques to gain possession of a ball. Most pupils demonstrate the ability to plan ahead and they show that they have some good ideas. Pupils' skills in evaluation are satisfactory in Key Stage 1, they are good in Key Stage 2.
113. Teaching is satisfactory overall. The work seen in dance at Key Stage 2 was good. Planning is undertaken conscientiously and often there is useful reference at the beginning of lessons about the overall aim of the session so that the pupils are clear about the purpose of the lesson. There is a good focus on the development of specific skills and staff spend time explaining how these can be developed and the pupils are prepared to practise to improve their performance. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and staff manage pupils' behaviour effectively. The pupils are enthusiastic about taking part in physical activity. Resources are organised and used effectively. Staff dress appropriately for physical education and in this way set a standard for pupils who in turn dress appropriately. Overall, best use is made of the time available with a suitable focus given to warming up and cooling down. Staff are prepared to help pupils' understanding by demonstrating techniques themselves and they often use other pupils as a model. Although teachers often praise pupils' efforts there is generally too little use of evaluative criteria in Key Stage 1 to indicate why particular movements are successful. In Key Stage 2 staff ensure pupils are very clear about the criteria to be used to judge performance and the pupils use this information well as a guide to refine their movements. Effective use is also made of a video camera in Key Stage 2 so that pupils can see the effects of different techniques.
114. Co-ordination is effective overall. Planning is carefully organised and resources and accommodation are adequate. There is suitable attention given to the importance of safe practices.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

115. Only one lesson of religious education was seen during the inspection. Judgements of pupils' attainment are based on talking to pupils and a scrutiny of their work. Consideration was also given to teachers' planning and assessments.
116. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages.
117. The pupils in Key Stage 1 speak confidently and share thoughts openly. They explore situations that lead to different emotions. The younger pupils are able to express feelings they have felt such as happy and sad. They can recall stories from the Bible told to them for example Moses. The pupils in Year 2 have a satisfactory knowledge of major Christian festivals, for example harvest and those of other faiths such as the Jewish festival of Sukkot.
118. In Key Stage 2, pupils are developing a greater awareness of Christianity and its teaching through Bible stories such as Abraham, Noah and parables such as the Good Samaritan and the Sower. By the end of the key stage, pupils have an appropriate knowledge of religious belief and teaching, and of various practices and specialist language. They appreciate that forms of worship differ. They have a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and some of its festivals and some of the other major religions, including Islam and Hinduism.

119. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The recently produced Locally Agreed Syllabus forms the basis for the school's scheme of work which provides pupils with appropriate knowledge and understanding. Staff have sound understanding of the subject, including a suitable awareness of the range of different religions covered in the programme. The school is suitably extending its resources to support this subject.