

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FLORENDINE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Amington, Tamworth

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124155

Headteacher: Mr T Lloyd

Reporting inspector: Mr R E Helliwell - 5535

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> May 2000

Inspection number: 196486

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Florendine Street  
Amington  
Tamworth  
Staffordshire  
Postcode: B77 3DD

Telephone number: 01827 475778

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr W B Atkins

Date of previous inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> December 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr R E Helliwell	Registered inspector	Science English as an additional language Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mr M Romano	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs F Ruddick	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mrs S West	Team inspector	English Design and technology Music Under-fives	
Mr J Sangster	Team inspector	Art Information technology Geography History Religious education	

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>24</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Florendine Primary is a community school which caters for 287 boys and girls of whom 12 were under the age of five at the time of inspection. It is of above average size for its type. The school is set in a mixed catchment area, comprising some housing of above average cost, mainly medium-cost, privately owned houses and a small proportion of social housing. According to the school's data, 12 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals; three pupils speak English as an additional language - two of these are in the early stages of English language acquisition. Forty-eight pupils, about 17 per cent, are registered as having special educational needs. Of these, five pupils have statements of special educational need.

Usually, most pupils enter and remain at this school until the age of 11 years but, recently, the catchment area designated by the local authority has been adjusted. As a result, about one third of pupils has joined the school since the beginning of Key Stage 2. Pupils' families are mainly of British, white European heritages: most families are waged and are employed in manufacturing, light industry and the service industries. Some families are from professional backgrounds. The attainment of most children at entry is average.

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

The school is very well led and managed in many aspects and is effective overall. However, the school is not effective in ensuring that all pupils' National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 2 match the quality of their work in class. Pupils have too little experience of how to respond to national tests and often revise work too infrequently. Standards of pupils' work are high at both key stages in English and mathematics, and in all other subjects pupils' work is close to national expectations by the time pupils are aged 11 years. Standards in National Curriculum test results have remained much the same since 1996 with some improvements occurring between 1998 and 1999. Standards of pupils' behaviour are very good, as are their attitudes to work and to school - the results of the overall good teaching quality and very good personal development. The school is a very settled and orderly community. Taking all the above factors into account and considering that the school has improved since the previous inspection and is improving further, it is providing good value for money.

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

- Standards of pupils' work in English and mathematics are above average at both key stages - much work is above the standards expected. Standards of reading and writing are high at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards of oracy (speaking and listening) are very high at the end of both key stages. Pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress: pupils with special educational needs progress well.
- Teaching quality on the whole is good at both key stages and very good for the under-fives; many lessons are deeply interesting and some are spiritually uplifting.
- Much to do with leadership is strong; there is good team work and finances are spent very wisely.
- Pupils' personal development is very good and so is their behaviour.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and are very well looked after.
- Relationships between pupils are excellent.
- Pupils' moral and social development are very good.
- Attendance is above the national average.

### What could be improved

- In English and science, national test results at Key Stage 2 are below national averages and do not reflect the quality of teaching seen at inspection, or the standards in pupils' work.
- Standards of work in science are not as high as they should be.
- Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are not built on well enough through the school in science, art, geography, history, music and religious education.
- Governors do not monitor the curriculum or the strengths and weaknesses of the school with sufficient rigour; the development plan does not have sufficient measurable targets.

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

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

Since the previous inspection in December 1996, the school has made many improvements. It has: established policies and schemes; created a framework for assessment and begun to implement it; improved the monitoring of teaching quality and of standards; modified financial planning and adjusted this to be more in line with its development plan; raised the profile of multicultural education. In addition, parents have noticed recent improvements in conversations at home related to their children's knowledge of English, mathematics and information technology; this is mirrored by the inspection evidence. Taken as a whole, standards are higher now and gains have been made in National Curriculum test results at similar rates to all other schools nationally since 1996. However, these do not match standards of pupils' work and their spoken knowledge - and test results in science have declined. Music at Key Stage 1 is of a lower standard than reported previously. Other gains include: a strengthening of the curriculum for the under-fives; an overall improvement in teaching quality and a corresponding gain in attitudes to work and personal development - both are now very good. Also, improvement has been made in the provision for pupils with special educational needs and this aspect is now well managed.

### STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	E	D	D	D
Mathematics	D	B	C	C
Science	B	C	D	D

<b>Key</b>	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

By the age of five, most children's attainment matches or exceeds the standards laid out in governmental guidance and they have made good progress. National Curriculum test results are at the national averages at Key Stage 1 in reading and mathematics, and well above them in writing. Also, in comparison with similar schools, they are at or above the average. At Key Stage 2, pupils' work in class is much better than National Curriculum test results in 1999 show. Their work is above national expectations at both key stages in English and mathematics, and in line with them in science.

The school's targets are not sufficiently challenging. The quality of teaching and standards of pupils' work show that National Curriculum test results and targets should be higher. Although standards overall have risen at the same rates as all schools nationally, results in tests in English and science are unsatisfactory compared with similar schools. The targets set for 2000 and 2001 do nothing to move towards rectifying this - they are too low.

## **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Nearly all pupils express positive views about their like of school and how well their teachers treat them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Nearly all pupils behave very well; occasionally behaviour is exemplary.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very strong; nearly all pupils make very good relationships and support each other well.
Attendance	It is above the national average.

## **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	very good	good	good

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

Taken as a whole, teaching seen at inspection was of good quality and, as a result, nearly all pupils are willing to work and try hard. In 97 per cent of lessons it was satisfactory or better; in 68 per cent good or better; in 32 per cent very good or better; in 3 per cent it was unsatisfactory (2 lessons). In three lessons, teaching was judged to be excellent. The strongest teaching was in mathematics and English where the schemes in use were clear and had good progression built in. Literacy and numeracy skills are being taught very well. The full range of pupils' needs is well met and, for example, pupils with English as an additional language are being well supported by voluntary help which is utilised well by the school.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum has breadth and depth, is balanced and there is good progression built into English, mathematics, design and technology and physical education, but less so in other subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is good - it is well managed.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is good; both pupils in the early stages of acquisition are well supported, and voluntary help from a well-qualified member of the governing body is well utilised.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, pupils' personal development is very good. Their moral development is outstanding, clearly based on personal relationships and very good adult example.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very well for its pupils.

The school works very well with its parental community, which has very positive views about its work. All pupils are very well known to the headteacher and teachers who keep a close watch on their personal development.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides a very good lead in many aspects, but not in relation to National Curriculum tests. There is a good sense of team work, and phase teams are effective.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have a good understanding of some of the school's strengths, but lack a systematic view of the curriculum and the school's weaknesses. They fulfil their statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school compares itself closely with other schools, has clear awareness of its performance data, and is now taking action to improve National Curriculum test results.
The strategic use of resources	Money is spent carefully and planned over the short, intermediate and long term. Good use is made of the lower than average income per pupil.

There are adequate numbers of staff, more than adequate accommodation, satisfactory amounts of teaching resources, but poor quality and insufficient outside areas. The play areas are overcrowded when the field is not in use. The field is not of the standard required for games for pupils aged up to 11 years. In making decisions, the school applies the principles of best value well.

## 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>• Their children like school.</li><li>• Their children make good progress.</li><li>• The teaching is good.</li><li>• They are kept well informed about how their children are getting on.</li><li>• They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.</li><li>• The school expects their children to work hard.</li><li>• The school is well managed.</li><li>• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The number of additional comments was small, much smaller than at many other inspections - amounting to minor adverse comments by only two parents and a number of positive ones.</li></ul>

Approximately half of the questionnaires sent out were returned. Responses showed a very positive picture, with very little adverse comment, and matched the overwhelmingly strong support for the school shown at the pre-inspection meeting with parents. The picture is clear: there is strong support for the school within its parental community. The school has been informed of all comments - but none have been attributed to particular sources. Inspectors agree that the school merits the strongly positive view of the parental community - but also say that it ought to aim to bring its National Curriculum test results into line with pupils' work.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. At entry, aged four, most children have an understanding of language and mathematics at the standards expected for their ages. By five, the majority has made good progress to meet or exceed the Desirable Outcomes - as set out in governmental guidance.

2. At the end of Key Stage 1, 1999 National Curriculum test results show that writing is, on the whole, well above the national average and has been so over the years 1997-1999. Mathematics has improved since 1998 and is now in line with national averages. Teacher assessments show scientific understanding to be at a good standard for experimentation and investigation, but below usual levels of understanding in the other aspects - life and living processes; materials and their properties; and physical processes. When compared to similar schools, standards are around the averages in reading, writing and science, but below average in mathematics. Taken as a whole, boys fare less well than girls - similar to the national picture. Over the years since 1996 - the year of the previous inspection - on the whole standards in reading, writing and mathematics have remained close to national averages, and girls have fared better than boys.

3. At the end of Key Stage 2, results in 1999 National Curriculum tests show that standards are below average in English and science, and at the average in mathematics. In comparison to similar schools, results in both English and science are below average, and average in mathematics. On the whole, boys fare less well than girls. Taking all core subjects as a whole, the school's results have been improving since 1996 at similar rates to all schools nationally, but not making gains at rates quickly enough to attain national averages in English and science.

4. Compared with the pupils' National Curriculum test results, work in class is much better, and higher results should be expected at both key stages. In English, most pupils' writing is much better than the standards expected in the National Curriculum; reading is better than expected. Most pupils write well, expressing their ideas logically and using punctuation appropriately. Most read well, with expression and understanding, and a vast majority speaks well to convey intentions clearly and in well thought out expressions. However, pupils are not suitably prepared to answer questions in the manner expected by the national tests, and work is not properly revised throughout the year. In mathematics at both key stages, pupils have a good grasp of the number system, recall appropriate facts accurately and are able to work out and explain a suitable range of numerical problems. In science, work is close to national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and in line with them at Key Stage 2. However, compared with work in English and mathematics, this is the weakest of the core subjects because pupils do not record in their written work the full extent of their knowledge and understanding which is evident in their oral work and in response to questions in class. This prevents a systematic revision of their knowledge and understanding and reduces their experience of the types of answers demanded by national tests.

5. In all other subjects, pupils' work is in line with national expectations, except in information technology where it is above at Key Stage 2. They use computers with satisfactory understanding, and have a sound knowledge of the topics they have covered in history and religious education. In art, pupils often illustrate work in other subjects. In design and technology, they plan and make working models, and in geography have awareness of places and the world map; in music, they sing well; and in physical education, they move and play games with suitable control and co-ordination of their bodies.

6. Taken as a whole, attainment is around the average, with National Curriculum test results not reflecting the higher standards of work in class, in the core subjects of English, mathematics

and science. Consequently, the targets the school sets itself for National Curriculum tests are too low. The school does not take formal steps to identify those pupils who are gifted in a range of subjects, or talented especially in one. However, sometimes talented pupils identified in mathematics are moved to work in older setted groups rather than with their peers, and talented musicians are provided with extra opportunities to perform. Consequently, such pupils make good progress. However, not all are identified. Most pupils with special educational needs make good progress, and those with English as an additional language make very good progress. In work in class, most pupils make at least steady progress, and in a high proportion of lessons during the inspection, many made rapid progress.

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

7. Nearly all pupils' attitudes to their work and school are very good. In a Year 3 numeracy lesson, for example, they were attentive and showed application and enthusiasm throughout. In a science lesson in Years 5/6, pupils were captivated by clear explanations and were deeply interested in the information provided. Pupils usually respond very well to their teachers and are very polite and respectful to all members of staff. At inspection, children under five were often seen to be very enthusiastic and eager to learn. Many pupils take part in and enjoy the extra-curricular activities such as football, netball, music club and the art club which Year 6 pupils organize for Year 2.

8. On the whole, behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. At lunchtime, even on 'wet play' days (when children are confined inside the school all day) the very high expectations of pupils' behaviour result in orderliness and settled activity which is sometimes exemplary. Pupils are very polite to each other and adults, and very orderly in their movement around the school. The behaviour and attitudes of children under five are nearly always good and sometimes exemplary.

9. There were no exclusions from school last year. There is a code of conduct with rewards and sanctions which children understand and can quote. Sanctions are rarely needed beyond an occasional word from a teacher for inattention or fidgeting. Rewards are usually given through praise from teachers for good work, attitude or improved behaviour. Pupils say that bullying is rare, but when it does occur it is dealt with quickly and effectively by the teachers, and so they feel very safe at school. Pupils are very caring of one another, and say that the school teaches them to support each other and understand others' problems by discussing issues at 'candle times' and in assembly. Relationships are often excellent. Older pupils say that teachers show respect for all pupils, and set an excellent example by the courtesy and respect they show for each other. Pupils have a number of opportunities to take responsibility around the school and in their own learning in class. For example, Year 6 pupils hear Years 1 and 2 pupils read, assisting their own listening skills but learning also how to support younger pupils' needs. They say that they particularly enjoy assisting midday supervisors at lunchtime in caring for younger pupils on the playground or in classrooms when it is wet outside. Year 6 pupils learn about the high school at induction days there, and through talking to Year 7 pupils who come back to assist at sports day at Florendine each year.

10. Attendance is good. Last year it was above the national average, an improvement on the previous two years: unauthorised absence was broadly in line with the national average. Nearly all pupils are punctual to school and lessons. Clearly, the good levels of attendance reflect pupils' interest in coming to school and the good quality educational and personal development provided for them.

11. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good overall, with the excellent relationships being a strength. This is an improvement on the good achievement reported at the previous inspection. Attendance has improved since then, when it was in line with the national average.

12. Almost all parents responding to the questionnaire believe that behaviour is good, and

that school helps their children to become mature and responsible. They quote several examples of the values promoted, particularly in the self-esteem and care for one another which children are taught. This matches the evidence found at this inspection.

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

13. The quality of teaching is very good for under-fives and good overall at both key stages. It reflects the standards of pupils' work when that is compared with national expectations. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching was judged to produce around steady progress. Progress is now at least steady and often good. Sixty-four lessons were observed, many for about one hour. In 97 per cent of these, teaching was satisfactory or better, in 68 per cent of lessons it was good or better, and in 32 per cent teaching was very good or better. In three lessons - five per cent - teaching was judged to be excellent. In only two lessons, one in music at Key Stage 1 and one in science at Key Stage 2, was teaching judged to be less than satisfactory. Teaching in mathematics and English is stronger on the whole than in science - which in part explains why science is the weakest of the three core subjects. Teaching in mathematics was stronger on the whole than in English, but good overall for both subjects. In the foundation subjects, teaching is, on the whole, satisfactory - but less was seen by comparison with the core subjects. On the whole, teaching is slightly stronger at Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1 - there is a higher proportion of very good teaching.

14. All teachers establish good, and some very good, relationships with their pupils, which are based on consistently high expectations for their behaviour and fairness in dealing with them. All pupils are accorded equality of opportunity and treated respectfully. Some teachers know their subjects particularly well, especially the basics in English and mathematics, because they draw their information well from the curricular frameworks of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Occasionally, a few show good understanding of science and several have a good grasp of information technology. However, some are less secure in their grasp of the requirements in the Agreed Syllabus for religious education, and some others do not have sufficiently deep understanding of art and music.

15. Most teachers challenge pupils well and have at least reasonable and often higher expectations for their learning. In some lessons, expectations are very high, resulting in part from clear explanation of the teaching objectives at the outset of lessons - particularly in English and mathematics. Pupils' learning is aided further by good management of them in nearly all lessons. Teaching strategies suitably include whole-class, setted groups, paired and individual work, combined with efficient management of time. In addition, most teachers make good use of support staff, particularly to assist pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. This results in good rates of progress for these groups. Support is most effective in providing extra assistance for English, and it is particularly successful in support of pupils with English as an additional language. Consequently, the pace of learning is usually rapid in the majority of lessons. Most teachers make sound assessments of their pupils' work in English and mathematics, but not in science and the foundations subjects of religious education, music, art, history and geography. All teachers set homework - but it is most effectively used in Years 5 and 6, particularly for English and mathematics. Sufficient homework is set: often, it includes reading, learning tables, revising spellings and personal research; but it is under utilised in science to back up what has been taught in class.

16. At its very best or outstanding, teaching combines one or more of these aspects:
- high expectations which lead to challenges for all attainment groups;
  - a good understanding of the basic skills, including phonics;
  - very good relationships which result in pupils being very willing to work and try hard and, consequently, to acquire knowledge and understanding at rapid rates;
  - an encouragement for all pupils to be productive;
  - pupils' being motivated through deeply interesting instruction;
  - good definition of the learning targets which are clearly explained and so the purpose

for learning is plain to pupils.

For example, in an English lesson in Years 5/6, the pupils' attentions were captured by the vitality of the teacher's presentation. They were helped to learn through very good questioning and clear explanations about dialect, and further helped by being given very accurate and interesting examples of clauses. Also, some good teaching is deeply interesting; for example, in a science lesson, a sense of awe was created by cleverly revealing to pupils how snails move. Consequently, pupils experienced a deep sense of wonder.

17. At its weakest, and by proportion this is very small, teaching does not: make the subject interesting; challenge pupils' inattention; keep up the usually high expectations for pupils' good behaviour; have good subject knowledge. Consequently, the pace drops, some pupils become disinterested and sometimes do not leave their friends to work uninterrupted.

18. Planning quality varies from being mostly good in English and mathematics to satisfactory in physical education and design and technology. The quality in other subjects is unsatisfactory. It is weakened when there is not a suitable scheme from which to draw teaching objectives. Therefore, plans do not build successfully on skills and knowledge through the years. This is most evident in science, geography, history, art, religious education and music.

19. Taken as a whole, teaching contributes well to pupils' achievements, to much of their work and to their attitudes to it, and often produces good rates of learning for all groups - especially in English and mathematics - and at least steady progress for all groups in other subjects. Most pupils are willing learners, try hard and work at a good pace. Most respond with interest and often think things out well for themselves. Mostly, they know what they are doing and some have a reasonable grasp of how well they have done. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they often receive extra attention, suitably modified work or extra support. Those with English as an additional language make very good progress: a well qualified governor provides voluntary help which is well utilised. However, insufficient preparation for National Curriculum tests, particularly to revise knowledge and understanding, and to be familiar with the types of questions faced, results in pupils doing less well than most should in such tests.

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

20. The school meets statutory requirements in providing a curriculum that has appropriate breadth and depth. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Strategies for teaching literacy are very effective and numeracy standards are also rising rapidly as a result of the good implementation of the numeracy strategy. The policies for drugs and sex education are fully in place: parents are kept well informed and involved in these aspects of their children's development. Although the present policy is sound, work on a revised version for personal, social and health education was started last January and is soon to be reviewed again to check for improvement: this pulls together issues relating to equality of opportunities and multi-cultural influences. Continuity and progression of skills are incorporated into the schemes of work for English, mathematics, physical education and design and technology, but this is much less so in history, geography, music and art. Parts of the science curriculum do not properly indicate a logical progression of skills, particularly because they are linked to class cross-curricular topics rather than to a progression in the scientific skills, knowledge and understanding required.

21. There is a reasonable range of extra-curricular activities including games, music and dance - a similar picture to many other primary schools. In addition there are sometimes art and French language clubs which increase the opportunities for pupils to widen their horizons. Most activities are offered to Key Stage 2 pupils, but the younger pupils have 'Fun and Games' evenings which are well supported and add an extra element to the curriculum on offer.

22. Team games add to the quality of interaction within the community and with other schools through local leagues. Very good links with local schools are strengthened further by the initiative started by Florendine. Standards are monitored within the group of schools which

transfer most pupils to the neighbouring secondary school. In addition, the school becomes the venue for 'Education Week', organized by the local church; this brings together the school and the local community. Some older local residents come into school to eat with the pupils at lunchtime: they share their memories to make some history lessons more vivid.

23. Pupils' personal development is well fostered in many ways: overall, the provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Provision for their spiritual development is very good: it is well supported by some lessons and in assemblies. Many opportunities are used to advantage to instil a sense of the wonder of the world, in assemblies and many lessons. For example, a study of snails was so well presented and organized in Year 2 that at one moment the whole group became deeply interested and in awe of what many were seeing closely for the first time. Acts of collective worship fully comply with statutory requirements and effectively underpin the excellent moral ethos which the school upholds. This is also evident in many literacy lessons and through interactions between adults and pupils at other times. The policy of having older pupils paired with younger ones for reading works well, and develops a sense of responsibility as well as strengthening social bonds.

24. The development of social awareness is very good: it is very apparent in assemblies and in the high level of collaboration and co-operation between pupils both inside and outside the classroom. The use of the 'parachute fabric' in physical education is an excellent example of this, combining as it does a sense of wonder as it billows and the need for considerable whole-class control and co-operation to make it work.

25. Cultural development is sound with, for example, multicultural influences evident in some art work. Multi-cultural awareness has been heightened further by the introduction of the 'Nancy Project' which involves the pupils in support of a child in Zimbabwe for whom they raise money. The presence of Korean pupils has also added an extra dimension to multi-cultural awareness. However, the ethnic and cultural diversity of British society is not sufficiently promoted and there are some missed opportunities in music and other subjects to promote understanding of the diverse heritages of our society.

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

26. The school has very effective procedures in place for monitoring the welfare and personal guidance of its pupils. All appropriate policies are in place with good arrangements for first aid, medicines and fire. Child protection and health and safety arrangements, which are very good, secure the safety and protection of all pupils, and the designated staff members have received appropriate training. All staff are aware of these arrangements which form part of the high standard of pastoral care. Teachers and support staff know pupils very well: they monitor and respond promptly to children's concerns in what is a very caring community. Several were observed discussing problems at the end of the day with parents, passing on information about minor injuries or upsets during the day and assisting parents with their children's welfare. This mirrors some compliments given at the pre-inspection meeting. Pupils say they feel very safe and secure, and able to approach any member of staff if troubled or hurt.

27. Very high standards of behaviour are expected, and the rules are well known to pupils, who respond well to the rewards and sanctions which celebrate achievement or emphasize the need to reflect. Praise is often used to raise pupils' self-esteem, and disciplinary action is only rare. Bullying behaviour is infrequent, because staff are very vigilant about it. Pupils say that bullying and harassment are discussed in 'candle times' and assemblies, and the few incidents which occur are dealt with quickly, effectively and in accordance with their expectations. The excellent behavioural monitoring systems provided by midday staff and teachers, combined with teachers' individual knowledge and sensitivity towards their pupils, provide a calm, purposeful place to learn.

28. Absence is very well monitored by the class teachers, and backed up by systematic

monitoring of registers by the secretary. She operates a 'first-day' absence system which promptly follows up any unexpected absences.

29. Procedures to assess and record pupils' progress are satisfactory overall, although there is inconsistency across the curriculum. In English, mathematics and physical education, good procedures are in place. For literacy and numeracy, they are based on annual tests and regular teacher assessment. They are well used to measure pupils' progress and to guide teachers' future planning of work in these subjects. For science, art and religious education assessment procedures are unsatisfactory, although key stage assessments in science are available, and there is an embryonic system in place to assess attainment at half-termly intervals. Baseline assessment, end of Year 1, and end of Year 4 testing are carried out annually as part of the recently introduced assessment policy. However, short-term assessment is not yet fully implemented to record what pupils can do, and what they should do next. This is particularly evident and relevant in Key Stage 1 science, where pupils' work seen and discussions with them clearly show that they know more than individual assessment records show. Assessment records for art, geography, history and music also fail to show clear progression in pupils' acquisition of the relevant skills and knowledge.

30. Overall, the school has made some improvement in monitoring pupils' progress by establishing a system to encompass regular assessment in the core subjects, but it has not yet been in operation long enough to become a useful tool. At the time of the last inspection, procedures for monitoring and recording pupils' progress were said to need further development. Good improvement has been made in English and mathematics, but further development is required, particularly in science and some foundation subjects. The school is aware of these deficiencies, and expects the full implementation of the new assessment policy to redress them. Plans related to target setting for pupils are a key part of the school development plan, and satisfactory progress has been made to date in implementing them.

31. The last report identified the effective support and advice available to all pupils and parents; this is still very much the case, and the high standard of pastoral care has been maintained. Almost all parents feel well informed about how well their children are getting on, and say that they can discuss targets and any areas where their children have needs at the termly consultation meetings.

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

32. The partnership with parents is very good overall, and represents an improvement on the good relationships identified in the previous report. Parents are very satisfied with the education and care their children receive. They give good support to the school which works hard to forge the very effective links with pupils' families.

33. Very good quality information is provided for parents. This includes a good quality prospectus, governors' report and a regular newsletter. Academic achievement is conveyed through the very informative and good quality annual pupil reports, which parents value and say they find helpful in understanding their children's progress. Additionally, parents have the opportunity to see their children's work and discuss progress with teachers at the termly parents' evening. Parents who cannot attend the dates arranged for consultations are able to arrange individual sessions at any convenient time. Attendance at the governors' meeting to make the Annual Report to Parents is not at all well attended. In early July each year, parents are invited to meet their children's new teachers at an 'open afternoon', when they are told what is expected of their children the following year, and how they can help them at home.

34. The headteacher is said to be particularly approachable, and makes himself available to parents around the entrances before and after school. Teachers often seek out parents at the end of school day to pass on concerns or information about minor accidents, including a written confirmation if the child has received a 'head bump'. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents said



how much they valued this courtesy. Although some parents help in class with reading, resource preparation, photocopying and various other areas where their skills are needed, only a few parents actively support their children's work at home. For example, discussions with pupils' about support with their reading at home showed that only a small minority receive regular, committed interest in it.

35. There is an active 'Friends' association which organizes social events and raises a considerable amount of money for teaching resources. A number of parents and staff run disco's, Christmas and summer events which have funded playground seats, a stage for the hall, computer lease and various items of furniture.

36. Over half the pre-inspection questionnaires were returned; for most of the questions asked, responses were very positive about the school's work. Almost all parents strongly agreed that: their children liked school; their children were making good progress; behaviour in the school is good; teaching is good; they are well informed about their children's progress; they feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem; the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best; the school is well led and managed; and that the school helps their children become mature and responsible. Inspection evidence mirrors these views. This very positive view by parents is a reflection on the successful efforts made by staff to inform parents about their children's education and personal development. It was mirrored in the views expressed by the group of parents which attended the pre-inspection meeting.

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

37. The school is very well led and managed in many aspects, but the poor leadership given about National Curriculum tests reduces the quality to good overall. The headteacher and deputy headteacher give a good lead by setting a clear educational direction for the school. They are well supported by strong team work from the senior management team and the phase teams. The good example set by the deputy headteacher in co-ordinating mathematics and implementing the National Numeracy Strategy provides a good model for others to follow in promoting high standards and effective teaching and learning. Leadership and management have succeeded in raising standards in pupils' work in mathematics, English and information technology.

38. The school development plan, whilst setting out a clear educational direction and programme of intent, is weakened considerably by an almost total absence of the quantifiable targets which the well planned actions are intended to achieve. Consequently, governors, who have a reasonable picture of the school's achievements, have an unclear view of the school's weaknesses and what to pursue and monitor in order to improve further. Their curricular committee is presently suspended, and so governors are having too little impact in helping to raise curricular standards. In addition, links to specific aspects by individual governors have not resulted in clear reports to fellow governors, or recommendations for appropriate action as follow-up, and so a less than full picture of the school's successes and achievements is obtained. Links for special educational needs and literacy are particular examples. Taken as a whole, the governors have too few, systematic links to enable them to understand the school's work and achievement in curricular terms.

39. Governors have a very clear oversight of the budget and spend money carefully, ensuring all grants are used for the intended purposes. They enable the budget to be distributed creatively to supplement new initiatives. Spending is carefully monitored and the minor recommendations from the latest audit have been implemented. Best value is sought by close comparison with other schools - and has culminated in a desire to raise standards in National Curriculum test results, particularly in English and mathematics. Nevertheless, there is still much to do in this respect. For example, 'booster' classes did not target individual pupils in the way intended, and pupils' revision and test preparation are weak features.

40. Teaching quality is monitored through a combination of direct observation by the headteacher working in concert with an outside agency, regular informal monitoring of work in class, and useful discussions in the three phase teams which are chaired by members of the senior team. Some self-evaluation takes place in these teams and has succeeded in helping to raise teaching quality further. The school is well set to monitor its own performance, diagnose its strengths and take measures to bring about improvement. It is a suitable place for the initial training of prospective teachers.

41. Subject management varies in quality from being very good for the under-fives, good for information technology, mathematics and geography, and satisfactory in English, art, history, religious education, music, physical education and design and technology, to unsatisfactory in science. In science, the scheme of work does not give clear guidance to teachers about key learning objectives for each age group. Some other subjects are weakened by lack of guidance regarding assessment, as is science. It is difficult to track the progress of groups and individuals in music, art, history and geography, and to identify what pupils need to learn next in these subjects. Provision for special educational needs is well managed and pupils' progress is assessed.

42. Accommodation within the building is more than adequate, with some productive and flexible use of available spaces, but there is barely sufficient space to accommodate the number of pupils using the two hard-surface play areas. Pupils' very good behaviour overcomes any potential problems by them following the strong guidance to control their patterns of play, confine themselves to small areas and carefully to control any ball games. The field is unsuitable for the standard of games required for older pupils at Key Stage 2. It has a steep slope, which makes competitive home matches in field sports of all kinds impossible, and practice and preparation very difficult.

43. Since the previous inspection, improvements have been made in relation to the management of provision for pupils with special educational needs. Practice now closely mirrors recommendations in the governmental Code of Practice and this results in good progress by most pupils. Good quality records are kept, and pupils at Stage 3 or beyond are given appropriate support which enables them to make good progress. Pupils on Stages 1 and 2 of the Code of Practice are often supported in class by suitably modified work, or by being given extra attention by teachers or classroom assistants.

44. The effect of leadership and management is often very positive and good as a whole. It is most noticeable in good team work which promotes very good standards of behaviour and very positive pupils' attitudes in class and towards school. It is reflected in many good standards in pupils' work and good quality teaching. However, it lacks effectiveness in producing National Curriculum test results which reflect the standard of pupils' work, and in matching test outcomes in schools with which this one is compared. Consequently, it sets targets which are too low for the current quality of teaching and pupils' work in class.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

45. In order to raise standards further and improve by comparison to similar schools, the governors, headteacher and teachers should:

- improve National Curriculum test results so that they properly reflect the standards achieved in pupils' work by:
  - building in more systematic revision of pupils' knowledge throughout the school year; (4, 59, 76)
  - more thoroughly preparing pupils in the style of responses which they are required to make under test conditions; (4, 19, 39, 59)
  - using booster classes more effectively; (39, 59, 78)
  - giving more positive leadership about this; (37, 44)
- raise standards in pupils' work in science in both key stages by:
  - improving continuity and progression within the scheme of work and within teachers' planning; (18, 20, 76, 77)
  - revising work more often; (15, 19, 76, 77, 78)
  - ensuring pupils' work records the full extent of their knowledge and understanding; (4, 6, 70, 72, 76, 77)
  - ensuring regular assessment takes place and work is compared with National Curriculum levels; (15, 29, 30, 41, 77, 78)
  - making links to topics sufficiently progressive year on year; (20, 73, 77)
  - providing more teaching time, particularly at Key Stage 1; (78)
- ensure that pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are built up progressively through the school in all subjects by:
  - identifying clearly in the schemes of work the learning objectives for each year group; (18, 90)
  - assessing pupils' progress regularly against these targets; (41, 78, 81, 86, 94)
  - strengthening subject co-ordination in monitoring standards and the quality of learning; (41, 78, 82, 93, 110)
- improve governors' oversight of the curriculum and impact on raising standards by:
  - sharpening the targets in the school development plan, so that more are quantifiable and measurable; (38)
  - raising annual targets to reflect the quality of teaching in English and mathematics; (6, 44)
  - giving governors a clearer insight into the curriculum and its developments; (38)
  - improving links already established for special educational needs, English, mathematics and other subjects; (38)
  - ensuring that governors gain a full picture of strengths and weaknesses of the school. (38)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	27	36	30	3	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll		YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		287
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		32

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs		YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		48

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	3.7	School data	0.04
National comparative data	5.4	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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999(98)	17 (23)	16 (21)	33 (44)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12 (17)	15 (20)	13 (19)
	Girls	16 (17)	16 (20)	16 (19)
	Total	28 (34)	31 (40)	29 (38)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (77)	94 (91)	88 (86)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15 (21)	13 (20)	14 (18)
	Girls	16 (19)	16 (20)	16 (18)
	Total	31 (40)	29 (40)	30 (36)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (91)	88 (91)	91 (82)
	National	82 (81)	86 (84)	87 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999(98)	21 (29)	17 (27)	38 (56)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13 (16)	17 (23)	16 (18)
	Girls	13 (16)	12 (20)	14 (24)
	Total	26 (32)	29 (43)	30 (42)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (57)	76 (77)	79 (77)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14 (19)	16 (20)	15 (20)
	Girls	13 (17)	11 (19)	11 (18)
	Total	27 (36)	27 (39)	68 (68)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (64)	71 (70)	68 (68)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	240
Any other minority ethnic group	6

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

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.5
Average class size	28.7

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	105

### ***Financial information***

Financial year (estimated)	1999/2000
	£
Total income	488,170
Total expenditure	492,840
Expenditure per pupil	1,711
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,810
Balance carried forward to next year	11,140

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	287
Number of questionnaires returned	145

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	43	4	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	57	40	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	43	0	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	49	8	1	3
The teaching is good.	61	37	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	43	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	32	3	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	46	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	46	7	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	63	34	2	1	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	44	1	1	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	46	8	4	9

Very few additional written complaints were received: these were minor in nature and so small in quantity as to be negligible. The high proportion of returns shows very good support for the school by its parents. The parents' views also are mirrored in much of the school's work.

## **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**

46. Children enter school in the September of the academic year in which they are five and, on the whole, have the expected knowledge and understanding of words and numbers for children of their age. At the time of the inspection there were 12 children under five. They are taught by a class teacher who is supported by a nursery nurse. The quality of teaching is always satisfactory and frequently very good. A second classroom assistant is present part time to support a pupil with specific learning difficulties. By the time they are five all children, including those with special educational needs, have made good progress: almost all children meet the Desirable Outcomes<sup>1</sup> and most exceed them.

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

47. Very good relationships have been established between the children, their families, the teacher and support staff. Expectations of behaviour and co-operation are high and the children respond very well to the opportunities and activities provided for them: mutual respect is quickly established. Many opportunities are provided for children to develop independence, work and play co-operatively and enjoy suitably varied ways of learning. They take turns and share equipment well; they respond positively to instructions, and often listen carefully. When they are in direct teaching groups, nearly all concentrate hard. Children know the routines well and understand that these must be followed. They clear away equipment and work sensibly before moving on to their next activity. They are beginning to evaluate their own learning and activities: for example, individual targets are set and feed back sessions frequently provide opportunities for them to say what they have achieved and can do. The stimulating environment provided for them encourages them to ask questions and make sensible choices. Their behaviour and attitudes to work are nearly always very good and sometimes exemplary: very good progress is made by most children in personal and social development.

#### **Language and literacy.**

48. Most children enter the school with the language skills expected at this age. The high expectations, careful planning and gentle attitudes of staff quickly build upon this early learning so that, by the time they are five, all children have progressed well to achieve good standards. Vocabulary is continually emphasized and children use correct technical terms when discussing their work. They speak out confidently, offering thoughts and ideas, and enjoy taping their own words for feedback sessions with the whole class. All read and write their own names and most correctly use upper and lower case letters. Although some still copy-write, almost all write simple sentences independently, and some add their own ideas. They correctly start with a capital letter and end with a full stop. All understand the format of a book and read familiar stories in unison. They understand that pictures illustrate the story and discuss why things are so and what might happen next. They enjoy adding their own sentences to make the narrative more interesting. They read and follow practical instructions well and their work is suitably assessed to determine knowledge, understanding and progress. A few children have well-established reading skills and begin to read fluently from early reading books. The teacher's planning has clear learning objectives, and she and the nursery nurse work effectively together to produce rapid rates of progress for most children. On the whole, teaching is of very good quality.

#### **Mathematics**

49. Many children enter the school with mathematical knowledge close to that expected for their ages. The teacher builds mathematical concepts into all areas of learning and so, by the

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<sup>1</sup> Desirable Outcomes are those skills, knowledge and understanding which are deemed necessary to lay suitable foundations for entry to the early stages of the National Curriculum at age 5. They are set out in governmental guidance as 'Areas of Experience' and 'Desirable Outcomes'. These are the expectations for the average nursery school child to attain, or be on course to attain, by age 5.



time they are five, most children are suitably familiar with numbers to 10 and many beyond this and standards are good. By practical activities, they are able to create simple addition sums, for example  $3+4=7$ , and record these correctly. They enjoy completing patterns in sequence, ordering different sizes. They consolidate knowledge of shapes, circles, squares and triangles by drawing them with templates and cutting them out with great care. They complete jigsaws confidently, matching shape and colour. Teaching is often good and work displays are used to reinforce number visually, and many good quality activities include interesting counting games and rhymes.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

50. Many suitable experiences are provided for children to gain knowledge and understanding about the world around them. They learn to care for themselves and the correct order in which to dress. They look at the need for suitable clothing in cold or hot weather. They talk about simple hygiene rules, particularly at bathtime, and the kind of food to eat for healthy living. They investigate fillings for sandwiches and make lemon pancakes. At the time of the inspection the play area was set up as an imaginary veterinary hospital and, through play, they demonstrated their understanding of the need to value all living things. Their discussions about the care of animals contributed to the language and social development, as well as to their knowledge about forms of life. The classroom abounds with lively displays and models of bees and spiders. All children have time on the computer and many use a mouse to draw simple figures with increasing confidence. Teaching is often good, activities very well organized, and adults deployed very well to ensure much conversation and interaction takes place between children and adults. Progress is good and standards are satisfactory.

### **Creative development.**

51. Most children develop creative skills well. To complement free-choice activities there are directed lessons when they are taught specific skills - for example, in music. Consequently, they know the names of common musical instruments and some of the less common, such as tambour and claves. They play these keeping a regular beat. They enjoy singing and memorise words and tunes well. Many activities are provided for them to develop artistic skills which draw on both observational and imaginative skills. Children experience a wide variety of media, such as pastel, charcoal, paint and crayon. They cut and stick very carefully and with increasing dexterity. Some of their model engines are of good quality and, although this work has been directed by the teacher, children have added their own decorations and then written about what they have done. All their work is valued by the teachers and is named and displayed attractively: teaching is usually of good quality. Progress made by most children is good and standards are correspondingly good.

### **Physical development.**

52. Through a variety of suitable activities, children's physical skills are soundly developed. A mini-gym is used well to increase their confidence to control movement and to balance whilst travelling along a low frame. Although they have some opportunity to climb on a large outdoor mobile frame, the use of this is dependent on the weather, and so opportunities for higher level climbing, balancing and risk taking are limited. Structured floor work and movement to music develops stretching, jumping skills and posture well. Outside activities with mobile toys are thoroughly enjoyed and develop an awareness of space and hand-to-eye co-ordination. Teaching is sound on the whole. Standards are those expected for children's ages, and progress is steady for most.

53. The curriculum, range of activities and quality of teaching provided for children under five have all improved since the previous inspection. Teaching on the whole is now very good, activities are well organized, there is a good amount of interaction between adults and children, and a good balance is created between direct instruction, choice, creative play and independent work.

## **ENGLISH**

54. The results of the 1999 national tests indicated that, at Key Stage 1, standards in English are average in reading and well above average in writing. Compared with similar schools, standards are below average in reading and above average in writing. Work seen during the inspection indicates that standards in reading have risen slightly and are now above national expectations. Standards of writing remain the same and are well above national expectations. At Key Stage 2, the results of 1999 national tests indicated standards are well below the average for all schools and below the average for similar schools. The standard of work seen during the inspection is of a much higher standard than the 1999 test results would suggest: it is above national expectations. The National Literacy Strategy is having a positive effect on raising standards: in most lessons, pupils are making good progress.

55. Throughout the school, pupils listen very well. They particularly enjoy whole-group literacy sessions, answering and asking pertinent questions. They only lose concentration when a few sessions slow in pace and questions cease to challenge them. They enjoy the humour, which many teachers spontaneously use, and particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils appreciate and understand innuendo and play on words. Vocabulary is properly emphasized at all times and, throughout, pupils attempt technical terminology. They confidently use dictionaries, thesaurus and specific word banks to extend language. Levels of oracy are very high at the end of both key stages. Pupils are confident that their thoughts and ideas are welcome. At both key stages, they construct answers to questions well. They readily engage in conversations, are able to keep to the point, and often use imaginative turns of phrase. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 co-operate very well with younger ones in Years 1 and 2 in 'paired' reading. They take turns to read text, older pupils reminding younger ones about word-recognition skills and questioning them about their understanding.

56. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils read well and are aware of authors and publishers and the use of contents, index and glossary. Texts presented to them in guided reading are well chosen to challenge them. However, the variety and literary quality of stories for self-selection do not extend the skills of average or higher attaining pupils. In writing, by Year 1, many pupils are already adding speech and question marks to their work to make it logical and interesting. Higher attaining pupils enjoy introducing adjectives and pay proper attention to the shape and content of their work. By the end of the key stage, nearly all pupils have good beginnings to their stories, write in logical sequences and use imaginative phrases to enrich their work.

57. Towards the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils develop their knowledge of grammar well. They identify subordinate clauses in complex sentences, and higher attaining pupils detect adverbial and adjectival phrases. They create complex sentences by connecting simple ones. In cloze procedural exercises, they strive to use adventurous words to clarify meaning or change the tone of the story. When writing their own stories, most use paragraphs and punctuation effectively, and ideas have logical sequences; however, many do not always include the amount of good descriptive words and phrases encountered in grammatical exercises. Nevertheless, at the end of the key stage, most have made steady and some good progress to write and read well with fluency, expression and understanding. They know a variety of authors and can compare their works, for example Blyton, Dickens and Dahl. There are good quality books presented for guided reading sessions with a wide variety of challenging texts. However, class libraries have only a very limited supply of books and so the opportunity to widen and deepen the literary knowledge of average and advanced readers is thereby missed.

58. Information technology is often used effectively in Key Stage 2 to support learning. Pupils use a variety of fonts, different layouts, pasted drawings and diagrams effectively to present their imaginative poetry and prose. The technology suite was used particularly well during the inspection with a Year 5 group. Pupils followed a text on screen and by using 'cut and paste' were able quickly to remove appropriate clauses and adjust them to simple sentences. They then saved their work for future reference before moving quickly back to the classroom to continue the lesson.

59. The quality of teaching seen was always at least satisfactory, often good, and sometimes very good or excellent. The National Literacy Strategy is now firmly established. This has led to well organized lessons with clear learning objectives: consequently, pupils are clear about what they have to do. Work is well suited to the differing ability levels within each class. Pupils who are lower attainers or who have special educational needs are well supported and so take an integral and positive part in lessons. Pupils who are higher attainers are presented with suitably challenging work and further tasks to extend learning, and so often make good progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are also very well supported, and consequently make very good progress in both spoken language and written work. Although the quality of teaching is good overall, pupils are not sufficiently prepared for the end of key stage tests, particularly in Year 6 where revision or 'booster' classes are voluntary and are not sufficiently well established to benefit particular pupils. This partly explains the lack of match between pupils' work in class at the end of Key Stage 2, and their results in National Curriculum tests.

60. Overall, the management of English is satisfactory. Through good teamwork, the National Literacy Strategy is well in place and is beginning to influence work across the curriculum. There is a folio of moderated work to guide teachers with their assessment. As yet, the co-ordinator is insufficiently involved with National Curriculum tests to have a good grasp of standards within the school.

61. At the previous inspection, standards in English were judged to be above the national average at both key stages. Since then, standards have risen in Key Stage 1 to be well above in writing. There was a substantial drop in standards in Key Stage 2 in 1997. Standards have risen since then to be below, but close to, national averages at the last Statutory Assessment tests in 1999. Standards in pupils' work seen during the inspection are above national expectations; many are on course to exceed the expected Level 4, and a substantial majority to attain it.

## **MATHEMATICS**

62. National Curriculum tests for 1999 showed that, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainments were in line both with national averages and in comparison with attainment in similar schools. This represents a considerable improvement from 1998 results. The evidence from the inspection indicates this improvement continues with most pupils' knowledge and understanding in line with national expectations, with a significant minority above average. At Key Stage 2, 1999 test results showed that the attainment was slightly above the national averages and broadly in line with that of similar schools. These results had regressed slightly from 1998, but the evidence of work seen and discussions with pupils show that standards have risen since last year, with many on course to attain above national expectations in 2000. The work is much better than tests in 1999 suggest. Several factors explain this; among them the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy which has added a greater focus and structure to lessons, and teachers' knowledge and confidence in this subject have increased.

63. Pupils are well aware of their own learning and explain strategies for solving problems with precision and clarity, using appropriate mathematical vocabulary. By the end of Year 6, most can multiply confidently by 10, 100, 1000, relate percentages to fractions and change fractions to decimals to two and in some cases three decimal places. Most show a clear understanding of the application of mathematics to solve practical problems in a wider field, and make effective use of such strategies across the curriculum. For example, this was seen in physical education (measuring, timing and recording), history (using a timeline to indicate when events happened relative to others) and geography (grid references using two co-ordinates). Pupils with special educational needs attain appropriately at both key stages.

64. Since the previous inspection in 1996, the provision of mathematics has strengthened in many respects. Pupils' attitudes to the subject have improved and are now mostly good or better at Key Stage 1, and never less than very good and sometimes excellent at Key Stage 2. Teaching quality has improved and expectations are high. Assessment is now used more

effectively to inform future planning. In 1996, Key Stage 1 results were above national averages, but they are now more or less in line. Key Stage 2 results have remained much the same but work seen at this inspection is above national expectations relative to pupils' ages.

65. The quality of teaching is never less than sound at both key stages. In Key Stage 1, 66 per cent of teaching observed was good or better and at Key Stage 2, all teaching was good or better with 75 per cent very good or better. This results in pupils making at least steady and many making good progress at both key stages. Overall, the quality of teaching is good.

66. All teachers have high expectations of good behaviour which engenders an appropriate atmosphere for learning. Planning is sound in the short term and good in the medium and long term, based on the guidelines of the National Numeracy Strategy. This produces continuity and natural progression to each term's work. Tasks allocated within teaching sets are appropriate for each group, taking into account their previous attainment: this allows all groups to gain a sense of achievement by the end of the lessons. Teachers give proper support and guidance where needed without over-directing pupils' thinking. Learning objectives are shared with pupils and are often evaluated at the end of the lesson to determine how successfully these have been achieved. This gives the class teacher continuous assessment of areas which need consolidation. Occasionally, such opportunities are missed with a resultant loss of re-enforcement of teaching points. At both key stages, pupils are encouraged to use correct mathematical terminology. This precision strengthens accuracy and helps clarify strategies and logical processes. A good balance between teacher instruction and pupil reaction helps maintain pace in lessons so that pupils' interest does not wane and they remain on task and often enthusiastic. Well judged encouragement and very good relationships between staff and pupils, based on mutual respect, promote self-confidence and a willingness to try an answer without fear of reproach. Teachers' high levels of knowledge and understanding, especially at Key Stage 2, ensure that questions have suitable depth to encourage thinking and, therefore, lead pupils to a deeper understanding of the mathematical concepts behind each area of study. At this key stage, mathematical learning is used well in practical applications so that pupils come to appreciate the point of learning the basic principles for use in a wider world. Homework is used effectively to consolidate class learning; for example, pupils use wood to find fractions of lengths, or in the realisation that time passing can be related to measurement of degrees of rotation of angles.

67. Where teaching is very occasionally less strong, not enough time is allowed to complete given tasks and there is insufficient emphasis on neat presentation. Both of these factors diminish pupils' pride in their work and sense of achievement. Also, very occasionally, a little loss of class control results in distracting behaviour and so lessens the impact of teaching.

68. The subject is well managed. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been well planned, starting from a draft project initiated by the mathematics co-ordinator and has been effective in giving extra focus and structure to lessons and thereby in raising standards. In-service training has increased staff confidence. Each teacher has been able to observe teaching in the phase below the one in which they teach, and this has given extra insight into continuity and progression as pupils move up through the school. Formal half-termly assessments, allied to on-going informal assessment, show up areas where further consolidation is needed. The co-ordinator has management time especially provided to give extra practical support to the staff and encourage their personal professional development. Also, he monitors the success of the mathematical curriculum across the whole school. This has produced the strength among the staff in their depth of understanding of the subject which enables them to challenge pupils, hone mathematical skills and encourage their pupils' intellectual development. Information technology is used in 'roamer' programs to back up principles taught in class. Much thought and effort has been put into raising standards, and this is bearing fruit.

## **SCIENCE**

69. According to teachers' assessments in 1999, attainment in science at the end of Key

Stage 1 is above national averages for investigation and experimentation, but below them in knowledge and understanding of life and living processes, materials and their properties, and physical properties. Taken as a whole, standards in science are around the national average and much the same as standards in schools with which this one is compared. No data is available to ascertain trends over recent years. At the end of Key Stage 2, National Curriculum tests in 1999 show that standards are below both the national average and that for similar schools. Trends since 1997 show a decline in standards compared with all other schools nationally. On the whole, boys fared less well than girls, and were about a term behind them. Girls' attainment was similar to that of all girls nationally.

70. Pupils' work in class is stronger than teachers' assessments in 1999 at Key Stage 1 show, with more knowledge and understanding evident about such things as plants and animals and what such creatures need to survive, about the properties of materials and about physical processes. Knowledge and understanding is particularly evident in many oral responses in class. However, written work does not show the range of understanding which pupils have, either of approaches to investigation and experimentation, or in the other aspects. For example, their written work does not cover the full extent of their knowledge, nor does it match their understanding of fair tests or record clearly some of the simple conclusions they draw. Progress in written work is slow by comparison to progress in oral response which is at a good rate.

71. At the end of Key Stage 2, the knowledge which pupils now have in all aspects of science - both in their recorded work and in their spoken comments - is better than National Curriculum tests in 1999 indicated and progress is at least steady for most. Most of their written work matches national expectations, but it does not match the higher levels of understanding evident in oral responses. Written work lacks detail and explanations are often too brief and not suitably scientific. Experiments and investigations are often not used well enough to relate their findings to scientific knowledge and understanding, to compare outcomes to pupils' predictions and to offer simple explanations for any differences in repeated tests. Nevertheless, in class, most pupils make simple predictions, know that foods serve specific needs of living things, recognize fair testing in class work, know something about solids, liquids and gases, and are able to plan investigations drawing on previous experiences. They are able also to provide simple reasons for their findings and make predictions based on what they already know.

72. Standards in National Curriculum tests in science have declined since the previous inspection at Key Stage 2. Experimentation and investigation are not now as strong as reported then, and written work is much weaker.

73. The quality of teaching was sound on the whole, but varied. Of seven lessons seen, teaching quality was sound in three, good in two, very good in one and unsatisfactory in another. By contrast, pupils' attitudes were invariably positive, but attainment was never better than good - and only at that standard in Year 5. All teachers plan clearly and most have a sound grasp of the Programmes of Study, but do not reach the higher levels of investigation and experimentation well. Often, they do not ask pupils to explain their conclusions in scientific terms or to give scientific explanations for their predictions and conclusions. They prepare individual lessons well. However, taken as a whole, there is lack of progression in work planned across the years. Some work is repeated at similar levels in differing years. All teachers have consistent and high expectations for pupils' good behaviour. Most give their pupils clear guidance and help with how to undertake experiments and investigations in class.

74. The best teaching has good understanding of the Programmes of Study, and logical guidance results in pupils engaging deeply in scientific investigation. In a good lesson in Year 2, careful preparation through collection of live specimens, good quality lead-up by linking literacy to science in the use of a 'big book', clever raising of pupils' anticipation and good knowledge of the animal served to heighten pupils' interests. At one moment, there was an awed silence as the snails first began to move, followed by excitement when what they had been told and read about was revealed to them at first hand. Consequently, they revised what they knew, deepened their understanding and were naturally curious about what would happen next. Unfortunately, their

written work did not subsequently record the range and breadth of their knowledge and understanding.

75. In the occasional unsatisfactory lesson, teaching does not provide clear explanations and fails to interest pupils. In addition, the usually high levels of expectation for pupils' good behaviour lessens. The result is a lack of interest for many pupils because they are confused or lapse into social discussion because they fail to be enthused and lack reminders of the code of proper behaviour. Consequently, a few interrupt the attempts of others to work.

76. Most teachers support pupils with special educational needs well, and then the pupils make steady and sometimes good rates of progress. On the other hand, needs in individual education plans are sometimes not well supported in class, and occasionally pupils struggle to comprehend what is required of them. Some teachers set homework, but it is not a regularly occurring feature - there is insufficient related to revision of work which has occurred. Only a few teachers help children to record their work logically, and rarely do any insist that they record the full extent of their knowledge and understanding.

77. Although teaching is stronger at both key stages than pupils' written work shows, there are three major weaknesses which prevent pupils' attainment from being higher, and written work from being closer to pupils' knowledge and understanding. They are: a) teaching does not give sufficient guidance or opportunity - as a whole - for pupils to record the full extent of their knowledge, and so writing is not of sufficient quality to assist pupils in revision for their National Curriculum tests; b) there are insufficient progress and revision within the planning and, consequently, the subsequent teaching year on year; and c) assessment does not yet provide a clear picture of pupil progress. National Curriculum levels are not assessed and moderated. However, there is an embryonic system in place to assess some scientific activities. This has not yet led to clear pictures of progress, and assessments do not incorporate judgements of the levels of attainment.

78. Science is not managed well. There are some strengths, but some important weaknesses. The headteacher's analysis of National Curriculum test results correctly discerned a declining trend and, with the co-operation of the subject co-ordinator, extra classes in science - along the lines of 'booster' classes for English and mathematics - have been offered. About 95 per cent of pupils took this offer up - but some pupils in need of a boost did not volunteer to attend. Recently, the co-ordinator has scrutinized teachers' planning and children's work at both key stages and recognized that not enough work is being undertaken to establish continuity and progression and also that that pupils know more than their National Curriculum test results show. However, the subject's development is currently on hold, owing to implementation of the national initiatives in literacy and numeracy. Since the previous inspection, a new policy and scheme have been established, in line with the report's recommendations. However, it lacks progression and some coherence. These aspects are sacrificed at times by linking science to cross-curricular topics rather than to in the next stage of development in science. Consequently, some aspects of the subject are under represented - particularly in life processes and living things at Key Stage 2, and physical processes at Key Stage 1. Guidance relevant to scientific experimentation is not translated well into short-term planning which lacks clear acknowledgement of the more advanced phases of Levels 4 and 5. Links with information technology are weak, and much opportunity to revise knowledge is thereby lost. Over recent years, there has been little in-service training in science, nor has it been allocated a slot in the school development plan, and assessment of work against national expectations has weakened. The subject's failure to match standards achieved in the other core subjects is compounded by suspension of the monitoring of teaching quality and levelling of pupils' work against expectations in the National Curriculum, and by a shortage of time spent in teaching it, particularly at Key Stage 1.

## **ART**

79. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 during the inspection but, from the analysis of

pupils' work and from displays around the school, the standards achieved by most pupils in the key stage are as expected for their ages and most make steady progress. Art is used well to support other areas of the curriculum. Pupils use a range of materials to design and make puppets of characters such as Postman Pat or Dorothy from 'The Wizard of Oz'. They mix colours effectively to produce paintings of leaves. They also illustrate book titles to good effect. Evidence from earlier work shows that they have made thumb pots from clay and used crayon to produce pictures in the style of Picasso's 'Weeping Woman'. The standards and progress of most pupils in Key Stage 2 are as expected for their ages. They produce good observational drawings of guitars and violins. They make effective paper collages of faces from magazines, as well as self-portraits and sketches to express their response to music. They design and make individual tiles to celebrate the millennium. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 paint teapots using watercolour with an appropriate delicacy and they also produce effective 'Batik-type' (wax-resist) work on Indian wildlife. They have some opportunities to appreciate and work in the style of art from a range of cultures, including Aztec, African, Indian and Aboriginal, and relate these well to their work in history, geography and religious education.

80. Standards are similar to those found by the previous inspection, when they were described as in line with national expectations but sometimes better at Key Stage 2. At the time of the previous inspection, teaching was good and often very good at Key Stage 2. Only two lessons were observed during this inspection, in lower Key Stage 2, and teaching in these was satisfactory.

81. Teachers plan individual lessons well. They also provide good visual stimulus, such as a good range of comics when asking pupils to paint cartoon characters, which enhances pupils' learning. They establish positive relationships with and give good support to pupils. However, teachers do not plan for the progression of skills and there is no clear direction in providing instruction about artistic techniques. Moreover, teachers do not assess pupils' skills regularly, to provide the basis for planning further work. They sometimes have low expectations of pupils' skills and do not give them sufficient choice, for instance in mixing colours.

82. Art is not currently a priority in the school's development plan, but is soundly managed. There are some strengths and some weaknesses. The school has a good range of materials for the teaching of art, but standards of pupils' work are not monitored sufficiently to ensure that their skills are developed fully.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

83. During the inspection, only one lesson of design and technology was seen at Key Stage 1. Other evidence was gained by scrutinizing teachers' planning and looking at displays of pupils' work. Evidence shows that the standard of pupils' work meets expectations for their ages at both key stages. At the previous inspection, similar judgements were made: standards have been sustained at similar, satisfactory levels since then.

84. At the beginning of Key Stage 1, having first made simple puppets with movable limbs, pupils progress to make good quality string puppets where lines attached to a rod move arms and head. Further on in the key stage, other pupils disassemble envelopes to see how they are made. They then produce simple nets to make their own envelopes and, in an activity linked with English, address them ready to send. They record how they have been made and the problems encountered, and then evaluate how they could be improved. Most pupils make steady progress. This type of work has been built upon in Key Stage 2, where pupils make more complicated nets to produce boxes. This is an activity linked to the history of India, and the boxes have been transformed into tea caddies, with appropriate coverings and designs. This work too is suitably recorded and evaluated. At the end of the key stage, pupils are preparing for a design and technology day. They plan and design anemometers, considering their use, where they will be positioned and which materials to use. This information is recorded on a computer program. When all is ready, pupils will spend a day making, testing and evaluating their efforts. A similar

day took place last term, when pupils enjoyed making models of Anderson shelters and testing them to find which one withstood the heaviest 'bomb'. This work was then recorded in detail. Evidence of design and technology is seen in several cross-curricular activities to reinforce learning, for example paper folding in art and dough snails in science. Progress for most pupils is at a steady rate.

85. In the one lesson seen, the quality of teaching was good. The lesson was well prepared and pupils were encouraged to take a practical part and to question and hypothesise about process and outcomes. Elements of surprise gained and held pupils' interest throughout, and they maintained concentration, co-operated well and behaved very well.

86. The management of design and technology is satisfactory. Planning follows recommendations by the local education authority and is supplemented by teachers' own ideas. It ensures continuity between key stages. However, it does not always include sufficient detail to ensure progression of skills when two age groups work on the same project, for example in Years 3/4 and in 5/6. Here, progression is dependent on teacher expectation and the relative demands made of different groups. Often, there are good cross-curricular links made with other subjects, particularly in Key Stage 2, where information technology is used very effectively to assist the teaching and learning of skills and knowledge.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

87. The standards and progress achieved by most pupils in both key stages are as expected for their ages. At Key Stage 1, pupils understand the purpose of maps; they draw plans with a 'key' and describe features they like in their own locality. In Key Stage 2, they develop their map-making skills satisfactorily. They calculate distances using a scale on a map. They identify oceans and rivers on a map of the world. They show a good awareness of differences in climate and make good use of information technology to extract this information and record it. They are conscious of the effects of human activity on the environment and some of the things which could be done to improve it. They look empathetically at some of the issues raised by immigration. They show a sound understanding of the water cycle. They have explored their own locality in Tamworth and are aware of its location in the United Kingdom. They understand some of the important factors in the location of a settlement. They also know about the different conditions in which people live in India.

88. The standards achieved by the oldest pupils in the school are broadly similar to those found at the previous inspection, when they were described as sound at Key Stage 2. Pupils' attitudes are positive, as they were at the time of the previous inspection.

89. The overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and use resources well to support pupils' learning. For instance, in a mixed-age Years 1 and 2 class the teacher used models of farm buildings well to give pupils an idea of what an aerial view looks like before they began to draw a plan. There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils, which has a very positive effect on learning and attitudes. Pupils settle to work quickly and they show appreciation of each other's efforts, for instance when they have made a map of an imaginary zoo in Key Stage 1. Older pupils work well in pairs, for example when they identify roads on a map of the area around the school. They are interested in their tasks and maintain their concentration well. Teachers of older pupils use questions well to check on pupils' previous understanding of the local area and its interdependence with Birmingham, which makes subsequent learning more effective.

90. Geography is often linked to 'topic' work, and so teachers do not always plan as carefully for a gain in pupils' geographical skills as they do with those related to map work. Regular assessments of pupils' work have only recently been introduced, but these are not matched against National Curriculum criteria, which makes them less useful to teachers in planning the next stage of work. Information technology is not at present used regularly to support learning in



geography. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject's state of development and manages it well. Monitoring of teachers' plans and pupils' work takes place. The subject is reasonably well resourced.

## **HISTORY**

91. There were no opportunities during the inspection to observe history being taught in Key Stage 1. However, analysis of pupils' work and discussion with teachers show that most pupils achieve standards similar to those at the time of the previous inspection, when they were reported to be in line with national expectations. Pupils know about figures from past times, such as Guy Fawkes. They understand the differences between present and past, for instance by looking at how horses were used as part of their topic on animals. However, where history is linked to topic work, there is insufficient emphasis on the development of historical skills, such as using a range of sources to find out what might have happened in the past. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 achieve the standards expected for their ages, and a minority of higher attaining pupils exceed them. They have developed good skills in using secondary sources, for instance to find out about Tudor houses or the Jarrow march. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 are able to identify differences between the present day and the 1940s by comparing comics from the two eras. Older pupils reinforce their numeracy skills by using a time line correctly to place changes, such as smelting ore to obtain metals, in the appropriate period.

92. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. When teaching is good, teachers set clear objectives and use resources well, such as a good range of different comics in Years 3 and 4. Also, they plan lessons from their evaluation of previous work, for instance to focus pupils' attention more closely on the details of the sources they are looking at. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and this helps to establish a good environment for learning. As a consequence, pupils are attentive, contribute well to discussion, and work well independently as well as in groups. Where teaching has weakness, the learning objectives are not sufficiently emphasized or explained. For example, in one lesson explanation and illustration of the scale on a time line was not sufficiently clear and some time was wasted until this was clarified sufficiently for pupils to commence the task set.

93. History is managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator has a sound grasp of the subject and its needs. Visits and practical experiences are promoted. For example, good use is made of a visiting theatre group to involve pupils in acting as Aztecs or Romans. Also, visits to places of interest, such as the Black Country museum, make pupils' learning more understandable and enjoyable. The use of information technology to support pupils' learning is very limited, and this is an area requiring improvement. The study of history makes an effective contribution to pupils' understanding of their own and other cultures. The co-ordinator recently led the introduction of regular assessments of pupils' attainment, but these have not been in place long enough to have had enough impact on planning subsequent work.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

94. The standards achieved in information technology meet national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and are above them at the end of Key Stage 2. This shows an improvement from the previous inspection, when standards were generally sound, although it was not possible to observe any teaching of information technology at that time. Since the previous inspection, the school has acquired an information technology suite, with networked computers, which facilitates whole-class teaching of the subject.

95. Most pupils make steady progress and at the end of Year 2 have sound skills in communicating and handling information. They combine pictures and text successfully and are able to log on and to save their work. They use information technology to compose and listen to melodies. Although it was not observed during the inspection, younger pupils also have good

opportunities planned for them to control a programmable device. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made at least steady and many quite rapid progress so that most are on course to attain and many to exceed national expectations. Older pupils develop good skills in communicating information, for instance preparing a presentation on their design and technology work on anemometers, using moving graphics as well as text and sound. They have a good understanding of the effects they can produce, although a few pupils do not match these appropriately to the text and the audience. They know how to use electronic mail, for instance e-mailing the continuation of a story to their teacher. They have also used sensors to measure variations in temperature and other aspects of the weather and recorded these appropriately. They show good skills in formulating questions for a survey on other pupils' travel habits; for instance, their means of transport and their destination, and are able to use information technology to represent their findings graphically. They have used a computer program which enables them to simulate the control of a programmable device.

96. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers' subject knowledge ranges from at least satisfactory to mostly good or very good. The headteacher often provides good quality support in the computer suite to those teachers who are less confident in their knowledge, to ensure that all pupils have good opportunities to learn. Most teachers use the very good facilities in the computer suite well to develop pupils' skills and understanding and to increase their enjoyment of information technology. When teaching is good, teachers keep pupils clearly focused on the objectives of the lesson and check regularly that these are being achieved. However, in a lesson when younger pupils were composing music, the teacher did not create any opportunity for them to evaluate their own work or that of others to enhance their learning. Teachers successfully make pupils aware of some of the applications of information technology in the world outside. As a consequence of good teaching, pupils have very positive attitudes to information technology. Usually, they become fully engrossed in their work, co-operating well in pairs and supporting each other very well.

97. The subject is very well managed. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the subject and its needs, and he is supported very well by the headteacher in monitoring the provision throughout the school. There is a well-planned scheme and programme to develop pupils' skills with computers. Information technology is used well to support some areas of the curriculum, such as literacy, where pupils use it, for instance, to draft poetry or to extract clauses from a text. A little use is made of a mapping program in geography, and information technology is incorporated well into design and technology processes. However, it is not used sufficiently in other areas of the curriculum, for example, for revision in science, to gather information in history or to deepen insight into religious education. However, computers are not readily accessible in classrooms, as a result of the switch to a networked suite. Nevertheless, the school has plans to rectify the situation. A link is established, through electronic mail, with a school in Los Angeles, which also contributes well to pupils' social and cultural development.

## **MUSIC**

98. During the inspection period, four lessons were seen - two in each key stage. These lessons covered singing and playing of tuned and untuned instruments. Little evidence was found of pupils' knowledge and understanding of composition, or of their ability to listen to and appraise a variety of forms of music. The standard of singing and of playing tuned and untuned instruments meets the expectations for most pupils' ages.

99. At the previous inspection, standards were said to meet expectations. They continue to do so in singing and playing tuned and untuned instruments. There is insufficient evidence to identify improvement in the other aspects of the music curriculum.

100. Very early in Key Stage 1, pupils are introduced to untuned instruments and they rapidly learn names and the sounds instruments make. They play these to a regular 'walking' beat and

higher attaining pupils quickly progress to faster rhythms. By the end of the key stage, most have made steady progress and recognize the rhythms associated with crotchets, quavers and minims. However, as pupils are taught in groups with a three-year age range, many of the older pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to be challenged to progress to a higher standard of learning. Sometimes, they have to wait for younger pupils to consolidate work, and so become fidgety and many lose concentration. In Key Stage 2, pupils choose suitable instruments to play a simple tune, and two contrasting untuned rhythms. In small groups, they then 'hold' these rhythms against the main lyric, staggering entry and finishing appropriately. Throughout, most pupils make steady progress and enjoy singing. They memorise words and tunes well, and pay attention to pause and rhythms. They are aware of the need for good posture and clear diction, and enjoy two-part songs.

101. In the lessons seen in Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching was satisfactory in one lesson and unsatisfactory in the other. This was mainly because of the wide age range and attainment of pupils in the music groups which planning for the lessons did not take fully into account. A little teaching lacked sufficient variety and challenge to hold the attention of all pupils: as teachers concentrated on individual year groups, others lost interest. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching was good. Pupils were motivated by suitably challenging tasks and enjoyed performing and evaluating their work.

102. There are some strengths and some weaknesses in the management of the music curriculum. Taken as a whole, it is satisfactory. Each key stage plans its work separately but, as yet, there is no overall scheme of work to ensure continuity and progression of skills through the key stages. However, the co-ordinator has identified this in the action plan and is preparing to introduce the recently received 'Curriculum 2000' guidelines for music. Although there is some evidence of music being used to support other subjects, for example in art and history, many opportunities are missed for music to become an integral part of the curriculum. Pupils who have specific musical talent are well supported and are encouraged to perform at assemblies and in whole-school music sessions to aid their progress and improve their confidence.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

103. Pupils' standards in physical education are mostly appropriate for their ages at both key stages, with a substantial number showing greater levels of achievement. From the early years, pupils show facility to maintain balance and move in controlled ways to music in dance or in field events in athletics lessons. They use the given space effectively, either inside or outdoors, and link control of particular muscles with particular exercises. As they grow older, they begin to know the names of muscle groups, for example 'quadrilaterals' and 'biceps'. They are always eager to improve and participate in class with enthusiastic enjoyment with very little inappropriate behaviour. Most can explain the purpose of exercise and the importance of being fit. The pupils at the upper end of Key Stage 2 have swimming lessons and almost all make good progress to meet the national standard of swimming 25 yards by the time they are aged 11.

104. Since the previous inspection, the provision of physical education remains sound. Standards have remained constant and pupils continue to make steady progress. Parental support varies according to availability but is often a useful factor. Where the staff are enthusiastic, this conveys itself to the pupils and adds to their levels of enjoyment. The resources are well maintained and offer a similar range of activities.

105. All teaching observed was sound or better with a large majority being good or better, half was very good or better and a little was outstanding. On the whole, teaching was good. The pupils are given opportunities for individual leadership within lessons which adds to their personal development. Teachers give clear instructions and often demonstrate techniques well to give the pupils clear guidance as to how they can improve. The emphasis on sensible behaviour increases pupils' awareness of others. Indeed, because of teachers' high expectations, behaviour is never less than good and quite often outstanding. The careful handling of

equipment and good class control help lessons to run safely, smoothly and at a good pace. Teachers in Key Stage 2 provide pupils with the opportunity to take part in the 'Ten Point Athletics Award Scheme', as set out by the local authority, and this gives guidelines to assess each pupil's progress against standardized tables. Thus, both teachers and pupils have a clear picture of how they compare with their peers and what improvement they could make to surpass their previous personal best. This scheme keeps pupils on target and allows each child to gain a sense of achievement from whatever base they started. Team games, where pupils can develop social awareness through co-operating with others, are mostly conducted after school, and both boys and girls take part in local football and netball leagues. Where teaching is strongest, teachers start and finish lessons with warm-up/cool-down sessions to diminish the possibility of muscular strain or injury. Instructions are careful to avoid ambiguity, and pupils are asked to evaluate their own and others' efforts to see how they could improve. Where teaching is less strong, there is no warm-up session, insufficient instruction and little demonstration of technique, so pupils do not make good progress.

106. The management of the subject is sound and is strengthened by the level of enthusiasm of most of the staff. The co-ordinator is constantly aware of health and safety issues and makes sure that the suitably wide range of equipment is checked regularly informally, and more formally once per year. There is a balance in the scheme of work between various activities, for example dance, athletics, orienteering and team games, some of which have good cross-curricular links to science, mathematics and geography. The co-ordinator reviews this regularly. Local qualified coaches come into school for netball and football, and this in turn strengthens links with the community. Apart from the county scheme, assessment is mostly informal, but each teacher is aware of aspects which need consolidation based on careful observation. The field is of an unsatisfactory standard for field games for older pupils at Key Stage 2. It slopes, and makes home matches impractical, and preparation for field events and competitive sports very difficult.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

107. The standards achieved by the oldest pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 meet the expectations of the local Agreed Syllabus and most have made steady progress. Pupils are familiar with stories from the Old and New Testaments, such as the story of Noah or the parable of the Good Samaritan. They know about some of the saints, for instance St Patrick, and they have an understanding of the symbolic significance which an object can acquire. In a lesson in Year 2, pupils developed a good understanding of the feelings of those saved in the ark as well as those who did not escape the flood, through the highly imaginative rôle play devised by the teacher. They were also able to consider the question of the 'truth' of the story at a level appropriate for their ages. Standards are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection, although the school has improved its provision of artefacts to support teaching.

108. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made steady progress to achieve standards appropriate for their ages. They understand the use of symbolic language through their study of a range of creation myths, including Norse and Aboriginal, as well as Judaeo-Christian and Hindu, at the same time comparing them with modern cosmology. They have an increasingly detailed knowledge of the stories associated with the Christian festivals of Easter and Christmas. They have a good understanding of the symbolism of artefacts such as the rosary, a statue of Vishnu or a seder plate, and some understanding of the significance of these to a follower of the related faiths. Their knowledge of Islam, the other major world religion studied, is more limited, although they understand the importance of Mecca. They have not, however, developed a greater awareness of how beliefs and traditions can affect people's personal, social and religious life.

109. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but examples of very good and good teaching were seen at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 respectively. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject, respond well to the ideas with which they are presented and work well together. In Key Stage 1, teachers use their good knowledge of, for instance, the story

of Noah to make it come alive to their pupils. Teachers use time well in short sessions and their teaching is reinforced by the good relationships they establish with pupils. In Key Stage 2, teachers' knowledge of the subject is, on the whole, satisfactory. However, there are sometimes weaknesses, for instance when Roman Catholicism is described as a religion rather than a denomination, or when teachers do not take opportunities to promote pupils' understanding of the diversity of faiths within their own society. This is shown when they leave pupils with the impression that Diwali is celebrated only in India. Good use is made of the specialist knowledge of a classroom assistant, for instance in explaining the significance of the rosary to pupils. Teachers enhance pupils' learning by sharing lesson objectives with them. However, pupils' progress and learning are often impaired by the lack of clear planning to enable them to develop their skills and understanding progressively. The school makes little use of visits by representatives of faiths or visits to places of worship in the community to deepen pupils' understanding, as recommended in the Agreed Syllabus. As yet, teachers do not use information technology to support pupils' learning, but the subject makes a very good contribution to their spiritual and moral development.

110. Management of the subject is satisfactory, with some strengths and weaknesses. Resources are organized and used well to support the scheme - more have been made available since the previous inspection. The realisation of many of the school's aims about moral codes and relationships is brought about by the implementation of the subject's guidelines. There is still no clear planning to ensure that pupils deepen their knowledge and understanding as they move through the school, and, during the inspection, work of a similar level was observed in pupils' books in Years 4, 5 and 6.