

INSPECTION REPORT

BRETFORTON FIRST SCHOOL

Evesham

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number:116655

Acting headteachers: Mrs A Gray and Mrs Z Nosworthy

Reporting inspector: Mrs S E Hall
21750

Dates of inspection: 6-8 June 2000

Inspection number: 196492

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-10
Gender of pupils:	mixed
School address:	New Street Bretforton Evesham Worcestershire
Postcode:	WR11 5HY
Telephone number:	01386 830418
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Willoughby
Date of previous inspection:	14 January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs S E Hall	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Geography History Religious education	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? How well pupils are taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs J Harrison	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr M Carter	Team inspector	English Information technology Art Music Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? Equal opportunities Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is much smaller than most schools. It has 61 pupils aged from four to ten years, 28 boys and 33 girls. Children enter the school from the beginning of the year in which they are five. Baseline information indicates that the attainment of children on entry to the school is above average. Sixteen percent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils having special educational needs (21 per cent) is average. There are two pupils with a statement of special educational need. There are no pupils speaking English as an additional language. The school is organised into three mixed-age classes. As the school has no pupils in Year 6, it is not required to set statutory targets for attainment. The school currently has two acting head teachers who are in post for two terms prior to the arrival of a newly appointed headteacher.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a school in transition and has areas of weakness. Its pastoral strengths are balanced by areas for further development particularly in school management. The standards achieved by pupils are mostly in line with expectations for the age of the pupils but there is some underachievement in writing. The quality of the teaching and learning is sound. The improvement made in areas identified in the first inspection has been slow. There is very high expenditure per head of pupils and a very considerable underspend. The school only just offers satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The provision for social and moral development is good.
- Pupils' interest and concentration are good, as exemplified in their high levels of speaking skills.
- The school promotes positive attitudes. Behaviour and personal development are well managed.
- Relationships between children and with adults are very good.
- Parents' views of the school are positive.
- The management of pupils is good.

What could be improved

- The quality of learning and progress made in writing.
- The number of hours worked each week is below national recommendations and there is a lack of balance between areas of the curriculum.
- The use of daily assessment to inform planning to meet the range of attainment and the consistency of the marking of pupils' work.
- The consistent monitoring and evaluation of planning, teaching and learning and in taking effective action to make improvements in these areas.
- The role of the governing body in shaping the strategic development and financial planning of the school.
- Action taken to address the issues in the last inspection has been slow and has been unsatisfactory.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Under the leadership of the two acting headteacher's, minor improvements have been brought about in financial management and team working. Attainment in mathematics has improved over the last two years. The previous inspection identified the need for the school to urgently review the management roles of staff and governors so that the tasks necessary for the successful running of the school were more efficiently distributed and drew upon the expertise available. There has been minimal improvement in this area and some teachers have no curriculum responsibilities. The governing body and headteacher were required to improve the rigour of financial planning to support the school development plan. There has been some improvement in the management of the school budget by an acting headteacher but little improvement in the role of governors. The teaching staff was required to improve curriculum planning and assessment to increase the progress of pupils. There have been some improvements in this area but much of the work is incidental and is not used in a formal manner. Improvement in these areas has been unsystematic and unsatisfactory overall.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
Reading	E	E	C	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	E	E	E	E*	
Mathematics	E	E	B	C	

Year groups are small and this can lead to wide annual variations. There are no national assessments at the age of ten when the pupils leave the school and the teachers do not have to set formal targets for the pupils' achievement. Inspection findings are that the attainment of pupils when they leave the school is generally average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. Pupils have well-developed speaking skills but the quality of writing skills is under developed.

Standards among seven-year-olds in reading in 1999 were average when compared to all schools but below the average of schools with similar characteristics. Standards in reading improved from those of the previous two years, which were well below the national average. Standards in writing, in each of the last three years, have been well below national averages. When compared to similar schools, standards of writing in 1999 were amongst the lowest five per cent in the country. The standards attained in writing have been consistently low. Standards in mathematics in 1999 show an improvement from those of previous years and were average in comparison with similar schools. In the last two years, the school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in a suitable manner and the structure that this provides is beginning to have a positive impact upon the quality of learning in these activities.

The attainment of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the 1999 national averages for pupils of this age in reading and mathematics, but below average in writing. Whilst standards in writing are consistent with expectations, relatively few pupils reach the higher levels of attainment and standards overall are not high enough. Pupils writing skills are under-developed and progress is unsatisfactory. Progress in reading and mathematics is satisfactory.

Standards of attainment in information technology are average throughout the school and the pupils are making good progress. Progress in science is good at Key Stage 2. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Assessment information indicates in recent years there have been variations in the areas of development when children enter the school. Current children under five attain and often exceed the desirable learning outcomes in the key areas of learning for children of this age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well towards one another and are polite to visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are involved in the daily routines of the school and they often help one another happily. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Good. Pupils arrive punctually. A small number of families take holidays in term time, which affects the progress of some pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-10 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the lessons observed, teaching was good in 32 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in a further 64 per cent of lessons, which is not as good as the national picture. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen in four per cent of lessons. There is no teaching that is very good or better or any that is poor. The management of pupils is a strength of such teaching and ensures that lessons are orderly.

The teaching of children under five is satisfactory. On occasion, this teaching lacks direction and does not help the children to develop calm and careful working habits. Staff knowledge and understanding is adequate but the focus upon the appropriate areas of learning for children under five is under-developed. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory throughout the school. Literacy skills are taught appropriately, although opportunities to develop skills in extended and imaginative writing are sometimes limited and the extensive use of commercial worksheets limits the opportunities for writing. The teaching of science in Years 4/5 is good and provides the pupils with a good level of challenge. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is appropriate and the support provided for pupils with hearing difficulties and in additional literacy support is effective. The needs of the higher attaining pupils are not always fully met when teaching activities are the same or very similar for all pupils within a year group.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school provides an appropriately broad curriculum but the balance of time allocated to subjects is uneven. The school week is less than the nationally recommended minimum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The school provides additional teaching and classroom support for pupils as necessary.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The provision for social and moral development is good and that for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. However, the school misses many opportunities to develop pupil's spiritual and cultural awareness including that in multi-cultural experiences.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. The school promotes the good behaviour of pupils well. However, there are concerns over some health and safety issues. Assessment information is not sufficiently well used to help plan work at different levels.

The school has established good links with parents who are supportive of the school, although few are involved in day-to-day activities to support the learning of pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The transitional arrangements of two acting headteachers are satisfactory in managing the school on a day-to-day basis, prior to the new headteacher taking up the post. The staff have begun to work well together as a team. However, the roles of subject co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluation are under-developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Unsatisfactory. The governors have been very slow to develop their roles in strategic and financial management. The school has not always made best use of the budget to support the learning of pupils.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This has been unsatisfactory. However there have been some recent improvements. The principles of best value have satisfactorily been established.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school has an appropriate number of staff. The school accommodation is generally suitable but is not always used to best effect. Resources are adequate.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents feel their children like school and the behaviour of pupils is good. • Parents mostly feel that the standards achieved and progress made are appropriate. • Parents feel comfortable that they can approach the school with any concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several parents would like more information as to the progress that their children make. • Some parents would like homework to be given on a more consistent basis. • Several parents would like a wider range of extra curricular activities.

Inspectors mostly concur with the positive views of parents whilst believing that the progress made is not always consistent. Inspectors feel that reports and information are adequate but could be improved, as could the arrangements for homework. The range of activities outside lessons is appropriate.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The attainment of children on entry to the school at the beginning of the year in which they are five is often above average. This is particularly in the development of speaking skills. Many children are confident speakers and have a well-established vocabulary for their age. Most children have well-developed social skills and work and play together well. They have a good level of knowledge and understanding of the world around them and of early mathematics. Children's physical and creative skills are average. By the age of five, the children achieve the desirable outcomes for their learning and many exceed these and are launched onto the early stages of the National Curriculum. On entry to compulsory education the standard of pupils' attainment is good.
2. Throughout the school, pupils achieve average standards in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing are not as well developed and are unsatisfactory at the age of seven; although improved to average by the time the pupils leave the school. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans. However, the rate of learning of some higher attaining pupils is slow and they underachieve.
3. By the age of seven, and when the pupils leave the school, speaking skills are generally above average. Many pupils speak confidently and can explain in detail the work they are doing and their ideas and experiences. For instance, Key Stage 2 pupils take part in interesting discussions about descriptive vocabulary when they discuss the meaning of words, or when hypothesising about what will happen in a science experiment. Most pupils respond appropriately, but their listening skills are not as well developed as their speaking skills, particularly in the reception and Year 1 class and for some pupils in Year 5.
4. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests, the attainment of pupils was average in reading when compared to schools nationally but below average when compared to similar schools. Assessment information indicates that attainment in reading had risen from that of the previous two years when it was well below the national average. However, the small number of pupils in each cohort means that direct comparisons between year groups should be treated with caution. The present standards of reading are good for pupils in Year 2 and satisfactory for pupils in Year 5. Most pupils have developed a reasonable range of skills and confidence to tackle unfamiliar words. Guided reading activities are having a beneficial effect upon reading standards and this supports the progress made in reading.
5. The 1999 end of Key Stage 1 assessments in writing indicated attainment to be amongst the lowest five per cent in the country when compared to similar schools. Writing standards at the age of seven are unsatisfactory. Whilst writing in Key Stage 2 is slightly better, writing throughout the school is not as well developed as it should be. Most pupils have adequate skills in handwriting; spelling and sentence formation but they do not always use the skills they have on a regular basis. Key Stage 2 pupils do not always join their writing in a consistent and neat style. Across the school the skills of extended and imaginative writing are not adequately developed. The progress made is limited by the lack of opportunities to use and apply writing skills across the curriculum. The extensive use of commercial worksheets throughout the school limits the opportunities for pupils to write at length and develop their own style of writing. Although there are some very good examples, generally the marking of pupils' work often fails to identify how pupils can improve the quality of their work. Similarly, few teachers insist that pupils present their work neatly and take care with spellings and punctuation. This affects the progress that the pupils make in acquiring and refining the skills of writing.
6. Standards in mathematics in the end of Key Stage 1 assessments in 1999 were average when compared to similar schools and have shown a significant improvement from the previous two years when attainment was well below the national average. Throughout the school pupils have a good understanding of numbers and of shape and measures. However, mental mathematics skills are not as well developed and few pupils can make calculations speedily.
7. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in an adequate manner. The planning of lessons linked to these strategies supports learning that usually builds in a continuous and progressive manner on what the pupils know, understand and can do. However, the pupils have not learned to apply all these skills in the writing of sentences, passages and extended pieces. Writing seldom reflects the often high levels of spoken English. Standards in literacy and numeracy are adequate to support learning in other subjects, especially in science.
8. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in science are average and the progress that pupils make in Years 4 and 5 is good and the attainment of several older pupils is above the average for their age. Many older pupils

show an interest in experimental and investigative science. This curiosity, coupled with good vocabulary, leads to some interesting discussions and hypothesising as noted when testing the strength of paper tubes to simulate the strength of human bones. Pupils were able to carry out tests by carefully adding weights to their 'bones', describe what is happening and discuss their findings. Pupils' knowledge of how to conduct a fair test builds well throughout Key Stage 2.

9. Standards in information technology are in line with the expectations for the ages of the pupils. Several of the pupils use computers with confidence as noted when pupils in Years 2 and 3 use a rotation tool to turn shapes on the computer screen to a different position to fit together with other shapes. However, the pupils are not always confident when using computers and are often slow in using appropriate skills. The pupils are learning about new programs quickly but their skill levels are not yet consistent throughout the school.

10. Attainment in religious education is in line with the expectation of the locally agreed syllabus throughout the school. Pupils know parts of several Bible stories and older pupils make a study of some other religions including the design and printing of copies of Islamic prayer mats using a computer program.

11. Standards of attainment in design and technology, history, geography and music are in line with expectations for the age of the pupils. Whilst standards in art in Key Stage 1 are average there was insufficient evidence on which to make a judgement about the standards when the pupils leave the school. Art is not a high priority in Key Stage 2 and this limits the progress pupils make in the subject. Learning in physical education in the small number of lessons observed in Key Stage 1 was slightly above average and in Key Stage 2 it was average.

12. The quality of pupils learning and the progress that they make is generally satisfactory and is best in Years 4 and 5. The progress made is linked to the quality of teaching and the expectations of teachers. The improvements brought about in the structured teaching of literacy and numeracy and the start made in using assessment information to plan work to meet the needs of pupils who make different rates of progress is beginning to have a beneficial impact upon pupils' learning. Teachers group pupils by ability for some activities and the challenge provided is at a level that mostly meets their learning needs. However, the needs of the highest attaining pupils are not always specifically identified and the expectations of some pupils, particularly in writing, are not always as high as they should be.

13. The standards of attainment largely remain as seen in the first inspection of the school, when standards in writing were below those in many other subjects. Similarly it was noted then that higher attaining pupils did not make the progress that they should. The school has not made sufficient improvements in these areas.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils have good attitudes towards school. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that their children liked school. This is reflected in the good attendance rates.

15. In lessons pupils nearly always behave well. They often show a real and positive interest in their learning as for instance in science. A few pupils show less interest in some of their lessons, chat too much and are slow to respond to the teacher's instructions. The school has had no occasion to exclude any pupils for poor behaviour in the last year.

16. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Bullying is rare. Pupils co-operate well. As early in school life as the reception class, there are good examples of pupils helping each other towards a common aim. At break and lunchtime, pupils of different ages play together harmoniously.

17. Pupils respond positively to opportunities to take responsibility. They maturely set up and put away equipment, clear away at lunch times and help with assemblies. Parents are pleased with the personal progress their children make at school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching throughout the school is satisfactory. Teaching supports the quality of pupils learning and the progress that pupils make. The teaching of children under five and pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 is satisfactory. This indicates a decline in quality since the first inspection when the teaching of children under five and pupils in Key Stage 1 was good.

19. During the inspection teaching was good in 32 per cent of lessons, satisfactory in 64 per cent and unsatisfactory in 4 per cent of all lessons. There was no teaching that was very good or better and none that was poor.

20. Teachers in all classes have high expectation of their pupils' behaviour and attitude to learning. The management of pupils is consistently good and a feature of the teaching throughout the school. Resources are used well including the school grounds for science and geography activities.

21. The planning of lessons is inconsistent in quality and is weak overall. As yet the school has not adopted a detailed whole school planning format. The identification of learning objectives lacks clarity, is vague and descriptive, and fails to identify exactly what the pupils are to learn. A few lessons are well planned whilst the planning of others is cursory. Whilst some lesson plans are used as the basis for recording what activities have taken place this is not consistent practice. The variability of planning and recording procedures has not been useful in identifying aspects for improvement including the development of writing skills or mental mathematics strategies.

22. The teaching of children under five is mostly satisfactory. Children under five attend the mixed reception and Year 1 class, where the emphasis is often upon the work of the older pupils. Children under five take part in a range of activities largely based upon the first stages of the National Curriculum rather than on the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes for children of this age. Whilst in many respects activities are suitable, this teaching does not always provide activities that are well matched to the needs of the youngest children. There is an emphasis on formal activities and recording and using worksheets that are not always appropriate. The teacher works very hard to provide an interesting range of activities that build upon the children's knowledge including the use of the local area. However, the teaching occasionally lacks focus and is slightly frenetic.

23. The quality of teaching in Years 2 and 3 is satisfactory. The teacher makes good use of effective group task sheets that outline to the pupils what they are to do in each lesson. However, the identification of learning objectives is weak and this limits the progress made in some lessons including literacy where teaching is occasionally unsatisfactory. Good use is made of the computer to support learning across the curriculum as seen in a mathematics lesson. However, a sample of pupils' work including some in design and technology, shows that some activities are too teacher-directed for the skill being taught. For instance the materials used in making tugboats or glove puppets are pre-cut and limit designing skills. The use of the classroom support assistant is particularly effective.

24. The quality of teaching in Years 4 and 5 is satisfactory and with a significant proportion that is good. The best teaching is seen in science where effective use is made of the outdoor environment and in conducting experiments. Good use is made of questions not only to check pupils' understanding but also to develop speaking and listening skills. This is seen in literacy lessons when discussing words that have similar meanings.

25. Teachers have implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies satisfactorily. However, there is not always a good balance of activities to promote writing or mental strategies. In some respects, the teaching does not always reflect the change in emphasis between the methods of the national strategies and previous approaches to the teaching of English and mathematics. There is some lack of confidence and flair in teaching in these subjects and staff would benefit from further training in these areas.

26. Lesson planning usually identifies work that is matched to two or more attainment levels within the class. However, a sample of recent work often indicates that the same work has been set for all pupils within a year group regardless of the pupils' attainment. Whilst the teachers have different expectations of what the pupils will achieve from the same task, the tasks sometimes limit the challenge offered to pupils. The extensive use of worksheets limits the opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills.

27. Pupils with special educational needs are usually well supported by their teachers and learning support assistants. They make satisfactory progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans. Class teachers are also aware of the needs of these pupils and often provide work that is suitably simplified or offer extra help when adult support is not available.

28. Assessment information is not always well used. The needs of pupils with higher attainment are not

consistently addressed and, on occasion, the work set for pupils is too easy. This was identified as an issue in the previous inspection and has not been rectified. The marking of pupils' work is highly variable and, whilst that for some older pupils is very good, that for other pupils is often cursory and fails to inform them what they need to do to improve. The use of homework to support the pupils' learning is also inconsistent. Several parents would like homework to be given on a more consistent basis.

29. Teaching in almost all subject areas is satisfactory throughout the school. There is good teaching of science in Years 4 and 5 and in physical education in Key Stage 1. As a result of the satisfactory standard of teaching, pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning. The progress pupils make is generally consistent throughout the school, although the progress made in English over a period of time in Key Stage 1 is inconsistent.

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

30. The curriculum includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and personal, social and health education. It is broad and relevant to the pupils' interests, meeting statutory requirements for the curriculum and for collective worship. There is appropriate attention paid to sex education for older pupils although there is little reference to drug misuse. The amount of time available for learning each week is less than that recommended nationally. The balance of curriculum planning for different subjects is uneven. Throughout the year, the pupils spend more time than usual on physical education because swimming occupies a considerable proportion of the time available for the foundation subjects. The pupils are reported to gain swimming and water skills well beyond the minimum requirements. Some subjects are taught in only some parts of the term and some are taught within themes or topics. The amount of time available for science is lower than is usually found. A small amount of time each week is used to enable the oldest pupils to learn French. Timetables are not monitored and consequently it is not known whether the pupils are taught subjects in the time allocations planned by the school.

31. The school's aims and curricular objectives are clearly detailed in the prospectus. Teachers and other staff are particularly keen that each child has an equal opportunity and access to learning. This is usually achieved well, although occasionally the pupils withdrawn for extra teaching of basic skills miss aspects of the subject being taught to the class. Teachers are aware of this difficulty and seek to reduce its impact. There are few subject co-ordinators to support development in the range of subjects. However, there are plans to enable them to play a greater part in promoting improvements and curriculum development. Although some parents feel that there are too few extra-curricular activities, the range is at least as wide as that found nationally and provides some enriching activities that are popular and supportive of the curriculum, particularly in sport. The curriculum is also enriched by a number of visits and visitors that support the pupils' planned learning. For example, pupils recently visited the Clifton suspension bridge as part of their learning about bridges. The pupils' learning is often helped by links with the local community.

32. There are a good number of activities in the community in which the pupils participate and others through which their experience is enriched. The school has satisfactory links with partner institutions and the cluster of local schools provide a forum in which to exchange ideas and collaborate for some activities. Students training to work in childcare use the school for work experience. There are no links with teacher training institutions.

33. Long term planning is usually carried out in standard formats. Planning for lessons using the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is sound and follows appropriate guidance. This enables teachers to have clear objectives for the pupils' learning and plan activities at different levels for pupils of different ages and abilities. The strategies are having a satisfactory effect, although in the case of writing, planning is insufficiently linked to an accurate knowledge of what the pupils know and can do already. Planning the other subjects uses a different format and what the pupils are to learn is less clear. However, the quality of these plans and whether or not they cover all the planned curriculum is not monitored.

34. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and the curriculum is appropriately adapted to take account of the targets set in these pupils' individual education plans. There are some lessons provided in which the pupils are withdrawn from their class to be taught the skills they need most. In other lessons, they are supported in the class by a helper who ensures they can understand and take a full part in the lesson. The teachers liaise satisfactorily with these support helpers to promote continuous learning for the child. However, on occasion there is no special support and here the teachers usually plan tasks that are easier or give extra help when appropriate. This planning is more difficult on those occasions when the targets are not readily available for class teachers. Although teachers are aware that pupils of very high attainment may have particular needs, there are none presently identified on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs.

35. The school makes good provision overall for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Spiritual development is satisfactorily promoted through assemblies and lessons in a number of subjects. Most

assemblies have a time for reflection with music played at the beginning and end as well as a time for prayer. Lessons occasionally have spiritual elements, but these are irregular and not planned. However, the school pond and its surrounds provides a beautiful and calm area for reflection, and some educational visits enhance the pupils' life, such as a visit to the Millenium Dome where pupils were very impressed by the size and spectacle of the show.

36. Provision for the pupils' moral development is good. Most pupils develop a strong sense of right and wrong and can quickly identify any unfairness, but without a sense of complaint. In assemblies, many of the stories told help the pupils to improve their understanding of the importance of principles and the need to understand others' situations. The oldest pupils have written sound fables in which they pick out the moral of the story. The pupils' behaviour is generally compliant with the schools rules and most pupils are polite and helpful. The school is an orderly and purposeful community in which the adults provide good role models.

37. Provision for the pupils' social development is also good. In lessons, the pupils are often provided with opportunities to collaborate and pupils in Key Stage 1 can do this well. Most of the pupils show a good sense of wanting to help others by distributing materials or answering questions from others. Many are polite and helpful to adults and often ask if they can help. Pupils in Year 5 show a good sense of community and prepare together for lessons. This good social development is enhanced by the good speaking and listening skills of many. The school also provides many opportunities for pupils to gain self-esteem, confidence and friendship, such as the pupil-led assemblies and the responsibilities that some pupils are given around the school. The school also enhances the pupils' social skills through a residential visit.

38. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The pupils visit the local church at times of Christian festivals. They learn about some world religions in lessons and become an integral part of occasional village events. However, there are few planned efforts to widen the pupils' knowledge and understanding of peoples from around the world and of the cultural heritage they bring to British society. For example, there is a limited range of music of different types.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. Parents are pleased by the school's open and receptive response to any concerns they might have. The school has mostly satisfactory procedures in place to care for pupils' welfare. Pupils are appropriately supervised at break and lunch times. Suitable accident records are kept and a member of staff is trained in first aid. Child protection procedures, which comply with legislation, are in place.

40. Since the last inspection the school has completed written policies on health and safety. There are satisfactory health and safety procedures and practice. The governors help to inspect the site and a risk assessment has been carried out as statutorily required. However, these inspections have not always been conducted in a rigorous manner. In lessons teachers show good care for health and safety. During the inspection some concerns about the suitability of the location of the reception class were discussed with the school.

41. The school still needs to address health and safety risks posed by the unfenced pond. This is a potential hazard to pupils who leave the classroom to go to the toilet unsupervised.

42. The school now uses an appropriate number of tests to allow it to monitor its results each year and the performance of different groups of pupils over time. It has recently become possible to chart the progress of pupils through Key Stage 2 and determine their achievement over time. However, this analysis has not been carried out yet. This testing programme is for reading, writing and mathematics, but there are none carried out for science. In Year 2, teachers assess the pupils' levels but after this there is no further formal assessment in several areas. This limits the schools ability to locate strengths and weaknesses in the subject or to see the comparative effect of the lower amount of time allocated for subjects. One of the acting headteachers has recently started a good record chart that allows the pupils' progress to be recorded and predictions made for their future performance. These will build up into picture of progress and can be used to identify trends in standards and in progress in English and mathematics.

43. Day-by-day assessments are less systematic but the teachers know the pupils well. Although there is a satisfactory assessment policy some teachers are unclear about how to use daily assessments to help plan the next learning. This is done well with pupils with special educational needs and helps the pupils' work towards the targets identified in their individual education plan. In class lessons, teachers sometimes do not take sufficient account of what the pupils already know and can do. For example, Year 3 pupils were asked to write a list of words in alphabetical order involving the third letters. They did this slowly but easily, because it was too easy. However, teachers are conscious of the need to make tasks at different levels of difficulty because of the different age groups in each class. In many lessons work is provided at different levels, but in some this is not

accurately enough matched to the groups prior learning. The on-going assessments that teachers make are sometimes recorded, but these systems are different between classes. There are too few assessments made to identify accurately the learning of pupils in groups and consequently to plan for what they need to learn next.

44. This lack of systematic assessment is exacerbated by inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work. In some cases the marking is very accurate, regular and provides the pupils with helpful comments that show them how to improve. However, in other cases the marking is not always done and may consist only of ticks and occasional celebratory words. Here, teachers have not gained the information they need to help plan the next lessons and the pupils have not gained sufficiently clear evaluations and strategies to improve their work. Records are kept and each week the pupils are graded against learning targets that have been set for the group or class. This three-point grade builds up over the year and provides helpful information for the next teacher and for writing reports. However, these records are for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science only. Individual teachers largely determine records and assessments for other subjects. This provides little opportunity for progress to be charted in other subjects over time.

45. The assessments made for pupils with special educational needs have been satisfactory. The last co-ordinator used a number of tests and these are not clearly used now and the present acting headteacher, who has taken over the role, has not needed to assess pupils recently. Records of the pupils' progress towards the targets in their individual education plans are well-maintained and available for teachers.

46. The school successfully promotes good attendance. Registers are kept to statutory requirements and attendance monitored effectively.

47. All parents who returned the questionnaire were unanimous that the school achieves good standards of behaviour. Teachers are caring role models. They expect and receive good behaviour in lessons. The school does not have a formal merit system to recognise and reward good work and attitudes, but pupils are clear about what is expected of them and generally respond positively. On a few occasions, some pupils can be disinterested or ignore the teacher's instructions, but overall a good climate for learning is established in all the classes.

48. Relationships are very good. Pupils work and play together in mixed age groups harmoniously. Bullying is very rare and quickly and effectively dealt with should it occur. Older children show concern and care for those younger. Pupils' personal development is only monitored informally, but this is effective, as in such a small school the staff have a close knowledge of the children. Pupils carry out jobs to help with the running of the school. This helps to promote effective personal development and a sense of shared community. Parents are pleased with the way their children make good gains in personal development and maturity at the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. Parents have positive views of the school. They find that the school is approachable, provides a good standard of education and sets good standards of behaviour. Some parents would like more regular homework to help prepare their children for the next stage of education, better information on their children's progress and a wider range of extra curricular activities. The inspectors agree with parents' views of the strengths of the school and their suggestions for improvements, apart from the provision of extra curricular activities, which are reasonable for the size of the school.

50. The school has established a satisfactory partnership with parents. The school had identified links with parents as an area for development at the time of the last inspection and it is still identified as a priority in the current development plan. In the intervening period little progress has been made in involving parents in a regular manner. Whilst there are good links on an informal basis with parents who bring their children to school daily, there are few formal initiatives. For example the school has not involved parents with the recent literacy and numeracy lessons. Parents provide practical support for the school, such as with gardening, swimming and putting together home-school packs, although they are not currently involved with help in the classroom. The school has started to compile a skills register of parents willing to do so.

51. The quality of information sent out to parents, including the prospectus, is satisfactory. Parents are provided with an annual written report on their children's progress and invited to termly consultation evenings with the teachers. These arrangements meet the statutory requirements. The written reports are suitably individual and present a clear picture of progress in subjects. They could be improved with more specific information on how the child is attaining in each subject and in comparison to similar aged children nationally and with suggestions as to how parents might help their children overcome any weaknesses.

52. Parents demonstrate their good support for their children's education by their regular attendance at the consultation evenings with teachers and several listen to their children read at home, signing and commenting in

the reading records. 'The Friends' of the school give welcome support through social and fund raising events. Each year they provide new entrants to the school with a sponsored kit for physical education and their first sweatshirt.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The school is in a transitional phase between the departure of the former headteacher and the arrival of a recently appointed new headteacher. During this period an experienced former headteacher is working in partnership with a teacher in the school as acting headteachers. This has been a time of team building and in developing the confidence of staff to move towards a period of change. The senior acting headteacher has been very successful in supporting the development of team approaches and raising staff morale. Whilst the transitional arrangement is suitable in some respects this has been a period of consolidation rather than a period of major development. Some necessary changes identified in the first inspection, and not acted upon, are now long overdue.

54. The quality of leadership and management is a balance of areas that are satisfactory and those that are not. The leadership and management of the acting headteachers is satisfactory in the circumstances. An interim school development plan has been drawn together and identifies some small-scale priorities. Recent activities have included work on the review of policies and some of these are now good. The staff have conducted an audit of resources, made small purchases of equipment and catalogued some of the resources available. A very simple record keeping system has been recently introduced in English and mathematics. All of these minor adjustments to previous working practices have involved all teaching staff and supported the ethos of a team rather than of having developments imposed upon staff.

55. Staff have recently begun to re-address the need identified in the first inspection to change the system of management responsibilities. Previously, the headteacher held the subject co-ordinators role for the entire core and several foundation subjects of the curriculum. Whilst another teacher had nominal responsibility for the co-ordination of the other subject areas, no opportunities were available to undertake any development of the subjects.

56. Previously, the headteacher monitored the quality of planning. However, this was largely ineffective in identifying weaknesses in the development of several subjects including English and mathematics. Whilst there had been a small number of opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching this again was largely ineffective in identifying areas for development or in proving the support necessary to bring about improvements. The monitoring and evaluation of the standards of pupils' work had also been similarly ineffective in highlighting or working towards improvement in standards. During the transitional period there has been little or no formal monitoring of planning, teaching or learning. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and taking effective action has been unsatisfactory for some time. Some long-standing areas of weakness such as writing have been allowed to remain and some newer areas of weaknesses such as the under-development of mental mathematics strategies have occurred. Some of these co-ordination and monitoring functions were identified as key issues in the previous inspection and remained unresolved. This has hindered the development of the school.

57. In the interim period the senior acting headteacher has assumed responsibility for the support and provision for pupils with special educational needs. Whilst work has been undertaken on managing the procedures the organisation of the information and dissemination of information about the needs of these pupils is ineffective.

58. The governing body has been very slow to develop its role in the strategic management of the school. Governors have not always been fully effective in helping to shape the direction of the school or in acting as a critical friend of the school by holding it to account for the decisions made. Many responsibilities have been delegated to the headteacher. Governors have often been very supportive of the school and some have regular contact with the school. Recently governors have been linked to curriculum subjects and have either visited school to observe or discuss activities. However, not all governors have had regular or detailed first hand knowledge of the day-to-day life of the school and the specific strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Some governors have undertaken training to enable them to assume the statutory responsibilities that governing bodies have. Whilst supportive of the school and knowledgeable in some related areas, governors understanding of the weaknesses in school management is unsatisfactory.

59. The previous inspection identified two key issues in the area of efficiency and financial management. These were in the area of reviewing management and co-ordination roles and in improving the rigour of financial planning. The governing body has been slow to assume its responsibility in these areas and allowed these issues to remain only partly addressed.

60. The current temporary job sharing of the headteacher's role is not conducive to long term financial management and planning. However, the senior acting headteacher has worked hard to manage the financial systems in place and to act upon such information as is available. The governing body does not have a sufficiently clear overview of the school's financial position and direction, although they are starting to become more involved.

61. The senior acting headteacher has made effective improvements in budget setting and short term planning. Governors receive regular financial reports and maintain a register of interest. Staff discuss the priorities for the budget, which is presented to governors for discussion and approval. The school receives a higher than average income per pupil. The current budget reflects sensible spending on educational priorities identified in the short-term development plan. However, the lack of more than one year planning hinders the efficient allocation of funds to educational directions. Some aspects of financial and strategic management are unsatisfactory. For example, the school has a long history of significant budget surplus, currently standing at 17 per cent of the annual budget. This is still being accrued until the new headteacher is in place and new classrooms built. The budget has not been used well to support the education of pupils or to raise attainment as it was intended. The expenditure per head of pupils is high and the standards achieved by pupils have often been below average. Overall the school barely offers satisfactory value for money.

62. The school makes sound use of funds that it receives for specific purposes, such as for pupils with special educational needs. Appropriate use is made of new technology. The day to day running of the school is efficient although the use of teaching time is sometimes poor. Several lessons start late and the school week and time allocations for the teaching of some subjects including science are less than recommended. The school has appropriately implemented the recommendations of the 1998 audit concerned with day to day handling of funds, purchasing and budgeting. The school makes satisfactory use of the principles of best value in spending decisions, but systems to monitor and compare the school's comparative costs and to evaluate the effectiveness of spending decisions are under developed.

63. There are an appropriate number of teachers who are suitably qualified to teach the pupils in the school. However, Early Years staff lack the experience of meeting the needs of children under five based upon the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes. The cycle of staff appraisal is in abeyance. The links between the staff development programme and school priorities are unclear. Whilst staff undertake in-service training this has not always been fully effective in eliminating areas of weaknesses such as the development of writing. Staff have undertaken training for the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies but further training is required in some aspects.

64. The school provides sound additional support for pupils with special educational needs and this is effective in supporting the progress these pupils make, including that of pupils with hearing impairment. Regular records are kept of these pupils' progress towards the targets outlined in their individual education plans. Liaison with class teachers is sound but some systems for updating the register of pupils having special educational needs and the assessment of these pupils are not speedily carried out. The co-ordinator is relatively new to the school, but is keen to hasten processes. The policy and school procedures meet the requirements of the code of practice.

65. The school accommodation is adequate for the demands of the curriculum to be met. The classroom for the older pupils is suitable and the small adjoining room is useful. Corridors are narrow and not conducive to safe movement around school. The school library is very small and not suitable as a teaching area. Whilst the hall is of reasonable size, its use as a classroom hinders the space available for music, drama and physical education. The portable classroom is adequate but, with no toilet facilities, it is unsuitable for the youngest pupils. The previous inspection highlighted the unsatisfactory accommodation for children under five and action to remedy this has been too slow. The hard play area is small but the field is spacious, although there are health and safety concerns within the area. The school and Local Education Authority have well advanced plans for the considerable development of the school accommodation.

66. The resources of the school are adequate. The school has a good number of books per head of pupils and a suitable number of computers. Good use is made of the locality, the school grounds and environmental area to enhance learning in science, geography and history. Visits are arranged to places of interest.

67. Since the last inspection, the school has been slow to make improvements in the key issues identified and the improvement has been unsatisfactory. However, the staff have recently begun to work together with enthusiasm for the next phase of school development and there is considerable potential for improvement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

68. In order to improve the quality of education that the school offers to its pupils, and to increase the rate of improvement, the acting headteachers together with the new headteacher, staff and the governing body should:

- ❑ Improve pupils achievement in writing by:
 - providing increased opportunities for writing sentences, passages and extended pieces (paragraphs 92,93,113,153);
 - promoting the consistent application of skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation (paragraphs 92, 93, 132, 137);
 - regularly providing work that helps pupil's progress towards the next National Curriculum level (paragraphs 92, 93, 95).
- ❑ Improve the quality of monitoring and evaluation of planning teaching and learning and the curriculum balance by:
 - ensuring an equitable distribution of curricular responsibilities (paragraphs 55);
 - developing the role of the headteacher and subject co-ordinators in rigorous monitoring procedures (paragraphs 56, 116, 133, 138, 142).
- ❑ Increase the oversight and strategic management of the schools work by:
 - providing training for governors in all areas of their responsibilities (paragraph 59);
 - ensuring that governors base decisions on a fully informed knowledge of the school's needs and its strengths and weaknesses (paragraph 58);
 - extending the role of the governing body in holding the school to account for the standards achieved (paragraph 58);
 - providing satisfactory value for money through sound strategic development and financial management (paragraphs 61, 62).
- ❑ Improve consistency in the use of assessment information by:
 - tracking the rate of progress made by pupils in key subjects (paragraphs 44, 95, 106, 116, 142);
 - using the information gained to provide work for and measure the progress made by especially the higher attaining pupils (paragraphs 93, 100, 106);
 - improving the quality in the marking of pupils' work (paragraphs 28, 95, 132).

69. In addition to the key issues above, the following less important issues should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- extending the school week to at least the nationally recommended minimum (paragraph 30);
- improving the organisation and dissemination of information about the needs of pupils special educational needs (paragraphs 57, 64).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	32	64	4	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– Y5
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	61
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR– Y5
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	13

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	3.0	School data	0.1
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	4	6	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	2	3	4
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	7	8	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70	80	90
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	2	2	3
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	7	7	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70	70	80
	National	82	86	87

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	61
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year - 0

	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 – Y5

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Average class size	20

Education support staff: YR– Y5

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	49

Financial information

Financial year	99/2000
	£
Total income	142,714
Total expenditure	147,735
Expenditure per pupil	2,383
Balance brought forward from previous year	29,861
Balance carried forward to next year	24,840

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	65
Number of questionnaires returned	27

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	37	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	48	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	70	30	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	44	26	0	11
The teaching is good.	37	63	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	55	15	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	19	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	42	0	0	8
The school works closely with parents.	15	66	15	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	52	37	7	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	37	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	11	44	37	0	8

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Whilst the majority of parents are supportive of what the school does, several do not feel their children have sufficient homework and that the school does not provide an interesting range of extra curricular activities.

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

70. At the time of the inspection, there were three children under the age of five attending the school in the mixed reception and Year 1 class. Children are admitted as full time pupils from September of the year of their fifth birthday, although admission procedures are flexible for the youngest children. Baseline information indicates that the attainment of children on entry to the school is widely varying but often above average for most areas of learning. Above average skills and knowledge are particularly the case in children's speaking and listening skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world.

71. Children under five, including those with special needs, make satisfactory progress in their first year in school. By the age of five the majority of pupils have attained the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes in the six key areas of learning. A significant number of children exceed these targets and are performing at above an expected level.

72. The teacher of the under fives has a broadly satisfactory understanding of how young children learn and has appropriate subject knowledge in the areas of learning especially in developing language and literacy skills. However, the sample of children's work indicates that the majority of activities are based upon the early stages of the National Curriculum and not upon the national guidelines for children under five. This is not always appropriate. The teaching of under fives is satisfactory and children are managed effectively. This indicates a fall in the quality of teaching from the first inspection when the teaching was judged to be good.

73. The relatively new staff team, of the teacher and support assistant, works reasonably well together and is successful in providing a supportive and caring environment for the children. The ethos contributes significantly to the positive attitudes pupils show to learning and to each other. However, the teaching of the youngest children lacks focus and is at times frenetic. The use of time is on occasion unsatisfactory and several lessons start late. The classroom assistant is not regularly involved in planning the work and this places additional burdens upon the class teacher.

74. Staff make satisfactory cross-curricular links and some use of on-going assessment in order to monitor and track the progress of pupils. However, planning takes relatively little account of the different rates of progress and work is often planned for the whole year group. Learning resources are of a reasonable quality and the range available is being increased. There are opportunities for parents to liaise with the teacher or support assistant at the start and end of the day. Parents are appreciative of these links with the staff.

Personal and social development

75. The children's personal and social development exceeds that expected of children at the age of five. Children relate well to the staff and to the other adults with whom they come into contact and with the older pupils within the class and main school. The teacher, through valuing the children's efforts, effectively raises their self-esteem and confidence by ensuring they share their work and that they are given time to talk about themselves and their experiences. Plenary sessions at the end of activities give children the opportunity to talk about what they have learnt and reinforce their understanding. Children take a reasonable pride in what they do although the presentation of work is often careless.

76. All the children are aware of classroom routines and organisation. The children co-operate very well and the staff's emphasis on giving responsibility fosters personal and social development in all children. The teacher encourages independence and this is reflected in the children getting resources out and putting materials away at the end of a task. Praise is used effectively to motivate children and raise their self-esteem. They demonstrate good levels of concentration and listen carefully to instructions though, when these are over long, levels of attention decline. In some practical activities, including mathematics, the level of noise rises and children are unaware that the noise they make affects the concentration of others.

77. Children's social skills are developing through working in pairs and sharing resources. The teacher provides a satisfactory level of challenge for all abilities and teaching and the quality of learning in this area is satisfactory.

Language and Literacy

78. By the age of five all the current children will exceed the desirable learning outcomes in this area of learning. The children have good vocabularies and the teacher extends their skills in this area by providing an environment where words are valued and meanings enjoyed. Children's speaking and listening skills are above average. Most speak with confidence and enthusiasm.

79. Children are often eager to write and record. However, the over-use of worksheets limits the children's opportunities to develop their own writing style and to express themselves. In the current topic, the teacher provides stimulating opportunities for children to write by encouraging them to write about snails. Children enjoy listening to stories on tapes.

80. Children are encouraged to read at an early stage. The focus on particular letters/sounds effectively supports their linguistic development. Children enjoy writing large 's' and 'h' letters in chalk on the playground when learning about the letter blend 'sh'. All the children can write their own name and several can write a sentence with little prompting. There is a reasonable consistency of writing size and style, which is becoming well developed, although not all children take care with their work. The quality of learning in this area is good.

81. All children are keen to take home their reading book and the routines for the exchange of books supports their reading skills. All children can follow text in books from left to right and can turn pages at the relevant point. They recognise and copy words. Several have begun to read well and show good progress, achieving beyond the desirable learning outcomes.

82. The under fives are involved in literacy hour and there are gains in learning as they demonstrate their knowledge of different types of books. Children's learning is supported by the good quality home/school packs, which encourage children to share books, tapes, videos and games with their families. This is a successful project that is appreciated by parents and supports children's learning at home. The teaching of language and literacy skills is slightly better than other areas of learning and is often good. This supports the quality of learning and allows the pupils to make good progress in this area.

Mathematics

83. By the age of five most children achieve the desirable learning outcomes and some exceed them. Structured play, including role play activities in the class Post Office help children to make appropriate progress in their understanding of number and measures. Most children recognise and use 1p and 2p coins and occasionally those of higher denominations through 'money' based activities. Several children can recognise silver or 'gold' coins and recognise that £2 coins are silver and 'gold'. The sample of children's work indicates most can name simple shapes and have no difficulty in following a sequence of numbers on a dot to dot activity in sequencing numbers, or combining numbers in simple additions. Children are interested in spirals and discuss the shape of snail shells when making them in plasticine. Children identify which trees are tall and which flowers are short and can draw around straight or curved shapes. They have decorated cereal box houses to indicate which houses have odd numbers and which are even numbers.

84. Daily discussion about how many are present in the class and individuals re-writing the date in numerical form is providing children with the opportunity to see how numbers are used in everyday life. Most children concentrate well on their number work and clearly enjoy playing with and using numbers. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and children's mathematical skills are sound and develop quickly.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

85. Many children enter school with an above average understanding and appreciation of the world in which they live and they are achieving the standards in line or above those expected by the time they reach five. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory, including in early science and geography where the level of challenge in discussions and writing tasks is appropriate.

86. The children have a wide descriptive vocabulary, which they use well in their spoken and oral work. They have good observation skills, which they use when studying their immediate surroundings by looking at the physical and human features of the immediate locality. They can describe the types of transport they see and discuss the effects of the noise and dirt that they make. When finding out about hot and cold countries they can decide which items of clothing they would take with them. The study of spirals and snails is giving the children an appreciation of habitats and they communicate their knowledge using appropriate vocabulary in written tasks and through pictorial representation.

87. Children's work in science indicates that they have a reasonable understanding of forces. They know that

forces can bend, squash and stretch materials. They can match the words push and pull to a variety of pictures and know that they pull a kite and push on roller skates. They can identify which toys are battery operated and cut out and sort pictures accordingly. However, several activities that the children undertake are the same as or very similar to those of pupils in Year 1 and the level of challenge is too hard for the youngest children. Pupils have the opportunity to use the classroom computer although there is relatively little evidence of this in a sample of children's recent work.

Physical development

88. Children make satisfactory progress and by the age of five they are achieving the desirable learning outcomes. Teaching in this area is satisfactory as is, broadly speaking, the progress that pupils make. Whilst it was not possible to observe any physical education activities, observations of children's fine motor skills show these to be appropriate. All children can hold a pencil correctly and can make reasonable attempts at drawing and writing. They can hold scissors and cut out and paste items into their books. They can roll and cut plasticine into long strips to make spiral snail shells. Observations of pupils at play indicate that pupils can walk and run and play 'follow my leader'. They can change direction, stop and start to a signal with several being able to hop and jump appropriately.

89. A major weakness in the development of physical skills is the lack of a suitable outdoor area or large play equipment for the children. There is no equipment to sit on and peddle or climb on and slide. There is also no permanent sand and water play area within the classroom although staff try hard to provide these opportunities with a small box of sand and the outdoor use of a water tray. This restricts the work children can do in establishing concepts of capacity and measures. This was an issue identified in the previous inspection and which the school has not addressed. Staff are reviewing the restrictions of the accommodation and the availability of resources in order to create more opportunities to extend the skills and experiences of the children.

Creative development

90. The children's creative development is satisfactory. Children have torn pieces of tissue paper and stuck them in a spiral shape to reflect the work of Matisse. They have made flat clay snails and twisted pipe cleaners into spirals to decorate plasticine snails. Children have decorated finger puppets, paper kites and fish shapes. However, several of these are simply colouring adult drawn shapes and this limits the development of children's creative skills and imagination. The classroom accommodation is quite crowded and at times appears jumbled. Paints and art materials are not available for children to choose to use as part of daily activities. Whilst work is displayed around the classroom the quality of display does little to enhance the children's learning. Whilst the teaching and progress in this area is satisfactory it is not an aspect of the provision for the under fives that is stimulating.

ENGLISH

91. The pupils' attainment at the age of seven as shown in the National Curriculum tests of 1999, was average in reading and well below average in writing. In reading there was a large number of pupils who achieved a level higher than average but in writing there were none. In reading, there has been improvement over the last four years while in writing standards have remained low. In comparison to schools having pupils from similar backgrounds, standards were below average and in writing they were very low. The difference between girls and boys performance was not significant in reading or writing. Near the end of Year 5, the results of unconfirmed non-statutory tests indicate that in reading the present pupils' attainment is a little above that expected of pupils of this age with a good proportion achieving above average. In writing, there is less high attainment but standards are close to average.

92. Throughout the school, the pupils generally have good levels of spoken English. About two thirds are confident and from an early age communicate complex ideas clearly using good vocabulary and sentence structure. However, a minority of pupils in each class find this hard. In a lesson with the youngest children, many could explain accurately how they were using a computer program to test their spelling and could demonstrate what happens when errors are made. A minority of these pupils are less communicative and their responses are more basic using single word answers. In a Year 5 lesson, about two thirds of the pupils listened carefully to the teacher's questions and were keen to answer. They were quick to identify comparative adjectives such as "happy, happier and happiest" and were also quick to locate the exceptions such as "good, better and best". They understood why some adjectives, such as "unique", do not have comparatives. This usually good level of spoken English is replicated in the general conversations of pupils around the school and the minority of pupils with lower levels of communication skills, benefit from conversing with their peers. The teachers' assessments of seven-year-olds show above average levels of high attainment in speaking and listening.

93. The present standards in reading are satisfactory for pupils of Year 5 and good for pupils of Year 2. Recent unconfirmed non-statutory tests indicate that a small proportion of Year 5 pupils have very high levels, but this is not reflected in a sampling of reading during the inspection, when the pupils showed satisfactory levels. However, the large majority at this age have sound skills with very few reading at lower than expected levels. Average and higher attaining pupils of Year 5, read with good expression, interest and understanding. They have a sound knowledge of some authors and most understand how to locate information from non-fiction texts. Only the lower attaining pupils are occasionally hesitant but all know some strategies to read previously unknown words. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have more varied standards, with good levels of confident reading especially in Year 3. In Year 2 the standards of the present pupils are good with most reading books that are at or above the level expected for their age. Higher attainers at this age are also able to use non-fiction books effectively. In Year 1, the standards are similar to those expected with an appropriate range of competence. The reception pupils make a good start to reading and some have standards appropriate to pupils a year older although a small number can only recognise a small number of words. In Key Stage 1, the pupils quickly gain a good grounding in the sounds of letters and combinations of letters. This is stressed in much of their work in the subject and computer programs support this learning. Pupils throughout the school change books independently from groups of texts that are appropriately graded for difficulty. They have a reading diary that is used to accompany books taken home and to record the pupil's place in the book. However, the way these are kept and the frequency of use is variable through the school and between pupils. This variability slows the rate of progress of some pupils. Nevertheless, the overall progress of pupils in gaining skills and confidence in reading is good in both key stages.

94. In Key Stage 1 in writing, the present pupils have some underachievement and standards are below average. The majority of pupils are just attaining the expected level for their age, but none has high attainment and this does not reflect their abilities in other aspects of the subject. These findings are mirrored by the unconfirmed results of the recent National Curriculum tests. In many cases, handwriting is untidy and seldom shows attempts to join letters. There is a limited range of writing for different purposes and much of the work is merely completing words on worksheets, which does not allow the pupils sufficient opportunities to use the extent of their spoken vocabulary in writing. Many pupils do not make sufficient use of the phonic skills they have learned to improve their spelling. The work of pupils in the rest of this key stage shows a similar picture with good knowledge of phonics, but weak handwriting and relatively few attempts at creating sentences and paragraphs, despite their learning about basic punctuation and grammar. Year 2 pupils showed good alphabetic skills and the lower attainers were able to use the index of non-fiction books to help locate information. However, higher attainers were not challenged by the tasks although they applied reasonable effort and concentration. These pupils did not extend their writing skills by communicating their real thoughts or use different styles of writing to effect.

95. The Year 5 pupils have standards of writing that are satisfactory overall. The majority of pupils are working within the expected level for their age with a small number above this and very few below it. Unconfirmed non-statutory tests indicate a relatively high proportion of pupils with high attainment although this is only partially evident in the past work of the pupils. Most pupils have sound skills of spelling, handwriting and punctuation. They are also able to write for a range of different purposes and more recent work shows sound progress. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to apply all their skills in writing longer passages and expressing more complex ideas in imaginative and compelling ways. For example, many higher attainers are able to form sophisticated ideas about members of their family, but in attempts to express these in writing they chose descriptive and simplistic words. In Year 4 pupils learnt how to abbreviate their thoughts when writing postcards, but in so doing, diluted the content.

96. The pupils in both key stages are generally interested in the subject and their behaviour is usually good. They acquire skills and knowledge soundly in a number of specifically designed activities and usually show good concentration, often being independent when getting on with their work. Most are able to use self-help strategies well. Alphabets, dictionaries and other aids are used appropriately. These factors significantly aid the pupils' learning and help those in Key Stage 2 particularly to make sound progress in the subject overall. The progress of pupils in Key Stage 1 is slowed by a lack of opportunities to apply their skills to writing stories and other extended pieces. In both key stages, the progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and sometimes good. These pupils gain from the special attention they receive either from class teachers who set appropriate work for them and from special support staff in the class or by withdrawal for closely targeted skills lessons.

97. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. In both key stages, many lessons are planned with interesting ways of learning. For example, in a lesson for younger pupils, letters were learnt by tracing the outline on the playground. However, the work of some pupils shows erratic progress, undated sheets and unchallenging tasks filling in words or answering simple questions. In the best instances the pupils' work is marked very well with thoughtful, encouraging and challenging comments made by teachers of the oldest pupils. However, in other classes, marking is less regular and often comprises only occasional ticks. This often accompanies a lack of use of assessment information to help these teachers provide sufficiently challenging tasks for pupils of

different ability. Consequently, there is a degree of under-expectation in the work of higher attaining pupils especially in Key Stage 1. There is sometimes insufficient insistence on work being of high enough quality or following instructions. For example, Year 2 pupils occasionally experiment with trying out different styles of handwriting, when they fail to reach the standard required for the next National Curriculum level. Planning for literacy lessons is usually satisfactory and follows appropriate guidance. The learning objectives sometimes lack clarity, but more often lessons are planned with interesting activities for pupils of different ages and abilities. Although not planned formally, some of the skills gained in literacy lessons are promoted in other subjects and often information technology is used to support the pupils' learning. The subject does not have a designated co-ordinator at present and consequently the school has not identified ways to improve those aspects most in need of development.

MATHEMATICS

98. The last inspection report in 1997 indicated that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and when the pupils leave the school were in line with the national average. The findings of this inspection are that standards remain average. The quality of pupils' learning as they move through the school is satisfactory.

99. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment is in line with expectations. They have appropriate skills in number work and of shapes and measures but mental arithmetic strategies are not as well developed. In Year 1, the higher attaining pupils recognise the missing numbers from a sequence of 93, 95 and 97; although lower attaining pupils simply enter any numbers without recognising the sequence. Most pupils make use of dotted paper to make a range of shapes with four straight sides. They make a block graph to show animals that have skin, feathers or fur. Most pupils use analogue clocks to identify times that say half past the hour and recognise house numbers that are odd or even.

100. By the end of Key Stage 1, overall attainment is in line with the national average. This reflects the end of key stage assessment in 1999 when compared to similar schools. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in lessons and standards are appropriate. However, as in other year groups, pupils' confidence in using mental arithmetic strategies is not well developed.

101. At the end of Year 2, pupils of all attainment show an increasing understanding and use of mathematical language. Pupils recognise the order of numbers and can work out the third number before 11. They can construct a bar graph of their favourite presents and add the value of two amounts of money such as 22p and 53p. Lower attaining pupils can calculate the total cost of an orange costing 3p and an apple costing 4p. Most pupils know how many cubes they will have if they fix 10 cubes together and break the tower in half.

102. In Years 4 and 5 pupils' knowledge of numbers is well developed. Higher attaining pupils work out what 50 per cent, 25 per cent and 10 per cent of 64 is. They change proper fractions to mixed numbers and round numbers up or down to the nearest thousand. Some pupils use their knowledge of numbers to carry out investigations such as if a farmer has planted potatoes on 16 plots, and each plant will yield 1kg of new potatoes, which of a range of plots will yield approximately 1000 kilograms. However, there is need for more challenge in mental mathematics for pupils in this age group, whose written strategies are better than their oral skills. For instance, several pupils including higher and lower attainers struggle to explain their methods for vertical addition of two whole numbers of less than 1000.

103. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Most enjoy mathematics, are good listeners but due to limited confidence in mental mathematics not all are enthusiastic when answering questions. Concentration is sustained well throughout lessons, even on the odd occasion when the pace is slow. Pupils accept the challenges offered by their teachers and most work hard to achieve success. However, very occasionally higher attaining older pupils prefer to chat rather than complete their work. Co-operation is good and most work with colleagues offering help when it is needed.

104. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' planning, whilst very variable, is satisfactory and implicitly based upon the National Numeracy Strategy. The needs of the pupils are taken into account in some activities through the grouping of pupils by ability. However, the sample of pupils' recent work indicates that on several occasions the same work is given to all pupils within a year group and sometimes the whole class. This does not consistently provide a sufficient level of challenge for the highest attaining pupils.

105. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is mostly satisfactory. However, the planning of lessons does not always clarify the learning objective of the lesson and the explanations given to pupils sometimes lack clarity. This was seen in the explanation to the oldest pupils of how to use different methods for column addition of two whole numbers. Most pupils can carry this out well but struggle to understand the teachers' explanation. The extensive use of commercial worksheets sometimes limits the opportunities for pupils

to try different methods or follow their own investigations. The pace of lessons is satisfactory but plenary discussions of what the pupils have found out are not always used to best effect to move the pupils on in their learning.

106. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent. The best marking is regular and offers pupils good support through developmental comments. But some marking is cursory and fails to show pupils what they need to do to improve. There is a need for teachers to make greater demands upon the way pupils present their work, so that it becomes easier to identify the processes and strategies pupils have used to arrive at their answers. Teachers make suitable use of resources, including information technology, in extending pupils' learning in lessons. This was well illustrated when pupils in Years 2 and 3 made good use of a program to follow instructions to rotate shapes to make a given pattern. Where possible, good support is provided for pupils with identified special educational needs. The quality of learning of these pupils is appropriate and they make suitable progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans.

107. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and its general effects are sometimes seen supplementing other areas of the curriculum, for example, when measuring the strength of paper tubes in a Year 4/5 science lesson. Staff confidence in the national strategy is not high and many activities are based upon traditional mathematics teaching rather than reflecting the methods of the numeracy strategy.

108. The school has established some satisfactory assessment procedures providing useful information about standards and pupils' attainment. However, staff do not consistently use such information in targeting work to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the highest attainers. There is no co-ordinator to offer leadership of the subject. Staff realise that a subject audit review and subsequent action plan, coupled to better use of assessment data to provide a clear way forward, is overdue. Currently there is no regular monitoring of teachers' planning, teaching or the learning. This is unsatisfactory. Learning resources are appropriate and the staff are beginning to make good use of information technology to support teaching in the subject.

SCIENCE

109. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and when the pupils leave the school at age 10. A significant number of the oldest pupils have attainment that is slightly above average. The quality of pupils learning is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and is often good in Years 4/5.

110. The previous inspection found that attainment to be above the national average. Recent National Curriculum teacher assessments in science at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate low attainment in experimental and investigative science but a high proportion of pupils with a good level of understanding of life and living processes. To some degree this is reflected throughout the school with good work on living processes. Work on investigations is appropriate in both key stages.

111. In Year 1, pupils identify and name the main parts of their body and know what relief may be given to injuries such as a broken arm. They identify which of a series of items is powered by electricity and can identify pictures of toys that need batteries to make them work. Higher attaining pupils draw a simple sketch of an electrical circuit and colour in activities such as which they think would light up a bulb. Pupils carry out simple experiments to observe which of a series of model cars will travel the furthest down a slope. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of everyday materials and their properties and can explain why some materials have particular uses.

112. In Years 2 and 3, the pupils have undertaken a study of bridges. They recognise some of the main types of bridge and use large-scale construction kits to bridge the gap between tables. Pupils investigate light and study which materials will make reflections. They observe candles and have some understanding of what is natural and artificial light. They observe what appears to happen to their finger when they place it in a beaker of water and find out what materials are attracted to magnets.

113. Older pupils investigate how things change and learn about the main organs in their body. They understand the main differences between a solid, liquid and gas. They carry out a study of rocks classifying them by colour, crystals, patterns and lustre. Pupils carry out a simple experiment to see if they can make pebbles from blackboard chalk. They have a good understanding of a fair test. Through topic activities pupils combine mathematics with science in measuring the growth of plants. Such links reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding and as a result their learning is enriched.

114. Pupils talk confidently about their work and are keen to show what they understand and can do as epitomised in the 'bone' experiments. Pupils are developing and using an increasing scientific vocabulary. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and the mixed age groups provide a good level of challenge especially for the

younger pupils in each class. Most pupils concentrate well and show interest and enthusiasm in their work, especially in practical lessons. Pupils collaborate well to solve problems in investigative activities although occasionally the higher attaining pupils wish to take over the management of tests and are impatient with other pupils. Most pupils have very good relationships with their teachers and value each other's work.

115. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Years 4/5. However, the extensive use of commercial worksheets inhibits the development of writing skills and pupils do not use their literacy skills of spelling and organisation of writing to enhance their written accounts. Although staff are beginning to make use of information technology to support learning across the curriculum, the sample of pupils' recent work indicates insufficient use is made of information technology to produce written accounts of investigations and to handle data. A strength of recent work is the learning of experimental and investigative skills, which are reinforced through appropriately planned practical lessons.

116. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Years 4/5. The quality of teaching is high when teachers have good subject knowledge; high expectations, manage the learning activities very well and use questioning effectively to challenge and encourage all pupils. Questioning is used very effectively to draw out pupils' knowledge and understanding; recapping and revision at the start of lessons, focus pupils' attention and thoughts well. These good lessons are delivered at a brisk pace, with good timing and organisation. The scientific content is accurate and the development of skills good. In the better lessons, tasks are open ended and well matched to the different abilities within the class. Class teachers know the pupils well and the very good relationships enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

117. Long term planning meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and appropriate use is made of national subject guidance to ensure pupils experience a full range of learning opportunities. Individual lesson plans usually identify appropriate learning objectives, but these are not shared with pupils. Support staff are well briefed and they contribute significantly to lower attaining pupils' gains in understanding and knowledge.

118. The school is beginning to make use of assessments on a regular though sometimes informal basis. The marking of pupil's work is very variable and at times cursory. There is no subject manager to provide leadership for the subject. There is currently no monitoring of planning, teaching or learning, and the school has failed to identify that the pupils spend less time on science than the national average. There is an appropriate policy. Planning is satisfactory and reflects the scheme of work, which follows an alternating yearly cycle of activities and topic coverage in order to cater for mixed age classes. Resources are adequate and used efficiently to teach the planned curriculum. Good use is made of the local environment, and the school grounds to extend learning.

ART

119. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 2, but some past work was available and in Key Stage 1, one lesson was seen. Overall, the learning of pupils is satisfactory and pupils make similar progress to that reported in the last inspection. The pupils are introduced to a sound range of techniques and the work of a number of artists. However, a weaker aspect is the development of skills, such as the use of paint and observational drawing. The level of pupils' discussion about their work is high, as shown in the Key Stage 1 lesson. These young pupils remembered their past learning well and could explain the spiral nature of Matisse's abstract "The Snail". They easily understood about the patterns of spiral shapes and their three dimensional form. However, there is generally less scope for pupils to develop skills and use them imaginatively.

120. The work of various pupils around the school and stored in folders shows that a range of techniques is taught. These skills are often employed as part of a topic in another subject; for example, an exhibition showed sound work in fabrics concerned with depicting life in the Aztec period. The work of pupils and discussion with teachers indicates a desire to extend the pupils' experiences and to sustain livelier provision. However, planning sometimes indicates objectives that are more concerned with other subjects than with developing pupils' skills in art. The pupils of Key Stage 1 show satisfactory interest and concentrate for good periods of time. The work of older pupils indicates sound effort and interest but some underachievement in the development of skills. For example, the few paintings available show limited exercise of creative choice or development of painting skills.

121. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1; a judgement is not possible for Key Stage 2. Teachers are enthusiastic about the subject. A published scheme of work is used for occasional lessons. The planned outline of work includes the topics and suggested work of particular artists to be studied. There is little reference to progression in skills and understanding. However, in Key Stage 2, lesson plans are stored and are building into a complete programme of lessons. There is much other guidance and materials to help teachers plan lessons. This is particularly so for techniques and the use of different materials. There is a sound collection of resources to meet present needs but staff are keen to introduce new techniques and to acquire new materials as needed.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

122. At the time of the last inspection, standards were average in Key Stage 1 and above average in Key Stage 2. The current level of attainment is average throughout the school and in several respects there has been little development in the subject and some degree of decline in the design element of recent work. There are strengths in the assembly skills of the younger pupils but little evidence of the design or evaluation elements of the programmes of study. Whilst the older pupils take part in design activities there is limited work in food technology, textiles and in using electrical or mechanical components and construction kits in Key Stage 2. There are few opportunities for pupils to generate ideas, work independently or develop their own criteria for designs. The quality of pupils learning is broadly satisfactory and the progress made is sound.

123. In the reception and Year 1 class, pupils have taken part in a reasonable range of making activities, which have helped them to learn the basic skills of joining materials. Making skills are satisfactory. However, on too many occasions, the pupils simply follow the teacher's instructions and this limits the design element of their work. Pupils have the making skills necessary to produce spirals from plasticine, pipe cleaners, clay and with paper. Photographic evidence shows they have made Christmas cards that are virtually the same. They decorate pre-shaped paper kites with paints and crayons and finger puppets using textured paper. Pupils learn to use simple shaping and cutting tools including scissors and clay tools.

124. In Year 2, pupils produce a booklet of information, some of which concerns the use of tools. Pupils make sketches of tools, which they label accurately. Pupils have experience of using woodworking tools. Pupils make sketches of a design for a wheeled vehicle and a photograph frame. They subsequently make the photo frame using card, paper, and pasta as decoration. Pupils have recently made tugboats from pre-shaped and cut wooden pieces. Whilst this has been a useful exercise in fastening the wood together almost all the tugboats look exactly the same and indicate little development of designing skills. Making skills are satisfactory but design skills are under-developed.

125. In Years 4 and 5, pupils are taught by a visiting teacher with skills in traditional design and technology work. Whilst the quality of the finished items of work is often good, the range of activities undertaken is very narrow and centres around the development of woodworking skills and the use of scrap materials. Pupils design and make a bird scarer using scrap materials, a wooden toy that works on the cam principle, a musical instrument and a moving monster. The quality of the bird scarers is good and shows some attempt to ensure designs are individual. Good use is made of a range of materials with awareness of the design brief to both make a noise and visual impact. However, the wooden toys are very similar and indicate a narrow application of the design element of the programmes of study.

126. Samples of pupils' work and photographic evidence from throughout the school indicates that pupils are very reliant on the teacher for ideas, and very few have the experience or capacity to solve design problems themselves. The school has good resources to support teaching and learning in some aspects of the subject. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to work with textiles or to handle tools such as drills, hammers, saws and vices on a regular basis.

127. It was possible to observe only a small number of lessons during the inspection. The teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are taught regularly and for an appropriate amount of time. Teachers' expectations of what the pupils can achieve are sometimes restricted by the schools' interpretation of the programmes of study, and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop problem-solving skills.

128. The school has not yet fully adopted the national guidelines, and the organisation of the units of work needs further refinement to ensure that skills are taught so that they build upon each other. The school makes only very limited use of information technology to support the design or evaluation stage of work. There is no monitoring of planning, teaching and learning in the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

129. The quality of pupils' learning is satisfactory throughout the school. This indicates an improvement since the first inspection of the school. In Year 1 pupils study their local area. They draw and label pictures of their own home and know where their grandparents live. They are able to identify things they see and hear on their way to school and can describe their journey to the library. Pupils have recently undertaken topic work on travel and have enjoyed using the role-play corner as a travel agency. They discuss journeys and when taking an imaginary journey they pack items in a rucksack and suitcase to 'visit' hot or cold countries.

130. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of their local area and its position in the wider world. When studying a map of the British Isles with help they are able to locate the village of Bretforton. Higher attaining pupils use a computer program to locate the village on a detailed map and print this to add to their folder of work. Pupils make use of detailed local maps to locate the position of their homes, school and other places of local interest. Pupils have a satisfactory appreciation of the area and an understanding of local features through the study of different buildings and occupations within their immediate environment.

131. In Years 4/5, pupils satisfactorily extend their knowledge and understanding of the wider world through studying places further afield. Knowledge of the wider locality is successfully developed through an imaginary journey to Mount Everest and Russia. They identify the oceans of the world and European countries. They take part in an adventure 'spy chase' game travelling across different countries looking for clues.

132. In the small number of lessons observed, and in a sample of pupils' recent work, the teaching was satisfactory. Pupils work collaboratively and co-operatively and show good levels of concentration. Where learning targets are imprecise or when pupils are not well managed then attention wanes and restlessness becomes evident. This was evident when the youngest pupils studied the environment around the school. The identification of learning objectives is very variable and on occasions little more than a description of the activity. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for and they make satisfactory progress as a result of additional support.

133. Pupils are beginning to use a growing geographical vocabulary. Skills gained in numeracy effectively support practical work and the school is starting to use information technology as a learning aid as seen when older pupils make use of a mapping program to follow clues to find the position of 'stolen' articles discarded around a village.

134. Variations exist in the quality of presentation of work. Whilst some pupils try hard to make their work neat, much is untidily presented. The inconsistent and variable quality of marking and annotation makes it difficult for pupils to gain an impression of the quality of their own learning.

135. Whilst the school has nominally had a co-ordinator for the subject for two years, few opportunities have been taken to monitor the quality of planning, teaching or learning. This is unsatisfactory and the school has a clear intention to rectify this situation. Resources are satisfactory and are sufficient to teach the planned curriculum with good use made of the school setting and the local environment.

HISTORY

136. The previous inspection found that pupils achieved the standards expected at the end of Key Stage 1 and when the pupils left the school. The amount of work undertaken in the current school year has been minimal in some classes. However, by the end of Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2 the quality of learning is mostly satisfactory and pupils' attainment is broadly what is expected. Only one lesson was taught in Key Stage 2 during the inspection. Judgements are made on the scrutiny of pupils' previous work, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils. Each strand of the programmes of study is covered in the school curriculum framework. However, the pressures on time, exacerbated by the shortness of the school week, has meant work in history has not always taken place.

137. The sample of pupils' work indicates that by the age of seven, pupils recognise the distinction between present and past. However, no work in history has been undertaken in the reception and Year 1 class during the current year, and this is unsatisfactory. In Years 2/3 the pupils study bridges and they have found out about Brunel and the work he did in Bristol. Pupils visited the SS Great Britain and can discuss some of the differences between it and the types of ship they see today.

138. In Years 4/5 pupils take part in group activities studying life in Britain since 1930. Pupils find out about the types of car in use then, and undertake a comparison between the cost of cinema tickets then and now. Pupils also compare the types of work and the changes in education and the home in the two periods. The

sample of pupils' work also shows that they have studied the life of the Aztecs particularly through the crafts and technology of the period as revealed by artefacts.

139. No judgement can be made on the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 as none was observed. However, the sample of pupils' work indicates that teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is satisfactory. In the lesson observed in Key Stage 2, the teaching was good. Recent work indicates weakness in the lack of emphasis on pupils' presentation and recording. Pupils are pleased to talk about their previous projects and visits.

140. The school has had a co-ordinator for some time. However, her role has not been developed to monitor planning, teaching and learning and, surprisingly, little history has been taught in her class in the current year. The school liaises with the local middle school to ensure that work is not unnecessarily repeated but this limits the work that the school can undertake in some eras including the Victorian period and the school is rightly keen to discuss this limitation with other schools. Currently the school makes insufficient use of information technology to support learning but has clear plans to extend this work.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

141. Very few class lessons were observed. However, in many lessons of other subjects pupils were seen to use computers and other equipment to support their learning. A small amount of stored work was also available. Taken together, the evidence clearly points to satisfactory standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 5.

142. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 know how to use a keyboard and mouse and understand some of the main uses and limitations of computers. They know how to access and save data and often how to print a copy. They have sound basic skills, but many have had insufficient practice at using them and are consequently slow. Sometimes simple word-processing takes a long time. Most pupils in Key Stage 1 have gained a range of skills but again many need more practice for them to become embedded in the pupils' regular work. Those pupils who have computers with similar programs at home are more confident and faster. Teachers occasionally enhance their skills by sending e-mails to them from home in the evening.

143. Learning is good in both key stages. Pupils are practising the skills they need and are being introduced to a wide range of software and applications that are often relevant to other subjects. For example, pupils of Years 4/5 learnt how to use a program, which supported the development of their mapping skills. They were also introduced to the use of external sensors and the recording of their measurements by the computer.

144. There was too little evidence to judge the quality of teaching. However, most of the teachers have been attending training sessions associated with national initiatives in the subject. There is a strong sense of the teachers wanting to increase the pupils' experiences in quality, quantity and range. There is provision for all the main elements of the programmes of study and teachers have ensured that appropriate resources are available. There is presently no co-ordinator to lead developments and this is limiting progress in some aspects of the subject. For example, teachers record the pupils' access to computers but in different ways and there is no whole school method of recording the pupils' use and their success with different programs and applications. Assessment in the subject is informal and it is difficult to track the progress that pupils make. However, a good scheme of work provides appropriate guidance for teachers. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and recent activities show the subject is presently an improving one. The pupils' good progress is helping them to remain enthusiastic and keen to gain more skills.

MUSIC

145. One lesson was seen taught in each key stage and a number of other observations were made, such as those of children listening to music in assemblies. Overall, the quality of singing is similar to that found in many schools. In Key Stage 2, the pupils sing and listen to music without a strong interest. Many sing competently but without the enthusiasm that exciting learning brings. The majority sing in tune with reasonable adherence to the timing and pace but not to the dynamics and attack that is needed for good performance. In Key Stage 1, the youngest pupils show an understanding of how music can represent the feelings and sounds of creatures. They play instruments competently for their age, at the right time, but there is no effort to play in a rhythm. The pupils' learning is satisfactory in both key stages and supplemented by a number of enriching experiences. These findings are similar to those of the last report.

146. A published scheme of work is used throughout the school and this provides close guidance and lesson plans for any teachers with limited levels of subject knowledge. However, in each summer term the pupils of Years 4/5 are taught to play the recorder. The published scheme involves aspects of the subject and provides a range of musical experiences. However, there is a limited number of CDs available and the music played to pupils is not from a wide range of cultural traditions. Teachers keep a record of which parts of the scheme have been taught, but these are individual to each teacher. There is no co-ordinator to promote whole school systems

and ensure a whole-school approach. The teachers work hard to collaborate and to provide enriching experiences for the pupils. There are opportunities for performance through school events in the local church and at other venues. There is a satisfactory collection of musical instruments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

147. The pupils' learning is sound in Key Stage 2 and good in Key Stage 1. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection when they were satisfactory with good features. Pupils of Year 2 have good physical control and are able to exercise with good quality movement. They are beginning to evaluate their own and each other's movements, but are not yet able to say what makes movement of good quality. Pupils of Year 5 are inventive in their movement and show a range of interpretations of challenging tasks, for example to travel with hands and feet far apart. These pupils learned the relative difficulties of various ways to meet the challenge. Records show that all pupils learn to swim and many go on to learn about water safety and survival at a higher level.

148. Pupils enjoy the subject and listen closely usually carrying out the tasks with good effort. They understand about the effect of exercise upon heart rate and are learning the importance of physical activity to good health. Most pupils show a good interest and are well behaved in lessons. They enjoy all elements of the subject and attitudes are good in both key stages.

149. Lessons often have appropriate safety warnings and teachers manage classes well. Teaching is sound in Key Stage 2 and good in Key Stage 1. This is because good discipline is maintained and a good pace helps to create interest and commitment by the pupils. In both key stages, lessons have appropriate warm-up sessions and sufficiently challenging, open-ended tasks for pupils of differing ability and age. There is ample discussion during lessons and this helps the pupils to concentrate on the requirements of the task. Good standards of dress are maintained and this supports the pupils' positive approach to the subject.

150. A long-term plan outlines which parts of the subject are taught when and all aspects of the curriculum are provided. There is an above average amount of time spent on the subject. This is partly because of the large amount of time overall spent on swimming. Provision for swimming more than satisfies the minimum standards required. The school uses the materials and training of a specialist for staff development and these have provided much enthusiasm, guidance and understanding for teachers. The school's hall is well used although sometimes a little small, because of the furniture stacked to one end. There is a satisfactory set of small equipment readily available and this has been added to by a scheme to promote skills for playing games. The curriculum is enriched by a small number of extra-curricular activities and by joint activities with other local schools. There are school teams for net ball and football. There is a residential trip annually in which pupils take part in a night hike.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

151. At the end of Key Stage 1 and when the pupils leave the school at the age of ten, standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. This maintains the standards seen in the first inspection. The judgement is based upon the small number of lessons observed, the scrutiny of pupil's work and discussions with the pupils.

152. Throughout the school, there is a limited amount of recorded work for virtually the whole school year. In Year 1, pupils know parts of the story of David and Goliath. Most pupils know that David was small and Goliath was very big. They know parts of the story of Joseph. They know that he had many brothers and that some of his brothers were jealous of him. They know that Joseph had a brightly coloured coat and some unusual dreams.

153. In Years 2/3 pupils learn about Hinduism. Pupils recognise The Deities and can draw pictures and describe Brahma. They know he had four hands for good and evil and life and death. Pupils know that many Hindus live in India and have a satisfactory understanding of some of the customs and beliefs of Hindus.

154. In Years 4/5 pupils study more stories from the Bible. They write about the journeys of Paul and the conversion of Saul. When thinking about their own experiences they can identify rules that would be applicable to their lives at home and school. Pupils also learn about the five pillars of Islam and what they represent.

155. The quality of pupils' learning is generally satisfactory. Whilst there is relatively little evidence to illustrate the work undertaken, discussion with the subject co-ordinator indicates that some activities take place purely through stories and discussion. However, the fact that there is so little recorded work in the subject limits

opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills. Pupils are generally interested in the stories that they hear and many are willing to offer ideas about the story or their own experiences of, for example, baptisms.

156. In the two lessons observed the quality of teaching was satisfactory. Teachers told the story of Joseph and of the baptism of Jesus with satisfactory subject knowledge. They were able to discuss what life was like at the time of the stories and explain to the pupils some aspects of life in Jesus' time. However, in both lessons the telling of the stories was slightly too long and limited the time available for the pupils' tasks. Little use is made of features such as a storyboard to sequence parts of the story; this makes it difficult for younger pupils to be sure in what order events took place.

157. The subject co-ordinator has nominally been in post for two years but has had very few opportunities to influence the development of the subject. There have been no opportunities to monitor the quality of planning, teaching and learning and this is unsatisfactory. Whilst staff try to implement planning based upon the agreed syllabus, some find it difficult to cover the work in mixed age classes. There has been little in-service training in the subject and some learning objectives lack clarity and many opportunities are missed to extend pupils' writing skills.