

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **ICKFORD COMBINED SCHOOL**

Ickford, Aylesbury

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110238

Headteacher: Peter Bozier

Reporting inspector: Michael Best  
10413

Dates of inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> February – 1<sup>st</sup> March 2001

Inspection number: 196518

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Sheldon Road Ickford Aylesbury Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	HP18 9HY
Telephone number:	01844 339261
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Karen Pile
Date of previous inspection:	14 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup> April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Dr Michael Best 10413	Registered inspector	English Geography History Music Physical education Religious education Foundation Stage Special educational needs Equality of opportunity	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
Mrs Pat Edwards 10965	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values & personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the schools work in partnership with parents
Dr Rosemary Saul 22526	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ickford Combined School is situated in the quiet village of Ickford on the borders of Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. It is close to the M40 motorway, equidistant from London and Birmingham. The school draws its pupils from local communities, from owner-occupier homes and from rented homes in the private and public sectors. There are currently 126 pupils on roll, 65 girls and 61 boys, aged between 4 and 11 years of age, the vast majority of whom attend on a full-time basis. At the time of the inspection five children in the reception class attended part-time. The school is smaller than most other primary schools in England and, at present, is near to its capacity. Children starting their school careers at the school do two terms before their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection there were 17 pupils in the reception year. The school's own assessments show that, over time, there is a wide range of attainment on entry to the school. The school believes that because of good playgroup provision, the majority of children come with higher level skills than those found in most schools. Several of the present pupils joined the school after the age of five years, reflecting the mobility of employment in the area. No pupil has free school meals, which is below the national average. No pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and all speak English as their first language. Sixteen pupils (12 per cent) are on the school's register of special educational need, which is below the national average. Four pupils (3 per cent) on the register are on Stages 3 to 5 of the Code of Practice<sup>1</sup>; they have differing learning needs. One pupil has a statement, which is similar to the national average.

### HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that is well supported by its governors and highly regarded by parents. Compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools, pupils achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science at the age of 11 years. Leadership and management are good. The overall quality of both teaching and learning are good. The very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils reflect both the high expectations of the staff and the purposeful learning environment the school provides. The school has a good capacity for further improvement. The school provides good value for money.

#### What the school does well

- Consistently high standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science.
- The high quality of teaching and learning for the youngest and oldest pupils.
- Very good arrangements for pupils' personal development.
- Excellent standards of attendance.
- The quality of its partnership with parents and governors.

#### What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology.
- The consistency of pupils' progress as they move through the school.
- The quality of teachers' curriculum planning.
- The school's arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning.

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

The school's accommodation, although much improved, is still inadequate. This is having an impact upon the standards achieved by pupils. The school does not have direct control over this matter.

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

The school was last inspected in April 1997. Since then there have been a number of staff changes and a major building project, providing three permanent classrooms and a staffroom, has been completed. It has successfully maintained and further raised pupils' National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6. The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the previous inspection report. The provision for children aged five and under is now good. The school has implemented a new assessment policy. Good procedures are in place to identify pupils' individual needs, but there are inconsistencies in the use of the information available to inform teachers' planning. Whole-school targets

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<sup>1</sup> Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act. Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.

for pupils' learning are now identified and discussed with pupils and parents. Parents are much more involved in their children's learning through the sharing of curriculum information and a homework policy has been put in place. The school has established a most successful parent partnership that works closely with teachers and governors on a wide range of curriculum matters. Pupils' attainment, progress and personal development are now more rigorously monitored and the information gained from this analysis well used to address any shortcomings in what the school provides for its pupils and thus help to raise standards further.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	A	A*	A
Mathematics	A	A	A	A
Science	A	A	A	A

**Key**

Very high (top 5 per cent of schools) A\*

Well above average A

Above average B

Average C

Below average D

Well below average E

The table shows that results in 2000 were very high (that is, in the top 5 per cent of all primary schools) in English. Compared with those found in all other primary schools, they were well above average in mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools these results were well above average. In the 2000 National Curriculum statutory tests taken by pupils at the age of seven years, results in reading and writing were well above average in comparison with all other primary schools. When compared with schools in similar contexts, results were average in reading and well above average in writing. Results in mathematics were above average compared with all primary schools and average compared with similar schools. Compared with all schools, teacher assessments in science in 2000 were very high. Pupils' results at this age have been consistently above the national average for the last three years. The standards reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained in reading, writing and mathematics; in science, standards have risen.

The findings of this inspection indicate that the majority of children aged five years and under successfully achieve, and many exceed, the early learning goals by the start of Year 1 in their personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy development; mathematical development; their knowledge and understanding of the world; and their creative and physical development. Notable features of their work are the quality of their spoken language and the mature way in which they work with each other. At the age of 7, standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average. Likewise, at the age of 11, standards for the vast majority of pupils are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in literacy and numeracy are above average in the school.

Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is similar to that expected at the ages of 7 and 11, but pupils do not demonstrate the level of competence or confidence evident in other areas of learning. Pupils could achieve higher standards in ICT and, in particular, in their application of ICT skills across the curriculum.

Children in the reception class make good progress. As pupils move through Key Stage 1 and into Key Stage 2 this momentum is maintained at a satisfactory level, but there are some inconsistencies in the challenges given to pupils in these year groups. The rate of progress accelerates in the oldest class where currently the majority of Year 5 and all the Year 6 pupils are taught. Pupils maintain this pace until they leave the school. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards achieving the targets in their individual education plans.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are committed to their work and eager to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour in lessons is generally very good but, on occasions, the lack of pace results in some inappropriate behaviour. Behaviour around the school is good.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils respect and take care of each other. The majority of pupils show very good levels of independence. They are very keen to accept responsibility for jobs around the school.
Attendance	Excellent. Compared with the national average it is very high. Pupils arrive punctually and lessons start on time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Taking all the available evidence into account, the quality of teaching in the school is good. It is good or better in 50 per cent of the lessons seen, and very good or better in 13 per cent of lessons. One excellent lesson (4 per cent) was seen. There were two unsatisfactory lessons seen (6 per cent) during the inspection, one in each key stage. Overall, the standard of teaching in English and mathematics is good with some very good and excellent practice seen. Literacy and numeracy skills are well planned for and generally well taught. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage<sup>2</sup> is consistently good with some very good teaching observed. Children are keen to learn and work at a good pace. They develop good, independent working habits, which ultimately enable pupils to achieve high results at the end of Year 6. The needs of pupils with special education needs are generally well met throughout the school. At both key stages good teaching, which enabled pupils to work hard and achieve good standards, was observed in all classes, but there are some inconsistencies in the challenge given to pupils. This is because teachers, in their planning, do not make the best use of the information that is available to them about what pupils know and can do. On these occasions, the pace of learning slows and pupils lose interest in what they are doing when this is not successfully managed and corrected. In the best lessons, there is a real buzz of effort and energy as pupils apply themselves both enthusiastically and knowledgeably to the well planned and demanding tasks they are given. This is why they achieve high standards.

<sup>2</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum for children aged five and under is good. The National Curriculum is in place, but some aspects of the physical education curriculum are impeded by the lack of appropriate facilities. The locally agreed syllabus is followed in religious education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils successfully follow a suitably modified curriculum and are well supported in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Pupils' moral and social development is very good. Spiritual and cultural development is good. The school's links with European schools through the Comenius project makes a valuable contribution to pupils' appreciation of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school provides a very caring environment where every child is valued. Information gathered about all pupils' academic work and progress is not systematically used to guide curricular planning.

The school has good links with parents. Parents make a much valued and significant contribution to the life and work of the school. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory overall.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher cares greatly about the school and its development. He is well supported by his deputy and colleagues who share his vision for the future development of the school. Administrative and support staff play a valued role in the day-to-day management of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Their role in shaping the direction of the school has developed well of late. All statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school analyses test results and identifies areas for development. A whole-school strategic approach to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is not yet in place.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Full use is made of the resources available, including specific grants. The principles of best value are successfully applied.

The school is adequately staffed. The accommodation has some significant shortcomings, which affect pupils' learning. Learning resources are satisfactory overall.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Seventy-four parents (56 per cent) returned the parents' questionnaire and 14 parents (10 per cent) attended a meeting with the registered inspector prior to the inspection. Other parents spoke to inspectors during the inspection.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children like school and make good progress.</li><li>• The good teaching.</li><li>• Approachable staff.</li><li>• The school's high expectations and children's good behaviour.</li><li>• How closely the school works with parents.</li><li>• How the school is led and managed.</li><li>• Children become mature and responsible.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The amount of homework given to children.</li><li>• The amount of information provided about children's progress.</li><li>• The range of out of school activities.</li></ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments and views of the school, but disagree with the criticisms regarding homework and the range of extra activities provided. Children have the right amount of work to do at home and the school makes every effort to work closely with parents and involve them in their children's learning. The range of activities outside lessons is good. Children take part in musical and sporting activities. However, inspectors agree that information given to parents on the children's progress is inconsistent. Annual progress reports do not always contain sufficient information on what children know and can do.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

1. This is a smaller than average primary school. The number of pupils in each group varies from year to year. This makes year-on-year comparisons unreliable particularly when, as is the case in this school, pupils' learning needs vary. In accordance with reporting guidance, the number of boys and girls as part of the school's 2000 National Curriculum statutory tests and assessments at the age of 11 is not reported as to do so could enable individual pupils to be identified.
2. In the 2000 National Curriculum statutory tests taken by pupils at the age of seven years, the end of Key Stage 1<sup>3</sup>, results in reading and writing were well above average in comparison with all other primary schools. When compared with schools in similar contexts, results were average in reading and well above average in writing. Results in mathematics were above average compared with all primary schools and average compared with similar schools. Teacher assessments in science in 2000 were very high compared with all schools. The standards reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained in reading, writing and mathematics; in science, standards have risen.
3. In the 2000 National Curriculum statutory tests taken by pupils at the age of 11, the end of Key Stage 2<sup>4</sup>, results were very high (that is, in the top 5 per cent of all primary schools) in English. They were well above average compared with those found in all other primary schools in mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools these results were well above average. Comparison of these results with those obtained by the same year group at the end of Key Stage 1 indicates that pupils have made very good progress. Standards reported at the time of the last inspection have risen in each of these subjects. The school has successfully maintained a rate of improvement in line with the national trend.
4. **The findings of this inspection indicate that by the end of the Foundation Stage the majority of children in the reception class, aged five years and under, successfully achieve, and many exceed, the early learning goals by the start of Year 1 in each of the six areas of learning. Notable features of their work are the quality of their spoken language and the mature way in which they work with each other. The standards reported at the time of the last inspection have improved considerably.**
5. Inspection evidence indicates that at the age of seven standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average. Standards in literacy and numeracy are above average. Pupils speak clearly and with good intonation. They listen attentively to what others have to say. They read accurately and with expression. In their writing in English lessons, they pay due attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation. In mathematics, above average standards are achieved in both oral work and recorded work. In science, pupils demonstrate good observational skills and use a range of language to describe what they see and feel. They approach investigative work confidently and make very worthwhile attempts to explain and interpret what they see.
6. Likewise, evidence from this inspection indicates that at the age of 11 standards for the vast majority of pupils are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards of speaking and listening are particularly good, reflecting pupils' confidence in speaking to others and in their very expressive use of language. Standards in reading are high. Pupils read with accuracy and expression. They comprehend well what they

have read and apply their understanding in different contexts. Standards in writing are well above those expected for this age. Extended written work is a joy to read and standards of presentation are particularly high. Pupils' skills in using word-processing for drafting, editing and revising their work are developing, but not all pupils have sufficient opportunities to use computers to the full in this particular area.

7. In both literacy and numeracy, pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 demonstrate a very good understanding of what is required of them. Standards are well above average. In science, pupils raise questions for themselves, make predictions and test these independently. Their approach to scientific working is very mature for their ages. They systematically test their ideas, look for patterns in their observations, formulate hypotheses and explain what they observe. High regard is given to sustained written work and in developing their recording skills in all aspects of their work. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
8. Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is similar to that expected nationally at the ages of 7 and 11 years. Pupils throughout the school use information and communication technology equipment, other than computers, in lessons and at other times during the school day, but they do not demonstrate the level of competence or confidence evident in other areas of learning. Although they make satisfactory progress, pupils do not achieve the higher standards seen in other subjects in ICT and, in particular, in their application of ICT skills across the curriculum.
9. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the Buckinghamshire Locally Agreed Syllabus at the ages of 7 and 11 years. Pupils make satisfactory progress.
10. In geography, music and physical education, standards are in the line with those expected for pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 years. In art and history, standards are in line with those expected for pupils at the age of 7 and above average at the age of 11. Standards in design and technology are similar to those expected at the age of 11; there was insufficient evidence to judge standards in this subject at the age of 7 years. Progress in these areas of the curriculum is at least satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and improved in art at the age of 11 years.
11. Children in the reception class make good progress. Although most children come to school with above average skills, there is a broad range evident. Children build well on their pre-school experiences and a high proportion exceed the standards expected of children by the time they reach Year 1. Their achievement owes much to the good quality teaching in all the areas of learning. Their enthusiasm for new knowledge and understanding is well harnessed.
12. As pupils move through Key Stage 1 and into Key Stage 2 this momentum is maintained in English, mathematics and science at a satisfactory level, but does not increase consistently for all pupils. In the oldest class, where currently the majority of Year 5 and all the Year 6 pupils are taught, the rate of progress made by pupils when they enter the class accelerates, particularly in English, mathematics and science. The impetus is maintained by teachers' exacting expectations of pupils. The evidence for this is clearly demonstrated in pupils' work where both the quality and quantity of work stands out. The pace of progress in this class is maintained and increased until pupils leave the school. This is demonstrated by the high standards achieved in the statutory tests at the age of 11 years.
13. Inspection evidence indicates that boys and girls are progressing at similar rates and their attainments are broadly similar. In comparison with all primary schools, there is a greater proportion of pupils in this school with the capacity for higher attainment. There are no

pupils in the school for whom English is an additional language. Overall, pupils with special educational needs are provided with tasks suited to their needs. They make good progress towards achieving the targets in their individual education plans, with some pupils making particularly good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

14. The majority of pupils are provided with varied tasks that take account of the different rates at which they learn in literacy and numeracy lessons. This is sometimes also the case in other areas of the curriculum. However, not all pupils are consistently challenged by the provision made for them as they move through the school. In some classes, the work provided is not always demanding and some pupils, particularly those who are more able, lose interest in what they are doing. A contributory factor to this is that teachers do not consistently make the best use of the information available as to what pupils know and can do. The headteacher's analysis and evaluation of test results and the setting of individual pupil targets is helping to remedy this deficiency, but teachers' planning needs to take better account of assessment information.
15. In conjunction with the local education authority, the school sets targets for pupils to achieve by the age of 11 in English and mathematics. Due to the small number of pupils involved, these targets vary from year to year. Inspection evidence indicates that these targets are wholly realistic and the school is on course to meet them.

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

16. Throughout the school pupils, including those with special educational needs, have very positive attitudes to their learning. This is in line with the findings of the previous report. The children in the reception class settle quickly into daily routines because of the consistent support provided by staff, which encourages their good personal and social development.
17. Pupils enjoy coming to school and talk about their work with enthusiasm. The majority of pupils respond well and show interest in the activities provided. Pupils sustain very good levels of concentration. For example, in a Class 5 personal health and social education lesson they listened carefully to their teacher, shared their ideas with one another and discussed moral issues sensitively. Most pupils work hard in lessons and try to do their best. Parents expressed strong agreement with the positive attitudes and values promoted by the school when replying to the questionnaire. The overwhelming majority of parents agree that their children like school.
18. During the inspection the pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school was good overall. Playtimes and lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions when boys and girls of all ages play well together. Behaviour in the majority of lessons is very good. However, on occasions when the pace of lessons is slow pupils' interest wanes and incidents of inappropriate behaviour were observed.
19. Pupils have discussed and agreed classroom rules. They demonstrate their acceptance of a clear moral code and show care for one another, their belongings and school property. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection.
20. There were no exclusions during the last reporting year. Pupils develop personal and social skills very well and are clearly motivated by the reward of privilege time and certificates for improved work and behaviour. The school has very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Parents are pleased about this and both they and pupils agree that bullying is not an issue in the school.

21. Relationships between all members of the school community are very good. Pupils know that all adults in the school want what is best for them. This has a positive impact on the way pupils treat other people. Pupils are developing a growing maturity and appreciate the trust their teachers put in them. This was clearly demonstrated when asking a group of Year 6 pupils if they were allowed in school out of lesson time. One replied, *"Yes, if you have a job to do or work to finish"*, and added, with a smile, *"You can usually think of something if you want to come in"*.
22. Pupils are very willing to accept responsibilities and enjoy helping with the routines of class and school, such as assisting with setting up for collective worship and manning the office at lunch times. Pupils are well able to use their own initiative and organise themselves in lessons, as, for example, in a Class 4 numeracy lesson on triangles where a group of pupils were quickly able to decide which of them was to be responsible for the different tasks.
23. The level of attendance is excellent and very high when compared to the national average. Most pupils arrive punctually allowing sessions to start on time and continue without interruption.

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

24. Taking all the available evidence into account, the quality of teaching in the school is good. It is good or better in 50 per cent of the lessons seen, and very good or better in 13 per cent of lessons. One excellent lesson (4 per cent) was seen. There were two unsatisfactory lessons seen (6 per cent) during the inspection, one in each key stage. At the time of the last inspection teaching was satisfactory or better in 86 per cent of lessons; it is now satisfactory or better in 94 per cent of lessons.
25. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good with some very good teaching observed. Children are keen to learn and work at a good pace. They develop good, independent working habits. The learning atmosphere is calm, but effective. A quiet word from the teacher is all that is needed to check any hint of inappropriate action. Adults and children work well together. Relationships are good and time is well used. Children willingly help each other to find what they need to complete their tasks, be it a missing word from a list or the correctly coloured crayon. It is this good basis for learning, established at this early age, which enables such high results to be ultimately achieved at the end of Year 6. At the time of the last inspection the quality of teaching of this age group was unsatisfactory. This has been very successfully addressed.
26. Good teaching was observed in all classes at both key stages during the inspection. However, there is some variation in the quality of teaching at both key stages. At Key Stage 1 teaching is satisfactory, varying from good to unsatisfactory. At Key Stage 2 teaching is good, ranging from excellent to satisfactory. A common feature of the lessons seen at both key stages during the inspection was the confidence with which pupils approached the tasks they were given. They work well on their own and in groups. This capacity to co-operate and collaborate is successfully fostered by teachers. It is also reflected in the way in which both teachers and pupils value the contributions made by other pupils. Because teachers share learning objectives, pupils' knowledge of their own learning is good. The vast majority of pupils, including those who have difficulty in learning, are hungry for knowledge and keen to work hard; they have high expectations of the tasks their teachers will give them to do.
27. In the best lessons, there is a real buzz of activity as pupils apply themselves both enthusiastically and knowledgeably to the well planned and demanding tasks they are

given. In these lessons, they rise to the occasion and, even when the challenge is high, some can still surprise their teachers with the quality and depth of their thinking.

28. This was particularly evident in a literacy lesson in Years 5 and 6 where pupils, working on a wartime theme, were writing propaganda statements. Their use of language was particularly persuasive and, in one instant, chillingly convincing. It was also evident in an art lesson with Years 4 and 5 where the work of the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was being studied. The teacher's animated introduction captured pupils' imagination and inspired them to quickly develop their own ideas and engage very quickly with their work. Very good questioning on the part of the teacher served to focus pupils' thinking and enabled the boys in particular, who were finding some difficulty with organising their ideas, to work more systematically. The class discussion at the end of the lesson successfully addressed many features of portrait sketches and provided a very good basis for development in the next lesson. It is this high quality of teaching that promotes high learning and enables pupils to achieve high standards.
29. There are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, and consequently in the quality of learning, at both key stages. These mainly lie in the challenge of the work given to pupils in some of these classes. Not all teachers systematically make the best use of the information that is available to them about what pupils know and can do when planning the next steps in learning. As a result, not all pupils are always appropriately challenged by the tasks they are set.
30. In some lessons, the challenge that is provided is sufficient to maintain pupils' concentration without requiring them to apply themselves intellectually. Their work is, in relation to the extent of the challenge set, satisfactory. Pupils are conscious of the routines of the class and the expectations their teachers have of their behaviour. In consequence, they conduct themselves appropriately. In other lessons, the gap between what is expected of pupils and what they could do, if challenged, is wider. When the pace of learning slows, pupils lose interest in what they are doing. Where such lapses are not successfully managed and corrected, as seen in a small number of lessons, progress is unsatisfactory.
31. In one of the unsatisfactory lessons, in numeracy, the teacher's planning was technically good. However, the demands put upon pupils were not well matched to what they already knew and could do. As a result some pupils needlessly repeated earlier activities without extending their learning. The teacher's questioning did not move the majority of pupils' thinking on far enough and much time was spent in trying to gain the attention of distracted pupils. In the other unsatisfactory lesson seen, in religious education, all pupils were required to complete the same task. Some found this too simple and looked for more complicated ways of completing it. Others were too challenged by what they had to do. The teacher had not shared the purpose of the lesson with pupils and, as a result, few were clear as to what was required of them.
32. The needs of pupils with special education needs are well met. Pupils' specific needs are well planned for and successfully supported by staff.
33. The deployment of support staff is good in the reception class. In other classes, it is more variable. Teachers do not systematically involve support staff in the planning of what they are to do to support pupils' learning. In some instances, support staff are not fully engaged throughout lessons, for example, in helping to interpret and reinforce to a group of pupils what the teacher is explaining to the whole class. Where support staff have a clear picture of what their role is, pupils' learning is enhanced. The success of this was clearly demonstrated in one lesson where fellow pupils applauded the hard work and efforts of others.

34. Many parents help in school, working with groups of pupils in the classroom or in the food technology area. The help they provide makes a valued contribution to pupils' learning.
35. Overall, the standard of teaching in English and mathematics is good with some very good and excellent practice seen. Literacy and numeracy skills are well planned for and, in the vast majority of lessons, very well taught. The school follows the national strategies, making appropriate adjustments where considered necessary. The recommended planning formats are used at both key stages. The strength of teaching and learning in these areas of the curriculum in the school is that teachers use the clear guidance as to what they should be teaching at a given time to plan the next steps in learning for their pupils.
36. Teachers' planning for other areas of the curriculum is less consistent. There is some very clear and detailed planning evident in the school, but in some instances it is not clear as to what skills and knowledge are being developed. The link between the longer term and shorter term planning is not consistently transparent. It is sometimes difficult to identify from scrutiny of teachers' files what is expected of pupils. In some cases, knowledge is identified but skills, and the particular level of such skills, are not. This is particularly important where there are pupils from the same year groups in different classes.
37. Some teachers systematically share learning objectives, that is what they expect pupils to learn by the end of the lesson, with their pupils and return to these at the end of the lesson to check that they have been covered. This is good practice as it identifies for pupils what they are expected to learn and provides teachers with a clear indication of the next steps in learning.
38. Overall, classroom organisation and management is good. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are high. Resources are generally well prepared and used. At the time of the last inspection, concerns were expressed about the standard of some teachers' knowledge and understanding, particularly in information technology (now known as ICT). Training is currently being undertaken in this area. It is evident, however, that although pupils' skills in this subject are similar to those expected of pupils of this age, ICT is not systematically being used across the curriculum. In all other respects, teachers' knowledge and understanding is secure.
39. Homework is set regularly and the majority of pupils and parents are satisfied with the amount of work that is done at home. Reading and spellings are regular features for the majority of pupils. A good feature of the homework set in Key Stage 1 is the story bag. Pupils take turns to write a story chapter based on ideas in the bag. Not only do they enjoy working at home on this activity, but their extended writing is being successfully developed.
40. Pupils' work is regularly marked, although the quality of marking varies from very short to highly developmental comment. An assessment policy is in place. Assessment information is routinely gathered and, in some classes, detailed written records are maintained. All teachers know their pupils well. It is the systematic use of this information that is, at present, inconsistent.
41. Teaching has improved since the last inspection, but there is still work to be done to develop further the points raised in the previous report in respect of the challenge of work provided for pupils, the use of evaluative comments in marking and the use of assessment to inform planning.



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

42. The school provides a good curriculum for children aged five and under in the Foundation Stage. At the time of the last inspection this was identified as an area for improvement. Very good progress has been made in addressing this issue. In contrast to the situation reported at the time of the last inspection, the curriculum for this age group is now of a high standard.
43. Very good arrangements are in place in the reception class to support children's progress towards the early learning goals. Arrangements for supporting pupils' physical development are good, but at present there is no provision for activities with large equipment, such as climbing frames, or wheeled toys, such as bicycles, as the school has no secure outdoor area in which children might use these. The school has plans to rectify this in the near future
44. All the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. The curriculum for pupils aged 6 to 11 years in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. Currently there are two major weaknesses. Insufficient emphasis is placed on the use of ICT to enrich pupils' learning. The curriculum for physical education is unsatisfactory because of the lack of appropriate facilities. With these two exceptions, the curriculum offered is broad, balanced and relevant and meets statutory requirements.
45. The school has implemented the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy well. This is making a significant contribution to improving the quality of teaching and learning in both subjects. Lessons are well planned and the routines are well known to pupils. These lessons are generally very efficient with little time wasted and good progress is made.
46. The school is in the process of bringing its curriculum into line with the new requirements implemented in September 2000. There are broad outline plans for all the subjects of the National Curriculum and for religious education. Planning for English and for mathematics is based around the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy documents. Planning for science, history, geography and religious education indicates how the National Curriculum will be covered through topic studies. Art and design, design technology, music and physical education are planned for each year group, drawing appropriately on commercial schemes and resources.
47. These broad outline plans are intended to ensure that repetition from year to year is avoided in the mixed-age group classes. However, these outlines are not foolproof. There is no consistent picture of how the school plans to systematically develop pupils' thinking and practical skills as they move through the school. The school has introduced a protocol to ensure that pupils in year groups that have been split between two classes are not disadvantaged and follow the same curriculum. This is being achieved in terms of curriculum coverage, but it does not consistently address what teachers expect their pupils to achieve or the skills that are to be developed
48. Links with European schools in Finland, the Czech Republic and Portugal through the Comenius project are making a very good contribution to broadening and enriching the curriculum in this relatively small, rural school. Pupils and teachers regularly exchange news and examples of each other's work. Some topic work is shared, for example 'A day in my life'. All classes participate in this. This activity not only enriches work in curriculum subjects such as geography and ICT, but also contributes to developing pupils' understanding of citizenship within Europe and to the developing their understanding and appreciation of other European cultures.

49. The curriculum is socially inclusive. All pupils, including those with physical difficulties, have equal access to opportunities for learning inside and outside lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class. They generally follow the same curriculum as other pupils and are provided with suitably modified activities to help them to learn and to make progress. Overall, more-able pupils are supported and extended, but the level at which this is achieved is not consistent throughout the school.
50. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities for its size. This includes football, cricket, netball, chess and music groups. Older pupils undertake annual residential visits, staying at youth hostels. These provide good opportunities for boosting work in curriculum areas such as science, geography and history and also contribute to pupils' social development as they learn to live together in a group outside their immediate family.
51. Very good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education. Many aspects of health education, including sex and drugs education, are addressed through the curriculum subjects. The school has good arrangements for older pupils in Key Stage 2 to receive specific teaching on sex and drugs education. The school has made a conscious decision that sex education is to be led by two teachers, one male and one female. This is to ensure that in discussion, pupils become familiar with both gender perspectives. The drugs education programme is shared by all the primaries feeding the local secondary school. This ensures that pupils starting their secondary education all have common experiences in this area and their learning can proceed smoothly, building on previous work.
52. The school is mindful of the need to provide opportunities for pupils' personal development to take place. 'Circle Time'<sup>5</sup> takes place in all classes. This gives pupils' opportunities to speak about matters that concern them and are of common interest. These discussions support pupils' spiritual development in that pupils learn to listen to and respect the ideas and beliefs of others. Their moral development is addressed in that pupils are helped to understand the effects of their actions upon others and develop an appreciation of 'right' and 'wrong'. Their social development is enhanced in that their self-confidence and self-esteem are boosted. The school values personal, social and health education and is planning to further enhance the quality of the provision in the near future. A member of the teaching staff has been identified to lead this development.
53. The school has good links with the local community. The school joins in church festivals, particularly at Christmas and Easter and harvest time. In particular, it participates in the St Nicholas day celebrations, when an older pupil takes on the traditional role of 'Boy Bishop'. Older pupils entertain members of the local Darby & Joan Club at Christmas time. Pupils visit local museums and theatres. These visits are well planned and preparations are thorough. For example, the visit of Year 3 pupils to the pantomime is preceded by a visit by members of the cast to meet the pupils in school.
54. The school has very good links with partner institutions in the locality and further afield. It has very good links with the local pre-schools. Older children from these meet in the school on Friday mornings. When the children start school formally, they are already familiar with the building, routines and some of the personnel. The school has good links with associated secondary schools and there are good arrangements for transferring pupils. There is good liaison between staff from this school and those in other schools. Joint curriculum development activities take place, co-ordinators meet to exchange ideas and there are joint pupil activities, for example a hockey festival and an arts week. The school has satisfactory links with a local teacher training institution. All these links are a

good feature of the work in this rural school where staff and pupils might otherwise feel isolated.

55. For the past three years the school has received funding to participate in the Comenius project that supports links between schools in Europe. These links are providing good enrichment for the school. The teaching staff exchanges provide valuable insights for teachers and make an important contribution to their professional development. This is a very important link with the wider community and is broadening the school's horizons considerably.
56. The school is making very good provision overall for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school sees its pupils as individuals and plans many of its day-to-day practices and routines to enable pupils to play a full part in the life of the school and to develop into rounded individuals through this experience. This is an area of the school's work where there has been improvement since the last inspection.
57. The school is making good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Pupils work in many curriculum subjects, for example writing poetry in English and drawing self-portraits in art and design, and their Circle Time sessions give pupils opportunities to reflect and to grow in self-knowledge. In one class, pupils pause just before they eat lunch when they read prayers they have written and kept in a book. In their work in religious education, pupils are developing a sound insight into the beliefs of others. In their general class discussions, pupils are learning to listen to the views others and to respect them. Teachers also value opportunities for pupils to reflect when they visit particularly beautiful areas on their field visits. All these things make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development.
58. Acts of collective worship are of satisfactory quality and meet statutory requirements. They provide opportunities for pupils to meet together to hear a short talk on a religious or moral subject, to sing a religious song and to pray together. However, these acts of collective worship do not in themselves make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. The surroundings in the hall are so cramped that conditions are not conducive to quiet thought and reflection.
59. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral and social development. The school has 'Golden Rules' to guide pupils' behaviour and these are well respected. Each class also has its own set of guiding rules, which have been drawn up by its members. These are clearly displayed in classrooms and are couched in language appropriate for the age of the child. Teachers sometimes refer to these when discussing pupils' behaviour. In the class of oldest pupils, these class rules are taken very seriously and pupils sign that they are willing to be bound by them. These rules provide a sound framework to guide pupils and help them to decide about the correctness or otherwise of their actions. Pupils have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong.
60. The school places a high priority on pupils' social development and provides many opportunities for them to grow in self-esteem and in self-confidence. Pupils' successes are celebrated in class, in whole-school assembly and in newsletters. The school has a policy for promoting personal independence and pupils' very good levels of self-discipline and behaviour make a very significant contribution to the good quality of learning in many lessons.
61. Pupils have opportunities to take responsibility for small jobs around the school, such as blowing the whistle at the ends of sessions and answering the telephone at lunchtime. This helps them to play a full part in the life and work of the school and to understand the

importance of members of a community playing their part. Residential visits also help pupils to mature socially.

62. Good overall provision is made for pupils' cultural development. Good use is made in lessons in a range of curriculum subjects, such as English, art and design and music, to develop pupils' appreciation of creative achievement and cultural differences. Pupils participate in local customs, such as the May Fair. There is good provision for pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding of European culture through the curriculum and through the Comenius project link.
63. However, the arrangements to enable pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of the cultures that make up contemporary British society are not systematically planned. Some arise within the curriculum; for example, in religious education pupils learn about Islam and in physical education they learn about Indian and African dance. A visitor has brought in saris to show and to demonstrate how they are worn. Pupils are given opportunities to meet pupils from ethnic minorities in local schools through sporting fixtures. Because these opportunities are not being systematically planned and monitored the quality in this area of provision cannot be guaranteed.

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

64. The school has maintained its effective care of pupils reported at the time of the previous inspection. It provides a very supportive environment where teachers know their children well and value them as individuals. The vast majority of parents are happy with the care and guidance offered to their children. They feel their children are happy in school and able to concentrate on their work as teachers are fully aware of their needs. The school's procedures for monitoring the personal development of pupils are good. Their records of achievement contain personal profiles completed by pupils themselves, which are supported by informal discussions with teachers.
65. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. The school assesses children when they enter the reception class and uses this information to plan for their learning towards the early learning goals. The results of National Curriculum statutory tests and assessments are carefully analysed and information used to identify areas that need to be addressed. The school also makes use of other tests to add to the information it collects from pupils' work. This information is successfully used to set individual targets for pupils to work towards in order to improve their work. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress is satisfactory; there is some inconsistency both in the frequency and in the detail with which records are kept. The records of pupils at the beginning of Key Stage 2 are particularly detailed.
66. Progress reports for children aged five or under are clear and informative. They give a clear picture of what children can do and what skills need to be developed. At both key stages pupils' annual progress reports are inconsistent. Not all contain sufficient information on what pupils know and can do with areas for development clearly identified.
67. Regular reviews are held for pupils who have special educational needs. Parents and pupils are involved in this process and the school values the support it receives from outside agencies. Individual education plans set realistic targets for pupils to achieve. The requirements of the Code of Practice are fully met.
68. Inconsistent use is made of the information available in the school to guide teachers' planning at both key stages. Pupils are not always challenged to the full by the work set for them. Where practice is good, pupils' results are high.

69. Procedures for monitoring and promoting positive behaviour are good. There is a very effective behaviour policy that is applied consistently by all staff. Pupils and parents are aware of the school rules. These are supported through the home-school agreement. Incidents relating to bullying and unacceptable behaviour are monitored carefully through activities such as whole-class discussions and the school's anti-bullying policy. Staff deal with any reported incidents swiftly and effectively.
70. Procedures for checking attendance are very good. Registers are called at the beginning of every session. Parents are made aware in the school prospectus and newsletters of their responsibility to inform the school of the reason for any absence. The education welfare officer works closely and effectively with the school where problems have been noted.
71. The school has an appropriate child protection policy. Procedures comply with those of the area child protection committee and all staff are fully aware of these. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy and regular risk assessment is carried out. All necessary checks on fire appliances are up to date. However, the checks on electrical equipment used in school have yet to be completed by the local education authority's contractor. This is now overdue and needs to be attended to as matter of priority.
72. The arrangements for first aid, including the recording of accidents and informing parents, are good. First aid boxes are fully stocked and appropriately sited. Lessons on sex education and drug awareness form part of the school's programme for personal, social and health education. This is well supported by outside agencies.
73. A number of health and safety issues, which give cause for concern, were drawn to the attention of the school during the inspection.

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

74. The good relationship with parents reported at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained. The vast majority of parents are proud of the school and indicate that they are pleased with what the school provides and achieves. The quality of information provided by the school is satisfactory overall. Most parents feel that the school's regular newsletter keeps them well informed about developments.
75. Consultation meetings for parents are held in the spring and summer terms. The majority of parents feel that they are given a clear picture of what is happening in the school and how their children are progressing. Parents have been consulted about their expectations of the school through a questionnaire, and the parent partnership working party was involved in drafting the anti-bullying policy and home-school agreement.
76. Parents feel staff are approachable. Teachers circulate with parents at the beginning and end of the school day. Parents know they are willing to talk to them at any reasonable time.
77. The impact of the parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. The school does all it can to encourage parents to help in school and many help on a regular basis, for instance with food technology, hearing readers and on school trips. This contribution is much appreciated by the school.
78. Parents regularly receive details of the curriculum to be covered each term and of the homework expected from class teachers. In reply to the questionnaire, some parents did not feel well informed regarding the amount of homework expected. The findings of the inspection do not support this view.

79. The Parent Teacher Association is open to all and raises considerable funds to help resource the school.

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

80. The headteacher provides good leadership and manages the school well. He has a good grasp of what is going on in the school and knows the way ahead. In a quiet and unassuming way he works diligently to successfully move the staff and governors forward and raise standards. The headteacher has good support from the deputy headteacher, teaching and non-teaching staff in ensuring the effective and efficient organisation of the school. The deputy headteacher undertakes the responsibilities that are allocated to him competently. Day-to-day routines are well established.
81. At the time of the last inspection the leadership and management of the school were judged to be satisfactory. Many initiatives were in the process of implementation and development. A feature of this inspection has been the wealth of reliable evidence to support judgements about the work of the school. The analyses and evaluations provided by the headteacher and governors have been particularly perceptive.
82. The school has made good progress in the areas identified for action at the time of the last inspection. Improvements have been well thought through and systematically developed. The school recognises that there are still areas to be worked on, particularly in regard to the development of ICT; staff are undertaking training and equipment has been updated. What is now required is a formally agreed approach to developing ICT across the curriculum. There is a good, shared commitment in the school to succeed. The school's capacity to achieve is also good. The very high standards achieved at the end of Year 6 bear clear testimony to this resolve.
83. The school's aims are clearly outlined in the prospectus and evident in all aspects of its work. The very good relationships evident between all members of the school community that form the basis of the school's ethos bear witness to the school's very good commitment in this area. Individual achievements are both valued and celebrated. This has a very positive impact on the standards achieved.
84. This is a small school where each member of staff has responsibility for a number of curricular areas. These responsibilities have recently been reviewed and some changes made. The good development of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in the school has shown that there is scope for similar developments in other subject areas. Firstly, however, the school has to develop its approach to planning and monitoring the curriculum so that there is a firm basis upon which curriculum co-ordinators can develop their management role.
85. At present the school's arrangements for monitoring, developing and evaluating teaching and learning are not rigorous enough. There are a number of contributory reasons for this. One is that there are inconsistencies in the way in which teachers plan the curriculum. Another is that the school's efforts to maintain five teaching groups involve a significant teaching commitment by the headteacher. This has an impact on the otherwise supportive induction of staff new to the school. The school has an ongoing partnership with Oxford Brookes University to provide placements for students undertaking initial teacher training. The school is implementing its performance management policy satisfactorily and all key dates have been met thus far. The school has recognised that time will need to be made for monitoring teaching and learning and appropriate arrangements are in hand to budget for this.

86. The school analyses National Curriculum test and assessment results carefully and uses this information well to set targets for pupils to achieve. The school has appropriate systems in place to track pupils' academic progress and personal development, but there is some inconsistency in the way in which this information is used to the best effect in planning for pupils' needs. Although all pupils make at least appropriate progress as they move through the school, the good rate of progress evident in Classes 1 and 5 is not consistently evident in the intervening years.
87. There is a rolling programme of topics in place to ensure that coverage of the National Curriculum is achieved at an appropriate level as pupils move through the school. The school has established procedures to ensure that pupils in year groups split between two classes follow the same curriculum. These are successful in terms of overall coverage, but does not sufficiently address inconsistencies in the challenge offered to pupils, in the expectations of what they will achieve or in the rate of progress they make. Although the school is committed to full equality of opportunity for all pupils, and achieves this is the vast majority of its work, this is an area that needs to be addressed.
88. Through their work, governors are making a good contribution to the standards the school achieves. There have been a number of changes to the governing body since the last inspection and some responsibilities have recently been changed. Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their experience in business and industry benefits the school significantly. There is a good working relationship evident between parents, governors and staff. A parent partnership, which works with governors and staff in reviewing and shaping the school's curriculum, has been successfully established since the last inspection.
89. Governors not only receive reports from the headteacher and staff, but also observe, at first hand through their visits, the work of the school. A format for writing governors' visit reports helps them to focus on particular issues and provides feedback to their colleagues. This is good practice that successfully helps governors to both understand how the school operates and assist them, with the headteacher and staff, to shape the future educational direction of the school effectively.
90. Priorities for the future development of the school are clearly identified in the school's development planning. Good attention is paid to identifying costings, time scales, responsibilities and success criteria. Provision is made for initiatives to be monitored and for the governing body to evaluate the outcomes. The school does its best to meet its targets within the constraints it faces, particularly to do with the budget and the accommodation.
91. The quality of financial planning is good. Priorities in the school development plan are carefully costed and the school makes good use of the specific grants available. Financial management is also good. The recommendations of the latest audit report have been implemented and the school is able to keep close track of its income and expenditure. The school successfully applies the principles of 'best value' to its purchases and demands the highest quality of service from its suppliers and contractors. The public funds available to the school do not provide the governors with much leeway. All their spending decisions are carefully considered. Pupils benefit from their wisely targeted spending. The school is most fortunate in receiving substantial financial support and help-in-kind from parents and the village communities it serves.
92. Sound use is made of new technologies in supporting the administration and management of the school. The budget is monitored through the use of a computerised accounting system and the school makes increasing use of electronic mail.

93. The school is staffed by sufficient qualified teachers and support staff to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and the curriculum for children aged five and under. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved by pupils.
94. The accommodation has improved significantly since the last inspection with the addition of three new permanent classrooms. Further improvements are planned, including an extension to the playground with the addition of a separate play area for children under five years of age. The school hall is unsuitable for physical education lessons and can barely accommodate the whole school for collective worship. The local education authority inspects this block, which also includes the headteacher's office and a kitchen area where food technology is taught, on a regular basis. The school reports that the building inspector has declared the hall's life to be no longer than 12 months for a number of years. The asbestos roof leaks and the school is faced with a very high bill for heating this area. The rapid changes in temperature result in the piano, which is used to accompany pupils during instrumental lessons, being permanently out of tune. This does little to support their learning.
95. The headteacher's office, which is situated in the hall block, is totally inadequate. It does not constitute a suitable environment for the headteacher to meet parents or visitors to the school who may wish to speak in confidence. The temporary heating in the secretary's office is inadequate, particularly as this room doubles as a medical room.
96. The school hires the village hall for physical education lessons. This provides a sufficient amount of space for pupils of this age, but there are a number of safety issues involved in the school's use of this facility. These are particularly to do with the movement of pupils along the road that leads from the village to the nearby motorway junction and to the movement and storage of teaching equipment. Despite the best efforts of the school and the village hall committee the present arrangements have a considerable negative impact on pupils' learning and the standards they achieve in this area of the curriculum.
97. Learning resources are adequate overall. The school recognises that there are gaps in its provision, particularly in terms of the outdoor facilities for children aged five and under, and is addressing these. The library area, although small, provides an appropriate facility for pupils to undertake independent study and research.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

98. The governing body, headteacher and staff should now:

- raise standards in ICT by:
  - (i) planning how the recent improvements in equipment and in staff expertise are going to be systematically developed in order to improve the use and application of ICT by pupils across the curriculum;
  - (ii) implementing, monitoring, modifying and evaluating the agreed proposals;  
*(paragraphs 8, 38 and 202-208)*
- develop a more consistent approach to planning and delivering the curriculum that:
  - (i) systematically identifies and develops pupils' skills in all subjects;
  - (ii) draws upon information as to what pupils know and can do in order to consistently and fully challenge all pupils, particularly those who learn at faster rates;
  - (iii) ensures that the good rate of progress made by pupils in the youngest and oldest classes is maintained throughout the school;
  - (iv) clearly identifies the contribution made by support staff and volunteers to pupils' learning in lessons;
  - (v) identifies and builds upon existing good practice in teaching and learning;

and provides a sound basis for rigorously monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in the school.

*(paragraphs 12, 14, 24-41 and 42-49)*

99. With regard to the inadequacies in the school's accommodation, the remit of this inspection does not extend beyond the responsibilities of the governing body. However, the governing body, headteacher and, as appropriate, staff should:

- (i) review the existing arrangements for teaching gymnastics and dance in order to address issues raised during the inspection;
- (ii) ensure that all health and safety issues brought to the attention of the school during the inspection are addressed;
- (iii) continue discussions with the local education authority for the provision of new facilities.

*(paragraphs 44, 73, 94-96 and 216-219)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	34
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
4	9	37	44	6	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	124
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	16

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	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.8
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	11	12	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	23	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	23	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	9	11	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	19	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	95 (87)	95 (93)	100 (93)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (73)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	18	18	16
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	90 (93)	90 (93)	80 (93)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

\* In accordance with reporting guidance, the number of boys and girls is not reported as to do so could enable individual pupils to be identified.

### ***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	109
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	25

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	78

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	248,586*
Total expenditure	249,873
Expenditure per pupil	2,031
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,346
Balance carried forward to next year	6,059

\* This includes income from fund-raising efforts by the parents and school and grants from the Comenius project.

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

### **Questionnaire return rate 56%**

Number of questionnaires sent out	133
Number of questionnaires returned	74

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	38	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	46	8	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	52	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	51	14	5	3
The teaching is good.	58	40	1	1	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	43	22	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	44	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	36	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	36	54	9	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	49	49	1	1	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	46	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	32	31	7	8

### **Other issues raised by parents in response to the questionnaire:**

Parents like:

- the happy atmosphere
- the academic school
- good contact with pre-school groups

Parents do not like:

- not knowing what older pupils have to do for homework
- split year group classes
- uneven progress as pupils move through the school
- football club only open to older pupils

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

100. At the time of this inspection there were 17 children aged five or under in the Foundation Stage, five of whom attend on a part-time basis. The majority of children have attended pre-school activities and there are close, purposeful links with local playgroups. The school reports that initial assessments of what children know and can do when they start school indicates that most, but not necessarily all, come with above average skills in all the areas of learning.
101. Children build successfully on these foundations in the reception class where they make good progress. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1 the vast majority of children successfully attain or exceed the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; creative development; knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development.
102. The report of the last inspection found that the curriculum for children under five was too narrow and that children made insufficient progress. The outcome of this inspection tells a very different story. The quality of the curriculum for children aged five and under is good; children make good progress and the quality of teaching is consistently good. The school has made good progress in developing its provision for children at this stage of their education.
103. Children achieve well at the Foundation Stage because of a quiet, purposeful approach to teaching that captures children's interest and concentration. A notable feature of children's learning is the way in which they apply themselves enthusiastically to the tasks they are given. One particular factor in this is that there are high expectations of what the children will achieve. Another factor is that adults regard children as young learners who want to succeed. This creates a very positive yet caring learning environment. Good attention is paid to ensuring that activities, whilst challenging, are carefully planned to meet individual children's needs and that individual adult support is available to support their learning. All these factors make a significant contribution to the good progress children make at this stage of their education.

**Personal, social and emotional development**

104. Children are quite accustomed to working and playing with each other. The calm, organised atmosphere of their classroom does much to encourage and benefit children's development in this area of learning. They are accustomed to taking responsibility for jobs around the classroom and for helping each other. When sitting together on the carpet and using equipment they are encouraged to take turns.
105. Both adults and other members of the class value children's contributions. In a 'Circle Time' lesson, children shared what they did during the previous week's half term. Accounts of visits near and far, together with the celebration of anniversaries, were carefully given and listened to. Judicious support and questioning by the class teacher encouraged children to think about what they heard and to work things out for themselves. This strategy successfully strengthens the confidence with which children approach and participate in day-to-day activities. Teachers and other adults successfully encourage the development of children's independence and life as members of the school community.
106. Children achieve well in this area. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1 the majority achieve, and most exceed, the early learning goals in this area of learning.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

107. Children's speaking and listening skills are good. They take turns in contributing their ideas to discussions as, for example, in a literacy lesson, where the class were discussing the 'big book' they were planning to write and illustrate. Such skills were also evident in their topic work where children were spotting signs and instructions around the classroom, such as 'Fire Exit' and 'Now wash your hands'. Good emphasis is given to widening children's vocabulary and understanding, for example, of the differences between requests, information and instructions. In both lessons, these carefully structured activities provided good opportunities for all children to participate in discussion and listen to others.
108. Reading skills are good. Through having opportunities to share a variety of texts and other activities linked to the literacy framework, skills are systematically developed. Children successfully acquire a working knowledge and understanding of a wide range of stories and rhymes. They know such terms as 'author', 'illustrator' and 'publisher'. They have a good knowledge of sounds, many knowing how 'magic e' can change the sound of certain words or that the 'w' is silent in 'who' but not in 'when'.
109. Children are keen to share their ideas for writing and, as seen in a class lesson, are keen for their teacher to record these on the marker board. Many children confidently recognise the need for a capital letter at the beginning of a sentence and a full stop at the end. They have a variety of writing and drawing materials available in the writing area to develop their own stories and captions. They work successfully with the teacher in developing their ideas. Children's handwriting is developing well. When copy writing, they form letters correctly and demonstrate good pencil control.
110. Progress is good and by the time they are ready to start Year 1 the majority of children successfully attain, and most exceed, the early learning goals in this area of learning.

## **Mathematical development**

111. Carefully planned activities meet the needs of children and lead seamlessly into the National Numeracy Strategy in Year 1. This good practice successfully addresses children's individual needs and their ongoing mathematical development. Adults carefully support practical work in sorting, matching and counting activities. Children concentrate well on the tasks they are given. They have a good understanding of 'bigger' and 'smaller' and of one-to-one correspondence. They recognise and talk about the properties of regular shapes with confidence.
112. Children make good progress and by the time they are ready to start in Year 1 the majority of children successfully attain, and most exceed, the early learning goals in this area of learning.

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

113. Many children have a wide knowledge and understanding of the world from the experiences they have had, at home and abroad, with their families. They confidently discuss visits to Disneyland, holiday resorts and local historical houses and museums. Some know that dinosaurs are extinct, but elephants are not. They are developing a sense of time, identifying what happened yesterday, last week and before that.
114. Children successfully develop an understanding of their local environment. They describe where they live and where to find such buildings as the village pubs, the post office and the village hall in relation to the school. In their topic on travel, they identified

different signs in and around the school and explained what these meant. They identify signposts, advertising signs and instructional signs. Through the encouragement of their teacher and other adults working with them, they are successfully developing ways to relate what they see and read on signs to the action they need to take in a real world situation.

- 115. Children successfully acquire and use computer skills. They work at the computer independently. They are confident in their use of the mouse and successfully click on an icon, 'drag and drop' to select the next stage of their work. Children also use equipment such as listening centres and use a camera.
- 116. Children make good progress and by the time they are ready to start in Year 1 the majority of children successfully attain, and most exceed, the early learning goals in this area of learning.

### **Physical development**

- 117. The absence of a dedicated outdoor play area, together with an appropriate range of large and wheeled equipment, limits the school's provision in this area of development. This is in the process of being resolved by the development of an outside area and the purchase of appropriate equipment. At present the children visit the village hall or, when numbers are low, use the school hall for movement and other physical activities. This was not observed during the inspection.
- 118. The school pays good attention to providing children with opportunities to handle tools and equipment in a correct and safe manner. Children make good use of sand and water as part of their learning in other areas. They handle a range of smaller equipment and other learning resources well, developing finer movements and control.
- 119. Children make good progress in developing an awareness of the space around them in the classroom and in the playground. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1, the majority successfully attain, and many exceed, the early learning goals in this area of learning.

### **Creative development**

- 120. Although limited, the space available in the classroom is well used to provide children with a range of opportunities to participate in structured, imaginative activities. One reason for this is the way in which teachers and helpers successfully provide practical support and encouragement to the children who, in turn, concentrate carefully on the tasks they are given.
- 121. Various activities were observed during the inspection, many of which were connected to the current topic of travel. One group, working with sand, was very absorbed in making up and acting out a story of a party of soldiers on manoeuvres. They happily developed the story together, exploring a number of different ways in which it could develop. Another group, using play dough, successfully investigated the different textures and shapes that could be used by using scribing tools to decorate the shapes they had cut out. All the time they were discussing with each other how they could improve and enhance the images they were creating.
- 122. Children enjoy singing familiar songs, particularly those in which they can add actions. They also enjoy suggesting new verses as, for example, to illustrate different forms of travel in the song "*Wheels on the bus go round .....*".



123. A most notable feature of the creative work seen in this class is the quality of the language used by the children in all activities. They genuinely act out, often in close collaboration with others, realistic situations and stories they are in the process of devising or developing from what they already know.
124. Children make good progress in this area of learning and by the time they are ready to start in Year 1 the majority successfully attain, and most exceed, the relevant early learning goals.

## ENGLISH

125. Standards in reading and writing have been well above average in three out of the last four years at the end of Key Stage 1. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards have been well above average in three of the last four years and very high (that is, in the top 5 per cent in the country) in the fourth year. Over this period, the differences in attainment between boys and girls are not particularly significant. It must be remembered that the number of pupils in each year group is statistically small. Furthermore, the number of pupils – and their particular needs – also varies each year. This can have a significant impact on the school's overall results and makes year on year comparisons less meaningful.
126. The inspection findings reflect the consistently high results achieved by pupils at the end of both key stages in the National Curriculum tests and assessments. Standards in English are above average at the age of 7 and well above average at the age of 11 years. These high standards are due to the good foundation pupils receive in the Foundation Stage, their positive attitudes and behaviour and the good standards of teaching and learning promoted in the school. It is important to note that there are pupils with special educational needs in the school who may not reach the national averages in this subject. However, in terms of the progress they have made in relation to their prior attainment, their achievement is good and sometimes very good.
127. Standards of speaking and listening are above average at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils speak with considerable confidence and demonstrate a good range of vocabulary. They are keen to ask questions and to contribute to discussions. It is noticeable in this class of Years 1 and 2 pupils that they talk a lot to each other, usually about their work but also about a wide range of issues at home and at school. This was very evident in a discussion that arose from a group reading activity about accidents. Pupils' descriptions were quite vivid and their recall of events systematic. The roots for this were firmly established in the reception class. The confident way in which pupils talk and ask questions does much to develop their thinking and inquiry skills and helps them to achieve good standards in what they do. Listening skills, although good, are not just as finely developed in some pupils; some are inclined to pitch in with a comment without always taking full account of all that has been said. Most pupils can, however, demonstrate that they listen to what is said and can accurately recall information or act upon instructions.
128. These skills are developed as pupils move through Key Stage 2. In Year 3, pupils are keen to discuss what they have heard in, for example, a recorded traditional story and then draw out points for and against a certain ending. In the Years 4 and 5 class, pupils use a good range of vocabulary to express their views, such as when explaining the meaning of phrases in an extract from *The Birdman*. Their quick and bright responses to questions from the teacher demonstrate how carefully they listen and how confident they are in responding so quickly.

129. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards of speaking and listening are well above average. Pupils listen very carefully to their teachers and to each other; they think about what they have heard and apply their thinking before answering questions or making observations. Their diction is clear, their voices expressive and there is much substance in what they say. This was particularly evident in the lesson seen in the Years 5 and 6 class where pupils were identifying the pros and cons of an argument as the basis of producing a piece of persuasive writing. Pupils express their opinions logically and with a good degree of conviction. At the same time they respect the views and value the contributions made by others. It is noticeable how pupils effectively reflect upon and build well upon what they have heard.
130. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy at both key stages, adapting it appropriately to meet the needs of pupils and the necessity to have pupils from different year groups in the same class. Standards in reading are above average at the end of Key Stage 1. In Years 1 and 2, pupils successfully develop the work on sounds undertaken in the reception class, enabling them to maintain the good rate of progress established when they started at school. Pupils quickly identify patterns in words and successfully discriminate between different sounds. Pupils read with increasing fluency and expression. They are successfully developing their understanding of what they read and some draw inferences from the text as they read in order to predict what might happen next. There are good links between text work and spellings. Spellings are learnt and tested weekly. Pupils of differing abilities have lists to learn that are appropriate to their needs. Good emphasis is placed on pupils learning to use the words they have learnt to spell in the right context so as to underline meaning.
131. Standards in reading are well above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils read from a range of texts and clearly express their likes and dislikes. The majority of pupils read fluently, with good expression and a high level of understanding. Pupils successfully learn they cannot always judge a book on the quality of the first few pages. They are developing the maturity to persevere without becoming disillusioned. This was evident in discussion with one pupil who had started a book, found it hard going, but then returned to it a few weeks later. Advanced reading skills are successfully developed. Many pupils are successfully developing the skills of skimming and scanning a text in order to establish content and meaning quickly. These skills prepare them well for the next stage of their education.
132. Standards in writing are above average at the end of Key Stage 1. Teachers give regular attention to developing pupils' understanding and use of both grammar and punctuation through using worksheets and by providing opportunities for them to write at length. Teachers frequently remind pupils about the correct use of capital letters and full stops. Pupils are successfully developing an understanding of structure in their writing. The use of the story bag, where pupils write a chapter of a story at home, provides a worthwhile and constructive opportunity for longer writing. Pupils achieve well, building upon the writing skills firmly established in the reception class.
133. Writing skills are successfully developed as pupils move through Key Stage 2. Standards in spelling, a concern at the time of the last inspection, are mainly good. Good attention is paid to developing pupils' understanding and use of grammar, punctuation and writing styles. In Year 3, the use of an 'ideas book' helps pupils to focus on the structure of what they write. In lessons, the teacher gives good examples of how to structure writing not just when specifically teaching writing skills, but during group and class activities in literacy. This is good practice. In the sample of work seen in this year group, there was less writing than might have been expected for the age and prior attainment of pupils. This may reflect the use of time during lessons. There are, however, appropriate

examples of pupils' writing across the curriculum, for example in topic work, and progress is satisfactory.

134. In the Years 4 and 5 class, pupils write for a variety of different purposes. One group was observed typing up their self-portraits on the computer. They make good use of the spell check facility and have an appropriate understanding of layout and font. It was not clear to what extent pupils use word-processing for drafting, editing and revising their work; this is currently undeveloped. Other groups were writing a story using as many given words, all with the prefix 'al', as possible. This was a technically demanding task for most pupils. Consequently, although most pupils achieved the task they were set, their work was not sufficiently extended.
135. Standards of writing in the Years 5 and 6 class are high. The progress made by pupils in this class over a relatively short period is very evident from a scrutiny of their work. There are a number of contributory reasons for this. Firstly, they have developed a good technical understanding of what is required of them in the earlier classes that provides a good basis for their development. Secondly, the stimulus of working with older pupils rubs off well on younger pupils and gives them a target for which to aim. Thirdly, it is the way in which their writing skills are developed and honed through opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes. This helps them achieve the well above average standards achieved at the end of the key stage. Pupils have written for a variety of purposes in a variety of styles ranging from autobiography to letters. They have summarised *The Tempest* and analysed the account of Dr Crippen's death; they have looked at both prose and poetry.
136. This range of earlier experiences was particularly evident in the lesson observed on persuasive writing. The teacher stressed to pupils that they could not expect to finish the whole piece in one lesson and gave them very clear guidance as to what they should aim to achieve in the time available. The exchange of ideas between teacher and pupils – and between pupils – was very good.
137. A particular feature of this lesson was the way in which the teacher actively encouraged pupils to evaluate a sample of her own writing critically. Comments from pupils, although constructive, were both pertinent and forthright. This very good working relationship, built on mutual trust and respect, is making an important contribution to the standards of work achieved. Examples of pupils writing, both poetry and prose, make for compelling reading. One particular example of the persuasive writing, seeking to justify the bombing of densely populated cities during the Second World War, was chillingly convincing when read aloud.
138. There are, at both key stages, pupils who have special educational needs. The majority of these pupils have aspects of literacy identified in their individual education plans. The progress these pupils make in reading and writing is good. In some instances, pupils make very good progress in relation to the targets set for them. Staff support pupils well. They benefit from the varied activities provided for them as part of the literacy lessons. Support staff and helpers also contribute well to pupils' progress. A good feature is the way in which teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs work alongside pupils who do not have such needs. Pupils achieve similar standards of work with support. This does much for their feeling of self-worth and provides a good incentive to progress further.
139. The school has arranged to train support staff to provide pupils with additional help in acquiring literacy skills. This is developing successfully. Support staff and voluntary helpers make a good contribution to raising standards, but their deployment lacks consistency. For example, in a number of literacy lessons support staff sat impassively

during the whole-class session rather than with a group of pupils who would have benefited from having the instructions and comments from the teacher interpreted or repeated. Conversely, some teachers specifically prepare guidance for support staff so that no time is wasted once the lesson is under way. This is good practice.

140. Standards in handwriting are generally above those expected for pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 years. Pupils in Year 2 form letters carefully. Many are using a joined script and are becoming more independent in presenting their work neatly. Many pupils in Year 6 are developing a mature style and their standard of presentation is good. Progress through Key Stage 2 is, however, not consistent. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that there are irregular opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their handwriting. Marked work does not consistently identify ways in which pupils can improve the presentation of their work. There is also some variation in the quality of teachers' marking. In the best practice, comments such as *'This has potential – we need to discuss it!'* and the subsequent discussion provide pupils with constructive advice as to how improve their work.
141. There is, at present, limited use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. Although some pupils do have the opportunity to draft, edit and revise their work using word-processing packages, many do not. One reason given for this is that pupils' keyboard skills are not fast enough. The school recognises that this is a chicken and egg situation that it needs to address in order that all pupils may make the most effective use of word-processing to advance their writing skills.
142. The teaching in the lesson observed at Key Stage 1 was satisfactory. In this lesson, the pace of learning was not maintained when pupils started their written tasks and pupils became distracted because they were not fully challenged by what they had to do. However, scrutiny of pupils' work, records and other documentation suggests that the overall quality of teaching has a number of good features. These further promote the positive learning habits acquired by children in the Foundation Stage and enable pupils to achieve good standards.
143. At Key Stage 2 the overall quality of teaching is good. It ranges from satisfactory to excellent. The satisfactory lessons were carefully planned and included a range of different activities that complemented each other well. A common factor in both lessons observed was that the demands placed upon pupils were not as finely tuned as they could have been. Information about what pupils already knew and were capable of doing was not being applied with sufficient rigour to move pupils on to their fullest extent. In both of these lessons pupils made satisfactory progress, but some could have made better progress. The purpose of the lesson was shared with pupils and the various strands were woven together quite seamlessly. Pupils were well supported, guided and advised. Adults and pupils were as one in moving learning on at a purposeful and meaningful pace. All these factors ensured that the lesson's objectives were fully overtaken. .
144. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. They are keen to learn and the majority apply themselves diligently to their task. When working with support staff and volunteer helpers, pupils also maintain their focus on the task in hand. On occasions, the activities given to pupils do not challenge them appropriately. This does give rise to chatter and some lose their concentration. However, this usually is short lived as teachers bring pupils back to their work.
145. The school has invested wisely in resources to support its teaching of literacy. Reading and writing undertaken at home make a significant contribution to the achievement of pupils in school.

## MATHEMATICS

146. Standards are above average at the age of 7 and well above average at the age of 11 years. These judgements reflect standards reached in the latest National Curriculum statutory tests. Over the last four years, with the exception of one year when they were below average, standards have been maintained above average at the age of 7 years. At the age of 11, with the exception of one year when they were above average, standards have been maintained at well above average. Compared with similar schools, the latest results are well above average at the age of 11 and average at the age of 7 years. Standards in mathematics have improved since the time of the last inspection when they were average at the ages of 7 and 11 years.
147. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy well. This is making a significant contribution to maintaining and raising further the already good or better standards in the subject. The quality of teaching in numeracy is good in both key stages. No differences in the performances of boys and girls were noted during the inspection. All teachers are giving pupils opportunities to become adept at mental computational skills and confident in explaining their thinking to others.
148. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in developing their understanding of numbers and of shape, space and measures. By the age of seven they have a good understanding of numbers and of place value. They correctly place numbers in a sequence, identify multiples of 10, 5, 3 and 2, and know the difference between odd and even numbers. They are very confident in the handling of numbers and in seeking patterns within number sequences. Their understanding of two- and three-dimensional shapes is developing well and they are able to describe the properties of simple shapes in terms of the number of sides and/or faces.
149. Good teaching is the key to pupils' success in Key Stage 1. In lessons, the teacher asks pertinent questions to help pupils to apply well-understood principles in making decisions and reaching answers. The teacher has very good knowledge of what pupils already know and draws on this well in order to help them to learn more. Pupils of all ages and abilities are provided with suitable activities. These ensure that all, including the more-able and those with special educational needs, are supported in their learning and make good progress. Teachers provide a rich programme of activities, which both re-visits and consolidates pupils' earlier learning and extends their knowledge and understanding. In lessons, work is initially practically based and then moves on, for those who are working quickly, to pencil and paper exercises. This good linkage between practical work and written work is helping pupils to learn to handle mathematical concepts in their heads early in their development as mathematicians.
150. There is a strong emphasis in pupils' exercise books and on their worksheets on recording answers carefully. Pupils are encouraged to show their thinking and working out in full. The good quality written work, which is valued by the teacher and is thoughtfully marked, helps pupils to have a clear understanding of what they know and can do and encourages them to take pride in their achievements. This is making an important contribution to pupils' good progress.
151. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy mathematics and work hard, if a little noisily at times. They quickly become engrossed in what they are doing and sometimes do not respond quickly to instructions as a result. They show good levels of independence in thinking and in practical work. They collaborate effectively and this is making an important contribution to the progress they make as they listen carefully to what each other has to say and share ideas.

152. In Key Stage 2, pupils make variable progress as they move between classes, but by the end of the key stage they have made good overall progress. By the end of Year 6 all pupils, including the more-able and those with special educational needs, are achieving very well taking their ages and abilities into account. By the age of 11 pupils have a very good understanding of work in all aspects of the mathematics curriculum including number, space, shape and measures and in data handling. Their exercise books indicate that they tackle a range of work and that they consolidate previous work on a regular basis as well as systematically tackling new areas.
153. Pupils in Year 6 are receiving a rich mathematical experience. The lessons seen during the inspection focused on work in number. Pupils use a range of strategies to help them to solve problems in their heads. For example, they apply the four rules of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, find squares and manipulate decimal numbers confidently. They enjoy mental work and explain their thinking confidently. They make very good use of mathematical language to help them to express their ideas, for example referring to numerator and denominator when describing fractions. Pupils have a very good understanding of percentages. They know that they are a means of expressing a fractional quantity and they can apply these ideas to everyday life, for example calculating percentage reductions on sale goods.
154. By the age of 11 the quality of pupils' written work is very good. It is set out clearly and logically. Pupils are encouraged to show how their thinking develops as they solve a problem. It is skilfully marked with helpful and encouraging comments. This is a good aspect of teaching that is helping to ensure that these oldest pupils in the school gain in confidence and achieve the highest possible standards.
155. Pupils make progress at different rates in the different classes in Key Stage 2. This is linked to the quality of teaching. The quality of teaching overall in Key Stage 2 is good, but during the inspection teaching for pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. Where the teaching is unsatisfactory, the main weaknesses stem from the lack of progress made by pupils. This is linked in part to the appropriateness of lesson planning and in part to the management of the pace of learning.
156. The unsatisfactory lesson seen had a good structure. Provision had been made for mental 'warm-up' activities and for pupils to work at activities of different levels of difficulty. However, the extent of pupils' existing knowledge and understanding had been underestimated and consequently the majority of pupils in the class were not sufficiently challenged by the lesson and did not make much progress. This led to their losing concentration and becoming fidgety and unsettled. Certain aspects of the lesson, for example introduction to the main activity, were too drawn out and, once again, pupils' behaviour deteriorated and this affected their learning.
157. Where the teaching is good or very good in Key Stage 2, there are many strengths. Teachers use learning objectives to guide their planning. These clearly identify what the lesson is to focus on. These learning objectives are shared with pupils at the start of the lesson so that they can check on their own progress as they go along. At the end of the lesson, teachers refer to them again, helping pupils to appreciate what they have achieved and what needs to be done. This is a good feature of teaching because it is helping pupils to be aware of how well they are learning and to develop a feel for their own progress.
158. In good or very good lessons, teachers draw on their own good subject knowledge and teach confidently. This builds pupils' self-confidence in the subject. Good use is made of teaching aids, such as number cards, number lines and squares, and personal

whiteboards for pupils. These all help pupils to clarify their thinking and keep them all involved in the lesson all the time. Lessons are well managed. The pace is good and the changes between different activities are smooth with no time wasted. Teachers are helping pupils to develop a range of strategies in order to succeed in the subject. They are encouraged to break down their thinking into small, manageable, logical steps. This helps pupils to gain confidence in their own capacity to succeed. There is good emphasis on fostering sound mathematical habits, such as working systematically, keeping tidy, logical records of work done and conclusions reached. The work of the oldest pupils is well marked. Help and encouragement is given. This helps pupils to take a pride in their work and their mathematical achievement.

159. Where teaching is good or very good in Key Stage 2, teachers have very good relationships with their classes. They know the pupils well as individuals and know what will motivate and interest them. They take their needs into account, ensuring that those who find concentration more difficult are challenged early in the lesson to ensure that they are focused and working hard when they are thinking most clearly. They are sensitive to the needs of all pupils, including the more-able and those with special educational needs. They plan appropriately to support these pupils and ensure they make progress during lessons.
160. Pupils in Key Stage 2 enjoy mathematics and respond positively when they are appropriately challenged. They work hard, helping each other, and older pupils generally have a mature attitude for their ages. This enables them to take a critical view of their work and to make every effort to improve standards.
161. In one class, the teaching of mathematics is shared between two teachers. Arrangements for this work very well. There is very good continuity between lessons and pupils benefit by receiving good or better quality teaching in two different styles. At the time of the inspection, one year group was shared between two classes. The pupils in the older class were making better progress and achieving higher standards than those in the younger class. Although the school has established a protocol to ensure that there is parity of experience for pupils in a split year group, it is not being effectively implemented in this case.
162. The well-informed co-ordinator has been identified by the local education authority as a 'lead teacher' in the subject. A good curriculum in mathematics is provided for every pupil. Attention is paid to developing pupils' knowledge and understanding and at the same time equipping them with skills and strategies to help them to use the subject as a tool in everyday life. Teachers do everything they can to make learning interesting and challenging and, best of all, fun for pupils, thus enabling them to develop independence and confidence in themselves as mathematicians. One of the ways in which this is done is through wall displays. In the Year 3 class and in the class of mixed Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, there are very good quality classroom displays, which stimulate pupils' thinking and encourage them to share their creative work in the subject. The Year 3 display also refers to famous mathematicians and some of their achievements. These displays also help pupils value the subject as an academic discipline and are making a very good contribution to teaching and learning.
163. One weakness in the curriculum is that ICT is insufficiently used to help pupils to learn. The exception to this is pupils with special educational needs. These pupils make good use of computers to help them to practise their skills and consolidate their learning.

## SCIENCE

164. In the National Curriculum teacher assessments in 2000 all 7-year-old pupils reached the standard expected for this age and a well above average number of pupils exceeded this standard. Compared with all schools, these assessments put the school in the top 5 per cent of all schools in England. In the National Curriculum statutory tests taken by 11-year olds in May 2000, standards were well above those found in all schools and in similar schools.
165. Standards have improved since the last inspection when they were average at the age of 7 and above average at the age of 11 years. Over the last four years standards have remained well above average at the age of 11, with the exception of one year when they were above average. Based on pupils' prior attainment at the end age of 7, pupils in last year's Year 6 class made very good progress to the age of 11 years.
166. During the inspection, no science was being taught in the Key Stage 1 class because of the school's topic work schedule. Judgements for this key stage are based on examination of pupils' work on light and on the topic 'My body, sound and hearing'. This work indicates that pupils at the age of seven make very good progress in developing as scientists. Their work on light shows they have a very good knowledge of the topic and can name a variety of light sources. They appreciate that different coloured lights can be used as warnings, know about the properties of transparent, translucent and opaque materials and how shadows are formed.
167. Pupils' work shows that they have approached it systematically and kept careful records. Their writing shows a good degree of independence and this is a particularly strong feature of their work. They have a very good appreciation of the design of investigations and know about the conditions for fair testing. They have a very good understanding of how changing one variable quantity in an experiment brings about a change in another and they describe this variation accurately using appropriate scientific language.
168. Their work on the body, sound and hearing indicates that they have a sound understanding of how the senses help us to detect what is happening around us. This work is extensively recorded. Pupils use pro-forma worksheets to assist their recording and write about their findings at length.
169. On the basis of the available evidence, these young pupils are making very good progress in developing good scientific approaches to their work. The subject matter is covered in depth and there is a good balance between developing pupils' knowledge and understanding and their thinking and practical skills. The thoroughness of the study is making an important contribution to the high standards pupils achieve. Very good opportunities are taken to help pupils to consolidate their understanding through writing about what they have learned and what they have done and found out. This makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills.
170. By the age of 11 pupils are very good scientists for their age. They write very well about their investigations. They record their predictions, list the equipment used and write at length, including very good levels of detail about what they have done and what they have found out. They have good recording skills and use tally charts and tables to organise their findings. They are making very good attempts to explain what they have found out, drawing on their own findings and previous knowledge. Their work covers all aspects of the curriculum and includes longer-term investigations, such as that of seed germination, as well as experiments completed in the shorter term, such as investigating stretching rubber bands.



171. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good. Pupils of all abilities are making good progress. Teachers challenge pupils to think for themselves and to relate their learning in science to their everyday lives; for example, when considering the water cycle in Year 3 and in work on teeth undertaken by the class of Year 6 and Year 5 pupils. Teachers emphasise the correct use of technical terms and encourage pupils to use these for themselves. This helps pupils to express their ideas clearly and unambiguously and helps them to make progress. Teachers are very good at exciting pupils' interest and curiosity as, for example, through practical investigations in the lesson on the analysis of ink in Year 3 and in the lesson on solubility in the class containing Year 4 and the youngest Year 5 pupils. In both of these lessons, teachers briefed the pupils well and made it clear what was expected of them. Appropriate attention was paid to pupils' safety and health warnings were given. Because the pupils were so interested in what they were doing and wanted to get on, these warnings were observed without exception.
172. Teachers value pupils' good, responsible attitudes to their work and praise them for it. This encourages pupils to work even harder. Teachers pay close attention to helping pupils to develop their observational skills. In one lesson, the teacher made very good use of one pupil's observation in order to discuss how future investigations might be undertaken. This is a good feature of teaching because it helps pupils to appreciate that scientific knowledge is wide-ranging and not compartmentalised. Teachers are very aware of the needs of individual pupils and appropriate support is given to help all to make optimum progress in lessons. Teachers know their pupils well and pay attention to extending the more-able through closer questioning and to ensuring that those who have problems concentrating remain motivated to learn.
173. In both key stages, the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well. No significant differences in the performances of boys and girls were noted during the inspection. However, although the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good, there are some shortcomings. Pupils in Year 5, who are divided between two classes, do not have total parity of experience. Although they basically cover the same material, teachers' expectations are not the same in respect of the standard of pupils' written work and in the presentation of their findings. The school has a protocol to address the issue of split year groups, but in this instance it is not fully effective in consistency between the two classes.
174. Teachers do not always make the best use of visual aids to help them. In one lesson seen, video material was too long and this shortened the time available for pupils to work independently. In another lesson, on teeth, no visual aids were used at all where photographs or models would have helped to focus pupils' attention and moved learning on faster. Little evidence of the use of ICT to support pupils' learning in this subject was seen during the inspection.
175. Pupils are provided with a good curriculum in science, which is placing appropriate emphasis on all aspects of pupils' learning, developing their scientific practical and thinking skills as well as their knowledge and understanding. A particularly strong feature of the teaching in both key stages is the emphasis placed on developing independence in pupils. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils in this respect and they respond very well. Teachers in Key Stage 2 build very effectively on the very good start pupils make in Key Stage 1 on recording their own work independently.
176. As they move through the school pupils become very good at writing about what they have done and what they have seen. Their writing has good levels of detail, events are recounted in sequence and diagrams are used appropriately. There is evidence that pupils are drawing on their good scientific training and are looking for patterns and

relationships within their findings. The more-able pupils are spontaneously mentioning possible relationships between the quantities they are measuring. This is very good.

## ART AND DESIGN

177. At the age of 7 standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with expectations. At the age of 11, standards have improved from being in line with those expected to being above those expected. No differences in the performance of boys and girls were noted in either key stage.
178. In Key Stage 1, pupils of all abilities, including the more-able and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. In their self-portraits they have mixed colours successfully to achieve desired flesh tones and they have experimented with different types of brushes and brush strokes in their depiction of hair. Much of the work in art and design in this class is linked to pupils' work in literacy. They have produced colourful illustrations of some of their favourite stories, such as *The Bear Hunt* and *Little Red Riding Hood*, using pastels and paint.
179. In the lesson seen in Key Stage 1, pupils were studying aspects of the work of Mondrian. They observed closely and commented on his use of vertical and horizontal lines and the use of colour. Their teacher asked good, pertinent questions and paid close attention to developing pupils' correct use of related vocabulary. This helped pupils to express their ideas clearly in discussion. Pupils' work in the style of the artist showed that they were aware of the important characteristics of the artist's approaches and techniques. The teaching was satisfactory. A weakness was that following a brisk, highly focused start, it took a while for pupils to settle to the task of painting and valuable time was lost.
180. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to build on their earlier work. Pupils successfully develop their drawing and painting skills. For example, in Year 3 they have used a viewfinder to help them in their studies of leaves. Their final images show good awareness of colour and tone and an appreciation of contrast. This work is detailed and small scale. Pupils' final pieces have combined four images. They have taken great pride in their achievements and framed their work using gold card frames and string collage. Pupils in Year 3 have also studied portraits, concentrating on those containing two people, and have used the works of a range of artists, including Picasso and Gainsborough, and photographic images to help them. They are making very good use of sketchbooks to support them in this work.
181. Pupils in Year 6 and the oldest pupils in Year 5 have been working in watercolour. They have painted in small groups to produce collaborative works inspired by the *Planets Suite* by Holst. This very detailed work shows evidence of good brush control and very good appreciation of the use of colour and tone. This work has required much patience and concentration.
182. On the basis of all the evidence available, teaching in Key Stage 2 is good. Pupils are being provided with a range of experiences, including work in three dimensions, and make good progress. They are being challenged to think for themselves, enabled to develop a range of skills and techniques and encouraged to think critically about the work of other artists.
183. In the lesson seen in Key Stage 2, older pupils in Year 4 and the younger pupils in Year 5 considered portraits of individuals and how we learn about people from their portraits. Their work shows that they appreciate how artists compose a portrait and select elements that they wish to incorporate to give information about the sitter. Very good teaching in this lesson ensured that pupils made very good progress. The lesson was very well

planned. Provision was made for pupils to gather information from the Internet to extend their knowledge of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The introduction was animated and pupils' imaginations were quickly captured. Very good reference was made to pictures displayed in the classroom, which pupils had had opportunities to examine earlier. These were by a range of artists from different periods, including Gilbert & George, John William Waterhouse and Michaelangelo. Pupils were encouraged to explore drawing portraits of themselves in their sketchbooks. Throughout this period the teacher, who challenged them to think for themselves, gave them very good support. This enabled them to develop and improve the quality of their work during the lesson.

184. The teacher further extended pupils' thinking during a discussion at the end of the lesson, which drew together a range of ideas. He offered good leadership in providing a demonstration as the basis of the discussion, together with very good questioning and use of pupils' own ideas to help them to develop appreciation of facial proportions. Although this work was clearly intended to provide a basis for development during the next lesson, sufficient time was allowed for pupils to begin to use the information immediately. This was good management as at the end of the lesson pupils were eager to develop their work and to try out more ideas. They looked forward to 'next time'.
185. This lesson made a significant contribution to pupils' development outside the immediate subject area of art and design. It made a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development as they were challenged to think about themselves and what makes them the people they are and to respect individual differences. It made a very good contribution to pupils' language development. The teacher used a very good range of language in discussions with pupils, which they in turn adopted and used in their replies. It also provided pupils with further opportunities to practise their skills in using the Internet. The very good teaching in this lesson meant that pupils were motivated to work hard from the start. Their attitudes to work were mature and responsible. They got on well with their tasks. By the end of the lesson pupils had made very good progress in developing their ideas.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

186. Only one lesson was seen in Key Stage 1 and there was only a limited range of pupils' work available for examination. In all, insufficient evidence was available to enable a firm judgement to be made on standards at the age of 7 years. At the age of 11, standards are in line with those expected. At the time of the last inspection standards were in line with those expected at the ages of 7 and 11 years.
187. In both key stages, pupils of all ages and abilities are making satisfactory progress. No differences in the achievements of boys and girls were noted during the inspection.
188. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are making satisfactory progress in their designing and making skills. They have made a model of the village using paper and card, in a project linked to their work in geography. They have also had opportunities to develop their sewing skills in designing and making a Christmas decoration in felt. In the lesson seen, pupils generated a range of good ideas about making a book with moving pictures.
189. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. It is helping pupils to develop good strategies for approaching design problems through focusing their thinking by considering examples. For example, in the lesson seen pupils' attention was drawn to examples of 'pop up' mechanisms in books and this led to good, creative thinking later. However, the lack of firm guidance in this lesson about the way in which pupils' work was to be used subsequently meant that they were not able to make the best of progress. This contributed to pupils' losing concentration, which also slowed down progress.

190. Pupils in Key Stage 2 work on a range of projects and by the age of 11 they have a sound understanding of how things are designed and made. They have experiences with a range of materials, including paper and card, textiles, wood and food. They are developing their skills of measuring, cutting and joining materials. They take a critical approach to their work and understand the role of evaluation in helping them to judge the quality of their work and how it might be improved.
191. No complete lessons were seen in Key Stage 2 but, taking all the evidence into account, teaching is at least satisfactory. Only a brief fragment of direct teaching was seen. The teacher was helping pupils to evaluate work with food they had just completed with a parent helper. The questioning was penetrating and helped pupils to think about what they had achieved. The range of relevant language used was very good. Pupils were thereby equipped with the means of expressing their ideas succinctly. This enabled them to place their learning in perspective and helped them to make progress in developing their skills of evaluation. Other evidence from examination of pupils' work indicates that pupils are suitably challenged and appropriately supported so that they make progress.
192. In Year 3, a project on sandwiches was well planned, giving opportunities for pupils to record their work as they went along and to return to it later. Pupils' responses to this work indicate that they have been engrossed in the project and have worked through every stage of the process carefully. This attention to detail in teaching is ensuring that pupils learn well, practising their skills of designing and evaluating their work regularly.
193. The curriculum for design and technology is satisfactory, although pupils make insufficient use of ICT to support their learning. Good links are made between design and technology and other subjects of the curriculum. For example, pupils in the mixed class of Year 4 and Year 5 pupils have undertaken designing and making in connection with their work on the Ancient Egyptians in history. In the mixed Year 5 and Year 6 class, the project has been planned to link with work in English. Pupils have designed and made marionettes and puppet theatres and written plays. Links with other curriculum areas were remarked upon as a feature of the teaching at the time of the last inspection.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

194. At the time of the last inspection, standards in both geography and history were reported to be in line with those expected of pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 years. There were limited opportunities to observe geography during the inspection. Due to the way in which these subjects are taught as part of the school's topic plan, no history was being taught in this half term. Judgements, therefore, draw upon those lessons seen, pupils' work, teachers' planning and other documentation.
195. In **history**, standards are similar to those expected of pupils at the age of 7 and above those expected at the age of 11 years. Pupils at Key Stage 1 are developing a sense of time. They recognise the different generations in their families and can point out features around the village that belong to different eras. They can identify differences between 'then' and 'now'.
196. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have recently studied Egypt. They have made comparisons between the ancient and modern periods and looked particularly at aspects of social history, including travel, food and technology. As part of their studies, they visited the Ashmolean Museum in nearby Oxford where many concentrated their attention on mummification. In discussions about this work, inspectors were spared no detail, however small, about the whole process. Pupils demonstrated not only that they were well informed about the whole subject, but that they had carefully considered it from a

number of viewpoints. They showed that they understood the underlying cultural reasons for mummification and a respect for the customs and beliefs of the Ancient Egyptians. In this way they are becoming successful historians.

197. In **geography**, standards are similar to those expected for pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 years. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are studying their locality and comparing it to a Scottish island through the story of *Katie Morag*. They demonstrate a clear knowledge of where they live and what is nearby. They are able to draw a simple map to show where they live and add neighbouring features, labelling these appropriately. In listening to the story, they identify similar features, such as shops and post office, and understand how important these are to village communities.
198. Pupils in the Years 4 and 5 class are studying water. As part of their work, they are studying how water is stored and cleaned before use and how used water is disposed of. Pupils understand the roles of reservoirs and sewage farms and appreciate that water is used for a variety of purposes both in the home and in industry. They further know that all-year-round supplies are required and that water is a finite resource.
199. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. At Key Stage 1 pupils showed a good level of interest in their initial work and applied themselves well to the task. However, when given a similar task following the story, some found the concept to be difficult to visualise while others tended to dominate the activity. At Key Stage 2 too much time was spent discussing the work to be done. The pace of the lesson was slow and learning, whilst satisfactory, was not extended. No particular differences were observed in what was provided for pupils who learn at different rates, including those with special educational needs.
200. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are generally good. Younger pupils are inclined to lose interest when they are not fully challenged and some persist in chattering despite requests not to do so from their teacher.
201. Resources for both geography and history are satisfactory. The school makes good use of opportunities to make visits in the locality in order to enhance pupils' learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

202. Standards are in line with those expected at the ages of 7 and 11 years. These judgements reflect those made at the time of the last inspection, although some of the weaknesses identified in the previous report, relating mainly to the opportunities pupils have for using computers during lessons, are still present.
203. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are familiar with the computer and know how to load and run a program. Their skills in using the keyboard and controlling the mouse are satisfactory. Pupils are familiar with a range of programs. For example, they use one to help them to draw in art. They know how to 'maximise' and 'minimise' the image and click confidently on the relevant icons.
204. In Key Stage 2, pupils further develop their use of ICT. Many pupils have computers at home and draw on their experiences outside school to support them in developing and practising their computer skills. By the age of 11 pupils use computers for word-processing and run the spell and grammar check features of the program successfully. They change fonts and colour. They have experience of using CD-ROMs to find out information, to run simulations and to play games. They access the Internet and send e-mails. Pupils in the mixed Year 5 and Year 6 class are learning to use databases to support their work in mathematics.

205. Pupils have a satisfactory range of opportunities in school to use ICT equipment other than computers. They learn how to program a toy. They use tape recorders and older pupils also answer the office telephone during the lunch hours. The cramped conditions in the hall, however, make it difficult for pupils to gain experience of operating the sound system that provides the music played at the start and end of acts of collective worship.
206. Teaching is satisfactory in both key stages, but there are weaknesses. In many curriculum subjects, insufficient use is made of computers to support learning. Although pupils are taught how to use computers, they are not confident in their understanding of the computer as a tool for learning. For example, they are hesitant in describing how the computer can be used to draft pieces of extended writing.
207. Generally speaking, insufficient use is made of computers in lessons and pupils are not making sufficient progress in honing their keyboard skills to enable them to work quickly and confidently. Teachers use computer programs to support learning in English and in mathematics for pupils with special educational needs. However, sometimes in Key Stage 1 the activities pupils undertake are not sufficiently demanding to help them to make significant progress.
208. The school has identified this area of the work for development. It acknowledges that the curriculum needs broadening and that greater use could be made of ICT generally to enrich pupils' learning. Staff have received recent training and are growing in confidence. The school has extended and improved the range of equipment available, but as yet is not using it fully. For example, no instances of use of the school's digital camera or scanner were seen during the inspection. The school's links with other institutions in Europe have provided the impetus for recent developments in this area. Pupils send e-mails to other pupils abroad. The school has yet to formally agree its approach as to how the recent improvements in equipment and in staff expertise are going to be systematically developed in order to improve the use and application of ICT across the curriculum.

## **MUSIC**

209. It was only possible to observe one class music lesson during the inspection, but there was an opportunity to observe an instrumental woodwind lesson taught by a visiting teacher. On the basis of the evidence available, it is judged that the satisfactory standards reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.
210. The school has adopted commercial materials as the basis of its music provision. Over time all elements of the National Curriculum orders are covered. These consist of a series of recorded lessons, which are used appropriately by class teachers as the basis of their lessons. In the lesson observed, in Year 3, pupils demonstrated good recall of an earlier lesson on chants. The majority of pupils were able to follow a given beat, although they had some difficulty in maintaining a steady pulse on their own. During the lesson pupils made satisfactory progress, practising clapping a four-beat rhythm as an accompaniment to a pentatonic melody played by one of their number on a tuned percussion instrument. The majority of pupils concentrated satisfactorily on their given tasks, but a small number were easily distracted.
211. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The lesson was carefully planned and prepared, with appropriate resources readily available. One of the shortcomings was that the pace slowed, giving rise to some pupils losing interest and some inappropriate behaviour.
212. The quality of the instrumental teaching is good. Good relationships are evident between teachers and pupils. There is a good commitment from pupils to practising and

developing skills and techniques. In the lesson seen, the teacher had transposed a number of familiar pieces to enable pupils to develop their technique when moving to a higher register. Through a good combination of example and encouragement, the teacher challenged the pupils to improve yet ensured that this challenge was achievable. This made a considerable contribution to the good quality of learning.

213. A significant number of pupils sing and play in concerts and productions staged during the course of each school year. Those who learn instruments in school perform well together as a school orchestra.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

214. Standards of work seen during the inspection are in line with those expected of pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 years. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection.
215. Pupils at both key stages are aware of a range of approaches to travelling in different directions. They make good use of body parts to balance and jump imaginatively. They are able to evaluate the features they like of their and other's work. When practising team game skills, pupils throw and catch in different ways with increasing control and co-ordination. In a team situation, they appreciate the importance of all being involved. A particular feature of the school's provision is that the specific needs of all pupils are met in order that they may participate fully in class activities.
216. The school makes every effort to provide a full range of activities, but there are a number of issues resulting from the lack of suitable accommodation on the school site that militates against this. Extensions to the school have reduced the amount of hard surfaced area available for outside games. The school field is often waterlogged and the school hall too small for any class-based physical activity to take place. The village hall is used for gymnastics and dance lessons, but there are a number of safety issues. These are particularly to do with the movement of pupils along the road, which leads from the village to the nearby motorway junction, and with the movement and storage of teaching equipment.
217. Despite the best efforts of the school and the village hall committee, the present arrangements have a considerable impact on pupils' learning and the standards they achieve in lessons. In the lessons seen, considerable time was spent in getting pupils down to the village hall, changed and the necessary equipment in place. The amount of teaching time available was, in proportion, limited. The temperature in the hall was particularly low and both adults and pupils were cold. Inspectors felt that it was unreasonable to make judgements about the quality of teaching when circumstances significantly beyond the reasonable control of the teachers concerned resulted in unsatisfactory learning and limited progress being made by pupils.
218. In the games lesson seen, which was ultimately curtailed by driving wind and rain, both teaching and learning were sound. Pupils worked well together to develop and practise skills and took very little notice of the adverse weather. A particular feature of this lesson was the good working relationship evident between the teacher and the pupils. This kept everyone actively involved in the lesson.
219. The school makes full use of its allocation of time at the swimming pool in Aylesbury, despite the fact that this involves a significant amount of travelling time. It reports that the vast majority of pupils achieve or exceed the standard expected in swimming at the end of Year 6.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 220. The findings of this inspection indicate that standards are similar to those expected of pupils in the Buckinghamshire Locally Agreed Syllabus at the ages of 7 and 11 years. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection.
- 221. There were limited opportunities to observe religious education lessons during the inspection. A lesson was seen in each key stage. Judgements are, therefore, based on the available evidence, including a scrutiny of pupils' written work, and through discussions with pupils.
- 222. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 know the major Christian festivals and discuss when these arise during the year. They appreciate the significance of birthdays and anniversaries and recognise the importance of celebration. They are developing a knowledge of the festivals and celebrations of other world faiths.
- 223. In the one lesson seen at this key stage during the inspection, pupils listened carefully to stories about Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday. They understood that Jesus went into the wilderness for 40 days and nights. The quality of teaching and learning in this lesson was, however, unsatisfactory as the activity given to the class was not readily understood by all pupils. The teacher did not share the objectives for the lesson with the pupils. The slow pace of the lesson and their lack of understanding led to chatter and low levels of productivity from pupils. The oldest and ablest pupils were given the same task as the youngest and those who needed help. This provided little challenge for a significant number of pupils.
- 224. At Key Stage 2 pupils make comparisons between three world religions. They have compared the Rites of Passage in Judaism, Islam and Christianity; they have compared different places of worship, Holy books and artefacts. Some pupils have examined the different styles of writing in the Bible, identifying the use of narrative in Genesis, poetry in Psalm 23 and recount in Corinthians. They are familiar with the life of Moses and the prophet Muhammad.
- 225. In the lesson seen at Key Stage 2, pupils were encouraged to compare and contrast different people's values through looking at the contents of two treasure chests. They then wrote their own lists of what they valued most and then discussed these with their partners. These skills were then applied to looking at photographs of various churches. Pupils had to sort these into two groups, simple and decorated, and then explain their reasoning. They approached their work sensibly and with enthusiasm. They worked well together and listened intently to each other's contributions, which were clearly valued. They concluded that different styles of church buildings do not necessarily affect people's values.
- 226. The quality of teaching in this lesson was good. The teacher shared the objectives for the lesson with pupils and ensured that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, were able to take a full and challenging part. The lesson moved along at a good pace and good preparation and organisation ensured that pupils were able to make good progress. The closing part of the lesson, the plenary, was well managed and allowed time for the key points to emerge from the lesson to be successfully drawn together.
- 227. The school has built up a collection of artefacts to support the teaching of religious education. The agreed syllabus is in the process of being revised and the school awaits the outcome before bringing about changes to its curriculum.