

INSPECTION REPORT

BURNHAM-ON-SEA INFANTS SCHOOL

Burnham-on-Sea

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123682

Headteacher: Mrs Sue Horne

Reporting inspector: Mrs Kay Cornish
21080

Dates of inspection: 14th – 17th February 2000

Inspection number: 196789

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Winchester Road Burnham-on-Sea Somerset
Postcode:	TA8 1JD
Telephone number:	01278 782342
Fax number:	01278 794744
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Clayton
Date of previous inspection:	July 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Kay Cornish	Registered inspector	Mathematics Religious education Art Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Brian Rance	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Denise Morris	Team inspector	English Information technology History Under-fives Special educational needs English as an additional language	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
Steve Hill	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Geography Physical education Equal opportunities	How good are curricular opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

Evenlode Associates Limited
6 Abbey Close
Alcester
Warwickshire
B49 5QW

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	06 - 09
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	11
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	16
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	19
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	23

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Burnham-on-Sea Infants School is maintained by Somerset Education Authority. The new building has been on the site since January 1989, pupils having been moved from an old Victorian building elsewhere in the town. It is deemed a small school, but numbers have risen and there are currently 157 pupils on roll aged between four and seven years, and rising. Most children commencing at the school have experience of pre-school education. Children have wide levels of attainment on entry, and although a few have attainment above national expectations when they begin school, the majority are below the expected levels. The community of Burnham-on-Sea Infants School has mixed levels of economic and social deprivation, widely divergent.

The school is on an attractive site with an adjoining flat play area. It is organised into six classes and the average class size is 26, which is broadly average. The number of pupils for whom English is an additional language is three, approximately 1.8 per cent which is above the figure for most schools. Twenty-three pupils are entitled to free school meals, approximately 14.6 per cent, which is below the average nationally. However, since Somerset Education Authority do not provide a cooked meals service, there are a number of families who do not claim for a school packed lunch. At the time of the inspection, there were 34 pupils on the school's register for special educational needs. This is approximately 22 per cent, which is higher than the national average. One pupil has a Statement and this is less than the national average.

During the previous three years, the school has experienced significant changes in leadership, staffing and governors. The turbulence is beginning to settle and the school is entering a new period of stability. The school enjoys and appreciates good support from parents and the community.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Burnham-on-Sea Infants is an effective school that provides a good quality of education. It consistently helps pupils to achieve standards that are in line with national expectations, and in some aspects even higher. Pupils' learning is overall good. Good teaching impacts substantially on pupils' learning and progress. The high quality of leadership constantly strives to achieve higher standards in all aspects of the school's development. The school gives good value for money. The significant strengths of the school outweigh those areas in need of improvement.

What the school does well

- The headteacher leads the school with dedication and a very good grasp of the school's needs. She is well supported by a talented deputy and a hard working staff.
- The committed governing body has a good grasp of the strengths and needs of the school.
- Teaching is a major strength of the school and has a significant impact on the pupils' learning.
- New entrants are given a very good start in their education through a lively, well-balanced under-fives programme.
- The co-ordinator and learning support staff ensure that the provision for special educational needs is good.
- The implementation of the reading and numeracy strategies has been successful.
- Pupils make particularly good progress in learning in art, design and technology and physical education, and standards are higher.
- The good behaviour, attitudes and relationships of pupils is ensured by all staff who give very good care and protection.
- The school's links with parents are very good.

What could be improved

- Pupils' standards of writing in English and other subjects.
- The systems for co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate teaching and pupils' standards in order to improve the progress of pupils' skills in all subjects.
- Improve the use of information technology in all subjects in order to reach the high standards of its use in numeracy.
- The organisation of the timetable to avoid over-long lessons.
- The attendance figures.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the previous inspection in July 1996, there has been appropriate improvement. Despite a reduced timetable to implement change, the new, and now permanent leadership of the headteacher and deputy, has rectified all the key issues apart from the need to improve writing standards still further. There is now improved provision for implementing the new reading and numeracy strategies. Teaching has improved significantly from its 21 per cent unsatisfactory standard, to overall good teaching now. Teaching is now a major strength. Standards overall have been maintained or risen. Planning of the curriculum and lessons is now much clearer. A new school development plan is informative and carefully prioritised with financial allocation. Child protection and pupils' welfare procedures are greatly improved and now very good. Collective worship fully complies with statutory requirements now.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	E	E	E	E
Writing	E	E	E	E*
Mathematics	D	C	E	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The low scores reflect a number of issues. Firstly the cohort of 1998/1999 included a larger number of pupils with special educational needs. In addition, as many as half the number of pupils had moved into the specific year group from other schools. A similar number over time, had moved out of the year group and neighbourhood. There was a significant amount of turbulence in the temporary leadership of the school during the period 1996 to 1998, before the present headteacher and her deputy were permanently appointed by Autumn 1998.

A different picture emerges during the inspection of 2000. Pupils' attainment shows a significant improvement. Standards in all year groups have improved. This improvement is due to the present good teaching and new leadership.

Children enter school in the under-fives age group with skills which are below national expectations, although a group of children perform above the expected level on entry. They make good progress and attain the desired learning goals by the time they are five. In Reception and Year 1 classes, pupils show standards emerging with definite upward trends in all areas of learning.

During the inspection, standards in the core subjects at the end of Key Stage 1 are mainly in line with the national averages, apart from writing. Standards in religious education are in line with the expected levels of the local education authority's agreed syllabus. Pupils' progress in history, geography and music is in line with national expectations throughout all classes. There are higher standards than normally seen and

good progress in art, design and technology and physical education. Progress and learning are good overall, and improved from 1999. They reflect the impact of good teaching and provision.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are keen and eager to come to school. They show good levels of interest in their lessons and take part with enthusiasm in the variety of activities provided.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is generally good across the school. No evidence of aggressive or bullying behaviour was observed.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are helpful and independent. Relationships are good. Pupils have significant respect for the feelings, values and opinions of others.
Attendance	Overall, attendance is unsatisfactory. Despite the hard work of the school to implement the procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance, a few families' poor attendance records pull down the overall statistics for the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good

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

Throughout the school, the quality of teaching and learning was predominantly good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching of lessons. Teaching in one in five lessons seen was very good. In nearly half the lessons, teaching was good. The remainder of the lessons were at least satisfactory. Examples of good teaching were seen in all classes. These high overall standards in teaching make a significant impact on pupils' improved learning. There are, however, weaknesses in the provision and teaching of writing skills in English lessons and for other subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	In the main, the curriculum is broad and balanced, apart from insufficient opportunities given for pupils to write. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. Apart from writing, planning for the literacy strategy is mainly effective and good for reading. The implementation of the numeracy strategy is good. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good. All pupils are integrated well into activities regardless of gender, prior attainment or ethnic origin.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	All pupils with special educational needs are welcomed and make satisfactory progress. The highly qualified and hard-working co-ordinator and all the support staff work sensitively to meet the needs of all pupils in their care.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. They receive good extra provision through the local education authority's external agency staff.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The overall provision is good. Spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Procedures to encourage moral and social development are good. The management of behaviour is often very good. The school encourages a well-developed sense of mutual responsibility and protection of people and the environment.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are satisfactory procedures implemented to assess all pupils. Apart from the analysis of whole-school performance of science being in its early stages of development, assessment is used satisfactorily to inform whole-

	school planning. Assessment is used well in numeracy. There are very good procedures used for child protection and pupils' welfare. The quality of support is very good. The school is clean and well maintained. All staff, including meal-time assistants, ensure that pupils are well supported in an orderly community.
--	---

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The quality of leadership and management is very good. The dedicated headteacher has successfully led a number of effective developments over the previous two years. She is well supported by a talented deputy. All the enthusiastic staff work well as a team and carry out their duties conscientiously.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The Chair of Governors cares for the school and is hard working. He has ably led his governors through a period of extreme turbulence in the history of the school's development. Through his example, the governors are closely involved with the life of the school. The school is now set to develop strongly with its good image in the community and numbers of pupils rising.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is very good at evaluating its own strengths and weaknesses. All the key issues of the previous report have been rectified and within a reduced timescale, despite the turbulence created by a temporary headship and deputy headship. The school has already identified the present areas for development in order to raise provision and standards further.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its resources of the budget and accommodation in an informed way and prudently. The school's financial and daily administration are most efficient. The structure of timetable is an area for development, which the school has identified.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The good start children receive. • Pupils' progress and standards of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. • The procedures to encourage good behaviour and caring attitudes. • The good information that is provided. • The approachability of all staff. • The warm encouragement to come into school. • The good Parent/Teacher Association. • The stable atmosphere and new leadership after an unsettled period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no major concerns voiced, however, one parent was concerned about the cleanliness of the toilets.

The inspection team agrees with all the parents' positive views about the school.

To reassure parents, the inspectors found that the toilets were cleaned daily and were hygienic.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The National Curriculum test results in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1, show a drop from the previous year's scores of below average, in reading, writing and mathematics to well below the national average and schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Attainment in science was slightly below the national interpretation for the end of Key Stage 1. However, higher attainers in reading and writing were slightly above the national averages for pupils at Level 3 of the National Curriculum. In science, higher attainers' results were slightly above the national interpretation of standards at Level 3.
2. Taking trends over time from 1996 to 1998 inclusive, the school's results in reading, writing and mathematics show a sharper upward trend than the national average. There is very little difference between the scores of girls and boys at the school during the same period. Both groups scored better at mathematics than at reading and writing.
3. The sharp drop in scores of the 1998 to 1999 cohort reflect a number of issues. Firstly, the cohort included a larger number of pupils with special educational needs. In addition, as many as half the number of pupils had recently moved into the specific Year 2 age group from other schools. A similar number over time had moved out of the year group, showing the effect of transient families in the neighbourhood at the time. In addition, there was a significant amount of turbulence in the temporary leadership of the school during the period 1996 to 1998, before the present headteacher and her deputy were permanently appointed in autumn 1998. There had been significant changes in the governing body. There was also a loss of confidence within staff during the influential period of 1996 onwards. All these factors have influenced the resulting drop in National Curriculum test results in 1999.
4. A different picture emerges during the inspection of 2000. Pupils' attainment shows a significant improvement. Standards in all year groups have improved. They have significantly improved in the under-fives, in Reception and Year 1 classes, with these pupils showing standards with definite average results in subject learnt. Pupils with special educational needs have good support and make satisfactory progress towards their individual targets. Pupils who speak English as an additional language at home, make good progress with good visiting teacher support. There are no significant differences in the standards achieved by pupils of different gender or ethnic background.
5. Although the school's results in the National Curriculum tests of 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1 were well below the national averages and interpretation, standards of pupils are now much better, apart from pupils' skills for writing in both English and in other subjects.
6. Children enter school in the under-five age group with overall skills which are below national expectations. There is a very wide range of prior attainment which includes a proportion of higher attainers as well as children with special educational needs. All make good achievement overall,

and by the time children reach the age of five years, the majority are in line with the desired early learning goals, apart from language and literacy, where they are still below expected levels.

7. During the inspection, the attainment of pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, mathematics, science and information technology is in line with the national average. Writing standards are below the national average. Standards in religious education are in line with the expected levels of the local authority's agreed syllabus. Pupils' standards in history, geography and music are in line with national expectations throughout all classes. There are higher standards and pupils make better achievement than that normally seen in art, design and technology and physical education. Since 1999, pupils' learning is good and reflects the good teaching and provision.
8. Overall, standards have been maintained since the previous inspection in 1996. However, there has been insufficient improvement in writing since the previous inspection, when standards were also below national averages. Reading standards have improved since the previous report when the National Curriculum test results showed standards below the national average.
9. The school has now stabilised. Apart from the special educational needs factor still influencing results moderately, the other influencing factors of temporary leadership, vacancies in the governing body, transient families and a loss of staff confidence impacting on results and progress, have now been mainly overcome. Trends clearly show a rise in standards and progress coming through the school with younger pupils. The influences of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been good and had a positive effect on pupils' skills. The school has already identified writing standards as a problem to be rectified and has begun to take steps to improve this aspect of literacy.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils' attitudes to others with special educational needs and to those with English as an additional language are equally positive. Pupils are keen and eager to come to school, they show good levels of interest in their lessons and take part with enthusiasm in the variety of activities provided. Attitudes are particularly good in lessons where pupils work with a variety of artefacts and resources which sustain their interest and encourage them to find out things for themselves. For example, in Year 1 where pupils use real lamps in history as they search for answers about changes over time. Also, in Year 2 in science, where pupils are fully involved as they learn about bacteria and viruses. Pupils contribute thoughtfully in many lessons. This is particularly evident in Year 1 science, where pupils try to get a bulb to light.
11. Pupils' behaviour is generally good across the school. They behave best when lessons are well organised, with an effective range of resources and activities to keep their interest. This is particularly evident in Year 2 science, where pupils behave very well as they concentrate hard while undertaking practical activities. Pupils behave well in the playground and during the lunch break. They play together and take turns with equipment. No evidence of aggressive or bullying behaviour was observed. Pupils are usually polite, and are keen to show their work. There has been one fixed-term exclusion in the past year. A few minor incidents of silly behaviour and some noisy disruptions occurred during the inspection, particularly when lessons were overlong. For example, in some literacy lessons and one physical education lesson, pupils became tired by the end of the session.
12. Pupils' personal development is good. They are beginning to develop independence in a range of lessons and activities. For example, they are able to change for physical education independently from the earliest years. Pupils help to prepare for break times, and take responsibility for their own lunches. Relationships across the school are very good. Staff and pupils respect each other. Pupils are well cared for and this gives them the confidence to enjoy school. In free-play activities for the under-fives, children are becoming co-operative. For example, in the early years class, they

dig for 'buried treasure' in the sand in a very harmonious way. Pupils show evidence of respect for others during whole-school assemblies, and during religious education lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. During the week of the inspection, the quality of teaching observed in lessons was overall good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Of the lessons seen, teaching in one in five lessons was very good; these lessons included some excellent aspects. Teaching in nearly half of lessons was good. The remainder of the lessons were satisfactory. Examples of very good teaching were seen in Reception and Year 1 classes. In all year groups there was good teaching. These high overall standards in teaching make a significant impact on pupils' improved learning.
14. Overall, the teaching of literacy and numeracy at Key Stage 1 is good with some very good features in evidence. Strengths are in the teaching of reading so that pupils understand the text of their books, and they remember good phonic strategies when meeting new words. However, the teaching of reading is of a higher standard than the teaching of writing. The teaching of formal recording by pupils of their own thoughts and the refining of their styles of writing are underdeveloped. Strengths in the teaching of numeracy can be seen when teachers encourage pupils to estimate before calculating, and when reinforcing the idea of place value. The teaching of strategies to enable pupils to calculate mentally with confidence is good. The teaching of the concepts linked to shape, space and measure is also good.
15. However, an analysis of pupils' work indicates that even though teachers are very competent in teaching literacy and numeracy and all other subjects, there are weaknesses in the provision and teaching of writing skills, both in English lessons and across all areas of the curriculum. This is unsatisfactory. Insufficient provision is made to enable pupils to write their own thoughts fluently in sentences, to practise better joins in handwriting, to enrich pupils' vocabulary and to encourage more use of picture and word dictionaries. In other subjects, there is a lack of time allowed for pupils to write more extensively. The use of information technology to impact upon literacy is not yet fully developed, although a good start has been made.
16. Teaching in the under-fives is good overall. The teaching of literacy and numeracy in the under-fives is generally very good. Some aspects, such as the management of children, the methods used to challenge and engage their interest, and the use of resources to capture children's imagination, are excellent and most appropriate for very young children. Children are encouraged to develop confidence and independence. The balance between teacher-directed tasks and those which are child-initiated, is very good. Children's development is carefully monitored daily and good records are kept of the assessments made.
17. Throughout all classes, teachers are conscientious and give a lot of their own personal time to help pupils. They have good knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the under-fives and of the subjects of Key Stage 1. Teachers are technically competent in teaching phonics and the basic skills of counting, ordering and recording numerals. Planning is good overall; it is very good in mathematics. Generally, most of the work is well matched to pupils' needs and precise targets are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons. Planning within year groups is very good so that all pupils meet with similar challenges and opportunities.
18. In the best of teaching, pupils are challenged and inspired to become imaginatively involved in their learning. An example of this is when very young pupils crept around in hushed tones reorganising numbers one to ten in reverse order on a line, in case the naughty toy bear hidden in the cupboard found out about their 'trick'. In the best lessons, the type of questions asked ensure that pupils make evaluative comments and think perceptively about their work. Teachers are well organised and their classrooms have highly focused areas of learning, such as in the alteration of one small room adjoining a class into a 'museum' which holds Victorian artefacts, resplendent with a dummy-model dressed in Victorian costume. The learning management and discipline of pupils is

predominantly good. Impact on behaviour enables all pupils to concentrate on lessons. Teachers work hard to provide stimulating wall displays which encourage pupils to reflect on questions and pictures with good insight and perception. The storage and retrieval of resources are made easy for pupils. Teachers make good use of support staff, who are highly trained to teach small groups of pupils well. However, the over-long length of some lessons means that the pace varies between classes and this is a weakness.

19. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator involves the teachers and learning support assistants well in the planning and review of pupils' individual education plans. Support given to these pupils is sensitive; teachers and assistants are very conscientious in their duties and a great deal of care and thought is put into integrating pupils, no matter how severe are their needs. Teachers ensure that good relationships exist throughout by constantly encouraging pupils to learn from their mistakes and to try again. This improves pupils' confidence. Teachers are skilled at patiently explaining tasks so that pupils understand more easily.
20. Marking is consistent overall. Teachers keep detailed records on each pupil, including samples of work for most subjects. These samples are graded with National Curriculum levels at year-group meetings. This aspect of ongoing assessment is good. Teachers make good use of any standardised scores and previous years' National Curriculum test results in order to inform future planning of lessons. Although the homework for reading is well managed and supported well by parents, homework for writing and numeracy is underdeveloped.
21. Teaching has improved significantly from the previous inspection when figures of 21.4 per cent were quoted as unsatisfactory teaching. Tasks for higher attainers are now more challenging. The impact of the improved teaching means that higher attainers have performed better in National Curriculum tests. In addition, pupils no longer spend lengthy periods merely colouring worksheets or drawings. Demands made on them are now more challenging and imaginative. The improvement in teaching has had a strong influence on improved pupils' performances evident in this academic year.

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

22. The curriculum for children under five and Reception is of good quality. A wide range of interesting and stimulating activities is provided, which takes good account of national guidance. Planning is thorough and a good balance is drawn between activities which are teacher-directed, and those chosen by the children. This supports overall good progress in children's learning, and helps them to develop independence.
23. The curriculum at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced in most respects, and there is generally good coverage of most elements of the National Curriculum. Planning for religious education is in line with the locally agreed syllabus. Since the previous inspection, when a key issue was to provide schemes of work for all subjects, good progress has been made. Although little was in place when the current headteacher took up her post two years ago, since then the school has provided effective interim schemes of work to support teachers' planning until the introduction of the new statutory curriculum in September 2000. Most of these schemes make good use of current national guidance. Teachers who take classes in the same age group also plan their lessons carefully together, so that expertise is shared and different pupils have equal access to the curriculum. This joint good planning and the interim schemes of work support breadth and balance in most subjects.
24. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being implemented effectively, although the current time-tables mean that these sessions are sometimes too long. However, there are

insufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length, either in English lessons or across the range of subjects, and full advantage is not taken of opportunities to use information technology to support pupils' learning in all subjects, for example history and geography. The curriculum overall supports effective learning and sound standards in all areas except for pupils' writing. This means that there are areas of weakness in pupils' skills in recording in a number of subjects, particularly in science, history and geography.

25. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good. Appropriate targets are set, and are used as a basis for provision in class, which enables pupils to learn effectively. Provision for equality of access to the curriculum is good. Within each year group it is well supported by the joint planning which teachers undertake. All pupils are integrated well into activities, regardless of gender, ability or ethnic origin.
26. Extra-curricular activities are satisfactory overall. Provision for country dancing is very good. During the year, pupils go out on interesting educational visits to local places of interest, local churches and they participate in a Country Dance Festival with other schools at Wells Cathedral Green. Older pupils play football with representative teams from other schools.
27. The provision of personal and social education is good, and is supported particularly well by assemblies and religious education lessons, as well as by the consistent approach by teachers and other staff to these issues. Throughout the school day, staff make good use of opportunities to develop pupils' social skills, both in lessons and outside. They provide good role models, treating pupils with respect and courtesy, and engendering respect and courtesy from pupils in return. Health education, including awareness of drug misuse, is provided for effectively through both science lessons and the specific personal and social education programme. Sex education is provided appropriately within the national curriculum science lessons, in accordance with the school's policy, which is of good quality. The curriculum and provision for pupils with English as an additional language are good.
28. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Lessons in religious education support this effectively, especially when pupils are encouraged to reflect on the implications in their own lives from the stories they hear. For example, pupils in Reception were helped to link the story of the feeding of the five thousand, with the idea of sharing and how this could make their own lives better. Opportunities are also taken in some other lessons to reflect on pupils' experiences which develop their spiritual awareness. A good example of this was seen in a lesson on personal and social education with pupils in Year 2. They had to reflect long and hard to come to terms with the tiny sizes involved when learning about germs.
29. Good provision is made for pupils' moral development. Staff work consistently during the day in lessons and during break times, to enable pupils to understand the differences between right and wrong. Pupils are encouraged to empathise with others and to think how others might feel in particular situations. Lessons in personal and social education and in religious education make particularly strong contributions to pupils' understanding.
30. Good provision is made for pupils' social development. From their start in the Reception class, pupils are encouraged to use their initiative, to work independently or collaboratively, and an emphasis is given to taking turns and sharing. The positive effects of this are seen in many lessons. For example, in a physical education lesson, pupils, as well as adults, made sensitive efforts to get a shy child to join in what was taking place. In lessons in the older Reception class, pupils not working directly with an adult, got on sensibly and independently with a variety of tasks, shared materials amicably, and they collaborated effectively in role play using the 'bus' which was set up in the classroom.
31. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Within each subject, there are some useful opportunities to study aspects of cultures from both western Europe and from further afield.

In art, for example, pupils have done work based on that of van Gogh. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils looked at the different painting techniques of painters from Japan and India before tackling their own paintings. In religious education, pupils are given some understanding of the cultural aspects of a range of religions, such as the use of candles at Diwali. Pupils have opportunities to listen to a range of music from different times and places, and to play different instruments themselves. Occasional visitors, such as a didgeridoo player, or entertainers at Christmas, also contribute to broadening pupils' cultural horizons. Dance in movement lessons and the country dances, which last year pupils performed at a festival in Wells, also contribute to cultural understanding. Teachers are aware of the opportunities to develop pupils' understanding across the curriculum, but there is no overall plan to ensure systematic development or to provide a good balance between different aspects of cultures from different times and places.

32. Overall, pupils' attendance at school is unsatisfactory. The authorised absence figure is higher than the national average but has declined. In fact, the attendance record and punctuality of the majority of pupils are good, but the very poor record of a small number of pupils, approximately ten, has had a significant impact on the overall statistics. The school has explanations from parents for almost all pupil absences and the incidence of unauthorised absence has been reduced to a negligible level. However, since the previous inspection the attendance has dropped, whereas national averages have improved over the same period. Accordingly the school's overall attendance is now in the lower quartile for primary schools nationally.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school's procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety are very good. The previous report commented that pastoral care was a strength of the school and this has been further improved. Procedures for dealing with first aid, medicines and accidents are well established, with a medical room that fully meets DfEE guidelines. Health and safety risk assessments are carried out regularly, as are checks on potentially dangerous equipment and the practice of evacuations of the premises. However, the practice of keeping registers in classrooms after registration could pose a small risk in some emergency situations. Child protection procedures are very good.
34. The procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality are now good, and the school has worked hard to gain the co-operation of parents in notifying the school about pupils' absence and minimising the number of family holidays taken during term time. For the small number of pupils with poor attendance records, the school is appropriately supported by the education social worker, but the procedures do not impact sufficiently. The great majority of pupils arrive at school in good time and are settled, ready for registration which is taken promptly so that the day gets off to a good start and the pupils have the chance of a full day's learning. The behaviour policy is effective in promoting the good standard of behaviour throughout the school. It is implemented consistently by teachers and all other support staff and helpers, including the lunchtime supervisors and voluntary parent helpers. Pupils know the school and class rules in each class. They also understand the rewards and sanctions system in the school. The result is that pupils' behaviour is good.
35. On entry, there is good assessment of the under-fives in all the desired learning goals. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good for reading and numeracy. They are satisfactory for all other areas of the curriculum.
36. Teachers keep samples of pupils' work each term. At the beginning and end of each school year, literacy, numeracy and science samples are levelled well according to the National Curriculum's criteria. For other subjects, teachers assess pupils' work informally over the year. There is good formal reporting to parents three times yearly about pupils' performances and progress and interest. Individual targets are discussed with pupils, particularly in mathematics, literacy and

personal development. Individual education plans are shared carefully with pupils with special educational needs.

37. The school complies with all statutory requirements for testing on entry to school and at the end of Key Stage 1. The headteacher makes a good analysis of these findings to discuss with staff. The use of assessment information by co-ordinators to guide curricular planning is not yet fully developed with all subject areas, apart from reading and numeracy. The school recognises that it needs to improve systems for co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate teaching and pupils' standards in order to improve the progress of pupils' skills in all subjects. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is satisfactory. The monitoring of pupils with special educational needs is very good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. As reported in the previous inspection, the great majority of parents are very satisfied with what the school provides for their children, in both their academic achievement and their personal development. Parents' relationship with the school continues to be open and friendly. Parents feel welcome in the school and they believe that all the teachers, including the headteacher, are approachable and prepared to discuss any concerns that they may have at any time.
39. The information provided to parents is good, and most parents believe that they are well informed about the school. Regular newsletters and other notes keep them informed about school activities and any special functions and events. All parents are notified at the beginning of each term about the topics for the forthcoming term. The school's prospectus and governors' Annual Report to parents conform to DfEE guidelines and statutory requirements. Although parents are satisfied with the annual report on each pupil, these reports have not yet been developed to meet the relevant DfEE standards. They do not contain sufficient commentary on strengths and weaknesses in the core subjects; little indication of progress being made in the foundation subjects, and no mention of targets for further development.
40. Parents' involvement in the work of the school is good and makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Almost 100 per cent of parents have signed and returned the home-school agreement for each pupil. The homework policy has been clarified and explained to parents, who work with their children at home on reading and spelling. The support of parents for the school through the Parent Teacher Association is very good, as illustrated by the substantial funds raised through their various functions, between £2,000 and £3,000 each year, which is spent on a number of items to improve the school's resources. A large number of parents (from approximately 25 per cent of families) come into school to help on a regular, voluntary basis. Their work is well managed by the teachers. It is timetabled and integrated into the detailed lesson plans, and makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The school has been through a difficult time from the previous inspection to Autumn 1998. The dedicated headteacher provides very clear educational direction to the work of the school and has successfully led a staff team in a number of effective developments over the previous two years, since she took up permanent headship in the Autumn of 1998. The headteacher is well supported by a talented deputy. All staff work together effectively and are committed to good relationships and equal opportunities for all the children in their care. There is a clear focus in the school's work on raising standards, and this has supported significant improvements over the last two years. A firmer basis has been established for the curriculum with the introduction of schemes of work, and the literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced well. The school has successfully promoted effective teaching and learning. This is a significant improvement since the previous

inspection when over 20 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. All the key issues from the previous inspection have been rectified successfully.

42. While the school's results for national tests in 1999 indicate that standards remain low in comparison with other schools, the headteacher has accurately identified reasons for the shortcomings, and has put into place effective plans to work towards improvement. For example, the promotion of reading through improved resources and record keeping has been effective. The planning for the curriculum is effective, and generally ensures breadth and balance, although there are still too many weaknesses in writing. Staff have identified this as an issue, and improvements in pupils' writing have a high priority in the school's plans, including a full day's training, for the staff as a whole.
43. The Chair of Governors cares for the school and is hard-working. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well and is supportive of staff and governors help in classes. Although most strategic direction comes from the headteacher, governors are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have recently improved the systems to give them a clearer view of the school's needs and priorities, for monitoring the curriculum and for controlling the finances. They are effectively involved in the formulation of the school development plan and contribute appropriately to the production and agreement of the budget.
44. The monitoring of teaching is developing, but is still at an early stage. The headteacher observes teaching as part of the appraisal process, and the English and mathematics' co-ordinators have observed their colleagues teach during the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies. Otherwise, however, monitoring of teaching has been informal and there are no systematic arrangements for this, or for recording the results of any monitoring. This is a weakness.
45. Although subject co-ordinators are now much more effective than at the previous inspection, their monitoring role is still underdeveloped. This is a particular issue in subjects other than English and mathematics. All co-ordinators and the headteacher monitor teachers' planning on a systematic basis, and this is successful in ensuring breadth and balance in the curriculum, as well as equality of provision in parallel classes in the same year group and through the school for continuity. Co-ordinators have made a start on monitoring pupils' work in different year groups by collecting samples of work, but this is not sufficiently systematic or extensive to give them a clear enough grasp of teaching and learning in each class. This means that they are not sufficiently clear about strengths and weaknesses in different classes, or in different aspects of the curriculum, to provide targeted support, or to share best practice.
46. Spending is linked appropriately to the budget, so that money is spent effectively to support the school's identified priorities. For example, the upgrading of the reading scheme, and extensive provision of extra staff to help lower attaining pupils in all classes have been effective in raising standards and improving learning.
47. The improved and increased delegation of responsibilities for curricular subjects to co-ordinators has been very effective in supporting curriculum provision. Effective schemes of work have contributed well to provide for pupils' learning.
48. The accommodation is satisfactory and is used well. The standard of decoration in the main building is good. However, the state of decoration of the recycled classrooms is unsightly. In the summer months, the temperature in these rooms is difficult to control. The site is kept clean and attractive. The environment is enhanced by a range of good displays, which encourage pupils to think about what is shown. Learning resources are satisfactory overall. Provision in physical education, art and music is good, as is provision for children under five. However, in information technology there is a lack of software to support pupils' learning in the full range of subjects across the curriculum.

49. Staff are well qualified and are used effectively. The decision to provide high levels of learning support staff and nursery nurses has been successful. These non-teaching staff are particularly well qualified and skilled. Specific extra resources are used effectively; in particular good use is usually made of extra support staff for pupils with special educational needs.
50. Provision for staff new to the school is good. A good programme is in place to support newly qualified teachers and there are well-established systems which enable them to function very effectively in classes. Suitable provision for mentoring new staff, and for non-contact time for newly qualified teachers, are provided. The appraisal system for teachers is in place, and is based on appropriate job descriptions. Good provision is made for training for all staff, including teaching and non-teaching personnel.
51. The school uses the principles of best value effectively. Shortcomings in attainment, as exemplified by weak results in national tests have been a major focus for the school's development. The remaining major weakness in writing has been identified, and the school is planning how to address it. Appropriate steps are made to ensure best value when making purchases to ensure good value for money. For example, when buying new computers, careful consideration was given to all aspects, including the costs of after-sales support in order to get the best overall deal.
52. The overall effectiveness of the school is good. During the inspection, standards were seen to be satisfactory, despite pupils coming into the school with attainment which is below average. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are good, as is their behaviour. The quality of teaching and learning is good, and was never less than satisfactory during the inspection. The school gives good value for money. This has been maintained from the previous report.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. Raise pupils' standards in writing by:
- (1) enlarging their vocabulary through the use of dictionaries and giving more focus on vocabulary extension in lessons;
 - (2) ensuring that pupils improve their sentence structures and fluency;
 - (3) broadening pupils' writing repertoire to include all subjects more fully;
 - (4) giving opportunities for writing for a variety of audiences.
54. Improve the use of Information Technology resources to support pupils' learning in all subjects so that they reach the same high standards as the use of Information Technology in mathematics.
55. Ensure that systems are put in place for co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate teaching and pupils' standards, in order to improve the progress of pupils' skills in all subjects.
56. Review and reorganise the timetable to avoid over-long lessons.
57. Improve attendance figures by continuing to implement and review the good procedures already in existence.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	20%	46%	34%			

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	Nursery	YR – Y2
	Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	-
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	-	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
	Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	34

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	28
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	7.3
National comparative data	5.6

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	34	20	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	17	23
	Girls	15	15	17
	Total	34	32	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63	59	74
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	24	27
	Girls	15	15	18
	Total	32	39	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	59	72	83
	National	82	86	87

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	
White	154
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	1	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	183.7

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13.08
--------------------------------	-------

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	275,413
Total expenditure	281,467
Expenditure per pupil	1.864
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,227
Balance carried forward to next year	17,174

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	156
Number of questionnaires returned	77

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	18	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	77	19	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	45	0	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	60	34	4	0	3
The teaching is good.	81	18	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	65	31	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	83	16	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	31	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	64	30	3	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	70	21	0	1	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	25	1	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	69	25	1	0	5

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

58. The attainment of children when they enter school at under five years of age is below average in language and literacy, but is in line with averages in all other aspects of learning, with the exception of physical development, where it is above average. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
59. Children's language and literacy skills are below average. Children benefit from good, structured teaching and a range of appropriate activities to support speaking and listening skills. However, many find it difficult to listen and often call out inappropriately and fail to wait their turn. They find it difficult to follow the rules of conversation. In responding to questions, children usually give one-word answers and use a limited vocabulary. Teachers use a range of good quality literature, as well as play activities, to foster greater use of language and help children to understand and use a wider vocabulary. Children begin to use books and treat them with care. A few higher attaining children recognise some letters and sounds, and begin to write the initial letter of their name. They begin to recognise simple rhyming words, such as 'wet', 'vet' and 'met'. However, many cannot yet correctly orientate their letters, and a high proportion are not yet associating sounds with letters.
60. Children's mathematical skills are developing well. They are in line with the average. Teachers' knowledge effectively promotes learning and the good resources and activities help children to develop understanding and begin to solve problems. For example, children were observed finding correct numerals and organising them in order as they played with a toy bear. The effective strategies used by the teacher enabled almost all children to succeed in the task. The very good teaching had a very positive impact on the quality of learning taking place. Teachers constantly reinforce numeracy skills through basic counting on and back, and by encouraging simple calculations such as "What happens if I take one away?" Children are challenged by the activities and make good progress as they undertake some exciting structured and play activities.
61. Children's personal and social development is in line with average. Children respond well to their teachers and generally to each other. They find it difficult to sit and listen for long periods, and sometimes the lessons are too long for this particular age group. This has a negative impact on their ability to work as part of a group, and to their ability to take turns. However, in most situations, children are able to concentrate appropriately, share and play together. They enjoy a range of indoor and outdoor play activities as they develop their social skills and their responses to each other. They usually behave well and enjoy their school life. This is because activities are effectively planned to engage them purposefully and to foster good relationships.
62. The physical development of children is above average. They change quickly with good evidence of independence. During a physical education lesson, children responded well to instructions and benefited from good challenging activities. The good teaching and sound planning ensured that children made good progress in learning as they moved safely around the hall and balanced on the apparatus. The well-chosen activities fostered learning and enabled children to practise and consolidate their physical skills. The good progress of children is clearly linked to good teaching and effective management of behaviour.
63. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is broadly average. They benefit from good organisation and preparation of lessons by the teachers. This ensures that all children are fully involved and that structured activities enable progress and learning to take place. Teachers take care to explain difficult concepts and vocabulary, such as 'disciples' in a religious education lesson, and 'monitor' and 'mouse' in an Information Technology lesson. This ensures that children

are clear about these aspects and that they extend their knowledge. Children in the early years' class show understanding of cause and effect and they know that their actions will result in an effect on the computer. Sometimes, there are insufficient resources, such as when the whole class uses one computer system and take turns. This reduces the progress that children make and causes restless behaviour and minor disruptions.

64. Children's development in creative skills is broadly average. They enjoy all aspects of art, music and imaginative play. Evidence from the scrutiny of work and from work displayed in the classroom suggests that children explore colour, texture, shape and form, as well as experimenting for themselves. Children enjoy making music and join in with enthusiasm when they sing rhymes and songs. Teachers make good provision of resources to foster progress.
65. Children under the age of five behave well in the classroom and around the school. They follow instructions well, as in the physical education lesson, and they play together effectively. They were observed playing in a pretend bus on several occasions, and they showed high levels of social interaction, turn-taking and understanding of the activity. Children have positive attitudes to their work and behave well. They are polite and responsive to adults. The teaching of children under five has a very positive impact on the quality of learning that takes place. Teachers provide good quality activities, and have a clear understanding of early learning skills. The curriculum for these children is broad, balanced and relevant, and it helps to ensure that children enjoy coming to school and that they make at least satisfactory progress in their learning in all aspects of their studies. Resources for learning are good and are used to good effect. The accommodation for the under-fives is satisfactory, with opportunities for imaginative and outdoor play created regularly. The provision for under-fives at the school ensures a good start to education for these children.

ENGLISH

66. Standards of attainment in English, overall, are below average. Results from the time of the previous inspection also show that attainment in the standardised National Curriculum tests for 1999 was below average. However, standards have improved since that time because pupils' reading standards are now broadly in line with the national average. Standards in speaking and listening are below national expectations. In writing, standards are still below the national average. The improvement in reading standards is evident across the school and has been supported by implementing structured reading schemes and by the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy in a systematic way. Standards in writing have rightly been identified by the school as an area for improvement.
67. The quality of learning in English during lessons is always satisfactory, and in over half of all lessons it is good. This is due to the impact of good teaching. Lessons are effectively planned, with a good emphasis on reading and the acquisition of phonics. The clear matching of tasks to the needs of pupils ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress and are sufficiently challenged. Support staff are used well and provide an effective contribution to pupils' learning in lessons. Pupils across the school are encouraged to talk about matters of immediate interest and communicate with other listeners. However, their use of language is often immature and there are times when they fail to show consideration for others in conversation. A few pupils call out unnecessarily during whole-class discussion, with irrelevant comments, thus disrupting the flow of some lessons.
68. Standards in reading are in line with the national average by the end of Key Stage 1. The quality of pupils' learning in reading is good. In Year 1 pupils recognise familiar words in texts and develop their phonic skills so that they begin to build unknown words. Teachers use effective strategies to encourage reading within the literacy hour. For example, in one lesson where pupils were sharing a story about "The lion and the mouse", higher and lower attainers worked in small groups at their

own level. In Year 2, pupils' reading skills continue to improve, because tasks are clearly explained to them, and good demonstrations help them to understand what the teacher expects. They are encouraged to read on a daily basis, and regularly take their reading books home. There is a good partnership with parents in relation to home-school reading diaries, which helps to foster good reading habits. Many pupils in Year 2 read simple texts with understanding, and are beginning to talk about the stories they have read. A few higher attaining pupils read a wider range of texts fluently and accurately, and use their phonic and alphabetic knowledge to locate information from dictionaries, contents pages and the index pages of more complex factual books.

69. Standards in writing throughout the key stage are less well developed than in reading and are below the standards expected nationally. This is because too little emphasis is placed on developing writing skills, and too little time is allocated to this aspect of English in many classes. Across the school not enough emphasis is given to practising and learning the skills needed to develop appropriate writing styles. Most pupils in Year 1 are beginning to form some letters correctly, and many can write their names, and those of others. They can write simple monosyllabic words, such as "cat", "put", "dog" and "peg" correctly. Some pupils, however, do not know how to form their letters and they start and end them in the wrong way, thus inhibiting the flow of their writing. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 write simple words and phrases, and convey meaning, but teachers allocate too little time for them to practise and consolidate their emergent writing. In Year 2 pupils' writing lacks fluency due to the lack of time allocated as well as to the over-use of sheets. There are too few opportunities to write for a variety of purposes. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work across the school, as well as from observation of writing within lessons, shows that written content is limited, punctuation and spelling are weak, and inconsistent use is made of simple punctuation such as full stops and capital letters.
70. Teachers are skilled at promoting good attitudes and behaviour. Pupils are very interested in the texts that they share during the literacy hour, and they enjoy answering questions and joining in with the good range of activities that are provided. They respond well to their teachers, although a few sometimes exhibit noisy behaviour and call out rather than wait their turn. This is usually when lessons are over long, and pupils become disruptive because they find it difficult to sit for such long periods. Teachers do not give sufficient opportunities for pupils to use the library to find out information and to develop their independent research skills.
71. The school has implemented the literacy strategy well. Teachers provide a wide range of relevant activities, and some exciting texts are used to promote interest. The planned curriculum is sufficiently broad, but too little time is allocated to the teaching of writing. Other aspects of English are effectively planned and taught. For example pupils study a range of poetry and plays, as well as rhymes, and factual accounts. There are times when literacy lessons are too long, often lasting for 75 minutes. This is when pupils find it difficult to concentrate and become restless. The subject is effectively led, and this has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning that takes place for reading. The co-ordinator has implemented training and support for teachers, and monitoring of teaching and learning is beginning to have a positive impact. For example, the evaluation of the most recent standardised tests, led to the identification of writing as an area in need of improvement across the school.
72. Some good resources have recently been introduced into the school, including several new computer systems. However, these are not yet used sufficiently to support learning in English, and this restricts pupils' competence and confidence in using information technology to support reading and writing. The organisation and introduction of structured reading schemes since the previous inspection has had a significant impact on the reading standards achieved by all pupils. There are some effective displays of books and of pupils' writing around the school. Too few writing opportunities are created to support literacy skills in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

73. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, show that the standards were well below the national averages of all schools. Compared with similar schools, test results were also well below the average levels for pupils at the end of Year 2.
74. Taking trends over time from 1996 to 1999, results show a sharper upward trend than the national average from 1996 to 1998 inclusive. However, they show a sharp drop in 1999 to well below the average, due mainly to a larger number of pupils with special educational needs. As many as half the number of pupils had recently moved into the specific year group from other schools. A similar number, over time, had moved out of the school, an effect of transient families in the neighbourhood at the time. By the end of Key Stage 1, over the four years together, there is very little difference between girls' and boys' scores. Both groups score better at mathematics than reading and writing.
75. As a group, however, higher attainers perform as well as other higher attainers nationally, in all the attainment targets of the Programmes of Study for mathematics. They score particularly well in work on shape, space and measures, and are above the national average for higher performing pupils in this area according to teachers' assessments. Pupils in need of extra support are well provided for; their needs are identified early and they often reach their individual education targets, showing appropriate progress in learning.
76. During the inspection, the standards observed in mathematics of present pupils, are mainly in line with the national averages by the end of Key Stage 1. According to the local education authority's assessment of children entering school at age four to five years, standards in this school in mathematics are below normal expectations on entry. Pupils have achieved well by the end of the key stage. In the older Reception class and Year 1, pupils' learning is very good and achievements are high. Conclusions show that pupils in these classes are moving up through the school with higher standards. They reflect the good influence of the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy which had been introduced early into the school's curriculum in 1998. The pupils of the present Year 2 and of the Year 2 in May 1999 had not experienced the National Numeracy Strategy for as early in their schooling as those pupils in the present Year 1. The National Numeracy Strategy is having a very positive effect on learning in the Reception and Year 1 classes.
77. Overall, many pupils have an appropriate knowledge of all the attainment targets of the National Curriculum, according to their age group. They show good learning in the subject which, in turn, reflects good teaching. At both Reception classes, standards are above those normally expected. Pupils count confidently to 20 and recognise numbers to ten. They order numbers to ten and order them in reverse order accurately. Higher attainers recognise and write numbers to ten. A significant majority recognise two-dimensional shapes well. They add two numbers to make five and apply this knowledge to coinage with a marked degree of accuracy.
78. In Year 1, a significant number of pupils recognise numbers to 100, using a 100 square; they sequence numbers correctly, writing numbers to 20 and show a good understanding of how the number can be split into sets. They count in twos with confidence, recognise odd and even numbers and have a high success rate in doubling numbers. Most three and two-dimensional shapes are labelled by pupils correctly. Pupils' handling of coinage is of a high standard.
79. In Year 2, most pupils write numbers to 100 confidently. They order tens and units to 100 accurately and add two or three numbers together to 30. Many pupils subtract a number from 30 confidently. They recognise more complicated three-dimensional shapes and explain the properties well, for example, the differences found between the shapes of the faces between a cuboid and a cube, and the different lengths of the edges. Pupils have had good experience of, and remember to differentiate between, seconds and minutes, recognising on the hour, quarter past and half past. They recognise items which are heavier than one kilogram in weight. They use the two, five and

ten times tables correctly and select the correct operation to solve simple problems. Higher attainers achieve standards above the national average.

80. Although pupils are secure in calculating mentally in Year 2, there is insufficient emphasis on recording calculations in Year 2. During oral sessions, not all classes took advantage of the use of cards for pupils to hold up in order to show their answers for mental strategies. Therefore, not all pupils feel involved in all classes during these initial sessions for calculating mentally.
81. Teaching is good overall. It is never less than satisfactory. In Reception and Year 1, teaching is mainly very good with some excellent aspects. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and give good emphasis in lessons to the principles set out in the strategy. They teach the basic skills of counting and recording very competently. Teachers carefully plan lessons together within year groups, so that pupils throughout each year receive the same entitlement. Evaluation and ongoing assessment of pupils are good and recorded regularly. The methods and organisation teachers deploy are highly efficient, such as the good emphasis on encouraging pupils' precise use of mathematical terms. Classrooms and displays are focused clearly in order to reinforce pupils' independence and their mathematical awareness. There are good links with other subjects, such as measuring in design and technology.
82. Pupils have positive attitudes to the learning of mathematics due to the good management in teaching. They are confident, willing to discuss their work and are conscientious. During mathematics' lessons, pupils behave well and are enthusiastic, particularly in practical activities. Pupils co-operate well with each other, such as when sharing coinage during a game with a die. They have a high degree of independence when selecting apparatus to aid their written calculations. As a result, they make consistent progress in their learning.
83. Pupils are managed well and teachers insist on good behaviour. At times, the management and challenges given to very young pupils are excellent. Resources are good and used to the maximum in order to secure pupils' understanding of the conservation of number, place value, and shape and space. Computers are very much in use in mathematical lessons; the programs used in information technology thoroughly reinforce concepts learnt in lessons. Individual targets for pupils help them to overcome their difficulties. The support staff and volunteers have a clear understanding of their roles and ensure that pupils are given a secure knowledge base and that pupils with special educational needs are well supported.
84. There is very good leadership in the subject. The monitoring of the subject is ongoing to ensure that informative records and assessment sheets are passed to the next teacher, and the National Numeracy Strategy's objectives are consistently applied throughout all lessons. A very efficient use of support staff, students and volunteers, frees teachers to work in more depth with alternative groups. The subject of mathematics has a high profile in the school; it impacts well on pupils' social development.
85. Since the previous report, there has been steady improvement in raising standards throughout, but the greatest improvement has been in the past 18 months. The 1999 National Curriculum test results do not reflect a true picture of standards at the school now. Present standards are mainly in line with national averages by the end of Key Stage 1. Then, higher attainers were under-challenged; there was a lack of investigative work; and little evidence of number bonds and multiplication tables. All these issues have been resolved well.

SCIENCE

86. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with national expectations, but there are weaknesses in pupils' skills in recording their knowledge and understanding. The results of

statutory assessments in 1999 were well below average. Conversely, higher attaining pupils did well, and the number gaining the higher Level 3 was above the national average. No results of assessments are available from the time of the previous inspection with which to draw comparisons. The weak results last year coincide with a cohort of pupils who showed particularly high levels of special educational needs. Records show that almost half of the pupils who took the national assessments in 1999 were on the register of special education needs, a higher proportion than is usual in the school, and much higher than the national average. This, combined with pupils weak writing skills, which make it difficult for them to show their understanding in a written task, largely accounts for the poor results last year.

87. Pupils' written work shows that they are covering a broad and balanced curriculum and that they undertake a range of practical work to support their understanding. The weakness of their recording makes it difficult to assess their level of understanding. However, the observation of lessons and discussions with pupils show that they are making at least satisfactory gains in their learning and that their knowledge and understanding of science are satisfactory. Older Reception pupils make simple observations accurately, for example when checking whether different objects will roll or slide on a sloping surface. They are able to describe what they have seen and a few higher attaining pupils offer explanations, such as why a yoghurt pot does not roll in a straight line. By Year 1, pupils tackle practical tasks quickly and remember their findings, offering good reasons for them. Most pupils in Year 1 use simple equipment to make a bulb light, and develop an understanding of an electrical circuit. The majority of these pupils know that particular kinds of clothing can help people to be seen in the dark, although at the start of lessons observed, they thought that this was because all the materials glowed in the dark; this shows good learning. Similarly although most pupils knew that "cat's eyes" helped drivers to see the road, they all thought that this was because they lit up and were powered by electricity. By the end of the lessons, the majority of the pupils knew that these phenomena were caused by reflection, and could explain this as "light bouncing of shiny things."
88. Pupils in Year 2 have a satisfactory understanding of the properties of materials, and classify them in terms of their properties, using simple terminology. During the inspection, for example, they investigated whether different objects could be bent, twisted or squashed. They used suitable vocabulary to describe their findings. With help, even those pupils who found the work most difficult were able to record some of their findings on a worksheet. However, none of the pupils recorded what they had found in sentences, and they only completed the worksheet after extensive explanations from their teacher.
89. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and in some lessons it is good. High levels of relaxed discipline are supported by the very good relationships which all teachers establish with their pupils. This supports pupils' concentration and enables the time in the lessons to be used well. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Teachers question pupils carefully, encouraging them to think through and explain their ideas. Good use is made of extra adults to support pupils who are not working directly with the teacher. Pupils who have special educational needs are supported well in this way, so that they keep up with the basic ideas of the lesson, and are enabled to record their understanding at a suitable level. Lessons are planned well and teachers are clear about what pupils are intended to learn. This all ensures that pupils are able to build systematically on their existing knowledge, and make gains in their learning. For example, in a good lesson with Year 1 pupils, high levels of organisation, a clear structure to the lesson and well-prepared materials, enabled pupils to learn about reflected light, making clear gains in their understanding. However, too little use is made of pupils' literacy skills to record their findings and to explain their thinking. Pupils have too little practice in writing at any length about their science work. Teachers seldom make use of information technology to support pupils' learning in the subject.
90. Pupils enjoy their science lessons, especially the practical aspects, when they investigate with confidence, sharing materials sensibly and discussing what they have found out with each other and with the adults in the class. Pupils are keen to contribute to discussions, and answer teachers'

questions thoughtfully. They generally work hard and concentrate well, although a few pupils lose concentration at the end of long lessons, particularly if aspects of the final plenary session concerns tasks they have not been involved with. Their behaviour is generally good, although occasionally a few pupils with recognised behavioural difficulties are inclined to be a little silly when in an unusual situation, such as working in a darkened room. This affects their concentration, and prevents them learning as well as their classmates.

91. The broad and balanced curriculum is supported by a useful interim scheme of work, which is based on national guidelines. Teachers in the same year group plan effectively together to ensure that pupils have equal access to the same curricular objectives. This is a major improvement from the previous inspection, when there was no effective scheme of work. The nominal time allocation to the subject is relatively small, and this may account for the lack of opportunities to write at length. The subject is managed well, and this has contributed to the breadth and balance of the curriculum. The co-ordinator's monitoring of planning has helped to ensure this. A useful start has been made on assessment arrangements, although the impact of this is not yet in place. The co-ordinator supports colleagues well, and has a good understanding of the subject. However, she has few structured opportunities to monitor standards and teaching in the different classes, and it is difficult for her to gain a sufficiently clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses across the school.

ART

92. Provision for art is good overall. There are consistently secure standards throughout and good gains in learning in relation to pupils' prior attainment.
93. Higher than expected standards are reached in colour-mixing, portraiture and collaborative work in two and three-dimensional aspects. Standards in ceramics are well above national expectations. By the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 1 they have experienced a variety of media. They competently use fabrics and paper to create a torn paper montage, and 'monsters' on block printed backgrounds. Their cut paper 'exploding' shapes of white on a black background and black on a white background create a bold and dramatic effect in the hall's displays. Prints are achieved in a variety of methods, from handprints to roller painting from blocks to an above-average standard. Pupils have good experiences of creating symmetrical patterns on a computer screen and printing them. They have carefully printed with repeated patterns, using blocks with paint.
94. Imaginative effects are created by painting on to fabrics and on to differing textures, such as on to wax resistant crayons and batik. Pupils use colour washes and pastel crayons to good effect. Standards in fine line drawings are better than those normally seen, such as is evident in pupils' fine black pen drawings of old Victorian iron and in their book cover designs of stories they have read. All pupils are well challenged, and pupils with special educational needs make good progress through good support given.
95. Areas in need of development, however, are in the use of famous artists' reproductions to enable pupils to experience painting in a similar style to the artist. Apart from a display of one aspect of the work of van Gogh, pupils' experiences in this aspect of art appreciation are limited. In addition, older pupils have insufficient experience of close observational drawings of everyday objects and botany.
96. The teaching of art in lessons, and that reflected through pupils' art on display and in a portfolio, is overall good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are broad and informed. Good teaching is reflected from links with history and children's literature. Teachers have ensured good learning in a wide range of techniques and experiences. Teachers' planning includes good provision for the teaching of skills, processes and techniques in order for pupils to investigate, draw, apply colour with clean lines and on to a range of textures. All the pupils' facial glazed tiles

have been mounted in an outdoor mural on the wall of Burnham-on-Sea's community centre as part of a Joint Community Project. This project was largely due to the drive and initiative of the school's art co-ordinator.

97. The impact of good teaching on pupils' attitudes to the subject are very positive. Pupils express their emotional reactions to art imaginatively. They are attentive, ask perceptive questions and collaborate well. Their independence in tidily clearing away is mature. Pupils are courteous to visitors and enjoy talking about their art work. Most take pride in their finished products.
98. The management of the subject is very good. An effective scheme of work ensures the good progression of pupils' skills and standards. Good support has been given to all staff when needed. A portfolio of pupils' selected work is ongoing and illustrates the breadth of experiences which pupils receive. Some art is assessed at differing levels according to the National Curriculum Programme of Study for art. These are collated well in pupils' record of achievement folders. The accommodation is used efficiently for art sessions; displays are attractive and focused well thematically. Resources are good, plentiful and used frequently.
99. Art is valued throughout the school as an enlightening activity for communicating ideas and feelings in the visual form. It is used to accompany and illustrate work in other subjects such as history, religious education and science, but it is also developed as a subject in its own right with its own skills and disciplines. The vibrancy of displays does much to stimulate good responses and improve perceptions. Therefore, the previous report's findings about good art provision have been maintained, overall. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly by heightening pupils' awareness of beauty and respect for the artistic attempts of others.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. No specific lessons were observed in design and technology, although some observations were made of pupils using construction kits during science lessons. However, the range of work on display and in files shows that pupils achieve well and make products of a high standard. This is an improvement from standards reported at the previous inspection.
101. Pupils' work reflects good teaching of techniques in designing, making and evaluating procedures. Pupils in Reception have used a variety of junk materials to make models of robots. These are of very good quality. They show individual differences in design; the use of a range of materials; and great care taken in sticking them together and decorating. Pupils also use construction kits with confidence, gaining good understanding as well as improving their manual dexterity. They have undertaken a substantial homework assignment, working with their parents to build boats from a variety of materials, which they then brought into school to test. In Year 1, pupils have made good weather charts from card and wooden picture frames gaining experience of using saws and a glue gun under adult supervision. Pupils' work with dough is explained simply in their workbooks. Higher attaining pupils have written simple evaluations of how they made models. All this work is of at least satisfactory quality.
102. Pupils in Year 2 have made glove puppets of good quality using a variety of materials, and show good early skills in sewing. The puppets show great individuality in design, using colour and materials with imagination. Similar variety is shown in pupils' use of colour and materials in collage work that they have undertaken. Pupils' design and making skills are good. They produce labelled diagrams of models they intend to make and they evaluate work competently. Higher attaining pupils use their writing skills effectively to describe what they have made and how they did it. Pupils in Year 2 have also produced some good quality moving models of 'Incey-Wincey Spider' in his spout, using card, wood and thread.

103. The subject is well managed and a useful scheme of work, and support from the co-ordinator has enabled teachers to work effectively to raise standards. Planning shows that there is a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Resources are satisfactory, but the school lacks some more sophisticated kits to provide a further level of challenge for older pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

104. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Although no lessons were observed during the inspection, an analysis of pupils' work and of teachers' planning gives a sound basis for judgements. Work is generally covered in 'blocks' of time during the year and this provides a satisfactory start in the subject and enables pupils to reach appropriate standards in the elements of geography which they study.
105. Teachers provide practical experiences and firm foundations for pupils. An analysis of pupils' work shows that teachers' knowledge and understanding impact strongly on pupils' learning. Teachers help Reception pupils to make a good start on map-making, following a visit to a farm and a museum. In Year 1, pupils achieve satisfactory standards using co-ordinates. Teachers ensure good achievement of pupils in a study of contrasting a Scottish island with their own area. Using a variety of sources, such as stories, pictures and maps, pupils make a study of the different forms of transport used in the contrasting regions. However, they do not make sufficient use of their own literacy skills to form their own thoughts and complete sentences. Instead, there is an over-reliance on restrictive type worksheets.
106. The subject is managed effectively. The scheme of work is broad and balanced. Joint planning within year groups enables teachers to share expertise and supports common provision for pupils in parallel classes. The co-ordinator has provided good support to colleagues and has made a useful start in collecting samples of work to serve as exemplars of standards, as well as monitoring planning and assessing pupils' work across the school. She has a good grasp of the way the subject could develop further, but has relatively few opportunities to monitor teaching and outcomes in the different classes across the school. There are good opportunities to learn of other cultures, but insufficient use is made of Information Technology.

HISTORY

107. Only two lessons of history, both in Year 1, were seen during the week of the inspection. Over the year history is planned to enable pupils to develop the appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject. The lessons seen provide an example of positive learning and worthwhile experiences. Lessons are well prepared with some interesting artefacts to encourage exploration and understanding about times past. Teachers in these lessons use questions effectively to encourage observation and understanding about changes over time. Pupils' learning is considerably enhanced by the good quality resources and the effective use of support staff. The small groups that are created to discuss the artefacts enable pupils of all abilities to benefit from the lessons.
108. Pupils in Year 1 talk about artefacts from the past and offer some explanations as to why things have changed. However they are generally unclear about the sequence of events, or reasons for things to be different now than they were in the past. For example, pupils knew that lamps had changed over time, and that people in times past did not have electricity. However, many were not able to explain the sequence of events, or order the invention of lamps correctly. Too little time is allocated to the development of pupils' literacy skills through the study of history. There is little evidence of pupils searching for information in books, or answering questions about the past from sources of information.

109. The planned curriculum is broad and balanced. Evidence from the analysis of work, from work around the school and from the two lessons seen, indicates that the subject currently has a low profile in the school due to the impact of implementing the literacy and numeracy strategies. Resources for the subject are adequate, but strategies for monitoring are not well developed.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

110. Pupils' standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. These standards have been maintained from a similar level of attainment reached at the time of the previous report. From beginning school, pupils use computers to help with their work. In literacy and numeracy, computer programs are used well. Both teachers and pupils are gradually gaining the skills to enable Information Technology to become an integral part of learning and to become familiar with the new resources. However, too little emphasis is placed on the use of Information Technology in other subjects.
111. The quality of teaching and learning in Information Technology is satisfactory; it is sometimes good, for example, for higher attainers. Teachers enable pupils to take turns and to use appropriate language and technical terms in their use of Information Technology. There is evidence that pupils use a range of software to support drawing, writing, and designing. Pupils often work in very small groups or individually with a support assistant to develop and practise their skills. This has a very positive impact on the quality of their learning as they are able to have high levels of help and encouragement. By the time they reach Year 2 pupils can store, save and retrieve information. They can give instructions, such as when they programme a floor robot to follow a large floor map, correcting when necessary. The good quality planning and explanations given by the teacher ensures that pupils are clear about the task, and helps to reinforce prior learning. Pupils of higher attainment are also able to explain what they are doing and are successfully challenged during the lesson to give more complex instructions.
112. Pupils enjoy using Information Technology in all forms, and are always anxious for a turn. They know how to respect the equipment and use it carefully. They often take turns and share appropriately. The use of Information Technology to develop pupils' personal and independence skills is good, because they are encouraged to produce and present their work on computers where possible. They generally behave well at these times.
113. The planned Information Technology curriculum meets the requirements in all areas, but Information Technology is not used sufficiently throughout all subjects and in all lessons. Pupils with additional special needs successfully use Information Technology to help with phonic and spelling skills. Software is limited, and computer systems are too often idle. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to use Information Technology in other subjects, such as history and geography, and this limits the development of both Information Technology skills, and literacy skills. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of how skills and use of Information Technology can be established, but as yet there is little evidence of monitoring standards or use of Information Technology across the curriculum.

MUSIC

114. Overall, provision for music is satisfactory. Standards are generally in line with national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning in all aspects. In Year 2, pupils' achievements are good. There are strengths in pupils' rhythm work, the use of percussion and knowledge of sounds which percussion instruments make. Pupils retain melodies well when singing. They show good appreciation of the different qualities of music.

115. Pupils sing enthusiastically with good rhythm and pitch, but with insufficient awareness of dynamics and at times, there is a tendency to shout. There are crisp entries to each line but the duration of notes in singing is variable and not always sustained correctly.
116. The development of rhythm work is good, particularly in Year 2. Pupils begin and finish together precisely and on time. When playing percussion instruments, they recognise correctly the number of beats and rests in a bar, repeat these accurately and maintain a good ostinato rhythm. Pupils have a good understanding of the effects instruments will make to produce the required sounds. In Year 2, pupils make good progress in the layering of sound effectively. Younger pupils make effective use of symbols representing waves, ripples, rain and waterfalls. They imaginatively create their own compositions of percussion sounds through the aid of these symbols. A significant majority explain their responses appropriately and match symbols to the sound of music relayed. Pupils respond emotionally to music and explain their reactions clearly. Higher attainers are well challenged and make appropriate progress through opportunities to lead performances and play solo. Pupils with special educational needs have good equal opportunities and very good support to help them succeed.
117. At present, there is insufficient focus made on music generally, for example, a lack of composers' names, photographs on display, particularly of the music relayed during the week for assembly. Pupils lack sufficient time during assembly to sit quietly and reflect and respond to the music they hear. An area for further improvement is to enhance the dynamics of pupils' singing together so that there is contrast expressed in the quality of the sound.
118. The quality of teaching is mainly satisfactory with some good aspects seen in lessons. Teachers have a good knowledge of the school's scheme of work and how to implement it. They are well prepared and ensure that pupils enjoy the lessons. Pupils' efforts are praised well and teachers are patient and encouraging with them. Sensitive support ensures that all pupils gain confidence and make steady progress. When teaching is most successful, lessons provide a good balance of performing together and appraising. Seating arrangements for music are well planned for in circular formation. As a result, pupils have sufficient space for playing instruments. The impact of teaching ensures that learning is mainly satisfactory, with good aspects.
119. Pupils' attitudes to music are positive. Most respond well in lessons in an alert manner. Pupils show good self-control when handling instruments carefully. They are well disciplined, co-operative and respectful of teachers and adults. Several pupils are confident to perform solo. Pupils' enjoyment during music lessons and for singing in assembly is obvious; they take delight in singing out unselfconsciously.
120. The management of the subject is effective. The commercial scheme of work and resources support the non-specialist teachers well. The planning of the music curriculum ensures that pupils make steady progress in their learning. The co-ordinator monitors the planning efficiently. Assessment is insufficiently recorded but pupils' efforts are being taped for assessment purposes in some classes. A governor has helped a recorder group in the lunch time in the past, and this is planned for again in the next term. Pupils have opportunities to perform for live audiences at Christmas and harvest festivals and this helps their social development. In the past, pupils have benefited from a wider musical repertoire, such as making musical instruments under the instruction of a specialist visitor. Instruments used in school are of good quality, sufficient and well stored. Each year, pupils have the opportunity to visit Wells Cathedral Green with children from other schools in the area to country dance to a live band. In preparation for this they practise weekly in school. Such events promote good enjoyment and creative expression. Since the previous report, standards in teaching and pupils' progress have been maintained.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

121. Pupils' achievements are good in physical education, because of the quality of teaching provided.

122. Older pupils in reception show a good awareness of space when moving around the hall, and take care not to bump into each other. All but a few are able to skip around the hall, and a group of half a dozen do so very competently. When moving in response to music, most show an appropriate understanding of pace and mood, and about half the class show a good understanding of the weight of movements, for example when pretending to be a “fat greedy zebra” galloping along. Pupils build on this good start, and when in Year 1 they show a greater refinement and accuracy in moving in response to music. They follow instructions well and show a good understanding of pace in their movements, responding quickly to changes in the music. About half of pupils show a good understanding of level, moving smoothly from high to low positions when travelling around the hall. In general pupils work well as pairs when asked to shadow another’s movements, but about a quarter of pupils find this very difficult and cannot mirror their partner’s movements accurately. In gymnastics, when using large apparatus, pupils in Year 1 show good control of their body movements, and practise and improve a range of movements. When asked, they make valid comments about each other’s performance. No lessons were observed with pupils in Year 2.
123. The quality of teaching is consistently good, and sometimes very good. Teachers prepare and plan lessons well, and are clear about what they want pupils to learn. Their subject knowledge is good, and they give pupils clear explanations, and give demonstrations, so that they understand what is wanted and little time is wasted. For example, most pupils in reception quickly learned the new movement of “galloping”, because of clear demonstration of the movement by the teacher. Teachers’ skills in managing pupils are very good, and they ensure that learning progresses well, even when some pupils are finding it difficult to conform. For example, when pupils in Year 1 were inclined to run wildly around the hall without regard for the activity in hand, the teacher quickly brought them back on task so that they performed much better at a second attempt. Conversely, when reception pupils were reluctant to join in, the teacher and nursery nurse worked very sensitively to encourage them. Teachers use resources such as taped programmes very well, stopping the tape from time to time to re-enforce key points and ensuring that pupils make good gains in their understanding.
124. The curriculum is broad, including a good range of activities including swimming. Standards are supported by a relatively wide range of extra-curricular activities, including football, short tennis and country dancing. The subject is well managed and is supported by an effective scheme of work to ensure a good balance, and that what pupils learn builds on what they have already been taught. However, there is no system in place to monitor teaching and standards in different classes, so the co-ordinator has no way of clearly identifying the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Resources are good, and this supports the good progress pupils make.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

125. The school follows closely the locally agreed syllabus, thereby meeting statutory requirements. All pupils have appropriate provision for religious education. Standards of pupils are in line with the locally agreed expectations throughout the school and by the end of Key Stage 1.
126. There are strengths in the values promoted in religious education lessons, such as those of care of others and family life. Pupils have frequent opportunities for reflecting on, and forming views about, religion and about the experiences and hopes of other people. Pupils distinguish well between the two main religions studied, namely Christianity and Judaism. They have secure understanding of the differences in festivals and modes of worship.
127. Pupils have good recall of the main features that characterise Christianity; they can relate them well to their own experiences, such as those of celebration. In their study unit, ‘Ourselves’, pupils identify clearly aspects of their own experiences and feelings and they recognise what is of value and concern to others, including people with a faith commitment, such as Mother Theresa. Good

standards are reached when pupils explore aspects of human experiences, for example, feelings, friendship, loss, growing up. Pupils have good recall of the key features of Jesus' life, His birth, healing, teaching and Resurrection. They remember many stories of the Old Testament.

128. Pupils have appropriate experiences and understanding of the differences and purposes of religious buildings through visits to the Church of England, chapels and a video shown of a synagogue. The artefacts they see and handle, such as a Torah, a Tallit (prayer shawl) and the video of a Jewish family sharing Shabbat, help them to identify clearly the meanings underlying symbols and rituals. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and are well supported by learning support assistants. Higher attainers have good standards.
129. Teaching in religious education is good overall. Lessons are always interesting and informative. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the locally agreed syllabus, reflected in the planning of lessons. Teachers' methods ensure that pupils are aware of the differences between an old Victorian Bible and the Torah and they accept these differences and customs or rituals with tolerance. Good questions are asked of pupils to assess how much of the lessons have been absorbed. Aspects of religious education, such as respect of the religious beliefs of dedicated and committed people, is well taught during assembly times.
130. The impact of good teaching ensures that the attitudes of pupils that are encouraged through their religious studies are good. These include: curiosity, fairness and respect. Pupils are curious and willing to explore religious ideas through empathy and their imagination. They listen carefully to the views of others and are prepared to consider further evidence. They respect the needs and concerns of others and see the need to avoid ridicule and embarrassment. The majority of pupils realise the worth and value of other people; this is made aware to them through the visits of key people in the community, a nurse, a policeman and a minister.
131. Planning is comprehensively based on the locally agreed syllabus which helps to provide a good framework for the subject. There are many opportunities taken in other subjects, such as art and music, in order to consolidate understanding in religious education. The impact of religious education lessons is insufficient on literacy skills.
132. The co-ordinator, who is conscientious and enthusiastic, has a clear vision of how religious education needs to be managed in the school. She sees its development as a continuing process and keeps a significant amount of evidence of pupils' work in a portfolio of pictures, writing and photographs. The co-ordinator has identified correctly the area of improvement as being the need for extra in-service training for staff on the newly agreed syllabus, in order to increase all teachers' confidence and knowledge of the syllabus.
133. There has been an effective improvement in the subject since the previous report due to a change in the locally agreed syllabus. The range of artefacts at the school and on loan from a central source has markedly improved since the previous inspection.