

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Barnard Grove Primary School**  
Hartlepool

LEA area : Hartlepool

Unique Reference Number : 111617

Headteacher : Mr B Lennard

Reporting inspector : Mrs J Randall  
1471

Dates of inspection : 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707082

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Infant and Junior
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	3 to 11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Barnard Grove Hartlepool Cleveland TS24 9SD
Telephone number :	01429 273 532
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Appropriate authority :	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors :	Mr J M Kay
Date of previous inspection :	June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs J Randall, RgI	Under fives Single regeneration budget Art Religious education	Attainment and progress
Mr J Hallett, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Mrs M Watson, Team Inspector	Mathematics Information technology	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mr J Puckrin, Team Inspector	History Geography	Leadership and management The efficiency of the school
Mrs T Aspin, Team Inspector	Science Design and technology	Teaching
Mrs S Mawer, Team Inspector	Special Educational Needs English Music	The curriculum and assessment
Mrs L Moore, Team Inspector	Equal Opportunities Physical education	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

### **Paragraph**

## **MAIN FINDINGS**

What the school does well  
Where the school has weaknesses  
How the school has improved since the last inspection  
Standards in subjects  
Quality of teaching  
Other aspects of the school  
The parents' views of the school

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

## **INTRODUCTION**

1 - 4

Characteristics of the school  
Key indicators

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school**

5 - 20

Attainment and progress  
Attitudes, behaviour and personal development  
Attendance

### **Quality of education provided**

21 - 58

Teaching  
The curriculum and assessment  
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development  
Support, guidance and pupils' welfare  
Partnership with parents and the community

### **The management and efficiency of the school**

59 - 74

Leadership and management  
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources  
The efficiency of the school

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **Areas of learning for children under five**

75 - 82

### **English, mathematics and science**

83 - 107

### **Other subjects or courses**

108 - 153

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **Summary of inspection evidence**

154

### **Data and indicators**

## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- Progress in English, mathematics, and science is good.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Provision for children under five is very good.
- Teaching and progress at the end of Key Stage 2 is particularly good.
- Provision for moral and social development is very good.
- The partnership with parents is very good.
- Relationships and care and concern for pupils are good.
- The development of pupils' self-esteem has a significant impact on progress.
- Financial planning is good.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. More work is needed in the development of assessment.
- II. Teachers do not always plan work that is appropriate for all pupils in a class and there is a lack of consistency in some year groups where staff do not plan together.

**The school has many more strengths than weaknesses. However the weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made very good improvement since the previous inspection. Standards of attainment have risen significantly in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2. There are now very good systems in place for the analysis and monitoring of progress and attainment. The school acts on the information it gets from assessments and tests at different levels and from what it knows about pupils' prior attainment. The information is used to make changes in the curriculum and in teaching and to set targets for each year group. There are schemes of work for all subjects and many of these offer substantial support for teachers. The good behaviour of pupils supports the rise in attainment and progress. The school sets realistic but challenging goals and has a very good capacity for further improvement.

### Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools
English	C	A
Mathematics	B	A
Science	B	A

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

The information above shows that in 1998 standards in English equal the national average and are well above average when compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Standards in mathematics and science are above average when compared with schools nationally but are well above average for similar schools. The inspection findings give a similar picture. Standards in information and communication technology are well above national expectations. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the Local Education Authority's Agreed Syllabus at Key Stage 1 and are above at Key Stage 2. Progress in all other subjects is at least satisfactory. It is good in history at both key stages, and in geography and art at Key Stage 1. It is very good in art at Key Stage 2. Progress in the classes for children under five is very good.

## Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	very good	satisfactory	good
Mathematics	very good	satisfactory	good
Science	na	good	very good
Information technology	na	satisfactory	very good
Religious education	na	satisfactory	good
Other subjects	very good	satisfactory	good

The quality of teaching across the school is good. Thirty three percent of teaching is satisfactory, twenty eight percent is good, thirty two percent very good and three percent excellent. Five percent of teaching is unsatisfactory. The teaching of pupils under five is very good with sixty percent of very good teaching and forty percent good teaching. In Key Stage 1 teaching is satisfactory, with fifty eight percent of lessons being satisfactory, twenty three percent good, fifteen percent very good and four percent unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 2 teaching is very good. It is satisfactory in twenty six percent of lessons, good in twenty eight percent, very good in thirty four percent and excellent in six percent of lessons. It is unsatisfactory in six percent of lessons. The quality is particularly good in the last two years of Key Stage 2.

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

## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good - generally polite and respectful.
Attendance	Satisfactory - good systems for monitoring and support.
Ethos*	Very good - particularly in relationships and the commitment to high standards and pupils' self-esteem.
Leadership and management	Good – a clear commitment to raising standards and fostering a good environment for learning.
Curriculum	Broad, balanced and relevant but with some further developments needed in planning.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision and progress throughout the school.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good – particularly in moral and social development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good - the quality of and quantity of resources make a good contribution to standards.
Value for money	Good.

*\* Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

## The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
III. Parents expressed satisfaction with all aspects of the school.	IV. No negative issues were raised.

The inspection findings support these views.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to raise standards further the headteacher, staff and governors should:

V. update and expand the present assessment procedures in order to:

- inform teacher assessment more accurately;
- improve day-to-day assessment and gain a clearer picture of pupils' strengths and weaknesses;
- gain information with which to match teaching and tasks more closely to pupils' prior attainment;

(paragraph numbers 24, 38, 89, 90, 99, 128, 133, 138)

VI. improve short-term planning in order to focus more clearly on the learning objectives for different groups of pupils.

(paragraph numbers 24, 33, 36, 89, 90, 99, 107, 128, 133, 138)

In addition to the Key Issues above, the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan: the poor state of repair of the exterior of the building. (paragraph 67)

## INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the school

- 1 Barnard Grove Primary School is situated in an older area of an industrial town that is suffering from considerable economic and social disadvantage. The number of pupils on roll is 276 and there are 52 part-time nursery pupils. The school is slightly larger than average and is smaller than it was at the time of the previous inspection. Although the full range of abilities is represented, most pupils' attainment is below average on entry to the nursery with a significant minority of pupils having language skills that are well below average. Three pupils speak English as an additional language. Eighty six pupils are on the school's register of special educational need (30.7%) and this is higher than the national average. Three pupils have statements of special educational need and this is below average. Thirty three percent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. This figure is higher than the national average. The average class size is 25 pupils. To support the large number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 4, an extra class has been formed, making classes smaller in this part of the school. The pupil-teacher ratio is 22:1. Pupils join the nursery class as soon as possible after their third birthday as a place becomes available and enter full-time school in the reception class in either September or January of the half year in which they become five.
- 2 The aims of the school are centred on the development of each child to its full potential, within a caring and supportive community, with policies and practices to secure each child's right to experiences that help them develop as confident and fulfilled individuals. The school also aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which places due emphasis on the core skills of literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology and scientific investigation.
- 3 In conjunction with the Local Education Authority and using school data collected about each year group, targets have been set for the year 2000. The targets for eleven year olds at the end of the school year 2000 are for 64% of pupils to gain Level 4 or higher in English, 80% in mathematics and 74% in science.
- 4 Present priorities for the school in its development planning are:
  - to consolidate the progress made in literacy learning and seek further training opportunities;
  - to ensure a sound implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy;
    - to develop further information and communication technology with a particular focus on the National Grid for Learning;
  - to respond to the new initiatives in the curriculum for children under five;
  - to develop further community links.



## Key Indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1  
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
<b>1998</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>(1997)</b>	<b>(13)</b>	<b>(29)</b>	<b>(42)</b>

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	21 (12)	17 (12)	24 (13)
	Girls	17 (27)	14 (27)	18 (28)
	Total	38 (39)	31 (39)	42 (41)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	79 (93)	65 (93)	88 (98)
	National	80	81	84

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	20 (12)	24 (13)	28 (13)
	Girls	15 (27)	18 (27)	28 (26)
	Total	35 (39)	42 (40)	46 (39)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	73 (93)	88 (95)	96 (93)
	National	81	85	86

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1

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

## Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2  
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
<b>1998</b> <b>(19970)</b>	<b>24</b> <b>(20)</b>	<b>20</b> <b>(25)</b>	<b>44</b> <b>(45)</b>

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	14 (11)	15 (18)	17 (20)
	Girls	16 (20)	17 (22)	20 (23)
	Total	30 (31)	32 (40)	37 (43)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	67 (69)	71 (89)	82 (96)
	National	65 (63)	59 (62)	69 (68)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	14 (14)	15 (14)	21 (16)
	Girls	18 (22)	19 (18)	20 (24)
	Total	32 (36)	34 (32)	41 (40)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	73 (80)	77 (71)	91 (89)
	National	65 (63)	65 (64)	72 (69)

## Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions)  
missed through absence for the  
latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	6.27
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.19
	National comparative data	0.2

## Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school  
age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	10
Permanent	0

## Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	35
Satisfactory or better	95
Less than satisfactory	5

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **Attainment and progress**

- 1 In English, the results of the National Curriculum tests in 1998 for seven year olds indicate that attainment in reading is below the national average but average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Writing is well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. In the 1998 tests for eleven year olds attainment is broadly in line with the national average and well above average for similar schools. The 1999 tests and teacher assessments at both key stages show, on average, a twelve percent improvement in standards across all aspects of English. The general pattern at both key stages since the previous inspection is one of rising standards of attainment and the inspection findings give a similar picture. However, within the current cohorts of seven and eleven year olds there is a significant minority of pupils with special educational needs who will not attain the nationally expected standards. Therefore attainment for this present cohort is average. This evidence reflects the targets the school has set. The major challenge faced by the school following the previous inspection has been to raise levels of attainment in English at Key Stage 2. This has been successfully achieved due to improvements in the quality of teaching, comprehensive planning for literacy, the support and monitoring by the subject co-ordinator and close analysis of test results.
- 2 In mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainments are in line with the national average. Evidence from the inspection gives a similar picture to that shown in the 1998 National Curriculum tests, when eighty eight percent of pupils reached the nationally accepted average of Level 2 or above and nineteen percent achieved the higher Level 3. These results are in line with the national average and above the standards generally attained by pupils in schools with similar backgrounds. Unvalidated results for the Key Stage 1 national tests taken in 1999, indicate that all pupils reached Level 2 and above. There were far fewer pupils on the school's special educational needs register in the cohort of pupils taking the 1999 tests than for the 1998 tests, explaining the higher standards achieved. The current group of pupils undertaking the tests in 2000 also has a significant number of such pupils on the register. There has been a steady improvement in the standards of pupils' attainment in all aspects of mathematics over the last five years due, in part, to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and an improvement in the quality of teaching. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is above the national average. Evidence from the inspection matches the picture of attainment achieved by the eleven year olds in the national tests of 1998, when seventy one percent of pupils reached the nationally agreed average Level 4 or above. Sixteen percent of pupils reached the higher Level 5, which is close to the proportion found nationally. These results are well above the standards reached in similar schools nationally. Unvalidated results from the 1999 tests indicate even higher levels of attainment with ninety two percent of pupils reaching Level 4 or above. Over one third of pupils in the current Year 6 are on the school's register of special educational needs, explaining why the standards observed during the inspection do not reflect the 1999 results. At the previous inspection, pupils' attainments in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 were judged to be in line with the national average and improving. There has been a very significant improvement in pupils' attainment levels in all aspects of mathematics over the last five years although this varies from year to year when there are larger numbers of pupils with special educational needs in the year group.
- 3 When teachers assessed pupils in science at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998, the number of pupils attaining the national expectation was above average, and well above average when compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. However the number of pupils attaining high levels was well below average. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 standards of attainment were above average overall, although the number of pupils reaching high levels was close to the national average. When compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds attainment was well above average. The school has made considerable progress in raising standards since the previous inspection where attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was judged to be in line with national standards and at Key Stage 2 it was well below average. This is due to the implementation of a scheme of work that identifies clearly what pupils need to know, understand and do at each stage, to improved teacher expertise and to well-informed leadership by the subject co-ordinator. The 1999 teacher assessments give a picture of continuing improvement at Key Stage 1 with all pupils achieving at least the national average. Improvement is rapid at Key Stage 2. The unvalidated test results show that all pupils achieved the average level for their age at the end of the key stage, with well over half the pupils achieving higher levels. Inspection findings are that standards at the end of both key stages are above average despite the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Years 2 and 6.

- 4 Many pupils make good progress in literacy and numeracy by the time they leave the school. They use these skills well in other subjects. For example, pupils write out instructions in design and technology, use descriptive writing well in history and demonstrate the use of speaking and listening skills well in religious education. They use numeracy skills in other subjects, particularly measuring skills in design and technology, finding co-ordinates on a map and data handling skills in a variety of situations.
- 5 Standards of attainment in information and communication technology at Key Stage 1 are in line with national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 2 attainment considerably exceeds national expectations. The subject is a significant strength of the school. The oldest pupils combine different forms of information technology to communicate ideas. They use desktop publishing programs to produce interesting combinations of text and graphics. They use animation; select and import pictures and add music tracks. They use both the school's own intranet and the internet to pass on and find information. In religious education they meet the expectations required by the Local Education Authority Agreed Syllabus at Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have studied Christianity, Islam and Sikhism. They relate symbolism to culture and understand how faith affects daily life. They discuss, for example, "The Lord's Prayer" and what it means in today's world.
- 6 Progress in all other subjects is at least satisfactory. It is good in history at both key stages, and in geography and art at Key Stage 1. It is very good in art at Key Stage 2 where skilled teaching and questioning elicited interesting responses from pupils in evaluating their own work and that of famous artists. Progress in geography at Key Stage 1 is enhanced by a clear attention to the development of essential skills, particularly those needed for fieldwork. At Key Stage 2 there is an imbalance in the time for geography with history taking two thirds of the time.
- 7 Taken across all subjects and key stages, progress is good. It is accelerated in the last two years of Key Stage 2 where the quality of teaching is particularly high. Progress is significantly strengthened by the initiatives funded by the Single Regeneration Budget involving Saturday and evening homework classes, summer schools and family learning days.
- 8 The number of pupils with special educational needs is above average. Overall, these pupils make good progress in language acquisition, mathematical skills, improved behaviour and enhanced personal and social development. Often in the two special needs classes, where there is a high level of individual support and work is particularly matched to their needs, pupils make very good progress. Evidence of the good progress made is demonstrated in the number of targets achieved in the individual educational development plans. In 1998/9 ninety one percent of pupils at Key Stage 1 and seventy three percent at Key Stage 2 reached or exceeded the targets set for them and this year more ambitious targets have been set.
- 9 The progress of children under five is good. The full range of ability is represented on entry but many pupils are below average on entry and a significant minority of pupils has language and vocabulary skills that are well below average. By the age of five most pupils have achieved the levels required by the Desirable Learning Outcomes except in language and literacy where a larger group are still below average despite making good progress.
- 10 The school makes detailed analysis of the results of tests and other assessments to set targets of attainment for each year group. The senior management team and co-ordinators monitor the quality of teaching and progress and identify areas for improvement. The school has improved its results significantly since the previous inspection. The clear focus on, and commitment to, raising standards supports future improvement well. This is further enhanced by the emphasis the school places on good behaviour. The happy and secure learning environment, the enrichment through links with the community and the great efforts to involve parents in their children's learning all make a significant contribution to attainment and progress.

## **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

- 11 Pupils' attitudes to learning are good across the school and in those classes for children under five. In Years 5 and 6 they are very good. Pupils all show an interest in their work, listen carefully and concentrate and persevere. They enjoy school and respond well to questions. Pupils take a pride in their work and this is enhanced by the attractive way it is displayed. Personal study and individual learning skills are encouraged and becoming well developed by a programme of regular homework tasks and after school clubs. In the classes for children under five, progress in personal and social development is very good. They develop self-esteem and confidence and know school routines.
- 12 Behaviour in and around the school is good and this contributes to the ethos for learning. In the classes for children under five pupils learn what is expected of them in school and how to take care of themselves. The school has worked hard to establish a positive behaviour management programme and this has encouraged the development of pupil self-discipline and a positive attitude to other children and adults. Both pupils and parents value the awards presented in recognition of good behaviour. Ten pupils were excluded in the previous year on short-term exclusions. The number of exclusions is falling due to the positive strategies for building self-esteem. Bullying is infrequent. Pupils are generally courteous and respectful to each other and to adults.
- 13 Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. Pupils are caring and thoughtful and work well together in pairs and in groups. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into the school and have good relationships with their peers. Pupils support each other well and help with difficulties. A strong feature of the school is the way in which pupils develop self-esteem due to the emphasis placed on putting pupils into situations where they can succeed and manage their own behaviour and in which they are treated with dignity and respect.
- 14 Personal development is good. Pupils undertake responsibility around the school such as managing the tuck shop and acting as librarians. The youngest pupils know how to tidy up and put away equipment. Pupils take the initiative for fund raising for charity regularly and are involved in numerous community events that encourage their sense of responsibility. Many pupils take part in extra-curricular activities and some attend the Saturday writing club to improve literacy skills.
- 15 Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development continue to reflect the high standard described in the previous report and contribute well to the progress made.

## **Attendance**

- 16 Attendance is satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average with unauthorised absence being below the national average. A prompt start is made to each session. Punctuality has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

- 17 The quality of teaching across the school is good. Thirty three percent of teaching is satisfactory, twenty eight percent is good, thirty two percent very good and three percent excellent. Five percent of teaching is unsatisfactory. The teaching of pupils under five is very good with sixty percent of very good teaching and forty percent good teaching. In Key Stage 1 teaching is satisfactory, with fifty eight percent of lessons being satisfactory, twenty three percent good, fifteen percent very good and four percent unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 2 teaching is very good. It is satisfactory in twenty six percent of lessons, good in twenty eight percent, very good in thirty four percent and excellent in six percent of lessons. It is unsatisfactory in six percent of lessons.

- 18 In the nursery and reception classes teachers have a very good understanding of the needs of young children. They provide a secure and happy environment where all are valued. Stimulating activities promote excitement in learning and self-confidence. For example, in a mathematics activity in the nursery, the teacher kept making deliberate mistakes when counting teddy bears on the wall. The children took great delight in trying to catch her out and in correcting her. Planning is very good and takes into account the attention span of the pupils and their prior levels of attainment. Teachers and support assistants interact well with children, responding to their needs. Relationships are very good, and classroom routines carefully re-enforced. A strong emphasis is placed on speaking and listening skills to help pupils overcome their difficulties in communicating with others. Good questioning skills are used to encourage pupils to think for themselves. Resources are well prepared and used effectively. There is a suitable emphasis on other literacy skills, numeracy and personal and social skills. There is a good balance between whole class activities, teacher-directed group activities and pupil-initiated tasks. The high quality of provision has a direct impact on progress. A pupil who has few words of English is well supported, and much effort is taken to ensure that he is able to access all the activities.
- 19 In both key stages behaviour is well managed and classroom routines clearly established. This helps pupils to focus on their work and make progress. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils. They provide a safe and secure environment and give all pupils the confidence to stand in front of a class and express their opinions or answer questions without the fear of being wrong. The previous inspection identified low expectations of pupils' ability as a weakness. Most teachers now have high expectations of pupil participation and performance in lessons. Practical resources are consistently used well and organised to generate enthusiasm and develop understanding. For example, Victorian toys were used to help pupils understand how children entertained themselves in that period of history and in a mathematics lesson each pupil had a number line to help them in adding and subtracting. All teachers place a suitable emphasis on health and safety. For example, in a science lesson in Year 4, the teacher emphasised the dangers of the misuse of paperclips before they were allowed to use them in an experiment with magnets.
- 20 Throughout the school the quality of planning in all subjects, and in particular in English, mathematics and science, has improved considerably since the previous inspection. This is helping teachers provide a sequence of experiences that are progressively more demanding and hence improve attainment. At the upper end of Key Stage 2 teachers plan together frequently to share expertise and learn from each other. For example, in science lessons to investigate the effect of mixing solids and liquids together that have a chemical reaction, evaluation by one teacher helped another teacher to improve the quality of the experiences provided. In some lessons plans identify clearly how tasks are matched to the different levels of attainment and maturity of pupils in the class. This has considerable impact on the quality of teaching and the good progress made by pupils of all levels of attainment. In other classes teachers do not plan together sufficiently or always plan work that is suitable for pupils with different levels of attainment in the class. In many lessons good question and answer sessions and plenary sessions are used to assess what pupils understand. Marking is good across the school. It is detailed and helps pupils to improve. However, assessment information is not used sufficiently to target learning in the next lesson.
- 21 In the best lessons in Key Stage 1, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. Both subject specific and general vocabulary is carefully developed, activities are stimulating, the pace of lessons is brisk and classroom assistants are used well. Tasks are carefully explained. Pupils are taught to work independently if the teacher is focusing on another group. All these features were present, for example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 1 where pupils were developing skills of estimation of number. In less effective lessons, introductions or activities take too long or the pace is too slow and therefore progress is also slow. Classroom assistants are not always used efficiently in whole class teaching. On occasions tasks are too demanding or not appropriate.

- 22 In Key Stage 2, where teaching is most effective, the high level of subject knowledge, an enthusiasm for the subject and a demanding pace to lessons has a considerable impact on progress. This is demonstrated well in information and communication technology in Years 5 and 6. In many lessons teachers are skilled at developing pupils' thinking and challenge them to make predictions, express opinions or explain reasoning. In religious education this was evident in lessons to explain the meaning of the Lord's Prayer. Here, the teachers were able to make the meaning very clear to the pupils by their illustrations and choice of vocabulary. Visual aids and demonstrations are well prepared to stimulate pupils' interest. For example, in a science lesson, pupils were fascinated by the effect of carbon dioxide on sultanas when they were dropped in a bottle of lemonade. In many lessons good question and answer skills keep all pupils involved and teachers consistently emphasise key vocabulary. On a few occasions delivery is uninspiring, the pace of delivery is too slow, work is not sufficiently challenging or planning is inadequate.
- 23 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good in those classes where the work that is set is closely related to the pupils' individual targets and when support assistants are used to help small groups. This is particularly successful in literacy and numeracy lessons but is not happening in all classes. There is close teamwork between teachers and support assistants and generally all staff are familiar with the information in the individual education plans. Where practice is best they use this information well to plan appropriate work to help pupils make progress and maintain motivation. Regular homework is set, which in many cases, relates directly to the pupils' individual targets and helps them improve.
- 24 The teaching of literacy and numeracy at both key stages has received considerable attention in the last year and is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Most teachers have a good grasp of the requirements of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies although they do not always strike a good balance between the different sections of the lessons. In many subjects, the plenary sessions are used extremely well to develop speaking and listening skills, to assess understanding and to develop knowledge further.
- 25 Throughout the school, homework tasks such as spelling, reading, mathematics and science activities make a very good contribution to standards achieved. A supervised homework club is provided for pupils who find it hard to study at home. Additional lessons in English, mathematics and science after school and on Saturdays are well received by pupils and parents and improve pupils' skills and knowledge. Homework for pupils under five takes the form of a half-termly sheet of activity suggestions for parents to do with their children as well as books to share.
- 26 The previous inspection report stated that the quality of teaching overall was "generally sound". There has been a considerable improvement since this report and the present high quality of teaching has a significant impact on the attainment of pupils, particularly that of children under five and in the later stage of Key Stage 2.

## **The curriculum and assessment**



- 1 The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. It successfully reflects the overall aims of the school in providing enhanced learning opportunities and improving levels of attainment in a purposeful and relevant curriculum. Statutory requirements are met in the delivery of the National Curriculum and religious education and an appropriate amount of time is spent on each subject except where there is an imbalance between history and geography at the upper end of the school. The school has recently reviewed the time allocation of the six foundation subjects and reduced the subject content to make them more manageable. They have also identified the need to provide additional time outside the Literacy Hour to develop extended writing and library skills. Because of the added pressure on time for foundation subjects, subjects such as design and technology are taught for a short, blocked, intensive periods to ensure a depth of coverage and the completion of tasks. Good opportunities are made to provide meaningful links across many subjects and often environmental education has a high focus. Although not a subject in its own right the global environment is incorporated into science and geography, while the concern for the local area is seen in the development of the school grounds. Literacy and numeracy receive a high profile, with good progress made in successfully implementing the Literacy Hour and Numeracy Strategy. Information and communication technology is used very effectively to support many subjects.
- 2 The curriculum for children under five is well planned within the six areas of learning recommended for children of this age and provision is very good. The majority of children make good progress in a stimulating environment and are well prepared for the transition to the National Curriculum. Planning for continuity between the nursery and reception is successfully established.

- 3 Health education is given a high focus and there is comprehensive documentation to support the good provision. These guidelines ensure that sex education, together with an awareness of the misuse of drugs, are taught effectively within the science curriculum. A Healthy School week is held in the summer term when various activities take place to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. The school is very proud of having been the first school in the region to win a health promotion award. Aspects of personal and social education are included in 'circle time', religious education lessons and assemblies. As there are no guidelines to support staff, planning is sometimes unsatisfactory, skills are not developed progressively and there are inconsistencies in provision.
- 4 Equality of access to the curriculum and other aspects of school life is well provided for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. When pupils are ready to transfer to secondary school, visits are arranged to help in the smooth transition. There is close consultation with regard to special educational needs and literacy. Within the formal homework policy additional work is set for Year 6 pupils as they prepare for the national tests and to help them adjust to the expectations and practices of secondary education.
- 5 The school has maintained its good provision for special educational needs since the previous inspection. Pupils have equal access to the curriculum by means of individual education plans, which are of good quality. These measurable plans set out realistic targets and programmes that help pupils to acquire necessary skills. The targets are reviewed regularly to ensure that the plans remain appropriate. Because of the high number of pupils with special educational needs in the current Years 3 and 4, two small classes have been established. Staff adopt a flexible approach to withdrawing pupils from their class but in most cases the support is provided within the classroom. Assessment and recording processes, that are part of the assessment strategies for all pupils, are used in assessing the progress of pupils with special educational needs.
- 6 The priorities for the headteacher, staff and governors since the last inspection have been to prepare schemes of work in all subjects and use them to improve planning. There are now comprehensive schemes in every subject including the recent integration of national guidelines and they are used well by staff in termly planning to ensure the development and progression of skills. These developments represent a significant improvement since the previous inspection and are an important factor in the improving standards throughout the school. In upper Key Stage 2, weekly planning is detailed in all subjects, identifying clearly the focus of the lesson and the activities to match the wide range of ability within the class. In other classes weekly planning is generally satisfactory although teachers do not always plan work that is appropriate for all pupils in the class. There is also a lack of consistency in some year groups where staff do not plan together.
- 7 The staff provide a good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils. During the year these include a recorder group, choir, football, French, sports and information and communication technology club. There is also a group to prepare pupils for statutory assessments and a Saturday club for pupils to extend writing skills. Over half of the pupils in Key Stage 2 take part, many attending several clubs during the week. At least five members of staff contribute to these activities. There are also good opportunities for pupils to take part in a variety of sporting competitions with other schools in the area. A group of parents have recently trained as community sports leaders and have organised games evenings for the Year 3 pupils. Older pupils will be attending an outdoor residential centre during the year and a comprehensive variety of visits and visitors enriches the curriculum well. The quality of these activities make a very good contribution to developing pupils' personal and social skills.

- 8 Several initiatives have been successfully established to address the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report and these are contributing well to the improving standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science. A detailed and thorough assessment is undertaken of children when they start in the nursery and reception and the information gathered is used well to plan work and identify early those children who have special educational needs. Effective analysis is made of the results of the National Curriculum tasks and other tests to monitor the progress of individual pupils, to select specific pupils for additional support and set targets for school improvement. Staff also gain information from this data to inform their planning. Some informal tasks are used to assess progress in the core subjects and these are beginning to be effective in providing information on the progress pupils are making and the further support they require. Marking is usually thorough and constructive, identifying strengths and areas for improvement. However day-to-day assessments are not yet sufficiently linked to teaching and learning in some classes and do not provide accurate teacher assessment scores at the end of Key Stage 2. The assessment policy gives little guidance to staff on how to improve these areas of weakness.

#### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

- 1 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Parents support the good attitudes and strong values promoted by the school and feel that these have a positive effect on their children. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is an important and significant strength, contributing very positively to its ethos, supporting its aims, promoting pupils' personal development and nurturing them to make significant progress in their learning.
- 2 The provision for spiritual development is good. The school offers an appropriate pattern of daily acts of collective worship throughout the week, based on well-planned, interesting and relevant themes, to which pupils easily relate. Music is well featured and there are appropriate opportunities for reflection. The programme for religious education also contributes positively to pupils' spiritual development, for example, when pupils in Years 5 and 6 reflected on the meaning of the Lord's Prayer. Teachers also plan for "special moments" in other subjects, for example in Year 5/6 science, when watching the effect when dropping sultanas into lemonade or in Year 1 when investigating the contents of a dark cupboard. Nursery pupils wonder at the colours of Autumn and enjoy the smell of newly baked shortbread.
- 3 Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong and all adults in the school have a consistent approach to supporting pupils to make appropriate behaviour choices. All adults are very good role models for pupils and work closely together to establish an orderly atmosphere in lessons and around the school. Teachers promote good behaviour and work through encouraging comments and by more tangible rewards such as 'Barney Bear' stars, stickers, raffle tickets, points, and 'thumbs-up' to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Pupils are made very aware of what is expected of them by the prominent display of behaviour expectations and consequences in every class and around the school. Pupils' work and achievements are celebrated in assemblies and through striking displays in some classes. Children in the nursery and reception classes learn about living and working together through topics such as friendship, making handprints to show the hand of friendship.
- 4 The school makes very good provision for the social development of its pupils. The positive atmosphere promoted by adults encourages good relationships amongst pupils and between staff and pupils. Opportunities for co-operation and collaboration are frequently incorporated into lessons, and independent research is well promoted through the use of information and communication technology, particularly amongst the older pupils. Many teachers use different groupings of pupils effectively to enable them to develop socially; for example, when working in the computer suite. The school places great importance on the development of "circle time" class discussions. In some classes these enable pupils to discuss a range of sensitive issues in a supportive atmosphere, building their self esteem and confidence, promoting trust, openness and care for others. However there is no whole-school guidance to enable less confident teachers to lead these important opportunities to the full. Pupils are given opportunities for contacts with the wider community to develop their awareness of others. Nursery pupils learn to share. They try unusual foods and learn about the importance of hygiene when handling food.
- 5 The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils have the opportunity to develop their interest in other cultures through music, poetry and art. In Years 5 and 6, in art, for example, pupils studied the work of Tom Schulten and then explored their own ideas artistically while reflecting his unique style. Music is valued and is incorporated effectively into acts of worship and in classes. There are opportunities for pupils to take part in music making within and outside school. In history and geography topics, pupils are encouraged to appreciate the lives of people from different periods and places, for example the daily life of working children in Victorian times, or those living on the Island of St Lucia. Good quality literature and poetry is used well to promote pupils' awareness of their own culture. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to belong to the French Club. Religious education includes appropriate consideration of the traditions of faiths other than Christian. Nursery and reception pupils follow topics such as "Ourselves" and enjoy studying nature and the seasons.

- 6 Many of the strengths identified by the previous inspection report have been further developed into significant strengths of the school. These actively promote the schools' positive ethos and the realisation of its aims.

### **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

- 1 The school provides a very caring environment. All adults know the pupils well and show them a respect that encourages self-confidence and a sense of personal worth. Staff actively demonstrate a high commitment to their pastoral role. Pupils' personal and academic achievement is regularly monitored and recorded. Any reported incidents of bullying or harassment are dealt with firmly and sensitively and parents have confidence in this. The school complies with statutory requirements for recording absence and publishing attendance statistics. Registers are monitored regularly by the deputy headteacher and the educational social worker. Rewards play a significant part in improving attendance. Lateness is recorded and appropriate action taken.
- 2 Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in daily learning and sensitive guidance on aspects of behaviour. They have access to a wide range of specialist services with whom the school has very good relationships. External agencies are used regularly to assess pupils' learning needs and to support teachers.
- 3 Arrangements for receiving pupils into the nursery and for transferring pupils to secondary school are very good. A carefully planned programme provides opportunities for pupils to become familiar with all aspects of school life. Effective support is provided for pupils prior to transfer to secondary school. The school regularly reviews the effectiveness of its support systems.
- 4 Statutory requirements for child protection are in place and all staff are aware of the procedures. The school meets all statutory requirements for health and safety. Regular safety audits are undertaken and the findings quickly acted upon. The recent audit by the Local Education Authority stated that there is an impressive commitment to health and safety demonstrated by all staff. Fire drills are conducted regularly and access to the school is controlled by an effective security system.
- 5 All established members of staff are trained first aiders. The day-to-day arrangements for the care of sick or injured pupils are well established and their effectiveness demonstrated very well during the inspection when there was an emergency. The school clerk makes a significant contribution to the care and general welfare of pupils. The school is currently updating its health and drugs awareness policy in consultation with the relevant authorities. The school nurse works with pupils in Years 5 and 6. Personal and social development is promoted through assemblies, visitors to the school and individual classes as the opportunity arises. The school has achieved a healthy school award for three successive years.
- 6 Good self-discipline is both expected and encouraged as part of the ethos of the school. Effective strategies promote high standards of behaviour and this makes a significant contribution to progress and standards. Appropriate sanctions are available for incidents of poor behaviour but the school emphasises the making of positive choices.
- 7 The parents' questionnaires and the views received at the parents' meeting confirm that parents have confidence in the school's procedures for identifying and supporting their child's particular needs.

### **Partnership with parents and the community**

- 8 The partnership with parents and the community is very good and is a particular strength of the school. This highly successful partnership makes a considerable contribution to the life of the school, to pupils' progress and to their personal and social development. Since the previous inspection, the school has worked enthusiastically to develop and expand its partnership with parents and the community.

- 9 The information provided is very good. Regular newsletters and other information are sent to parents when required. Good use is made of the school notice boards, particularly in the nursery, where the details of the term's activities are displayed, together with a comprehensive list of activities that can be done at home to enhance learning. The school has an "open door" policy for parents wishing to come into school and this promotes very good relationships. Consultations with parents are held twice a year so that they can discuss their child's progress with the class teacher. The pupils' annual reports inform parents well about what their child has achieved and those areas requiring development. They find this detail helpful. Occasional information evenings about curriculum matters are held for parents and these, together with regular coffee afternoons, are effective in fostering a continuous working partnership in learning. Many parents have taken part in courses organised by the school to enable them to be effective when helping in classrooms. The "Reading in Partnership" initiative is improving reading skills and confidence of the pupils involved. The school uses external funding from the Single Regeneration Budget to support a number of initiatives such as homework clubs and parent and child "Nearly at Nursery", to strengthen the links between home and school and to increase parental involvement in learning.
- 10 Parents of children with special educational needs are involved in the process of identification and are kept fully informed about their child's progress at all stages. All parents are invited to review meetings and the school does all it can to encourage their involvement.
- 11 The "Friends' Association" is very active. It organises a wide range of social and fundraising events that are well supported. The money raised has recently funded events for pupils and helped in the purchase of a digital camera.
- 12 The links with the local community enrich the school's work and make a very good contribution to personal and social development. Local groups such as keep fit classes use the premises regularly. The school choir performs at a number of venues within the community. Pupils make visits to local places of interest to extend the curriculum. Representatives of the local community come to school to speak to pupils and assist in many ways. The local vicar takes assembly regularly. The school's football teams play an active part in local competitions. A group of parents, trained as community sports leaders, and organise games evenings for pupils.
- 13 Very good relationships are established with parents whose children are due to enter nursery, including home visits. Liaison with the local secondary school is very good, with an induction day, a comprehensive programme of visits and discussions with pupils and their parents. Particular attention is paid to the arrangements for those pupils with special educational needs. There are regular meetings with the other feeder primary schools and the secondary school. Liaison activities are regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure continual improvement. Students from local colleges and the secondary school benefit from work experience in the school.
- 14 Parents at the parents' meeting and in the questionnaire expressed their support for all aspects of the school and the inspection findings support their views.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and management**

- 15 The school is very ably led and managed by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, supported by an effective governing body. Governors respect the professional expertise of staff and have therefore concentrated their management efforts on providing strong, challenging direction to developments. They share with the headteacher and staff a clear commitment to fostering a good environment for learning, raising standards of attainment and making the school a community asset. Governors take accountability seriously, encouraging careful consideration of proposals at all levels to ensure lasting value to the school. The headteacher successfully shares responsibility for leadership and management with the deputy headteacher, curriculum and key stage co-ordinators. This helps the decision-making process and encourages high levels of implementation.

- 16 The previous inspection report suggested that promoting high standards of attainment was not an aim of the school. This is no longer true. For the last three years, this has become the foundation of all management decisions and ensures that the school has appropriate systems to sustain improvement. The success of the measures is indicated by the considerable improvement in results in national assessments and tests. Systems for monitoring and supporting teaching are strong and the quality of teaching has improved. The headteacher plays a significant role in monitoring planning and regularly observes work in classrooms, supported by the curriculum co-ordinators and senior management team. The attainment of pupils is systematically tested, recorded and analysed to provide valuable information on progress, particularly in mathematics and English. This results in profiles that track pupils as they progress through the school, generating data to inform target setting and identifying general weaknesses in teaching. Co-ordinators are becoming increasingly involved in raising standards in subjects by producing schemes of work, monitoring planning and offering support. The impact in science is particularly strong. The management and organisation of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordination and administration of procedures is thorough and adequate time is allocated to the special needs co-ordinator to carry out her duties effectively. There is an identified governor for special educational needs and the annual report to parents provides adequate information on this topic.
- 17 Development planning is another area of improvement since the previous inspection and this is now very good. Plans give a clear direction to the school and involve all staff in some way. Curriculum co-ordinators review their subjects frequently and needs are discussed at staff meetings before the plan is finalised. Priorities are clear and appropriate and there is a close link with the process of budget setting. Maintenance aspects are intentionally included in the plan to give a complete picture of school needs. Progress of the plan is regularly monitored by the governing body and by staff, and formally evaluated at the end of the year.
- 18 The school is very successful in implementing its aims, values and policies. The mission statement is clear and simple, underpinning the daily work of the school and prefacing documents such as the development plan. Staff understand the aims of the school well and frequently reinforce these in lessons and in assemblies. The positive behaviour policy is a feature of the school and this is regularly emphasised in staff training, ensuring consistent application and pupil acceptance. This makes a significant contribution to the very good school ethos. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good and this has a strong impact on the pleasant atmosphere in the school and the commitment to learning. There is a firm emphasis on equal opportunities. All statutory requirements are met.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

- 19 The match of number, qualifications and experience of teaching staff is good. Appointments are made to address specifically particular needs, for example, information and communication technology, and this has a positive effect on the quality of education provided. There are two newly qualified teachers, one of whom is a supply teacher. Staffing for classes for children under five is good. The complement of permanent staff with more than five years' experience has improved since the last inspection.
- 20 The match of number, qualifications and experience of support staff is good. Classroom assistants are generally used well to support pupils effectively, particularly in the Literacy Hour group activities. They are less effectively deployed when whole class teaching is taking place. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is very well qualified and provides good support for staff and training on how to increase their skills in supporting these pupils and to improve the writing of the individual education plans. There is a sufficient number of experienced, qualified and capable support staff to assist in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs and they are used well.
- 21 Arrangements for appraisal and the professional development of staff are good. There is a formal induction programme that effectively monitors and supports newly qualified teachers. Particular areas for staff development are identified clearly in the school development plan. Staff have been involved in a wide range of in-service activities, which are then disseminated at whole school and key stage staff meetings. Non-teaching staff have also been involved in training for positive behaviour management. The school clerk plays an important role in the day-to-day running of the school.

- 22 The accommodation is satisfactory. An additional classroom and a new information and communication technology suite contribute positively to the quality of learning. There are no additional facilities to assist access to the building for disabled pupils and carers but accommodation is on one level with only a few steps.
- 23 The outside fabric of the building is in a very poor state of repair. Rotten window frames and leaking roofs adversely affect the quality of the learning environment within the school. However, the standards of care, maintenance, and cleanliness of the inside of the building are very good.
- 24 The quality and quantity of resources in religious education, music and geography are satisfactory, whilst across other subjects it is good. The information and communications technology resources are excellent. These resources also effectively support special educational needs and the under fives. The range, quantity, accessibility and management of resources are much improved since the previous inspection. The very good range of resources available for pupils with special educational needs has a positive impact on the progress they make. Library stock for both key stages has been developed well. Non-fiction books and books of interest to boys have been targeted. Resources are used well in lessons. The provision and use of overhead projectors across subjects has a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning. There is a wide range of displays across the school, many of which are interactive, for example, in information and communication technology. These contribute positively to setting high expectations for pupils' work.

### **The efficiency of the school**

- 25 Financial planning is very good. The school uses the resources allocated to it efficiently, effectively and with imagination. There are clear aims of improving the quality of education and the standing of the school in the community. Particularly good use has been made of grants from the Single Regeneration Budget to increase learning opportunities. For example, Saturday writing and homework clubs, summer schools and family learning days have been established, which together, raise the profile of education and learning within school and the community and help to improve attainment. The funds available to the school for special educational needs are used effectively. Additional staff are employed as support assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator is allocated time to carry out administrative duties.
- 26 The school development plan provides an effective blueprint for budget setting by the headteacher and senior staff. A draft budget is then presented to the governors' finance committee for discussion before the full governing body approves it. The school roll and finances are relatively stable and therefore long-term planning can be undertaken with security. In the current financial year, a deficit budget was set deliberately to reduce surplus balances, leaving a safe level of contingency funding and sensibly meeting the governors' wish to benefit pupils already in the school.
- 27 Teaching staff are well deployed. The governors value having a deputy headteacher with a very small teaching commitment that allows her to undertake a wide range of monitoring and support and this is proving effective. The school is particularly good at identifying and using staff interest and expertise as, for example, the extra use of the caretaker to work with computers. Non-teaching staff provide valuable support to the school as a result of clear job descriptions and training. Classroom support staff are used well when working with individuals and groups, but are sometimes less effectively employed when whole class teaching is taking place.
- 28 Accommodation is used well following the successful development of areas such as the information and communication technology suites, the library and the conference room. Outside the buildings, the secure nursery play area is imaginatively marked with roads to help lessons in road safety and a well-established pond enhances the curriculum in art and science. Access to resources is much improved since the previous inspection with the introduction of subject catalogues available to staff and many frequently used resources dispersed to classrooms. Resources are used well in lessons, particularly information and communication technology, including imaginative use of overhead projectors. The library is organised efficiently with the help of a computerised system for issuing books and monitoring usage. Well-chosen resources to enhance the teaching of literacy are being used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs.



- 29 Standards of financial control were judged to be satisfactory in a recent audit and the few minor issues have been resolved. Day-to-day administration is exceptionally good, with the school clerk playing a major role in its success. Alongside efficient systems of administration, she provides caring support to pupils, which is valued by parents. During the inspection a serious medical emergency was dealt with calmly and efficiently, demonstrating the success of well-planned procedures.
- 30 Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment that are well below average and make good progress overall. They make very good progress at the end of Key Stage 2. The quality of education, including teaching and pupils' attitudes, is good. When compared with national figures, the unit costs per pupil are below average and the school gives good value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

- 31 Provision for children under five is very good. Pupils are admitted to the nursery for five part-time sessions per week as soon after their third birthday as a place becomes available. They begin full-time education in the reception class in either the September or January before they are five. At the time of the inspection there were 52 part-time and 13 full-time pupils in this age group. Base-line assessments, teachers records and classroom observations indicate that the full range of ability is represented but most pupils are below average on entry to the nursery and a significant minority have language and vocabulary skills that are well below average. The nursery has the benefit of a full-time nursery nurse and the reception class benefits from a teaching assistant for part of the week. Both classes plan well to include the full range of experiences required by the national Desirable Learning Outcomes.
- 32 The quality of teaching for pupils under five is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection where it was good. Both teachers are thoughtful and knowledgeable about the learning needs of young children. Both they and the nursery nurse interact well with pupils to draw out ideas and learning and to increase knowledge and understanding. There is an appropriate extra emphasis on language and vocabulary development. Record keeping is extensive and systematic. Daily assessment and records are securely based on learning objectives and are used to provide work for pupils with differing prior attainment. Work is well planned for individual needs. For example, a nursery pupil who is in the very early stages of speaking English as an additional language is well targeted with extra support and adults are aware of the need to ensure his inclusion. This is a significant improvement from the previous report where support for such pupils was deemed to be ineffective. Baseline assessments are carried out on entry to the nursery and again on entry to the reception class. Planning mainly follows the Desirable Learning Outcomes but elements of the numeracy and literacy strategies are introduced over the reception year as pupils move towards the early stages of the National Curriculum. Display is very effective in both classes in raising pupils' awareness and contributes well to understanding. Induction arrangements are secure for both entry to the nursery and to reception and very good links are made with parents. Home visits take place before entry to the nursery and children and carers have the opportunity to attend a "Nearly at Nursery" group. The work for the nursery nurse and teaching assistant is well planned.
- 33 Progress and teaching in personal and social development is very good. Both teachers and assistants are aware of pupils' need to develop self-esteem and confidence. There are very good relationships between adults and children who learn classroom routines and what is expected of them. They work together, for example in setting up the track for the railway or in role play areas. They know how many are allowed in any work area at a time. They co-operate in building models with construction kits and in outdoor activity. There is an appropriate balance between adult-directed tasks such as exploring the sounds of letters at the beginning of words in the nursery or in reading a "big book" in the reception class and in child-initiated activity such as exploring the properties of sand or painting. During the session in the nursery where pupils were tasting porridge, they extended the range of food they liked and when cooking biscuits, learned the importance of cleanliness. They discuss "friendship" and make handprints to show the hand of friendship. By the age of five most pupils have learned the social skills required, take part in group and class discussions and are prepared for the needs of the National Curriculum.

- 34 Progress in language and literacy skills is very good. Teaching is also very good. In both classes, teachers and assistants focus very carefully on language and vocabulary development at all times and are aware particularly of pupils' limited language experiences outside school. This was well illustrated in the session where pupils cooked shortbread and words such as "stir" were carefully emphasised. Good quality books are provided for parents to share with their children at home and much helpful advice and support accompanies this. In the nursery, pupils have many opportunities to begin mark making and early writing. They work in the role play area and the classroom "office". They make lists and "write" letters. With the help of adults they learn to hold a pencil correctly, using well-chosen special pencils, and begin work on learning to form letters. They play games to learn the sounds of letters. During the inspection pupils enjoyed learning the words and initial sounds for objects pulled from a "feely bag". Some lower attaining pupils do not know the names of everyday objects and colours. Most pupils can copy letters and a few higher attaining pupils begin to write their name unaided. In the reception class, pupils continue to develop writing skills. They begin to read "big books" as a group with the teacher and add to their work on the sounds of letters. Some pupils begin work on the early stages of a reading scheme and begin to recognise words by sight. In both classes pupils listen to stories told by the teacher and on tape in the listening area. By the age of five pupils "read" books along with an adult and attempt to write for themselves. Lower attainers attempt this with a few recognisable letters appearing and average attainers begin to form groups of letters. They also use the pictures in books to "tell" the story. Higher attainers read books with help from an adult and produce writing with recognisable attempts at words. Attainment is still generally below average and a significant number of pupils are not yet ready for work on the National Curriculum although they make very good progress.
- 35 Mathematical skills develop well and teaching and progress is very good. Teachers have a good understanding about the way that pupils need to learn. Pupils in the nursery enjoyed correcting "teddy" when he made deliberate mistakes in counting. Higher attaining pupils in the nursery count to seven and average attainers to five. Both these groups are secure with order and recognise and order figures. They are beginning to understand the ideas of addition and subtraction; for example "How many are left if one teddy falls down?". They learn comparative size from discussing the story of the "The Three Bears" and about shape when they paint on triangles and circles. Wet and dry sand and water activities help to develop an understanding of volume and capacity. Reception pupils continue these activities and by the age of five higher attaining pupils count securely to ten and begin to add and subtract within ten, They can take away half mentally and know the names of simple two dimensional shapes. Average attainers count to ten and understand the principles of "add" and "subtract". They have some mental skills such as subtracting one or doubling but still need to work with real objects. Both these groups have a secure understanding of positional vocabulary. Below average attainers know the names of numbers to ten and count to ten. They match figures with groups of objects, are secure in understanding position and know some simple shapes. By the age of five most pupils have achieved the requirements of the Desirable Learning Outcomes and are ready to begin work on the National Curriculum.
- 36 Knowledge and understanding of the world is promoted well through role play, working with train sets, construction kits, building blocks, using the computer and the "road" in the nursery outdoor play area. The quality of teaching is very good. For example, in the nursery, pupils learn the vocabulary of time such as "today" and "yesterday" when reading together a letter from Ricky Bear about a visit to town. They learn about food and how it changes when ingredients are mixed together and cooked through making and eating shortbread and porridge. An understanding of the world of nature is gained from examining signs of Autumn and the nursery has an excellent display of these including attractive and interesting gourds. Nursery pupils design wheeled models and use a variety of materials to make hinge mechanisms for clock doors. They test and evaluate each one for suitability for the job. Reception pupils design and make a healthy salad and use a variety of cutting tools such as graters, which they are taught to use correctly and safely. They undertake traffic surveys and continue to develop skills with the computer. They follow topics such as that of "Ourselves". By the age of five progress is good and most pupils have achieved all the requirements of this aspect of the Desirable Learning Outcomes. In a number of aspects skills are above average, for example in food technology and in geographical skills.

- 37 Physical skills develop well and teaching is good. The nursery class benefits from a secure outdoor play area and there are many opportunities for pupils to climb, crawl and jump. Reception pupils followed a taped music and movement lesson well, listening carefully and joining-in promptly. They are aware of body parts in space and use curl and stretch movements to represent fireworks. A few pupils lack the expected co-ordination for their age. In both classes pupils learn fine motor skills through the use of scissors, pencils, paint brushes and fitting together pieces of construction kits, making suitable progress by the age of five in increasing their dexterity and in meeting requirements.

- 38 Creative skills progress and develop well and teaching is good. In both classes pupils use paint, crayons and cut and stick paper and junk materials. They model with clay and play dough. They make models with construction kits and evaluate their work. From the earliest days pupils are expected to mix colours for painting and many nursery pupils know that blue and yellow makes green. Brushes, sponges and rollers in various sizes are used to make different effects. They use instruments to make music and listen to music on tape. They sing rhymes and songs. In the reception class most pupils can clap a rhythm to music and change from hand to knee claps when required. By the age of five attainment in this aspect meets all the requirements of the Desirable Learning Outcomes well.

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **English**

- 39 The results of the National Curriculum tests in 1998 for seven year olds indicate that attainment in reading is below the national average but average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Writing is well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. In the 1998 tests for eleven year olds attainment is broadly in line with the national average and well above average for similar schools. Although at seven there is no difference in the performance of boys and girls, at eleven, girls attain higher levels of attainment than boys do. The 1999 tests and teacher assessments at both key stages show, on average, a 12 percent improvement in standards across all aspects of English. The general pattern at both key stages since the last inspection is one of rising standards of attainment and the inspection findings give a similar picture. However, within the current cohorts of seven and eleven year olds there is a significant minority of pupils with special educational needs who will not attain the nationally expected standards. Therefore attainment for this present cohort is average. This evidence reflects the targets the school has set. The major challenge faced by the school following the previous inspection has been to raise levels of attainment in English at Key Stage 2. This has been successfully achieved due to improvements in the quality of teaching, comprehensive planning for literacy, the support and monitoring by the subject co-ordinator and close analysis of test results.
- 40 At the end of both key stages pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is average. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils listen carefully to adults and each other. They answer questions enthusiastically and are beginning to use well-formed sentences that are appropriate for their age. However on entry to school a significant minority of lower attaining pupils have a very restricted language ability and take time to develop an extended spoken vocabulary. In class they are quiet and their contributions are brief. When asked to speak aloud many other pupils do so confidently and clearly and during the class assembly on "Being Me", pupils presented their contribution with assurance and pride. By the end of Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils are beginning to discuss in some depth their preferences for books they read. For example, pupils examine closely the story openings of well known novels and express their views about the ideas and language used, in a sufficiently standard form of speech. This represents an improvement in attainment in speaking and listening since the previous inspection. Pupils engage in good levels of conversation with adults and are given more formal opportunities for speaking in class assemblies and planned drama sessions. Recently pupils acted out their favourite scenes from "Oliver Twist" and afterwards, evaluated their performance and suggested improvements. The skills of lower attaining pupils are more limited but with the encouragement they receive, especially in class discussions, they are showing confidence in sharing ideas together. During the Literacy Hour and on other occasions, pupils' responses are usually considered and appropriate, reflecting the good quality of their listening skills.

- 41 Reading standards are average at the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1 higher attaining pupils read fluently and with a good understanding of the text. These pupils use a range of strategies to read new words and self-correct more difficult ones. However pupils seldom read with expression. There is a very good focus in lessons on pupils reading instructions. For example, a group of pupils followed the instructions carefully to make finger puppets successfully. Average attaining pupils are more hesitant in their reading, while lower attaining pupils recognise familiar words and initial letters in a very simple text. The extensive use of “big books” for the Literacy Hour has improved the level of enjoyment shown by all pupils. Pupils are also showing sound understanding of alphabetical order and use dictionaries and word banks confidently. By the end of Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils read with fluency, understanding and some expression. Many express interest and enjoyment in reading, including poetry, and discuss their favourite authors, although few belong to the local library. They have a good understanding of different types of texts but are in the early stages of evaluating their preferences critically. Pupils use dictionaries confidently and many are proficient in finding information from books and make use of the library, especially to access books from the computerised system. Although average pupils are often fluent and confident in their reading, expression is underdeveloped. The lower attaining pupils are more hesitant in their reading but most have a good knowledge of strategies to use and are gaining confidence. The recent initiative to buy more non-fiction books especially suited to the older and more reluctant readers, who are usually boys, has helped to improve interest and motivation.
- 42 Standards in writing by the end of both key stages are average. At seven, handwriting is neat and generally well formed but very few pupils are beginning to use a cursive script. In writing out the instructions of how to make beans on toast, higher attaining pupils demonstrate a good awareness of the structure and sequencing of events. Spellings are usually accurate and punctuation is used well. There are limited examples of writing seen in books or on display. However examples seen are often linked well to other subjects such as describing the route from home to school and using the computer to write about themselves. There are good opportunities during the Literacy Hour to practise phonic rules to improve spellings and pupils are confident in using these skills in their written work. Average and lower attaining pupils write short phrases and sentences with adult support and spell simple words correctly. By the end of Key Stage 2 many pupils use sound expressive language and grammatical awareness and accuracy in a variety of work that includes letter writing, reports, book reviews, diaries, poetry, curriculum vitae and play scripts. Pupils are now beginning to focus more on writing for a ‘real’ audience. They produce a school newspaper, regularly send messages through the internet, and recently wrote to the Prime Minister to ask if he would ban smoking in public places. Written work by all pupils is usually very well presented with fluent and legible handwriting. Since the previous inspection, there has been a significant improvement in the range and quality of writing. However a significant minority of lower attaining pupils, many of whom have special educational needs, are unable to write in an organised and sustained way, with below average standards in spelling and punctuation.

- 43 Progress across the school is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The intensive support that pupils with special educational needs receive in the lower ability Years 3 and 4 classes often results in very good progress. In the Literacy Hour, the progress that pupils are making is very closely linked to the quality of teaching and for pupils at upper Key Stage 2 this progress is often very good. Progress at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 learn how to speak more clearly, widen their vocabulary and listen more carefully. During Key Stage 2 discussion skills develop well particularly in extending pupils' technical vocabulary across many subjects. Pupils in Key Stage 1 move progressively through the reading scheme. Staff place a very high priority on hearing pupils read during guided reading sessions and on helping the lower attaining pupils gain skills and confidence in their reading. Challenging texts are often used to maximise levels of interest and motivation. Pupils learn the appropriate strategies for many of them to become fluent, confident and independent readers in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1 progress in writing skills develops steadily, with the emphasis on improving handwriting, sentence construction, spelling and punctuation. Less progress is made however, in preparing pupils for the transition from printing to cursive script. The range and quantity of written work is also less evident. Pupils in Key Stage 2 proof read and correct their work to improve the structure, spellings and punctuation and make good progress in using information and communication technology to extend grammatical, recording and editing skills. Good progress, especially at Key Stage 2, is made in extending the opportunities pupils have to use their language skills across many subjects. It is very well represented in history, with good examples of descriptions of Victorian life and in design and technology where pupils are frequently asked to plan their own model making and write out instructions such as how to make a moving toy. Progress is less apparent in extended writing but the school has identified this as an area for development and has allocated additional time during the week. There is a very stimulating environment in many classrooms where literacy has a high focus. Books, pictures, words, ideas and story lines are well displayed to help pupils improve the quality of their writing. Many parents, in providing valuable support for their children with homework, help to accelerate the good progress made and the school has worked very hard to involve parents in the "Reading Partners" project. In addition, clubs are held after school to help pupils improve their language skills and a Saturday club is used to focus on improving writing.

- 44 Behaviour is very good in most classrooms and pupils work hard to complete the work set for them. Self-esteem is high and many pupils confidently stand in front of the class and explain their ideas and read out their work. Most take a considerable pride in the presentation of their work and are pleased when they have been successful. Relationships are often very good and pupils support each other well, giving help and encouragement when needed. There is usually a high degree of interest, concentration and independence shown by the pupils in the Literacy Hour. Older boys are beginning to develop more positive attitudes to reading. The school's initiative of allowing some of the more reluctant readers to accompany the teacher to a book shop and help in the buying of books of their own choice has considerably helped interest levels and motivation.
- 45 The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1 20 percent of lessons were good and 80 percent were satisfactory. At Key Stage 2 20 percent of lessons were satisfactory, 50 percent good, and 30 percent very good. The very good lessons were mainly found in the upper Key Stage 2 classes. There were no unsatisfactory lessons at either key stage. This represents a significant improvement in teaching since the last inspection. Staff have a very secure and confident subject knowledge and share a common understanding of literacy and how best to promote it. In the most successful lessons, planning is detailed and focused on practising and improving key skills and matched correctly to the stage of pupils' learning. Teachers have high, but realistic, expectations of pupils and challenge them well through very good levels of questioning and discussion. Their interest and enthusiasm for books is passed on to the pupils. Good classroom practices and management of time are well established, enabling brisk and productive learning to occur without distractions. Resources are used very well, particularly the overhead projector in the shared work with the class. Staff adopt a positive and consistent approach in their very good relationships and pupils are well supported and actively encouraged to do their best. This particularly applies to the classes where there is a majority of pupils with special educational needs and where staff show a high level of patience and understanding. There is also a significant minority of pupils in the school who have behavioural problems. All staff adopt very positive and effective strategies to prevent potentially disruptive behaviour and this allows the rest of the pupils to work productively. The plenary session gives useful feedback and provides pupils with the opportunity to present their work. Teachers mark work constructively and are able to monitor progress well and set targets for improvement. There is, however, some lack of consistency in the quality of this good teaching by a few teachers. In less successful lessons planning is not sufficiently detailed and similar work is given to all the groups in the independent tasks without considering the range of ability and whether the task is appropriate. The pace of these lessons is slow and there is a lack of urgency or challenge and the output from the pupils, particularly in their written work at Key Stage 1, is limited. Some library sessions consisted of no more than the opportunity to change books.
- 46 Very good management has successfully prepared the staff for the Literacy Hour and improved provision since the previous inspection. The impact of the comprehensive training and support for staff is evident in the improvement to teaching skills and the raising of standards of attainment. The highly qualified co-ordinator is very committed to continue this progress and the comprehensive monitoring and evaluation is used to address weaknesses and to develop a more consistent approach in teaching. Further developments in writing at Key Stage 1, improved assessment and a more consistent approach to planning across some year groups have been identified as strategies to accelerate progress even further. The Literacy Hour has been well resourced and the refurbished and generally well-stocked library provides good opportunities for pupils to extend their literacy skills. The co-ordinator has identified a shortage of non-fiction books in some subject areas. There is a very good range of computer software to support learning in English.

## Mathematics



- 47 At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainments are in line with the national average. Evidence from the inspection gives a similar picture to that shown in the 1998 National Curriculum tests, when 80 eight percent of pupils reached the nationally accepted average of Level 2 or above and 19 percent achieved the higher Level 3. These results are in line with the national average and above the standards generally attained by pupils in schools with similar backgrounds. Results for the Key Stage 1 national tests taken in 1999 indicate that all pupils reached Level 2 and above. There were far fewer pupils on the school's special educational needs register in the cohort of pupils taking the 1999 tests than for the 1998 tests, explaining the higher standards achieved. The current group of pupils undertaking the tests in 2000 also has a significant number of such pupils on the register. There has been a steady improvement in the standards of pupils' attainment in all aspects of mathematics over the last five years due, in part, to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and an improvement in the quality of teaching.
- 48 Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is above the national average. Evidence from the inspection matches the picture of attainment achieved by eleven year olds in the national tests of 1998, when seventy one percent of pupils reached the nationally agreed average Level 4 or above. Sixteen percent of pupils reached the higher Level 5, which is close to the proportion found nationally. These results are well above the standards reached in similar schools nationally. Results from the 1999 tests indicate even higher levels of attainment with ninety two percent of pupils reaching Level 4 or above. Over one third of pupils in the current Year 6 are on the school's register of special educational needs, explaining why the standards observed during the inspection do not reflect the 1999 results. At the previous inspection, pupils' attainments in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 were judged to be in line with the national average and improving. There has been a very significant improvement in pupils' attainment levels in all aspects of mathematics over the last five years. There is evidence of slightly higher overall attainment among girls, but this is not significantly above the national picture.
- 49 The use of 'readers' for particular pupils undertaking the national assessments enables them to concentrate on the mathematical skills required rather than be penalised for their reading skills. This practice may also account for some of the improvement in standards in recent years.
- 50 By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils use mental arithmetic confidently, and speedily, recalling addition and subtraction facts, and using numbers at least up to 20 with higher attaining pupils working beyond. They recognise a range of two and three-dimensional shapes and explain what is special about them. Pupils use rulers to measure the length of a straight line in centimetres. They collect data to make block graphs of their favourite foods and use simple methods of tallying when recording a local traffic survey. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are developing a good range of mathematical vocabulary, using it fluently when describing their working out or in answering questions. Pupils use the four rules of number with increasing confidence, often adding and subtracting using a variety of methods. They have a good understanding of place value and describe their thinking well, often discovering several different ways of finding the same answer. Most pupils recognise and name complex shapes and accurately identify reflective symmetry. Pupils generally have a sound understanding of area and perimeter, using this to measure regular and irregular shapes. Pupils are proficient in data-handling, making graphs, pie charts and scattergrams, interpreting results accurately, and often transferring data onto a computer for further interrogation. They use computers successfully to record, display and analyse their findings.
- 51 There are a number of examples of pupils using and applying mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding in other subjects. In Year 2, pupils write poems about different shapes, and translate scientific data about different foods into bar charts for ease of analysis. Year 6 pupils accurately measure the materials necessary to make moving models. Pupils interpret time lines accurately in history and recognise the use of co-ordinates in finding places on a map. Pupils use a function machine well to investigate properties of numbers and the problem solving approach in choosing a meal with costs and various options adds interest.

- 52 Pupils make good progress overall, throughout the school. Progress is satisfactory throughout Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 it is good and consistently very good in Years 5 and 6. Pupils are making particularly good progress with mental arithmetic skills in the numeracy lessons. Teachers encourage and help pupils to make speedy mental responses to calculations by teaching important tips and short cuts, for example in recognising numbers that total ten. The careful matching of challenging tasks by most teachers to pupils with different abilities enables them to make good progress, building upon their existing knowledge and understanding. The use of accurate terminology by teachers ensures that mathematical vocabulary becomes meaningful to pupils and they progress well in using correct subject terms. However, pupils' mathematical skills and understanding is significantly higher when talking about their work or working practically than is seen in their written work. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop a good level of understanding, supported by skilful, logical teaching. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers, particularly when they receive additional support in lessons.

- 53 Pupils' attitudes towards mathematics are usually good. They settle well to tasks, concentrate for lengthy periods and are enthusiastic and eager to answer questions. However, many pupils find recording work difficult and presentation is often unsatisfactory, particularly at Key Stage 1 and in lower Key Stage 2. Most pupils are attentive and behave well in lessons, with only occasional incidents of restlessness, usually in classes where the teacher fails to motivate them sufficiently. Pupils listen with respect when others are explaining their mathematical thinking. They share equipment well.
- 54 Overall, teaching throughout the school is good. It is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. 50 percent of lessons at Key Stage 1 were judged satisfactory, 25 percent good and 25 percent very good. At Key Stage 2 13 percent of lessons were satisfactory, 38 percent good, 25 percent very good and 13 percent excellent. One lesson was unsatisfactory. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 was consistently at least very good. Teachers' management of pupils is usually good. They use regular praise to encourage pupils and circulate around the classroom giving support and advice. Lessons are usually managed at brisk pace, often with plenty of challenge for pupils of all abilities. Teachers use resources well, many of which have been newly acquired for the introduction of the Numeracy Strategy. In Years 5 and 6, the high quality transparencies prepared by teachers for use on the overhead projector help to motivate pupils and retain their interest. Teachers' lesson planning shows that they have developed a very positive understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and are implementing it well. In just a few lessons, teachers' planning does not identify sufficiently challenging tasks for the most able pupils in each year group within the class. In the most successful lessons, teachers use a logical, methodical approach to explain concepts, then consolidate pupils' new learning with well-matched tasks. Lessons usually conclude with a very useful discussion and summary of what pupils have learned and explains how this will be developed in the future. Pupils' work is marked regularly and in a positive style. The use of homework is a regular feature of many lessons and extends pupils' learning. The teaching of mathematics has improved markedly since the previous inspection, especially at the upper part of Key Stage 2.
- 55 Co-ordination is good. The school is implementing the National Numeracy Strategy successfully and now uses this as the basis for its scheme of work. This gives the curriculum a good framework for the steady development of pupils' skills and understanding. The significant emphasis upon mental arithmetic is sharpening pupils' calculation skills. Assessment procedures are generally satisfactory. However, day-to-day assessment is too informal and does not enable the teachers to have a clear picture of individual pupils' progress. This explains, in part, the considerable discrepancy in the teacher assessments in the National Curriculum assessments at the end of both key stages. Resources for mathematics are good.

## Science

- 56 When teachers assessed pupils towards the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998, the number of pupils attaining the national expectation was above average, and well above average when compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. However the number of pupils attaining the high levels was well below average. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, standards of attainment were above average overall, although the number of pupils reaching high levels was close to the national average. Teacher assessment underestimated pupils' ability to perform in tests, as they were conscious that the pupils' reading and writing skills were not as high as their level of scientific knowledge. When compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds attainment was well above average. The school has made considerable progress in raising standards since the previous inspection where attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was judged to be in line with national standards and at Key Stage 2 it was well below average. This is due to the implementation of a scheme of work that identifies clearly what pupils need to know, understand and do at each stage, to improved teacher expertise and to well-informed leadership by the subject co-ordinator. The 1999 teacher assessments give a picture of continuing improvement at Key Stage 1 with all pupils achieving at least the national average. Improvement is rapid at Key Stage 2. The unvalidated test results show that all pupils achieved the average level for their age at the end of the key stage, with well over half the pupils achieving higher levels. Inspection findings are that standards at the end of both key stages are above average despite the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Years 2 and 6. Rapid progress is made towards the end of Key Stage 2. There are no significant differences in performance between boys and girls.

- 57 By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are keen to find out how things work and have a broad base of subject knowledge in life processes and living things, materials and their properties, and physical processes. They predict with confidence, for example what will be needed to make different types of torches work. They understand the need for a complete circuit. They have a good knowledge of parts of the body and an understanding of senses. They make a good attempt at recording their findings, although this is sometimes restricted by their writing skills. They have a good grasp of scientific vocabulary.
- 58 By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have assimilated many facts and have a very broad and secure base of scientific knowledge. Pupils' understanding of forces is very good. Those with lower attainment indicate what forces are acting on different objects, such as a football about to be kicked. Those with higher attainment have a secure understanding of what is required to maintain equilibrium, and have a good knowledge of different types of force such as upthrust and friction. All pupils understand that molecular distribution leads to different states of matter and recognise properties such as that of the surface of a liquid finding its own level. Pupils appreciate some of the properties of gases and make well-informed predictions about situations based on their subject knowledge. They know many facts about the human body, about plant reproduction and about food chains. They understand that some types of materials are better insulators than others, and some pupils explain how to extract salt and sand from a liquid.
- 59 In both key stages pupils develop a good understanding of scientific vocabulary. They demonstrate good listening skills in all lessons. Many opportunities are given for pupils to use their speaking skills when making predictions or describing results to the class. Descriptive writing and note taking are encouraged where these are appropriate. Numeracy skills are used well to support the subject. For example, pupils measure with increasing accuracy and experimental data is presented in a variety of ways.
- 60 Progress for all pupils is good in all areas of science across the school and in most lessons. Progress is very good towards the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils move securely from describing simple features of objects and recording information in picture form to the identification of key factors in experiments and making predictions based on former knowledge. They improve their recording skills and the quality of measurement. They steadily develop their understanding of life processes and living things. For example in Key Stage 1 they know that the body needs exercise to be healthy and at the beginning of Key Stage 2 they learn about tooth decay and the importance of oral hygiene. From the early stages of observation of physical appearance they move on to classification of gases, liquids, and solids. They make good progress in their understanding of physical processes. Pupils with special educational needs make particularly good progress and most reach national expectations due to the quality of support in lessons and the emphasis on practical experiences, although they have difficulty communicating in writing. In some lessons, in both key stages, the progress of pupils with higher attainment is not as rapid as that of pupils with lower or average attainment. This is because ongoing assessment is not sufficiently used to inform daily planning and tasks do not always provide enough challenge.
- 61 Pupils have good attitudes to science. They handle equipment with care and have a very good understanding of safety procedures. Behaviour is good. Pupils concentrate on their work, even in the rare situations when tasks are mundane. They are very keen to participate in experiments and investigations. Younger pupils were desperately anxious to have a turn in a dark room to find objects, using their senses to explore the object and answering questions from the class to try to identify it. Older pupils were fascinated by the reaction caused by adding sultanas to lemonade. Pupils with special educational needs thoroughly enjoy their lessons and demonstrate a real sense of achievement when their experiments are successful. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout the school. Personal and social skills are extremely well developed through the emphasis on prediction and whole class discussions, to which pupils with all levels of attainment contribute without fear of failure. Opportunities that are provided for pupils to handle equipment and materials and test things for themselves help them to appreciate the wonders of science

- 62 In Key Stage 1 teaching is good. Half the lessons seen were good and half were satisfactory. Lessons are well prepared and pupils are challenged to think, for example in the lesson where pupils were trying to put together different types of torch and make them work. Subject knowledge is good and scientific vocabulary is carefully emphasised. This has a direct impact on progress. Teaching is enthusiastic. Less effective features are a slow pace to introductions and group sizes that are too large. In Key Stage 2 teaching is very good, and it is particularly strong towards the end of the key stage. 33 percent of lessons are very good, 33 are good, 22 percent are satisfactory and one lesson was unsatisfactory. The high quality of subject knowledge and shared planning in Years 5 and 6 has a very strong impact on standards achieved by the end of the key stage. In the best lessons teaching is enthusiastic, resources are well prepared and activities are stimulating and well thought out. Plenty of opportunities are available for pupils with higher attainment to extend their learning and tasks are accessible to those with special educational needs. Where lessons are less effective, tasks are mundane and pupils learn very little. Teacher interaction is insufficient to help pupils develop or the pace of delivery is slow and lacks enthusiasm.
- 63 In both key stages there is a careful emphasis on health and safety. Legal requirements are met to assess pupils at the end of both key stages but there is a lack of consistency in assessment procedures across the school with assessment being better at Key Stage 2. Homework is used appropriately to support learning. Since the previous inspection there has been a high and successful focus on improving standards; through better planning, more efficient use of practical resources, improved teacher knowledge and classroom organisation to improve the performance of girls. Monitoring and evaluation of provision, teaching, and standards are very good and used effectively to improve the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils. The subject is well co-ordinated. The policy is of good quality and the most recent national guidance has been suitably adapted to meet the specific needs of the school. All teachers are provided with good quality documentation to support them in their planning. The wide range of high quality resources are carefully audited, organised and used effectively. Good use is made of local facilities such as the power station. The environment is used well to stimulate pupils' interest in science.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **Information and communication technology**

- 64 At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in information and communication technology considerably exceeds national expectations. This represents a major improvement since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be sound. This improvement is due to the creation of two specialist computer suites, considerable improvement in staff expertise and confidence, high quality subject leadership, major investment in resources and the use of specialist expertise and excellent use of national funding. This subject is now a significant strength of the school.
- 65 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is satisfactory. They use computers and programmable toys with confidence. They retrieve stored work and edit it on screen using the mouse and the keyboard. They save and print out their work successfully and revise previously saved work. They use specialist vocabulary accurately and confidently in describing their actions. They use programs to extend their learning in a range of other subjects, including science and mathematics; for example, using block graphs and simple graphics to illustrate how pupils in their class travel to school. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' understanding, confidence and competence in the use of information and communication technology is considerable. The oldest pupils at Key Stage 2 combine different forms of technology to communicate their ideas. For example, they use desktop publishing programs to produce interesting combinations of text and graphics. They design home pages to illustrate aspects of life in Victorian times, creating the text against a carefully chosen background, using animation, selecting and importing pictures and adding music tracks. They gain access to the school's own internet page (the Barney Board), where pupils past and present have published some of their own poems and stories and where a range of interesting competitions and messages have been left. Pupils use the internet successfully to find information. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils have researched interesting facts about St Lucia for geography. Pupils create and use various databases to process information and use graphics successfully to illustrate their work.

- 66 Pupils at Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress, while those at Key Stage 2 make good progress in all aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' progress is consistently very good. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop secure knowledge and skills. They learn to use the mouse to move and control pictures, shapes and letters. They soon understand the basic controls on the keyboard and simple programmable toys. Young pupils control and use tape recorders to listen to stories. The steady development of pupils' skills, and the use of computers in other subjects, are key factors in securing good rates of progress at Key Stage 2. Pupils make the very good progress in Years 5 and 6 due to teachers' enthusiasm, confidence and expertise, together with the wide range of fascinating and challenging activities planned for them. Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs and they make similar progress to that of their peers. The high quality support from a range of additional adults in lessons also has a positive impact on the rate of progress made by pupils in all year groups.
- 67 Pupils are fascinated by the possibilities opened up to them by the use of computers, and are keen to investigate further techniques, particularly in Years 5 and 6. They enjoy their work. Pupils are keen to use the internet and the intranet, both to communicate with others through use of the 'Barney Boards' and to search for information. They co-operate and collaborate well, often in groups or pairs, sharing the use of computers and advising one another as appropriate. Most attend closely to instructions and behave responsibly. However, in the few lessons when pupils' attitudes are less positive, it is because the teacher is not fully confident in organising the class in the different learning environment.
- 68 Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 in the one lesson observed and good at Key Stage 2. In the lessons seen at Key Stage 2 twenty five percent of lessons were satisfactory, fifty percent very good and twenty five percent excellent. The quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 is consistently very good. The best teaching is characterised by clear explanations and good demonstrations of skills to be learned. Teachers and supporting staff make very positive use of questioning, always trying to lead pupils to discover new techniques for themselves. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Teachers' subject expertise is developing well and shows considerable improvement since the computer suites have been developed. Very good use is made of additional adults, including support staff, a very computer literate and expert site manager and a range of parent helpers. They give particular assistance to individuals and groups of pupils, enabling them to make good progress in developing skills. An expert technician, funded through a special grant, offers staff high quality support and guidance in teaching the subject.
- 69 The school benefits considerably from the enthusiasm, commitment and expertise provided by the subject co-ordinator, supported by the headteacher. Teachers use the school's computer suites very well and ensure that class-based computers are readily accessible to their pupils, promoting their use in day-to-day class lessons. The teachers' own use of computers is evident in some high quality class displays, in the preparation of transparencies used in lessons, for example in Years 5 and 6 mental mathematics, and in completing their planning. The quality and quantity of resources have a significant impact on attainment and progress.

113

### **Religious education**

- 70 Attainment in religious education meets the expectations of the Local Education Authority Agreed Syllabus. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know some facts about the life of Jesus and that the stories of Jesus are found in the New Testament of the Bible. They remember well the stories of "The Feeding of the Five Thousand" and "Jesus meets Simon Peter". They decided that the best bit of the story was when the net burst because it was full of fish and discussed what "I will make you fishers of men" might mean. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils know many facts about Sikhism. They can describe "The Five Ks of Sikhism", relating the symbolism to the culture. They know the story of Guru Nanak and describe the "Golden Rules" and how these affect daily life. During the inspection the discussions that took place within the lessons about "The Lord's Prayer" demonstrated pupils' ability to relate faith to daily life. Above average attaining pupils used words such as "feeling compelled" when describing temptation; others gave good examples of forgiveness relating to playground incidents. They make connections between needs and desires and discuss ways in which to share God's gifts with those less fortunate than themselves. Most pupils find references in the Bible competently and many pupils know the writers of the four Gospels and what these are.

- 71 Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. Progress is accelerated in Years 5 and 6 due to the high quality of teaching in these classes. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with that of their peers. The new policy and scheme of work in the school, devised in response to the new Local Education Authority Agreed Syllabus, ensures progression in knowledge and understanding and in revisiting topics at different levels. It also ensures that pupils have opportunities to reflect on the meaning of faith for people in their daily lives and evaluating feelings and belief. During their time in the school pupils study Christianity and the Sikh and Muslim faiths. Most work in religious education is based on discussion and pupils use and develop speaking and listening skills well.
- 72 Pupils demonstrate an interest and awareness in religious education. At Key Stage 1 pupils listened well to a story about Jesus and responded well to questions about what it might have felt like when the nets burst with fish. They recalled previous work with enthusiasm. In Years 5 and 6 pupils demonstrate maturity in the discussions about the meaning of sections of the Lord's Prayer, were willing to listen to each other, and to share feelings and experiences.
- 73 Too few lessons were observed at Key Stage 1 to make a firm judgement on the quality of teaching. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. One third of lessons observed were satisfactory and two thirds were very good. These very good lessons were at the end of Key Stage 2. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when teaching was said to be sound. In Key Stage 1 a story was told with skill and using good dramatic expression to engage pupils' interest. In a less effective lesson the religious education content was limited and the task not well matched to the objectives. Teaching is particularly effective at the end of Key Stage 2 when a very good variety of visual aids and teaching strategies are used and when each section of the lesson has clear objectives. Skilled questioning extends pupils' developing ideas and reflections and all pupils' contributions are valued and used to enhance the lesson. Speaking and listening skills and vocabulary were clearly extended in the lessons on the Lord's Prayer. Plenary sessions were used well to sum up pupils' discussions and to help them to draw conclusions.
- 74 The subject is very well co-ordinated by an enthusiastic teacher with a specialist qualification. The new scheme of work is a very effective document in its support for teachers and offers many useful suggestions as to how the content might be approached in order to make it interesting and relevant. There are particularly useful ideas for links with other subjects. Assessment methods are built into the documentation and teachers keep notes of pupils' progress and use these to write their reports. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning carefully and provides feedback and ideas. Regular meetings take place to discuss the further development of the subject particularly in relation to new topics. The coordinator also uses herself as a role model for teaching when necessary. Visits to support the understanding of the three world faiths to be studied are built into the new planning but none have taken place as yet. Resources, including artefacts, books and pictures, are satisfactory and the school has recently bought a variety of children's Bibles. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when there was a shortage of quality books. Further resourcing is planned. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **Art**

- 75 No lessons were observed in art at Key Stage 1. Observations of pupils' work around the school indicate that progress is good and by the end of the key stage pupils have built on previous experiences in a variety of ways. Pupils mix colours for themselves, for example in painting faces and attempting to match different skin colours. They use raffia, ribbon and scrim to weave very colourful and effective textile pictures with an emphasis on different texture. Pupils paint what they feel whilst listening to Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons".
- 76 In Key Stage 2 all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress by the end of the key stage where teaching is particularly skilled in encouraging pupils to evaluate and express feelings and views about their own work and that of famous artists. During the inspection, pupils studied the work of Tom Schulten and compared the feelings represented by a number of different paintings. They used speaking and listening skills well to give their views and opinions. All pupils attempted to reproduce one of the paintings but to create the opposite effect; for example making a dark picture light. Higher attaining pupils discuss the mood of the picture using words such as "fresh" and "drab". They describe how paint can represent texture and use acrylic paint well to recreate this. Average attainers experiment with acrylic paint and recreate blocks of bright

colour in the style of the artist. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 paint in the style of Van Gogh. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs in a special class made good attempts at reproducing parts of Van Gogh's work and know how to mix colours to gain effect and shade. Another average and higher attaining group sketched Van Gogh's "Sunflowers" and demonstrated a good understanding of technique in using a drawing pencil with a light touch. Pupils looked specifically at the mathematical shapes used in the work of David Hockney.

- 77 Pupils show a high level of maturity in their discussions at the end of Key Stage 2. An impressive part of lessons is the way in which all pupils listen to each other and evaluate work in a supportive and friendly manner. They treat materials and media with respect and understand safe working practices. Art is used well to support an understanding of feelings and expression and pupils used charcoal to try to represent what children in World War 2 might be feeling by focussing on faces. Art is used well to enhance other subjects, for example after a visit to Beamish Museum. Strong links are made with other cultures through, for example, a study of Kenyan art and pupils use oil pastels and water colour pencils well to attempt pictures in this style.
- 78 The quality of teaching is very good at Key Stage 2 with seventy five percent of lessons being very good and twenty five being good. No judgement was made on the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. The main strengths of teaching lie in the skill by which teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their own work, that of others and that of famous artists. A particularly good technique was demonstrated when a teacher had reproduced pupils' work by scanning into a computer and producing overhead projector slides to enable whole class discussion to take place. All opportunities are taken to increase and enhance pupils' vocabulary and their range of language skills. In all lessons very good questioning extends and challenges pupils' thinking and guides them well into focussing on specific aspects of the work such as the representation of mood by colour. The clear teaching points made in all lessons on how to use the media, how to apply paint and how to use drawing pencils and mixing palettes have a strong impact on attainment and progress. Teachers demonstrate a good understanding of the subject requirements and have taken care to introduce pupils to more unusual artists, including those of today such as Tom Shulton and those of not so long ago such as Clarice Cliff, providing good links with the world of design and industry. Pupils have benefited from the experience of working with an "artist in residence".
- 79 Subject co-ordination is very good. There is an art policy that gives clear guidance and support on all aspects of the subject. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable about the subject and has an action plan for its further development. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Monitoring of planning and work produced takes place and comments feed into half-termly staff meetings to provide development and support for all teachers. A good example of action taken after a gap was identified in the provision was the need to provide more works of art by women for study. Planning is thorough at all levels. Assessment is carried out through the use of sketch books, informal monitoring of progress, and individual portfolios of pupils' work, which are completed by pupils and teacher together. Resources for the subject are good. There is a good range of posters and other visual aids and a very good range of media and materials. These have a significant impact on progress and understanding and represent an improvement since the previous inspection. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

123

### **Design and technology**

- 80 Few lessons were seen in design and technology during the inspection. Evidence is taken from lessons, from the co-ordinator's portfolio, other photographs, work on display and discussions with pupils. All pupils make satisfactory progress in design and making throughout the school. Standards in design for purpose and written evaluation towards the end of Key Stage 2 are the weakest areas. Pupils with all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make consistently good progress in their development of making skills. Their understanding of health and safety with tools, and food hygiene across both key stages is good.



- 81 In Key Stage 1 pupils improve their techniques by working with a range of materials and tools. They steadily improve joining and cutting skills. They make prototypes of glove puppets from paper and think about what type of join to use. They learn how to use a needle and thread to join fabric, and think carefully about size in order to design and make their own puppet. They use a range of construction kits to make models and try to reassemble different types of torches. Younger pupils learn to prepare salads. They taste different kinds of salads and express their opinions about them using speaking and listening skills well. They know what safety procedures must be followed in relation to both the use of equipment and to hygiene. Older pupils test different varieties of biscuits. They adapt a recipe to make their own flavour of biscuits and test the outcomes. Throughout the school the pupils move from the construction of wheeled vehicles using construction kits to making their own models of vehicles from wood, using axles. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils consider several ideas before selecting the design they will make. They increase the complexity of the structures by including a cam that operates a moving part. Pupils draw suitable designs but have not developed the skills to produce plans, elevations, and minor detailing. They write simple lists of materials and tools. They evaluate their work and identify some areas for improvement. Good links are maintained with industry, and this enables older pupils to make suitable progress in control technology and the use of programmable kits to drive models.
- 82 Attitudes to learning are good. Pupils concentrate well. They are proud of their achievements and produce good quality finished models. They treat equipment with respect and respond well to high expectations of behaviour when using potentially dangerous equipment.
- 83 The quality of teaching in one lesson seen was good and in another it was satisfactory. Lessons are well planned, resources prepared and accessible, and tasks are appropriate to the needs of pupils. In the best lesson good questioning skills were used to make the pupils think carefully about how to make their models and there was careful development of vocabulary. The quality of pupils' work generally indicates that teaching is at least satisfactory although in the planning seen there was no specific provision for pupils with different levels of attainment. In models and records scrutinised, pupils were offered some opportunities to make choices for themselves. Different activities are used well in conjunction with other subjects, including mathematics and English. For example, in the Literacy Hour younger pupils followed instructions from a "big book" to make finger puppets and spinners, and in mathematics older pupils reinforced their knowledge of symmetry through a textile design.
- 84 Co-ordination of the subject is rapidly improving, due to greater subject expertise and confidence of the subject leader. It is satisfactory overall, and there are some strengths. For example, good guidelines have been provided for adults working in the classroom with teachers and the health and safety documentation is very good. Since the previous inspection the latest National Curriculum guidelines have been adopted as a basis for planning and this is improving the teaching of specific skills. However the documents have not yet been fully adapted to meet the needs of mixed age groups and to ensure the best progress in skills from one year to the next in all aspects of the subject. There are no consistent assessment procedures, although in some classes pupils assess and grade their own work against set criteria. There is a good quantity of good quality resources to support food technology, textiles, control technology and structural work although they are not all efficiently organised or audited. These support standards well.

## **Geography**

- 85 Only one geography lesson was seen during the inspection and this was at Key Stage 1. Judgements about standards are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, planning documents, co-ordinators' files and discussion with pupils and teachers.
- 86 Progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 2 and good at Key Stage 1. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and is a result of a well-structured approach that encourages the development of essential skills, including those needed for fieldwork. Pupils start the key stage with a good knowledge of the area close to school and a developing vocabulary of features of the environment learned from nursery onwards. They are familiar with large-scale plans and can plot their homes and the journey to school with confidence. They undertake simple fieldwork, illustrated when a Year 1 class compared a busy road with a quiet one on the perimeter of the school. Pupils could suggest the best area to count traffic, confidently handle clipboards,

observe carefully and keep accurate tallies. Back in the classroom, they presented their findings as graphs. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a broad understanding of human and physical features of the world and a good understanding of how they interrelate. For example, a group of Year 6 pupils looking at a photograph of a desert settlement talk about the climate and weather and how the design of the buildings was appropriate. They also understand how camels were well adapted to the conditions. They contrast these features with the island of St. Lucia. They use Ordnance Survey maps to gain information but are less proficient at using atlases, preferring to find places by random search rather than using the index and co-ordinates. A strength of the learning is the understanding of concepts such as why supermarkets are located where they are. There are weaknesses in the recall of the names of significant local and world features such as mountain ranges, cities and countries.

- 87 Pupils at both key stages find the subject interesting. At Key Stage 1 pupils enjoy the fieldwork and delight in sharing their knowledge. Standards of presentation are better at Key Stage 1 than Key Stage 2 where many examples of work lack care.
- 88 Insufficient lessons were seen to make a firm judgement about the quality of teaching overall, but at Key Stage 1 the teaching was very good in the lesson seen and this is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. The strength at Key Stage 1 is based on high expectations, an emphasis on geographical vocabulary, the clear progression of skills and an insistence on being precise. For example, in the traffic survey, all results were carefully checked and anomalies removed. Numeracy skills are generally used well, especially at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2 similar opportunities are sometimes missed as when tabulating climatic statistics without turning them into more meaningful graphs. There are insufficient opportunities to enable pupils to use a wide range of literacy skills.
- 89 The subject is well led by a very knowledgeable co-ordinator who has recently taken over the task. The scheme of work has sensibly blended the best of old practice with new national guidance. The co-ordinator realises that the time allocated to geography is insufficient and could be more equitably shared with history and inspection evidence supports this view. The co-ordinator is beginning to monitor teachers' planning, but has not yet had the opportunity to extend this to pupils' work. There are clear ideas for the development of the subject. Assessment is informal at present, providing comments for pupils' reports. Resources are satisfactory.

## **History**

- 90 No history lessons were seen at Key Stage 1 and judgements are based on examining pupils' work and the co-ordinator's planning file and discussion with pupils and teachers.
- 91 Progress in history is good across both key stages. Pupils start Key Stage 1 with some knowledge of past and present and of the simple language of time. By the end of the key stage they have a secure knowledge of some important events in history such as the fire of London and an understanding of the ways we learn about the past from oral history and from diarists such as Samuel Pepys. They have a knowledge of famous people from the past. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in developing the way they communicate their growing knowledge of history both in drawings, in models and in accounts. At Key Stage 2 progress is sustained, with pupils developing increased insight into the significance of events and their effect on the people of the time. For example a Year 3 class listened attentively to a teacher who used an overhead projector to illustrate her account of Anne Frank's short life. They were able to make their own notes and transform these into accounts. Years 5 and 6 pupils study life in Victorian times and gain knowledge of the period from a museum visit, book research, early photographs and from a study of typical Victorian toys. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a secure knowledge of most of the periods studied and use literacy and information and communication technology skills well to present findings. A sample of pupils has a secure knowledge of chronology, helped by the strong emphasis on time lines around the school.

- 92 Pupils enjoy history and find it very interesting. They are sympathetic to how the people of different times might have felt and imagine their own reactions to the events. For example, a group of Year 4 pupils with special educational needs made good progress in role-play about the effects of World War 2 on everyday life. Standards of presentation are good and pupils take pride in the work.
- 93 The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. 50 percent of lessons seen were satisfactory and 50 percent good. Teachers generally plan lessons well to make them motivating. Very good use is made of visits such as those to the Victorian schoolroom at Beamish, the Roman Wall, or World War 2 Eden Camp, to stimulate interest. This is sustained in school by motivating lessons, demonstrated when pupils handled Victorian toys and contrasted them with their modern counterparts. In less successful lessons, planning is not sufficiently detailed to identify how objectives are to be achieved and activities fail to stimulate and challenge pupils. Cross-curricular opportunities, particularly in using geographical skills, are sometimes missed. Occasionally teachers spend too much time introducing topics rather than placing the emphasis on providing resources to stimulate individual research. A strength of the teaching is the contribution that information and communication technology is making to the subject towards the end of Key Stage 2. Another is the excellent use of a wide range of displays, many of them interactive, to stimulate pupils' interest and increase understanding. Expectations of pupils are high and marking comments in books are helpful.
- 94 The subject is efficiently co-ordinated and quality resources are well catalogued and maintained. There is an issue about the imbalance of time devoted to history in Band C compared with geography, where history has two thirds of the time allotted to both subjects, leaving geography with insufficient time for the scheme. Assessment is satisfactory. There has been a significant improvement in the subject since the previous inspection.

138

## **Music**

- 95 Pupils' level of understanding of music at Key Stage 1 is in line with that expected for their age. They sing confidently in acts of worship. They remember and follow the tunes of a good number of hymns and songs, often with more energy than precision, and pitch is not secure in many cases. Pupils add a simple tuned accompaniment to a well-known song but, although the notes are usually correct, pupils find it hard to maintain the rhythm. No actual teaching of music was observed at Key Stage 2. However in assemblies pupils sing enthusiastically with good tone and rhythm but are not always able to pitch the notes correctly. They sing in two parts and develop this into a round, maintaining their own melody well. In discussion with pupils and in examining planning, it is evident that there are some opportunities to play untuned percussion instruments to compose 'river' music. Pupils sometimes use a poem, story or picture to create a particular atmosphere. However pupils seldom use tuned percussion or make up their own pictorial score to help in the understanding of the language and structure of music. Pupils from both key stages listen to music chosen for assemblies but at Key Stage 2 are not encouraged to listen quietly while the music is being played. In lessons, pupils hear a satisfactory range of music from different times and cultures. Year 1 pupils interpret their ideas of the "Firework Music" into their paintings and Year 2 pupils discuss the sounds made in "The Carnival of Animals". There are a small number of pupils who are in the early stages of learning to play the recorder and read notation and a few pupils are learning orchestral instruments.
- 96 Progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Although pupils increase the repertoire of songs they have learned from memory, there is less focus on improving the quality, and particularly the pitch, of pupils' singing. No judgement can be made about the progress at Key Stage 2 as no lessons were observed. However, pupils gain some opportunities to perform at special events and to develop their understanding of music through the performances of groups of musicians visiting the school. The upper Key Stage 2 pupils are currently using CD-ROM to write their own multi-media page on the Victorians and are adding a sound accompaniment. There are also good links with other subjects, especially dance and drama, when music is often used to enhance the activity and extend the pupils' forms of expression.

- 97 Pupils are interested in music and enjoy singing in assemblies and adding actions to the songs. Younger pupils practise well together and share the instruments. Older pupils have not yet learned to refrain from talking or to concentrate on listening to the music in assemblies.
- 98 From the limited teaching observed at Key Stage 1 the quality is satisfactory. Sixty percent of lessons were satisfactory and the rest good. Staff generally have a secure musical knowledge and are confident in teaching the subject. The recent introduction of a scheme of work is helping staff to teach the skills necessary for pupils to make progress. The scheme has also helped staff to develop a consistent approach to teaching and planning and this represents an improvement since the last inspection. However not enough time is spent on showing pupils how to play instruments correctly or in helping them to sing in tune. There are no formal assessment procedures. Resources are satisfactory in supporting progress. The subject makes suitable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

142

### **Physical education**

- 99 During the inspection there was limited opportunity to observe physical education lessons and so judgements are based on those observations possible, evidence provided by the school, evidence from teachers' planning and discussions with teachers.
- 100 By the end of Key Stage 1 progress and pupils' work is in line with normal expectations. All pupils have an awareness of space and can move quickly avoiding collision. In dance, pupils are able to move in time to the music. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' progress and work is in line with normal expectations for above average and average attaining pupils, but for lower attaining pupils it is below that normally found. At both key stages pupils make satisfactory progress. At Key Stage 1 pupils learn how to use a variety of ways of moving, gaining control and awareness of different parts of the body. They understand the importance of routines in physical education. At Key Stage 2 low attaining pupils consolidate skills of throwing and catching a small ball with greater accuracy. Progress and attainment in swimming is reported in detail in the extra paragraph below.
- 101 Pupils' response at both key stages is at least satisfactory. They enjoy physical education lessons of all kinds. They respond with enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment. At both key stages pupils are considerate of each other and listen to the contributions of their peers.
- 102 The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. It is satisfactory in 75 percent of lessons and very good in 25 percent. At Key Stage 2 teaching is satisfactory. It is satisfactory in fifty percent of lessons and very good in fifty percent. These were swimming lessons. Teachers' knowledge and understanding at both key stages is satisfactory and planning clearly shows learning intentions which are shared with pupils. At both key stages teachers dress appropriately and health and safety requirements are reinforced. High expectations are expressed that these will be observed. At both key stages pupils are questioned and challenged to evaluate their own performance in order to set targets for future development. Subject specific vocabulary is taught clearly. Attention to equal opportunities is evident in lessons at both key stages. Pupils of both sexes take turns to be a group leader and equipment is set up by both sexes. Girls versus boys groupings are avoided. At both key stages timing and balance of activities is satisfactory. Resources are used well; they are ready and accessible at the start of lessons. At both key stages management of pupils' behaviour is satisfactory.
- 103 Co-ordination of the subject is effective and there is a commitment to promoting high standards of attainment. Resources are good; the playing field and halls are used well. Occasional visits from outside coaches provide valuable input. A good range of extra-curricular activities is offered, including netball, football for boys and girls, circuit training and aerobics. Parents run a 'Top Sport' after school club. Year 6 pupils participate in an outdoor pursuits residential week. The subject is further enhanced by participation in local and countywide competitions and swimming galas, which make a positive contribution to pupils' enthusiasm and achievement.

- 104 As part of a special survey by OFSTED, the inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming, which is reported below.
- 105 At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in swimming is in line with national expectations. Most pupils swim unaided and with confidence for 25 metres. They use a variety of means of propulsion using a recognised stroke on their front or back. They are very aware of health and safety requirements in the water. Pupils of all abilities make progress in swimming using only one arm, in throwing and catching an aid with greater accuracy and entering the water using a straddle entry. They are confident in the water.
- 106 The response of all pupils at Key Stage 2 is very good. They have positive attitudes towards swimming and listen attentively to the instructor. They respond promptly and with enthusiasm to the tasks set. They show consideration to their instructor, the class teacher and their peers.
- 107 The teaching of swimming at Key Stage 2 is well above average. The instructor is appropriately qualified and subject knowledge is secure. The use of a range of appropriate contexts to consolidate survival skills is very good. Planning is detailed with clear learning intentions. Explanations and instructions are clear and effective, ensuring all pupils listen and understand. Stroke demonstration to both whole classes and individual pupils is effective and timely. Expectations of pupils for both swimming pool safety and skills are high. Relationships are very good. The instructor knows the pupils and their abilities very well. Lessons proceed at a lively pace. Class teachers are used effectively to supervise groups of pupils. Behaviour management of pupils is excellent.
- 108 Management of the subject by the co-ordinator in consultation with the instructor is effective. The teaching of swimming positively reflects the school's ethos of raising pupils' self esteem and this in turn sets high standards of attainment. The accommodation is satisfactory. Resources available are satisfactory and used effectively and efficiently. Years 5 and 6 pupils participate in an annual swimming gala. Pupils also take part in a sponsored swim during Health Week to raise money for asthma research.
- 109 The existing provision for swimming gives good value for money.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

- 110 A team of seven inspectors spent the equivalent of twenty four and a half days in school. One hundred and seventy observations of lessons, registrations, assemblies and other activities were made. All the available work of a sample of pupils from each class, covering all levels of prior attainment, was scrutinised. These pupils were also heard reading and they talked about their use of books. Informal discussions were held with pupils about their work and what they know. Planned interviews were held with teaching and non-teaching staff, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, chair and vice chair of governors, chair of the finance committee, parents and others. Prior to the inspection a meeting was held with parents and the results of the questionnaire analysed. The school documentation was also scrutinised.

## DATA AND INDICATORS

### Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	276	3	85	92
Nursery Unit/School	26	0	1	0

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	12.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.1

#### Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked each week	104.5

#### Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

#### Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week	30

Average class size:	25
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### Financial data

Financial year:	1999
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	£
Total Income	500,342
Total Expenditure	495,955
Expenditure per pupil	1,476
Balance brought forward from previous year	29,877
Balance carried forward to next year	34,264

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

302

Number of questionnaires returned:

39

### Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	23	69	5	3	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	28	64	3	5	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	18	54	13	13	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	10	74	8	8	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	28	62	5	5	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	38	62	0	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	31	51	8	10	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	28	67	0	5	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	15	72	10	3	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	15	69	8	5	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	44	51	3	0	0

NB Percentages of responses are rounded to nearest integer, sum may not = 100%.  
Percentages given are in relation to total number of returns INCLUDING nil replies.