

INSPECTION REPORT

Rodmarton Primary School

Rodmarton

LEA: Gloucestershire

Unique Reference Number: 115535

School Inspection Number: 197169

Headteacher: Ms Diana Boulton

Reporting inspector: Mr. Andrew Matthews

Dates of inspection: 6th – 8th December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707339

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Richard Ball
Date of previous inspection:	March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Vic Fisk, Lay inspector	Physical education Equal opportunities	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Richard Eaton, Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Science Religious education History Geography Music	Curriculum and assessment Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Staffing, accommodation and resources

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is consistently good in all classes and pupils make good overall progress through the school.
- The school has a well-balanced curriculum and good assessment procedures.
- Pupils behave very well and there are very good relationships.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and work hard.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by the governing body.
- The school has very good relationships with parents and the community.
- There is good overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Pupils' writing is not as good as it should be.
- II. The marking of pupils' work is not consistent through the school.
- III. Certain aspects of the school's health and safety procedures need reviewing.

The school provides a good quality of education for all its pupils. It has many more strengths than weaknesses. The weaknesses identified 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 worked hard to overcome the weaknesses pointed out in the last inspection report of 1996. The length of the school day has been extended and overall progress in English and mathematics has improved. The curriculum is now well balanced and there is appropriate coverage of all subjects. Teachers' planning is now based on effective long- and medium-term plans and this ensures good progression in all subjects. The major building works, involving construction of the mezzanine, have considerably improved the school's accommodation, particularly for the younger pupils. The management of the school has been improved and governors are playing an increasingly effective role in the life of the school. The annual school development plan incorporates many targets that are now clearly prioritised and costed, with the outcomes carefully evaluated. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection and the targets set for individual year cohorts are regularly reviewed and are helping the school to focus on further improvements in pupils' attainment. The school is in a strong position to continue this improvement.

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

Rodmarton School has small numbers in each year cohort and this can lead to wide swings in attainment between the years. The results shown above were achieved by a group of pupils, which had a lower than normal proportion of special educational needs. Compared to schools nationally in 1999, pupils' results were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Compared to schools that take children from similar backgrounds, results were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Inspection findings show that the present small cohort of 11-year-olds is attaining at the average levels in English and mathematics and above average in science. In Key Stage 1, standards are average in English, mathematics and science. In information and

communications technology and religious education, standards are in line with national expectations for these subjects. Pupils make good progress in music and art throughout the school and in history in Key Stage 2. In all other subjects, pupils make satisfactory progress. Children under five make good overall progress.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Science		Satisfactory	Good
Information technology		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

Teaching is consistently good through the school in most subjects. It is good or better in seven lessons out of ten and satisfactory in the remainder. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. The good and very good teaching seen through the school is characterised by teachers having high expectations of pupils, planning well for the different ages and abilities of pupils in each class and having a brisk pace to lessons. This results in pupils being challenged, working hard, concentrating well and producing a good output of work. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved through the school.

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	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and play happily together at breaktimes.
Attendance	Good. Pupils arrive punctually, enabling efficient use of the school day.
Ethos*	Good. There is a positive ethos that encourages pupils to work hard and achieve well. Pupils form very good relationships with one another and with staff.
Leadership and management	Good overall. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction for the school. The governing body works hard and is becoming increasingly involved in the life of the school.
Curriculum	Good. It ensures that pupils’ learning builds progressively on what they have learnt before. The school has good procedures for assessment and the results are used well to address pupils’ strengths and weaknesses in teachers’ planning. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and make good overall progress in relation to their identified learning targets.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	The provision is satisfactory for pupils’ spiritual development, good for pupils’ cultural development and very good for pupils’ moral and social development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good overall. Teachers have a good range of expertise and are well supported by experienced learning support assistants. Accommodation is cramped for practical activities for the older pupils. The school makes good use of the village hall, the playground and adjacent playing field for physical education lessons. Resources to support pupils’ learning are satisfactory overall.
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

- IV. The good progress that their children make.
- V. There is good encouragement for parents to become involved in the life of the school.
- VI. The school is easy to approach and handles complaints well.
- VII. They have a clear understanding of what their children learn and good information on their children's progress.
- VIII. The behaviour of children and their attitudes and values.
- IX. The achievement certificates for good work and behaviour.
- X. Children are well looked after.
- XI. The new-style parent-teacher meetings.

What some parents are not happy about

- XII. The late start to the school day.
- XIII. The older children in a class not being
- XIV. Year 6 pupils "free-wheel" after National tests.

Inspection evidence confirms all parents' positive views. The school does start later than the great majority of schools but this is dictated by the arrival time of the school bus. There was no evidence to suggest that older pupils in classes were not being challenged as teachers plan their work carefully for pupils of all ages and abilities. There is a change of emphasis on some aspects of the curriculum when Key Stage 2 pupils have taken their SATs. Last year the school held a very successful arts week which introduced the pupils to a wide range of new activities and experiences.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to remedy the weaknesses observed and raise the standards of attainment and the quality of education, the headteacher, governing body and staff should:

- XV. Improve the quality of writing in Key Stage 2 by:
- establishing regular opportunities for pupils' extended writing;
 - developing planned opportunities for different types of writing across the curriculum;
 - improving the quality of marking so that pupils understand how they can improve;
 - teaching a consistent style of handwriting through the school.
(paragraphs 10, 26, 80, 84, 86)

In addition to the key issue above, the following minor weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- review the curriculum time for science; (paragraph 102)
- provide a wider range of play apparatus for the under-fives; (paragraphs 75 and 76)
- introduce the evaluation of elements of the school development plan as a focus of governors' visits;
(paragraph 51)
- complete school registers before morning assembly; (paragraph 43)
- ensure the visitors' book and accident book are maintained; (paragraph 43)
- review the safety of children working on the computer at the top of the stairs; (paragraph 43)
- establish the adequacy of the present fire exit provision. (paragraph 43)

INTRODUCTION

- **Characteristics of the school**

1 Rodmarton County Primary School is part of the Thames Head ward in Gloucestershire. The school roll has changed little since 1994 and there are now 71 children on roll, 39 boys and 32 girls. The school is much smaller than other primary schools. A low proportion of pupils come from homes where English is not the first language. The school is popular and has a wide catchment area, with a mix of socio-economic backgrounds. Parents work in a variety of occupations, ranging from unskilled to professional and managerial jobs. 8.5 per cent of the pupils come from a traveller community. The percentage of pupils applying for free school meals is low, as the local authority no longer provides cooked meals. Children are admitted full-time to the school in the September before their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection, there were eight children under five in the reception class and a further two who had turned five since the beginning of the academic year. Children's attainment on entry to the school is around that expected. There are 23 pupils on the special educational needs register: approximately 30% of the school roll. One statemented pupil receives extra support in the classroom.

2 The school's mission statement is "learning for a better future".

The school aims are as follows:

- To provide a stimulating, harmonious environment in which each child is aware of his individuality and worth.
- To foster caring, personal relationships which develop an appreciation of the need for interdependence with others.
- To provide opportunities for each child to develop talents and qualities of character to his/her full potential.
- To encourage each child to develop an enquiring mind, logical, rational, thinking, self confidence and self discipline in order to learn for a better future.
- To meet the needs of the National Curriculum.
- To broaden each child's awareness of the needs of others through respect and sensitivity so they can become responsible members of society.
- To give guidance in spiritual and moral issues.
- To work in partnership with parents in order to develop each child and the school community.

1 The school's current school priorities are:

- To raise standards in mathematics and introduce the National Numeracy Strategy.
- To improve continuity and progression in science.
- To focus on achievements of Years 3 and 4 and traveller children.
- To continue to develop expertise and resources for information and communications technology.
- To further develop parental involvement in school.
- To develop a whole school policy for personal and social education.
- To improve the profile of governors in the daily life of the school.

1 The school has set the following end of Key Stage 2 targets for the year 2000:

- 83% of all pupils to achieve at or above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.

For the year 2002 the school has set the following targets for Key Stage 2 pupils:

80% to achieve the national average in writing, 80% in reading and 80% in mathematics.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	4	6	10
- National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics	
Number of pupils At NC Level 2 or above	Boys	3	4	4	
	Girls	4	4	6	
	Total	7	8	10	
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	70 (90)	80 (90)	100 (90)	
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)	
- Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science	
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	4	4	4	
	Girls	4	6	6	
	Total	8	10	10	
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	80 (90)	100 (90)	100 (90)	
	National	82 (81)	85(85)	87 (86)	

Attainment at Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	7	4	11
- National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science	
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	6	6	7	
	Girls	3	3	3	
	Total	9	9	10	
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	82 (85)	82 (85)	91 (92)	
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)	
- Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	6	6	6	
	Girls	3	3	3	
	Total	9	9	9	
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	82 (N/A)	82 (N/A)	82 (N/A)	
	National	68(65)	69 (65)	75 (72)	

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

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed			%
through absence for the latest complete	Authorised	School	4.3
reporting year:	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.1
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

-

- Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during		Number
the previous year:	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

- Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	9
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

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

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

- **Attainment and progress**

- 1 In the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests, results for pupils aged 11 when compared to all schools, was well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. When compared to similar schools, attainment in English and mathematics was well above average and above average in science. These results show a significant improvement on the previous year. However, the different sizes of cohorts and the variations in their composition, make it difficult to reliably compare the performance of consecutive years or establish attainment trends. Inspection evidence indicates that in the present very small Year 6 cohort of pupils, attainment is average in English and mathematics but above average in science. These pupils are on course to meet the appropriately challenging targets that the school have set for English and mathematics.

- 2 In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests the results for seven year old pupils were well below average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. Compared with similar schools standards were very low in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics. These results show a significant decrease on the previous years. However, the cohort did enter the school below average, has a very low proportion of pupils attaining at the higher levels and a much above average proportion of pupils on the special needs register. This is one of the principal reasons why in all three subjects, results were so low. Inspection evidence indicates that, for the present cohort of seven-year-olds, standards in reading are above average and average in writing, mathematics and science.

- 3 A scrutiny of children's work and assessment on entry to the school, shows that they have a range of attainment but overall standards are in line with what is expected of children of this age. By the age of five, the great majority of children attain satisfactory standards in all areas of the Desirable Learning Outcomes, with a minority of children exceeding expectations in personal and social

development, language and literacy, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. With small cohorts and often a large disparity between the sexes, it is not possible to make an accurate judgement on the difference between the rates of progress of boys and girls. However, overall children make good progress, with much of this good progress due directly to the consistently good teaching that the children encounter throughout the day.

- 4 Under-fives make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. They are interested in what is going on in the classroom and have good attitudes to work. They co-operate well, show a concern for their classroom environment and are developing good personal independence, such as when selecting appropriate materials for use in the classroom. Children behave and concentrate well and show a good consideration for others. They make good progress in developing their language skills, with many having above average speaking and listening skills. They listen attentively to stories and enjoy writing and sounding individual letters. They enjoy reading and describe characters in their books. Children make satisfactory progress in their writing, with most beginning to write their own name. Some higher-achieving children write their name with the accurate use of a capital letter. In mathematics children make satisfactory progress. They enjoy counting in different situations and use a computer program appropriately to match

containers to numbers. Children make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. They gain a good sense of history through their project on “how we have grown” and understand about the importance of keeping healthy. Children are encouraged to ask why things happen and, as a result, now understand that when they run around in physical education lessons, their heartbeat increases. Children make good progress in their creative development. They use scissors and glue effectively when creating a winter collage and extend their vocabulary when they describe the feel of their hands in moistened cornflower. Children make satisfactory progress in their physical development, with good progress in control of pencils. They show increasing control and co-ordination in their running and turning during physical education lessons. They develop good hand-eye co-ordination when they use building blocks and construction toys. However, children’s physical development is limited by the lack of large play equipment such as bikes and other wheeled vehicles.

- 5 Pupils make sound progress in English in Key Stage 1 and by the age of seven achieve standards in line with those found nationally. They make good progress in speaking and listening and use these skills appropriately to develop their knowledge and understanding in other areas, such as design and technology and mathematics. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in their reading; they develop increasing

accuracy and fluency through the use of well matched books and develop suitable word attack strategies for unfamiliar words. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their writing and, by the age of seven, pupils express their ideas in appropriately sequenced and punctuated sentences. Higher-attaining pupils have good spelling skills and use punctuation, such as commas, accurately. Pupils are developing a regular cursive style of handwriting.

- 6 In Key Stage 2 pupils make overall satisfactory progress in English. By the age of 11, pupils have above average speaking and listening skills. These are well used, such as when older pupils discuss the importance of emphasis on words when reading extracts from Macbeth. Pupils in all years have positive attitudes to reading, with higher-attaining pupils having good expression and fluency. They have definite preferences for texts and for their favourite authors. Pupils have good library skills, which they use well in their research for subjects such as science and history. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress in their writing. This is due mainly to lack of opportunities to write at length. They do have satisfactory knowledge of grammar and punctuation but much of the writing of older pupils lacks the use of complex sentences. The presentation of pupils' work is often untidy and pupils' handwriting is unsatisfactory overall.
- 7 In mathematics pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. Year 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in counting up to 100 and when telling the time. Year 2 pupils handle data

appropriately when representing numbers in graphic forms. Year 3 pupils build on this work and have a good understanding that graphical representation helps to identify trends. Older pupils make good progress in all aspects of their mathematics work and apply their mathematical knowledge well in practical situations.

- 8 In science pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. By the age of seven, pupils understand that forces include pushing and pulling. They are beginning to understand a fair test and use this knowledge appropriately when testing a vehicle rolling down different gradients. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good progress in learning about the body. They understand that muscles contract and expand and use their scientific knowledge well when explaining the effects of exercise on the heart rate. By the age of 11, pupils have a good understanding of life and the living processes and use this knowledge well when discussing the dangers of the misuse of drugs. Pupils make increasingly good use of computers to record results of their investigations.
- 9 In information technology standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils make good progress and sometimes very good progress in developing their word processing skills. Pupils in the Year R/1 class make good progress in their use of computers. They develop good skills in the use of the keyboard, cursor, space bar and control of the mouse. As a result, pupils benefit from the wide range of programs in the classroom. Pupils in Years

2 and 3 develop good confidence on the computer and are making good use of CD-ROM's to find out information, such as when designing and making their own water wheels. Modelling skills through Key Stage 2 are unsatisfactory. Older pupils use data handling programs effectively in their mathematics and science work and make good progress when using desktop publishing for the publication of a school newspaper, which was further enhanced by the importing of pictures taken on the school's digital camera.

- 10 Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education and achieve the standards set out in the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages. They use their listening skills well in assemblies, such as when learning about the jealousy of King Herod. Younger pupils understand the importance of special places and relate this well to their own homes. Older pupils make sound progress in exploring different religions and are fascinated by details, such as when learning about a mezuzah.
- 11 Pupils make good progress in art and music through the school and good progress in history in Key Stage 2; in all other subjects pupils make satisfactory progress. In history, younger pupils show a good understanding of the recent past through their study of parents and grandparents, whilst older pupils use their research skills well when finding out about important personalities in Elizabethan England. In geography, younger pupils have a good understanding of their village through discussions with a local resident and older pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding of the

journey of a river. Pupils' progress in physical education is satisfactory overall, with all pupils making good progress in swimming. Older pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities and from the good number of competitive matches against other schools. Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities and experiences in art and their work is enhanced by the arts week. In music, pupils sing well with some pupils benefiting from individual music tuition.

- 12 Pupils with special education needs, including those with statements, make good progress overall. The school makes good use of an experienced part-time Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and the learning support assistants who work effectively with these pupils. There are clear targets on the Individual Education Plans and these are used appropriately by teachers during lessons. There is some withdrawal from lessons but this is on a rotating basis. Traveller children are well supported by their teachers and learning support staff. Their work is well co-ordinated by the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator who is further supported by the authority's traveller teacher who visits school for regular half-day sessions. Targets on traveller pupils' Individual Education Plans are appropriate and these pupils make good progress towards their targets.

16 **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

- 13 Pupils' attitudes to work and school are good. Pupils listen and observe well and settle quickly to the task. They are enthusiastic, such as when part reading in 'Macbeth', and confident in the use of equipment and resources. They participate well in question and answer sessions, take a pride in their work and show perseverance. However, older pupils' presentation of their work is

often untidy with unsatisfactory handwriting.

- 14 Behaviour is very good, not only in class but when moving around the school, in the playground and during extra-curricular activities. Pupils are polite, courteous and friendly. They are able to distinguish between right and wrong and take a pride in their school. They are lively with a well-developed sense of humour, however they recognise clearly the division between what is acceptable and what may be considered unsuitable behaviour. They show full regard for the school's rules and conventions, in particular the five 'golden' rules which were established as a result of consultation with them. There have been no exclusions at the school in the past two years.
- 15 Relationships are also very good. This is not only between children and adults but also between pupils and their peers. Staff know all the pupils very well and treat them with respect and affection. This results in mutual trust and understanding. Pupils work together successfully in pairs or larger groupings, and show patience when awaiting their turn on equipment, for example the computer. Good examples of collaborative working were seen in food technology and in numeracy with pupils using dominoes. There is also effective paired reading between the top two classes. The ambience of the school is one of a big family. One of the Year 6 pupils made exactly this point when asked what she liked about the school.
- 16 These three preceding paragraphs cover aspects that were highlighted as being good during the previous inspection and these high standards have been maintained.
- 17 Personal development of the pupils is good. There are jobs of responsibility for the older children, which include lunchtime monitors, library monitors and computer monitors. These jobs are rotated either termly or half-termly among Key Stage 2 pupils so that they all experience a level of responsibility. Older pupils are also given opportunities for more independent investigative work on topic work, for example the Elizabethans, involving use of the computer encyclopaedia and the library. Circle time is also used well with all pupils having good opportunities to contribute to these sessions. This gives them valuable experience of addressing a group and results in good confidence development. It also provides quality time for reflection and self-analysis. Year 6 pupils' personal development is further enhanced when they take part in a junior citizenship scheme that is designed to make them more aware of their role and responsibilities as members of the community.

21 Attendance

- 18 Attendance at the school is good for all pupils, including traveller children. Attendance was found to be very good at the previous inspection. Due to above normal levels of illness, the figures for last year are not as high as those reported in the previous three academic years; however, they are still better than the national average. There is no evidence of unacceptable levels of late attendance and lessons begin and end punctually. Registers are satisfactorily completed but the time of registration is after assembly. This means that the school does not have an accurate register of pupils should an emergency occur in the early part of the day.

22 QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

22 Teaching

- 19 The quality of teaching in the under-fives, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good overall and varies from satisfactory to very good. During the inspection there was no unsatisfactory teaching observed. Teaching was very good in one lesson in ten, good in six lessons in ten and satisfactory in three lessons in ten. The good quality teaching is consistent through the school. Teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection particularly in the areas of teachers' planning and the challenge for the older and higher-achieving pupils.
- 20 In the under-fives, teaching is good. It is characterised by intelligent and demanding work, which challenges children and leads them to make good and sometimes very good progress. The teacher demonstrates very good subject knowledge of the areas of learning for children under five.

Particularly impressive is the way in which the teacher builds up the children's knowledge and understanding of their world, through talk, questioning and the use of stimulating resources, such as a visiting doctor. The quality and use of assessments is good and directly informs the teacher's planning which is based on good quality observations and judgements. Activities are well planned and capture the imagination of the children, such as when they dig in the sand tray for letters of the alphabet. This thoughtful planning results in children developing good concentration skills and encourages them to learn at a good pace. In group activities, children are given tasks which accurately match their needs and good use is made of the learning support assistants, who give good support to the teacher and to the children with whom they work. The teacher has very high expectations of children's behaviour and gives a clear understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable. Children respond well to this safe and stimulating atmosphere and show increasing independence in their work, such as when they work on a computer or collect tools for their design and technology work. Story, song and rhymes are an integral part of the children's learning and are used well by the teacher. There are very good relationships in the class. Lessons are brisk, well organised and opportunities are taken to involve children in work at all times. Occasionally, such as in their role-play work, children are left for too long without teacher intervention and, when this happens, the quality of their play deteriorates. However, occurrences like this are few.

- 21 Teaching at Key Stage 1 is good and directly impacts on the pupils who make sound overall progress and good progress in reading, speaking and listening, art and music. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which is well used in subjects such as design technology and physical education where pupils make good progress in their swimming. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and this leads to pupils concentrating well and working hard during lessons. Teachers plan carefully from the schemes of work and clearly identify what pupils are to learn in lessons. Work is appropriately challenging for pupils of all abilities. Teachers make good use of parents, classroom assistants and other visitors to the school to help consolidate and extend pupils' learning. Pupils in one class benefited directly from the good quality input from a general practitioner on their health topic. Teachers assess appropriately and good use is made of questioning, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. This was clearly evident when Year 2 pupils were learning about glossaries and indexes as part of a literacy lesson. There is good pace to lessons and this results in pupils maintaining good interest and working hard. Homework is used well, with pupils regularly taking home reading and spelling and this results in pupils making good overall progress in both these areas.
- 22 The quality of teaching is consistently good in Key Stage 2, with a fifth of lessons being very good. The high quality teaching input leads directly to pupils, by the end of Key Stage 2, making good progress in science, mathematics, history, art and music. Teachers employ stimulating approaches, which motivate pupils and result in good quality work. This was clearly seen in older pupils' work on the school newspaper. The marking of pupils' work is erratic and often unsatisfactory. Some work is not marked at all and, unlike Key Stage 1, clear indications are not given to the pupils as to how they can improve their work. Expectations of pupils' work is inconsistent; for example, untidy work in English and science is accepted, and this results in some low quality presentation and increased careless mistakes. Teachers' planning is good and this leads to good organisation of activities in the classroom. These are well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers make good use of questioning; clearly shown in the older pupils' literacy lessons. Through this questioning, teachers make accurate assessments of pupils' learning and consolidate and extend this learning through further questioning. Effective use is made of plenaries and the good quality relationships in the two classes, giving pupils confidence to ask for help when needed. Homework is used well to support pupils' learning in English, mathematics and in other elements of the curriculum. Pupils who have computers at home often find further information on subjects that have been discussed in lessons.
- 23 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and pupils make good overall progress as they move through the school. There is good quality input from the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, who carefully monitors the progress of all pupils on the special needs register. The progress of these pupils, including the traveller children, is regularly discussed and monitored with class teachers. Traveller children also benefit from regular half-day visits from the authority's traveller teacher. Some pupils are withdrawn from the classroom for extra support and assessment. This is planned on a rolling basis to avoid pupils regularly

missing the same lesson. Pupils receive good support from the classroom learning support assistants, who work closely with the teachers to ensure that special educational needs pupils are appropriately challenged.

- 24 The teaching of literacy and numeracy in both key stages is good. The staff have worked hard to implement both strategies and, in the case of literacy, links have been developed across subjects in the curriculum, including science, design and technology, history, geography and religious education. However, these links do not at present provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length. The planned use of numeracy through the curriculum has not yet been addressed but there is evidence of its effective use in science, history, design and technology and physical education lessons.

28 **The curriculum and assessment**

- 25 The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets statutory requirements. At Key Stage 2 the school has a short working week but by careful management is covering the curriculum satisfactorily. The length of the school day has been increased since the last inspection by the shortening of lunchtime. Religious education meets the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus and assemblies and circle time are of high quality. The curriculum for the Under-Fives is good and addresses the needs of the children very well. The school has a clear Sex Education Policy and a good drugs awareness programme as part of the science curriculum. Pupils at both key stages study history and geography for one term each with the summer term being devoted to a humanities project. This has allowed the school to present a well-balanced programme of humanities in the limited time available.

- 26 Literacy and Numeracy have been the focus of curriculum development over the last two years and have led to more systematic approaches to reading and mental mathematics. Adequate time is given to these subjects and both are well represented across the curriculum: for example mathematics is used effectively in science and design technology and literacy in history and religious education. To help raise pupils' attainment in science, the school now divides the school into four groups for one afternoon a week. This has reduced the numbers and age range in the upper school but planning for the wide ability span in Reception and Key Stage 1 has still not been entirely successfully addressed. The Year 3/4 and Year 5/6 groups gain from the arrangement and follow a good programme that satisfactorily addresses experimental and investigative science adversely commented on in the last report.

- 27 Schemes of work were a key issue in the last report. The school has addressed this well. There are policy documents and schemes of work across the curriculum. Some of these take the form of long- and medium-term planning but teachers are clear about what they have to cover and how they will tackle the work. Work for pupils with special educational needs and for those of higher ability is identified in teachers' short-term planning. Teachers know their pupils well and plan together to good effect. The school has a clear homework policy and teachers set homework regularly. Reading diaries are effectively used and contain useful dialogues between home and school.

- 28 All pupils have access to the curriculum including those with special educational needs who take part in all school activities. Classes are small and this helps teachers to address the needs of the wide range of age and ability in each class. The school supports its pupils with special needs well. Clear procedures for their early identification and assessment are in place. Their withdrawal for group work with the special needs co-ordinator is well managed and their needs are well known to class teachers. They receive a structured range of activities to develop their reading and writing skills. The school meets statutory requirements in respect of its statemented pupil. The school has a good range of extra-curricular activities including sport, arts, chess and music. The school is instituting a residential visit for the older pupils in the summer term.

- 29 Arrangements for assessment and monitoring are good in the core subjects. In other subjects assessment is less well developed. The school has carefully analysed the 1999 National Curriculum tests and is addressing the weaknesses through extra classroom support for the Year 2/3 class. There is a comprehensive range of testing procedures and the school feeds the results of these effectively

into its curriculum planning. The Middle Infant Screening Test for example is given to Year 1 pupils at the end of the spring term so that needs can be assessed and targeted for help during the summer term. Some of the systems are new and have not yet impacted on standards.

30 Record keeping is good. Full and useful documentation is compiled on all pupils. Practice is fullest and most secure in the core subjects. Marking varies; it is good in Key Stage 1 and erratic in Key Stage 2. The assessment and recording of the progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. Targets are regularly reviewed and updated.

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

31 Overall the school makes good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils and has maintained the same high standard of the last inspection.. Provision for their spiritual development is sound, for their cultural development good and for their social and moral development very good. The school has a very caring atmosphere with relationships being very good. Sound values and attitudes are well promoted. Rodmarton is a small school in which every pupil is known and valued. Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated. Teachers and other pupils respond to them well. Teachers try to give them confidence; a good example being some sensitive questioning in a mathematics lesson enabling a pupil with learning difficulties to succeed.

32 The school has revised its pattern and the content of assemblies recently and they now make a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual development. A deity is always recognised and pupils have time for thought. Circle time is very well organised: all pupils have opportunities to express opinions and discuss things that interest or worry them. Teachers lead sessions perceptively, challenge pupils to think and make sure that all those who want to can have their say. Through circle time, assemblies, religious education and other lessons, teachers make opportunities for pupils to reflect on themselves and on how they might appear to others.

33 Pupils' social and moral development is very ably supported and developed. The school's family atmosphere encourages pupils to behave in a moral way towards one another. Pupils support charities, including, at their request, the current Blue Peter appeal. There are many opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibility as an important part of their social development. For example, older pupils look after younger ones at lunchtime and carry out this task well. They read to and with younger ones in paired reading sessions. Pupils developed the Golden Rules for behaviour displayed in many places around the building and clearly obeyed. The oldest pupils have monitorial duties, for the library amongst other things. Behaviour in school is very good. The Golden Rules work well. The school has a very good atmosphere and ethos. The school aims, well aligned to pupils' moral and cultural development, are realised in its day-to-day life.

34 Pupils have a wide range of cultural experiences. They come from a wide variety of backgrounds including a small minority from a traveller culture. The school works hard to build on these different cultures; for example, the canal project last summer touched on the traveller way of life and compared it to the life of its own traveller children. Multi-cultural themes are addressed in religious education and history amongst other subjects. During the inspection, for example, Elizabethan cookery was very ably demonstrated. This took pupils in a very real way into another culture. Indeed, into more than one, because the visiting teacher brought out well that there would be wide variation in the food eaten by the rich and by the poor people of the time. The school has made good attempts to make pupils aware of the multi-cultural nature of society today. There is some good quality artwork around the building and the school has created a rich and welcoming environment. Pupils are introduced to the works of famous composers on a regular basis and particularly enjoyed Handel's seasonal music during the assemblies of inspection week.

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

35 This aspect is good overall. The procedures for monitoring academic progress and personal development are good.

The staff know all the pupils well and take an active interest in their development. Children with special educational needs are well supported. Annual reports provided for parents contain information on both academic progress and personal development.

- 36 The procedures for promoting discipline and behaviour are very good. The relaxed atmosphere within the school and the pleasant relationships between staff and pupils encourage the pupils to care about their school, its environment and the community within it. The attitudes of the staff make them good role models for the children. Consequently, behaviour and discipline within the school are very good. There is a sensible behaviour and discipline policy based on a rewards and sanctions principle. There are occasional incidents that necessitate involving parents and these are fully documented. Parents attending the parents' meeting were happy with the discipline within the school and confident in the ability of the school to handle the occasional transgression.
- 37 The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. Attendance at the school is better than the national average. The headteacher personally follows up on unexplained absences, although parents generally are very co-operative, advising the school when pupils are kept at home. The school makes suitable use of specialist support agencies should the need arise.
- 38 Procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' wellbeing, health and safety are satisfactory. All staff are trained in child protection awareness and there is a policy based on local authority guidelines. The usual statutory requirements are met where appropriate; for example the checking of electrical appliances and fire-fighting equipment and the practice of emergency evacuations. Pupils are made aware of health and safety through, for example, personal and social education, circle time and assemblies. Some of the golden rules are specifically designed to promote safety around the school. Those pupils involved in the junior citizenship project also receive training in road safety, cycling proficiency and dealing with fires.
- 39 However there are some issues of which the school and governors are aware but which need to be kept under review, and some current practices need to be reconsidered:
- Registration is not completed until after assembly, so there is no accurate record of who is in school if an emergency occurs first thing in the school day.
 - There is only one exit route for the two upstairs classrooms.
 - There is only enough room at the top of the stairs for a small group of pupils to work on the computer.
 - The school does not maintain a visitors' book.
 - Minor accidents, such as bumps and bruises that require minimal first aid are not systematically recorded.

Partnership with parents and the community

- 1 The schools' partnership with parents and the community is very good. The high standards reported at the last inspection have been maintained. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. There are informative newsletters, a clear prospectus and, for new parents, a small handbook which contains valuable information about the school. Parents are provided with information on topics and the curriculum by the school. There are also home/school diaries and homework books. The latter contain advice, information for parents and educational targets for pupils; this information helps parents to understand what their children have to do and clearly describes how they can help. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting felt this was a positive and valuable aid to home/school partnership. They also felt the information provided for them had improved over the last two years and was no longer the issue described in the last inspection report. Annual reports for parents are well written, contain details of what each child knows, can do and understands, and highlights strengths and weaknesses. They cover personal development as well as academic progress. In the best examples the weaknesses are clearly identified giving parents the opportunity to provide additional support should they so wish.
- 2 Parental involvement in children's learning is also very good. Several parents regularly help in school such as with cooking and information technology. Parents also give valuable support with extra-curricular activities such as football and netball training and French club. They also help with

school trips and with accompanying pupils to the swimming baths. Despite this being a very small school with a parent base that is wide spread geographically, there is a lively and active parents' group. This is known as "The Friends of Rodmarton School" and they produce their own informative newsletters and organise social events. A recent jazz evening and various seasonal events reinforce community links and raise valuable additional funds for the benefit of the school.

- 3 Enrichment through links with the community is good. The school has close links with the local church and each month's parish magazine carries a paragraph about what has taken place at the school and outlines future events. There are good links with the local police and emergency services and the school makes frequent trips into the local environment to reinforce pupils' project work, such as a recent canal field trip. The school also makes good use of visitors to the school including recent visits by a postman, a doctor (also a parent) talking about their work and a member of a local college demonstrating Elizabethan cookery. Year 6 pupils are also involved in a junior citizenship scheme that raises awareness of their position as members of a community outside the school. Pupils regularly support charities such as the Hurricane Appeal and Comic Relief. The pupils themselves sometimes instigate this involvement; for example an impending Bring and Buy sale in support of the latest Blue Peter Appeal is being largely organised by the children. This gives them an insight into the wider community, good opportunities for personal development and an appreciation that there are many not as fortunate as they are.

46 THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

46 Leadership and management

- 4 The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides good leadership and has, in her short time in the post, built a hard-working and close-knit team of teachers and support staff and established effective links with governors, parents and the community. She sets clear expectations regarding behaviour and good manners and is instrumental in promoting the positive learning environment that the team found. She gives very clear educational direction to the school and is well supported by all members of staff.
- 5 The monitoring of teaching is good. Due to the implementation of the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies all teachers have been observed teaching at least once by a co-ordinator. The school has made good use of a recently acquired video camera and teachers have discussed and evaluated the teaching of all members of staff. The monitoring of pupils' attainment and the setting of realistic and challenging targets is good. The results of this year's Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests have been shared and discussed with governors. As a result, increased support has been given to the middle class to address identified weaknesses. Co-ordinators monitor their colleagues' planning and are instrumental in the rolling biennial review of their subject areas. This system works well and co-ordinators work hard to ensure there are close links between the subject areas. This is particularly noticeable in information and communications technology, which is a main focus in this year's development plan.
- 6 Procedures for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs are well managed and, as a result, these pupils make good progress as they move through the school. The school has appropriate regard for procedures recommended in the Code of Practice. The knowledgeable Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator has a clearly defined role which involves organising the work of the traveller teacher, working with individual pupils on the register, overseeing the drawing up of the Individual Education Plans and ensuring the correct resourcing for teachers. The school makes good use of the learning support assistants who work very effectively with pupils on the register.
- 7 The quality of the school development plan is good and has improved considerably over the last two years. It has also been instrumental in improving teachers' information and communications technology skills and the targeting of smaller groups for science through the school. The present plan is detailed, has clear costings and accessible success criteria and in these areas it has improved since the last inspection. However, one of the weaknesses is that on paper, it covers only the

one year and does not cover long-term plans, such as the development of information and communications technology through the curriculum and the ongoing maintenance and improvement of the school building. The procedures for drawing up the development plan are very good. Staff and governors meet for a closure day to evaluate the old plan and discuss and agree priorities for the new one. Decisions are closely linked with the school budget. Giving shared ownership in this way is a very good initiative, as it directly involves all those who are ultimately responsible for the implementation and evaluation of the plan.

- 8 The contribution of the governing body to the effective running of the school is good. Governors take their responsibilities seriously and are committed to improving standards in the school. Both the literacy and numeracy governors have visited the school recently and talked through developments with the headteacher. Other governors visit the school on a regular basis but these visits do not result in a regular focusing on whole school initiatives as drawn up in the development plan. Without this focus, governors do not have the first hand experience to judge the effectiveness of the development plan and are too dependent on the headteacher's reports for information. However, their visits to the school do give governors good knowledge of other aspects of school life, enabling them to challenge the school and to act as critical friends, such as in the drawing up of an improvements' programme for the school building and playground. Governors fulfil all their statutory requirements.
- 9 The school very successfully meets its aims: it maintains high quality teaching and fosters pupils' enthusiasm for learning. It is instrumental in developing the talents of pupils and broadening their awareness of the needs of others. It has developed a very good partnership with parents and the community and gives effective guidance in spiritual and moral issues.
- 10 The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the last inspection:
- the length of the teaching day has been extended;
 - overall progress in English and mathematics has improved, particularly for the older and higher-achieving pupils and progress in information and communications technology since the acquisition of new computers is improving;
 - the curriculum is now well balanced and there is appropriate coverage of all subjects;
 - teachers' planning is now based on effective long and medium term plans and this ensures good progression in all subjects;
 - major building works, involving construction of the mezzanine and improved storage facilities have resulted in significant improvements to the school's accommodation, particularly for the younger pupils.
- 1 The headteacher, staff and governors have worked hard to improve the quality of education in the school and the attainment of pupils. They are committed to developing new initiatives and are determined to raise standards further and move forward. Apart from the lack of a longer-term vision in the school's development plan, the capacity for the school to secure further improvements is good.

54 **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

- 2 The school has sufficient appropriately qualified teachers to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. Curriculum leaders have the necessary expertise in their subjects. In some cases skills and awareness still have to be consolidated. In others, such as special educational needs, teachers have taken their personal knowledge and skills to an advanced level. Teachers regularly attend inservice courses and a governor recently joined them in numeracy training. The school's appraisal procedures meet the local authority's requirements; the school has an established system of appraisal linked to the school development plan. The school has an experienced teacher able to meet pupils' special educational needs. She also teaches a class for part of the time and knows many of the pupils in a classroom context.
- 3 Accommodation is satisfactory although two of the classrooms are small. Since the time of the last inspection the building has been altered radically. An upper floor has been built into the old high single

storey building almost doubling the space available. It releases an extension room for staff use, storage space and use as a hall. For this last use it is not well suited being too small but it makes a good base for special needs tuition and other group work. It allowed, for example, the visiting teacher to set up the Elizabethan cooking ready for the class to watch. Outside accommodation, apart from the under-fives', is good. Playground space is adequate and the school has a small but well-planned adventure playground. A large field is available adjacent to the school. The school has the use of the village hall for physical education lessons. Whilst this provides adequate space it does lack fixed apparatus to enable pupils to work at different levels.

- 4 Resources are adequate and more accessible and more safely stored than at the time of previous inspection. The school has a good number of computers and the library resources are now much improved. In some subjects, such as history and geography, reference material is good in quantity and quality. The local authority library service provides topic boxes for humanities studies. The school is building a library of CD-ROM's to supplement pupils' learning and is on line to the Internet. Resources and accommodation for special educational needs are satisfactory.

57 **The efficiency of the school**

- 5 Financial planning is good and has improved since the last inspection. The headteacher, working closely with the governing body's finance committee, has established a clear procedure for evaluating, preparing, discussing and approving the annual budget. This is linked well to the school development plan and incorporates clearly set out criteria for success, against which the spending is evaluated, principally by the headteacher. The school is involved in target setting and in developing procedures for evaluating its own cost-effectiveness. This is based primarily on improving pupils' progress and raising standards of attainment. Governors demonstrate a good understanding that any resource allocation should have a positive impact on standards of attainment. This is particularly evident in their decision to employ a part-time class assistant in the middle class to help improve standards. Governors also ensure that the school gets good value for money when making large purchases, such as the recent acquisition of a photocopier. Funds to support the pupils with special educational needs are effectively used.
- 6 The deployment of teachers and support staff is good and good use is made of teachers' expertise, such as in music and physical education and this leads directly to above average standards in aspects of these subjects. Teachers work hard to plan, resource and assess their lessons. Learning support assistants are well deployed and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning, particularly those pupils with special educational needs. Lunchtime supervisors work hard to ensure that the mid-day break is a well-ordered and social occasion and the school is kept in good condition by an efficient cleaner in charge. The use of learning resources and the accommodation is satisfactory overall, with computers being used increasingly to support subjects across the curriculum. The school library and art resources are used particularly well to support pupils' learning.
- 7 Financial controls are very good. There are sufficient checks and balances with the school system to ensure financial rigour. Regular reports are provided to enable governors to monitor patterns of expenditure. Curriculum managers receive funds to purchase resources and maintain current equipment against planned priorities. There is a detailed financial procedures policy which governs day-to-day financial practices. All the recommendations of the last audit report have successfully been put in place. Day-to-day administration is very good. It is unobtrusive, effective and serves the needs of staff, pupils and parents.
- 8 Given that:
- pupils enter the school attaining levels similar to those found nationally;
 - by the age of 11, standards of attainment observed in science are above national averages and in line with national averages in English and mathematics;
 - progress in the under-fives is good;

- provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good;
- the quality of education, including teaching, is good;

the school provides good value for money, although its unit costs are above the national average.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

- 1 Children are admitted to Reception in September and all have previously attended nurseries or playgroups. At the time of the inspection there were ten children in Reception, with eight being under five. The present cohort has a high ratio of boys to girls. A wide range of attainment is represented in the school's intake, with most children entering the Reception class with skills in line with those expected of their age. Provision for children under five is mainly good and all, including traveller children, make good overall progress in most areas. By the age of five the majority of children attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes specified in national guidance in all areas of learning, with more children than usual exceeding expectations in personal and social, development, language and literacy, creative and knowledge and understanding of the world. Because of the small number of children in some intakes, it is not possible to reliably identify trends in attainment over time. There is no significant difference in the progress of children of different gender or backgrounds. Children with special educational needs are accurately assessed by the teacher, set appropriate work and make resulting good progress.
- 2 The management of children under five is good. The governing body is committed to providing a good start for children when they join the school. To this end they employ experienced classroom assistants for four days a week to support the children. The classteacher successfully puts into practice the school's principles and aims and enjoys a good level of parental support. Curriculum planning is appropriately structured around the six areas of learning with good arrangements for children's transition to their full National Curriculum entitlement. Assessment procedures are good and are used well to inform planning and to promote individual children's progress.
- 3 Resources are sufficient for the delivery of the curriculum and most are easily accessible. The classroom is of good size but children do not have immediate access to their own secure outdoor area and this restricts their opportunities to participate readily in activities which require space and expansive movement. Pupils also do not have access to large apparatus, such as bikes and as such parts of their personal, social and physical development are restricted. Both the teacher and the classroom assistants are well qualified and experienced and, as a result, promote good learning in the classroom. The early years' policy is now out of date and does not accurately describe the present organisation of the class. A new policy is in the process of being drawn up in the light of the new government guidelines.
- 4 The previous report mentioned under-fives very briefly and raised no issues for the school to address. Inspection findings indicate that the early years' provision has been at least successfully maintained and provides children with a secure and thoughtful base for future learning.

65

Personal and social development

- 5 Children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills with an above average proportion achieving standards higher than expected for children of this age. Children come from several nurseries and playgroups and, as such, the early years' co-ordinator does not meet them before they start at the school. However, children settle quickly and most show a good confidence and eagerness in the classroom. They behave appropriately and have a good understanding of the classroom routines, such as putting their hands up when they know the answer to a question. They are polite to adults and show good respect and consideration for others. A clear example of this was the way children empathised in a literacy lesson with a girl who misses home whilst she is staying with her grandparents. The great majority of pupils co-operate well and demonstrate good levels of developing independence. This is clearly shown when they work in the sand and water areas. Children are interested in what is going on and are keen to respond when asked questions. Pupils show good concern for their classroom environment and are keen to help to clear up after practical activities. They are developing good personal independence, such as when they work on the computer unaided, collect equipment and materials for lessons and change for physical education lessons on their own. Children attend the whole school assembly; entering and leaving the room sensibly and sitting still and listening attentively throughout.

- 6 The teaching of personal and social development is good. The teacher has high expectations of the children's involvement and behaviour. Routines are quickly established for children new to the class and effectively support children's sense of security and growing interest. The teacher and classroom assistants work well together as a team. They are consistent in their positive approach, encouraging all pupils to work and play together.

67

Language and literacy

- 7 Children make good progress in language and literacy and by the time they are five, children's skills are in line with those expected for their age, with a significant minority achieving higher standards. Most children talk confidently and make themselves understood by adults and their peers. For example, children in a religious education lesson shared ideas on their own special places. They act out parts in the home corner and take on different roles in the present post office. However, sometimes children's speaking and listening skills are not encouraged because of the cramped and unimaginative setting of this area. Children enjoy building up their knowledge of letter names and their associated sounds. They particularly enjoyed finding buried letters in the sound tray which they dug up and described to their partner. All children recognise their own name and higher-attaining children recognise those of their friends. Children enjoy books and handle them carefully. They know that pictures and words have meaning and some are beginning to recognise familiar words. Children enjoy reading and describing characters in their books; they read regularly at home with their parents. All children are beginning to write their own name, with higher-achieving children including a capital letter.

- 8 The teaching of language and literacy is good. The teacher uses very good questioning techniques to challenge the children's understanding; this leads directly to their good speaking and listening skills. Many opportunities to expand and develop children's vocabulary are incorporated into the daily routines, such as in regular stories, rhymes and songs. Children's contributions are valued and encouraged and in consequence children gain in confidence. The classroom assistant is effectively deployed to give additional individual support to the youngest children.

69

Mathematics

- 9 Children under five make satisfactory progress in mathematics. Mathematical skills are well developed through a range of activities and mental exercises. By the time they are five, the great majority of children obtain the national standards. Children recognise numbers up to five and join in counting up to 20, with higher-achieving pupils counting in tens up to 100. Children recognise the different sized hands on a clock and show a sound understanding of chronology when ordering cards to show a loaf being cut. Children show satisfactory awareness of number recognition when using a computer program to match containers to numbers.

- 10 The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory and lessons are appropriately planned. The teacher uses innovative methods in her planned activities, such as when children practise their numbers in a large bowl of moistened cornflower. Children also benefit when their learning is consolidated during an effective plenary.

71

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 11 In this area of learning children make good progress overall and, by the time they are five, all have reached the national standards for children of this age, with a significant minority exceeding these levels. Children gain a good sense of history through a colourful display of paintings and photographs of their family trees as part of their "how we have grown" project. Their understanding of the past has also enhanced by the visit of an elderly village resident who talked about her childhood and changes that have been made to the village in her lifetime. Pupils understand about the importance of keeping healthy and this understanding was heightened by the visit of a parent who talked about his life as a GP and discussed the contents of his doctor's bag. Children successfully explore features of living things such as when some record their findings of germination in a personal seed diary. Children are

encouraged to ask why things happen and now know that when they run around in physical education lessons their heartbeat increases. Children quickly gain confidence in the use of information technology and use the mouse, space bar, function keys and numbers and letters with increasing accuracy.

- 12 The teaching of knowledge and understanding is good. Lessons are carefully planned and appropriately structured. Thoughtfully-prepared resources and well-planned activities, such as the making of gingerbread men, stimulate children's interest, imagination and learning and also play a significant part in the development of children's speaking and listening skills.

73 **Creative development**

- 13 Children make good progress in their creative development, with a small minority exceeding the standards expected by the age of five. Children use scissors and glue effectively when making their winter collage and different colours of paint for their individual self-portraits. They enjoy working independently and in pairs in the sand and water trays. Different textures that children come into contact with, extend their vocabulary with "sticky" and "slippery" describing the feel of the moistened cornflour. Opportunities for children to listen to music are limited but when given the opportunity, such as in a physical education lesson, they respond well to this stimulus. Children's imaginative play is satisfactory overall and they enjoy assuming different characters when using the dressing up clothes for role-play.
- 14 The teaching of creative development is good and a range of relevant opportunities is planned that enables children to represent their ideas in a variety of ways. However, the quality of children's creative play does not reach the same high standards when they are left for too long without the stimulus and direction of an adult.

75

Physical development

- 15 Children make satisfactory progress overall in their physical development and, by the time they are five, their skills are in line with those expected for their age. Most make good progress in pencil control and use scissors and paint brushes with satisfactory levels of control. They use space imaginatively, both in the classroom and in the hall and show increasing control and co-ordination in their movements and turns during a dance lesson. Children enjoy working with a variety of substances, such as dough and show increasing control in this work. Children develop good hand-eye co-ordination, such as when they use building blocks to build a house for a teddy. However, they have very limited opportunity to work at different levels during physical education lessons and, because of the absence of bicycles, pedal cars and other large play equipment, their opportunities to develop co-ordination in these areas are unsatisfactory.
- 16 The teaching of physical education is satisfactory, particularly in the classroom and in hall times. However, the children's lack of access to large play equipment means that this part of children's physical development is unsatisfactory.

77 **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

77 **English**

- 17 The results of the statutory tests in 1999 indicate that overall levels of attainment in English, by the end of Key Stage 2, were well above the national average and well above average in comparison with similar schools. These results showed a good improvement from the previous year. Inspection evidence indicates that the standards for this year's very small cohort of six pupils are in line with national averages, with above average speaking and listening skills but with no pupils attaining overall at the higher levels. With very small numbers in each cohort it is not possible to reliably identify attainment trends over time.
- 18 The results of the statutory tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 indicate that pupils' overall attainment in reading was below the national average and below average when compared with similar schools. Pupils' results in writing were well below the national average and well below the

average when compared with similar schools. These results are lower than the previous year, particularly in writing. However, this small cohort of pupils did enter the school with attainment below average and contains a much higher than average proportion of pupils with special needs. Inspection evidence for the present cohort of seven year olds indicates that the standards in reading and speaking and listening are above average and standards of writing are average.

- 19 By the time they are five, pupils' language and literacy skills are at least in line with national expectations with a minority achieving higher than expected for children of this age. In both key stages pupils' overall progress is satisfactory. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening where the school provides a good range of opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to practise and hone these skills. Pupils' progress in writing is less consistent, being satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and unsatisfactory through the rest of the school. In both key stages, pupils with special educational needs are appropriately supported; work is well matched to pupils' particular needs and in accordance with their Individual Education Plans. As a result, these pupils make good overall progress towards their targets.
- 20 The school has successfully addressed the issues raised in the last inspection report. There are now good opportunities in all classes for group discussion and role play is particularly well addressed in planned events such as the Arts' Week. Pupils' listening skills have improved and opportunities for reasoned argument are now a regular feature of literacy hour. Older pupils have good opportunities to develop their higher order reading skills, both in using the recently improved library and in relevant information programs on the computer. There are still, however, not enough opportunities through the school for pupils to write at length and this is the principal reason for pupils making unsatisfactory progress in this area.
- 21 Pupils' above average speaking and listening skills are well used by teachers, particularly in the initial introduction to lessons. Most pupils express their ideas clearly, such as when older pupils discuss their Shakespearean text and younger pupils discuss a recipe for gingerbread men. All pupils listen well to their teachers and to their peers, with older pupils having good skills in questioning and discussing the ideas of others. Pupils also have good opportunities to address larger groups when they participate in assemblies and Christmas productions before a large audience of parents and friends.
- 22 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading is above average and average at the end of Key Stage 2. The youngest pupils learn how to use books and make good progress with early reading skills. By the age of seven, pupils read books regularly, both independently and in different size groups. Pupils take books home regularly and are fastidious in ensuring that their reading record book is appropriately filled in. They develop a range of strategies for establishing the pronunciation of new words, including an increasing knowledge of phonics and sight vocabulary. Pupils have well-developed self-correction skills. Pupils recall and talk about events in the books they are reading and express their opinion about them confidently. Pupils build appropriately on these skills in Years 3,4 and 5 and by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils approach a range of books with interest and confidence. They read texts at an appropriate level with average-attaining and higher-attaining pupils having good expression and fluency. They understand the significant events and main themes of their books and discuss their reading preferences and favourite authors with animation. Although the size of the library inhibits class or large group work, pupils have good library skills and use index and content pages confidently when locating information in non-fiction texts.
- 23 Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in their writing but in Key Stage 2 pupils do not make sufficient progress in this aspect. A principal reason for this is the lack of opportunities for pupils to use the satisfactory language skills that they develop in literacy lessons in longer pieces of work. There is evidence in science, in the writing up of experiments, and in history of some extended writing but opportunities are not consistently planned through the curriculum. By the age of seven, pupils express their ideas in appropriately sequenced and punctuated sentences and have good spelling strategies. Higher-attaining pupils have well above average spelling skills and use punctuation, such as commas, accurately. Most pupils are developing a regular, cursive style. By the age of 11, pupils demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge of grammar and punctuation but lack opportunities to practise these skills sufficiently. Examples

of pupils' writing in a range of formats include poetry, play scripts and stories. There are good links with information and communications technology, when pupils word process their autobiography. However, most pupils' writing lacks the use of complex sentences and although punctuation is satisfactory, spelling is erratic. The presentation of pupils' work is also unsatisfactory and through the key stage there is no evidence of an emerging handwriting style.

- 24 Pupils engage with their work purposefully and have a good attitude at both key stages. They particularly enjoy the opportunities for discussion at the beginning and end of literacy lessons and this is well used by teachers to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. At both key stages, pupils show good concentration and quickly settle to their work. Whilst the younger pupils are careful with their handwriting, older pupils do not take a pride in the presentation of their finished work. Pupils co-operate effectively and sensibly; clearly evident in group reading activities. They are well behaved and respond positively to their teachers.
- 25 The quality of teaching is consistently good through both key stages. Teachers have a high level of interest in their pupils' learning. Their subject knowledge is good and questioning is well used to promote learning and assess pupils' understanding. This was particularly evident when older pupils discussed aspects of their Macbeth play script. Planning is detailed and in all lessons teachers have a clear understanding of what they want pupils to learn in the course of the lesson, with the planned outcomes being specific and measurable. Lesson introductions are sharply focused and pupils' speaking, listening and reading skills are well promoted. Follow-up tasks generally present sufficient challenge but do not, in Key Stage 2, sufficiently extend pupils' writing skills. Marking is good in Reception and Year 1 but is not consistent in the top two classes. As a result, pupils are not clear about how they can improve their work, do not complete corrections and have no clear indication about expectations of presentation. Homework is used constructively to promote pupils' reading development and older pupils will often complete unfinished work at home. There are very good communications in the reading record diaries between home and school, with teachers clearly emphasising appropriate areas for development. The new system for the learning of spellings is well understood by pupils and parents and there are indications that, in the short time that it has been in place, it has already had a positive impact on standards. There are good relationships in all classrooms and this results in good behaviour, with pupils having confidence to ask for help when needed. Support staff are well deployed in the two lower classes, in support of individuals and groups of pupils, although their role during the introductory session of the literacy hour is not clearly defined.
- 26 The English curriculum is well balanced and broadly based and pupils' overall progress is well supported by medium- and short-term planning based on the National Literacy Strategy. Opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills across the curriculum have been well addressed apart from the provision for pupils to write at length in the various subjects. The school is developing good procedures to assess pupils' attainment and progress and information from these is used well in teachers' future planning. The school was concerned about the lack of reading time and this has now been successfully addressed by discrete reading sessions for all years. Some of these are in the form of paired reading and this provides good opportunities for older pupils to work with younger pupils in the school. Whilst this is a good initiative, older pupils do not fully understand the reading strategies that teachers employ and, as a result, younger pupils are occasionally confused by the different approaches. Pupils also benefit from literacy target setting, which is shared with parents in pupils' homework books. The newly introduced spelling strategy is clearly understood by pupils and parents and represents an improved and more systematic approach to this aspect.
- 27 The subject co-ordinator has successfully led the school in implementing the National Literacy Strategy. The subject has a high profile within the school and good use is made of the co-ordinator's expertise when she takes all the literacy lessons in the class of the oldest pupils. The assigned governor gives good support to the school and has visited every class to see literacy lessons. The school is well resourced with ample good quality reading books that are used well to promote pupils' interest. The classroom book collections are well organised and maintained and attractive to pupils. The school library is sufficiently stocked and is well used. Computer programs are being introduced that appropriately support pupils' learning, particularly in

areas of communication and research. A good range of initiatives successfully promotes pupils' interest in the subject and has a positive effect on pupils' progress. These include book fairs, visits to the theatre and talks from visiting authors.

88 **Mathematics**

- 28 The results of the statutory tests in 1999 indicate that the overall levels of attainment in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2, were well above the national average and well above average in comparison with similar schools. The results of this cohort showed a good improvement from the previous year. Inspection evidence indicates that standards for this year's very small cohort are average, with these particular pupils making good progress since they started at school. The small numbers and varying abilities of the cohorts means it is not possible to reliably identify attainment trends over time.
- 29 The results of the statutory tests for seven year olds in 1999 were well below the national average and well below average when compared with similar schools. These results show a decline from the previous year, particularly with the proportion of pupils achieving at the higher levels. However, this cohort of pupils did enter the school with attainment below average and has a much higher than average proportion of pupils on the special needs register. Inspection evidence for the present cohort of Year 2 pupils indicates that standards are average and that pupils are making satisfactory progress.
- 30 By the age of 11, pupils have sound understanding of numbers. They have a good knowledge of place value, clearly shown in their decimal work. They use their mathematics knowledge satisfactorily in investigations and use their good speaking and listening skills to help them consolidate their understanding of new learning, such as when working on the rules for odd and even numbers. Pupils have sound data handling skills and use information and communications technology appropriately to support this work. The targets set for this cohort are challenging, based on good assessment information, and regularly reviewed. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils will successfully meet these targets.
- 31 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 build on the sound progress made in Reception. Year 1 make satisfactory progress in counting up to and back from 20 and counting in tens to one hundred. They identify analogue time correctly, with higher achieving pupils recognising half past the hour. Year 2 pupils have sound understanding of number and successfully consolidate their ideas when making graphs from given data. Year 3 pupils make satisfactory progress in all their number work, such as when they solve problems using their five times table. Higher achieving pupils have a good understanding of interpreting data from a graph. Year 4 and 5 pupils make good progress in all aspects of their number work. Higher achieving pupils have a particularly good understanding of place value and understand the relationship between decimals and fractions. Pupils make good progress in using their mathematical knowledge in their investigations. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons, given well matched work and make good progress in the targets set for them.
- 32 Pupils have a good attitude towards mathematics. They are interested in the work at both key stages. They take a willing part in the oral sessions and are keen to answer questions. Some of the pupils in the Year 2/3 class become excited about their work in their oral sessions. However, they move quickly into the written work and concentrate well. Behaviour in all three classes is very good. Some of the Key Stage 2 pupils sometimes chatter between activities but concentrate well within them. Pace of work is satisfactory. Pupils relate very well to teachers and to each other. In investigation work, pupils work well co-operatively and share equipment sensitively. Occasionally, in Years 5 and 6, pupils show a lack of initiative, such as when they did not ask if they could use calculators for the work on number rules.
- 33 Teaching is good at both key stages. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and use this well in their questioning to challenge pupils, such as in the mental mathematics sessions. Teachers' planning has improved since the last inspection; lessons are now well planned and work is generally accurately matched to pupils' abilities. Occasionally higher-achieving pupils are not always extended successfully and when this happens, they do not make the progress they are capable

of. Teachers usually group pupils appropriately and support these pupils well by moving round the groups, questioning, explaining and assessing. Teachers pace lessons well and good use is made of time. However, pupils' concentration is not sustained when resources are not readily available. Teachers give good encouragement to the lower-attaining pupils and they make good progress, particularly when teachers insist on them using the correct mathematical terminology during class discussions. Improving use is made of information technology to support pupils' work and, as such, the weakness described in the previous report has been successfully addressed.

- 34 The mathematics curriculum is good; the school follows the National Numeracy framework using a published scheme as a work source. The curriculum co-ordinator is in the process of revising the policy document to go alongside the new curriculum. Assessment is used appropriately to inform all aspects of teachers' planning. The school analyses the National Curriculum test results carefully to look for strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work. Weaknesses identified in last year's Year 2 cohort are now being addressed with the help of extra classroom support for the present Year 3 pupils.
- 35 Classrooms are small but there is sufficient space for mathematics teaching and alternative spaces elsewhere in the school are used well for group work. The quality and number of resources has improved since the last inspection; they are now satisfactory, accessibly stored and used appropriately.

96 Science

- 36 In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds, pupils' attainment was above the national average and above average when compared with similar schools. These results showed a slight improvement over the previous year. Inspection evidence indicates that the present Year 6 cohort is making good progress and is achieving above average. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds, all pupils achieved the expected level but no pupils achieved at the higher levels. However, this cohort did have a higher than average proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register. The present Year 2 pupils are making satisfactory progress and attaining at appropriate standards.
- 37 By the age of 11, pupils have a good understanding of a fair test and use this knowledge well in their science investigations. Pupils have a good science vocabulary, clearly shown when discussing their work. They have a good knowledge of life and living processes and a good appreciation of the dangers of drugs. Pupils make good use of information and communications technology to record the results of their work. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials and physical processes is satisfactory, with pupils due to cover work in these areas next term.
- 38 Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 build satisfactorily on pupils' good work in Reception. They are building up a sound understanding of a fair test and use this knowledge appropriately in their investigative work, such as when they investigate the relationship between different slopes and the distance covered by a toy car. Pupils have a sound understanding of physical processes, for example they understand that forces include pushing and pulling. However, they could not equate a force with the car rolling down the ramp. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good progress in their knowledge of the work of the body. They understand about the importance of healthy food and have a good understanding of how muscles control the movement of joints. Pupils show good investigation skills when setting up their own experiments to show how exercise impacts on their heartbeat. They have a good science vocabulary to describe their findings. Pupils in Year 5 continue the good progress and their progress is helped by working alongside the older Year 6 pupils.
- 39 Attitudes to science are good. In all the work seen, pupils were enthusiastic and very much involved in the work. They collaborate well in the Year 1/2 group, such as when they work with magnets, and work sensibly and without help on an appropriate computer program. Pupils are attentive, listen and relate well to the teachers and to one another. Pupils build well on each other's ideas; for example, Year 3/4 pupils brainstormed enthusiastically whilst designing their exercise experiment. Year 5/6 pupils demonstrated a sensible attitude in their work about drugs; they were quiet and thoughtful. There are some well-presented books, particularly in Year 6, but

many pupils work quickly and as a result their work is untidy. This was so in the lessons seen and clear from the work scrutiny. It does not reflect poor behaviour or carelessness but simply a desire to commit work to paper too quickly. Diagrams are not well drawn and some labelling is carelessly done.

- 40 Teaching is good overall; it is sound at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Teachers plan good practical activities at both key stages and question well to lead pupils to think about the work. Pupils are well managed in all three classes. Explanations are good. In the Year 1/2 lesson seen, for example, the teacher emphasised why the test was fair and why that was so important. The work on estimation and prediction was appropriate and well handled. Teachers organise lessons well and give good support to groups. As a result, pupils work hard. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and particularly well planned for; the open-ended activities allow these pupils to take a full and active part in all science activities. Elements of pupils' personal and social education are taught through science; this is carefully planned and sensitively carried out by the teachers.
- 41 The curriculum is good and the school has successfully addressed the lack of emphasis on science investigations. However, the school at present gives less than the average time to science, particularly in Key Stage 2. This was highlighted in the last inspection report and has only been partially addressed. Standards in science were recognised by the school as being lower than standards in mathematics and English. As a result, science is now taught simultaneously throughout the school with an extra teacher working with the youngest pupils in Key Stage 1. As a result of this initiative, most groups now cover a two year age span and this is resulting in accurate targeting of pupils' work, particularly in Key Stage 2 where the groups are smaller. In Key Stage 1, despite the additional help, one of the groups is significantly larger than the other and this makes it more difficult for the teacher to successfully challenge the wide range of ability. The teaching of science takes place in an afternoon and is sandwiched between two short literacy sessions. This sometimes means for the older or slower-working pupils, that not all investigations have an appropriate amount of time for their completion.

102 OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

102 Information and Communications Technology

- 42 During the inspection no lessons were observed but there was some small-group teaching by a teacher and also a parent. Judgements are based on these observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils. Based on this evidence, pupils make satisfactory progress through the school and, by the ages of seven and 11, achieve standards that are in line with national expectations. Since the last inspection, pupils' communication skills, particularly in the area of word processing, have improved and progress has increased for the older and higher-attaining pupils.
- 43 By the age of 11, pupils have good and often very good word processing skills, clearly seen when writing the Rodmarton News using a desktop publishing program. This publication is improved by the importing of pictures that are scanned in to the computer by the pupils. Another high quality example, was the well-written and well-illustrated article that was published as a result of pupils' visit to Charlecote House as part of their history project. Although pupils have good word processing skills, those pupils who do not have computers at home generally have slower typing skills. Pupils use information technology well for research for their history topics, recording their literacy and science work and handling data in mathematics. At present Year 6 pupils have not had access to monitoring or modelling programs but these are planned for later this year.
- 44 Pupils make good progress in Reception and Year 1 and regularly use the computers to support their work in lessons. For example, pupils use a time program to extend their understanding of o'clock and half past. Children in Reception show good skills when using cursor keys to find the initial letter sound of a displayed picture. Mouse skills are well developed, particularly when using the paint and art program for designing a Christmas tree. Higher achieving pupils in Years 2 and 3 show good confidence on the computer; for example when calling up information to

help in the design of their water wheels or using a spellchecker accurately. Pupils develop satisfactory control skills when using the turtle but have not yet had sufficient access to a range of modelling programs to fully develop their skills in this area. As a result their modelling skills at the time of the inspection were unsatisfactory. In Years 4 and 5, pupils make good progress in developing their communication skills and use information and communications technology effectively to support their learning in a wide range of subjects. At present pupils' progress in using the Internet for research is impeded by difficulties in logging on. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory use of computers to support their learning although, at present, there are very few programs which are specific for their needs.

- 45 Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject. Those seen working on computers concentrate well and show good co-operative and collaborative skills when working in small groups. Higher-attaining pupils enjoy sharing their more advanced skills with their peers.
- 46 The teaching of information and communications technology is satisfactory overall and the school has, during the last two years, systematically developed teachers' skills and subject knowledge, through the effective use of local authority courses. Teachers' increased confidence and interest in the subject has led directly to the improved progress that the team saw during the inspection. Teachers clearly plan the use of information technology into their lessons and it is now far more integrated into pupils' learning than during the previous inspection. Because of the size of classrooms, it is not possible for teachers to teach whole class lessons. As a result, instruction is given to small groups whilst other pupils get on with their work.
- 47 Information and communications technology is a high priority in the school development plan, with ongoing teacher inservice training. The co-ordinator gives good leadership to the subject and her expertise is used well in the monitoring of teachers' medium- and short-term planning. This ensures that all elements of the long-term plan are fully incorporated into the curriculum. The school has recently developed a useful assessment proforma to record pupils' progress.
- 48 The school has good resources that are well used by the pupils to support their learning. With the recently acquired computers, the school has invested in some good quality programs that are making a positive contribution to the development of pupils' skills across the curriculum.

109 **Religious Education**

- 49 Pupils meet the requirements of the local authority agreed syllabus for religious education and attain satisfactory standards at the end of both key stages. Pupils in both key stages show sound knowledge of different aspects of the subject and use this knowledge well in class discussions. By the age of 11, pupils understand some of the main differences of the major religions and have a good knowledge of certain aspects of Judaism and Christianity. Pupils are intrigued by small detail and are fascinated when learning about certain Jewish artefacts, such as a mezuzah. Pupils have a good knowledge of the Christmas story and make good use of their knowledge of relationships when discussing King Herod's jealousy.
- 50 Pupils make satisfactory progress through the school. Year R/1 pupils understand the importance of "special places" and use their empathy skills well when discussing why a young girl would feel lonely and homesick when staying with grandparents. Year 2/3 pupils have a sound understanding of the Jewish religion with higher-attaining pupils having good knowledge on specific aspects such as the torah. The work in pupils' books shows that they are developing their own ideas on aspects such as feelings and are building appropriately on their previous knowledge. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 use their subject knowledge well when discussing aspects of assembly themes, such as the Christmas story and their books contain some perceptive writing on the Jewish religion.
- 51 Attitudes to religious education are good. Pupils settle well to their work. They discuss sensibly and listen to one another and the teacher. Pupils in Year 1 greatly enjoyed the story read to them and were keen to share their ideas on loneliness. In assemblies, despite being rather crowded, pupils are well behaved, listen attentively and are keen to answer questions. This helps them to

understand not only the main story line but also to explore some of the underlying elements. The morals learned from their lessons and from assemblies are effectively incorporated into the everyday life of the school.

- 52 The teaching of the subject is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. As a result, pupils are interested in their work and play a positive role in lessons and assemblies. Assemblies are well planned and often support on-going classroom work. Teachers question well; they challenge appropriately and prompt pupils to think. Teachers bring religious education to life by bringing the stories told into the present in a way that pupils can understand. A present weakness is the school's lack of an appropriate range of artefacts to support teaching of different religions. Relationships are good, teachers are anxious to develop pupils' understanding and give good help for the lower-attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teachers value pupils' comments and this encourages pupils to share their ideas. Lessons are well prepared, explanations clear and work set generally challenging for the different abilities. Occasionally, some follow-up tasks do not do justice to the thoughtful teaching input and pupils do not consolidate their new knowledge effectively.
- 53 The Local Authority Agreed Syllabus provides a satisfactory basis for pupils' learning and is followed appropriately by the school. The new curriculum co-ordinator has recently revised the pattern of assemblies to help pupils build on their classroom learning. This is effective with assemblies making a good contribution to pupils' religious education.

114 **Art**

- 54 During the inspection no teaching of art was observed. Judgements are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work and the large number of displays around the school. On this evidence, pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Much of this good progress is due to the enthusiasm of the teachers and the wide range of opportunities to work with different materials. Pupils have a natural enthusiasm and this is well nurtured by the teachers. This was clearly evident in the winter collage work that the younger pupils in Key Stage 1 had recently completed. Pupils make particularly good progress in developing their painting skills through the school. They have a good knowledge of mixing their own paints and of making different consistencies of paint; for example, older pupils mix glue with powder paint to simulate oil paintings of Tudor personalities. Clear development of pupils' sketching skills is shown in their sketchbooks, although the good progress slows as pupils reach the top end of the school. There are good links with design and technology when pupils produce detailed, labelled diagrams of slippers, before the materials are cut out and sewn together.
- 55 One of the principal reasons for the good progress and enthusiasm of the pupils, is the newly instigated annual art week, which took place for the first time in the last summer term. The water theme linked carefully with the pupils' topic and expertise from parents and teachers was carefully woven into the experiences that the pupils encountered during the week. These included pottery, painting, weaving, costume making, role play and a small production that was shared with parents. The principal legacies of this week now hang from the assembly room ceiling in the form of a most wonderful dragonfly and butterfly. These three-metre models are the result of pupils' willow weaving which was later carefully covered with different colour tissue paper. The effect is stunning and a constant focus of pupils' discussion and awe and wonder. Since the last inspection, the high standards have been maintained throughout the school and there is now good achievement by the more talented pupils. There are good links with information and communications technology, clearly shown in the class of the youngest where pupils design their own Christmas tree using an art program.

116

Design and Technology

- 56 Pupils make satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school and this closely reflects the findings of the last inspection. There have been improvements in the organisation of resources, which are now far more easily accessible and in the development of pupils' design skills through the school. These were particularly evident in the class of the oldest pupils, where a careful analysis of needs and the properties of different materials, were incorporated into clear

designs for a pair of indoor slippers. Pupils use these designs well to sequence their work and to ensure the correct use of resources. However, pupils do not yet have a clear understanding of the importance of evaluation as part of the making process and, as a result, pupils' skills are not being progressively developed through the school.

- 57 The youngest pupils develop good skills with tools, such as scissors and have an above average understanding of different ways of joining materials. For example, they understand the role of hinges and use this knowledge well when making a stand-up photograph frame. Pupils also develop a good knowledge of the materials they use, such as when they use glue not only for joining materials but also for varnishing the surfaces of their finished products. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 develop above average skills in overcoming design problems when constructing water wheels as part of their geography topic. Although many of the water wheels themselves were not symmetrical, pupils shaped the framework accurately to accommodate the spinning wheel. Younger pupils have good opportunities for developing food technology skills, such as when they make gingerbread men, but at present these skills are not progressively built on through the school, resulting in uneven progress in this aspect of the subject.
- 58 The teaching of design and technology is good overall, with teachers having good subject knowledge, which is clearly shown in the questioning of pupils and the clarification of tasks. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject and particularly enjoy the challenge of overcoming difficulties in the making aspect. There is a good emphasis on pupils taking a pride in their work and the correct use of tools and materials. In the two classes of older pupils, teachers improve pupils' knowledge of materials by encouraging the testing of materials for appropriateness before the making process. The two classrooms for the eldest pupils were adequate for practical work during the inspection but several pupils were absent due to illness. With a complete class of pupils, space for practical activities is very limited. There is, however, no other alternative space in the school for this work. The school has satisfactory resources that are used appropriately by the pupils.

119

Geography and History

- 59 Progress is satisfactory in both key stages and has been maintained since the last inspection apart from Key Stage 2, where progress has improved with pupils making good progress in history. The school provides its pupils with an appropriately balanced curriculum for history and geography. The subjects are taught discretely in the first two terms and are combined for a humanities project in the summer term. The last combined project centred on a canal study for Year 2 to Year 6 where pupils successfully applied skills taught in the previous terms' work.
- 60 There is an appropriate emphasis on historical and geographical skills. For example, older pupils were encouraged to draw on their knowledge and draw conclusions when they were given a demonstration in Elizabethan cookery. This excellent input by a professional chef, not only fascinated the pupils but also enabled them to learn about the social differences of the time and gave valuable insights into how food was prepared. A taste of an authentic wild boar sausage provided a good focal point for a lively discussion on the merits of certain Tudor foods. Pupils used their sound knowledge of hygiene to question how cooked food was kept. A visit to a Tudor house further brought alive the subject to the pupils who have built up a good knowledge of the different life-styles of rich and poor. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 have developed a satisfactory knowledge of the journey of a river and have a good knowledge of the correct terminology associated with this work.
- 61 No geography lessons were observed during the inspection so it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. Teaching in history is good. Teachers organise the work well and provide a wide range of experiences for pupils. This brings history alive for the pupils and encourages them to want to find out more. Good links are planned to incorporate other subjects into the history curriculum such as art and information and communications technology. As a result there are some high quality paintings depicting well-known Tudor personalities displayed around the school and pupils use computers effectively to find out more about life in Elizabethan times. Older pupils also make good use of the library for research purposes. The river study has been carefully planned to build on pupils' previous skills.

62 The school has carefully selected elements from both the history and geography National Curriculum programmes of study to provide a cohesive and well-balanced scheme. This is one of the main reasons for pupils' positive attitudes to the subject and the particular enthusiasm for the carefully planned field trips. The subjects are effectively resourced with good use made of visits and visitors.

123 **Music**

63 Standards in the music heard during the inspection were above the national expectation. Pupils sing well. In a small and acoustically unhelpful hall they make a pleasing and tuneful sound. A small group of Year 5/6 girls have prepared songs for Christmas and sing these well, using head tone and a clear accurate sound. A small group of recorder players plays well. Pupils know a good number of notes and play with good tonguing and phrasing. They "blow" a little too hard on some of the higher notes and the sound as well as the tuning suffers. In class lessons pupils were at a late stage of preparation for Christmas. They know the songs well. The school will hold its Christmas concert in the adjacent village hall, which is resonant and helps vocal sound.

64 Pupils make good progress in music at both key stages. The small group rehearsing songs and recorder pieces made perceptibly very good progress in their session. They have clearly maintained this level of progress through the term in order to sing and play at this level. The Year 4/5/6 class, although they too made good progress overall, gained only slightly from the singing exercises. In all three sessions during the inspection pupils made progress in the idea of performance, of making it right first time.

65 Pupils clearly enjoy their music making. They sing and play willingly and many show enthusiasm. Both the gentle carol and a lively Mexican song were enthusiastically sung. The small group of volunteers is very enthusiastic and pupils have a good rehearsal discipline - except that in their enthusiasm they are tempted to play out of turn. In class pupils behave well and relationships are good. Pupils are keen to perform the Christmas music to their parents and friends. They are approaching the performance with a good sense of responsibility. They understand that they all have to try hard to do their best "on the night".

66 Music is well taught. A visiting specialist music teacher visits the school for one afternoon per week taking all the classes and the small recorder group. Lessons are well planned and supported by a good level of teacher musical skill. Pupils are well managed and lessons well organised. Methods match the age range well. Pupils with special educational needs are well involved in music making. One of them has an excellent sense of pulse and accompanies one of the pieces for the Christmas concert very accurately on a percussion instrument.

67 A full programme of musical activities is planned. Composition will follow the present performance and listening work in future terms.

128 **Physical Education**

68 During the inspection two lessons were observed, one in each key stage. Based on the evidence of these lessons and on discussions with teachers, pupils by the age of 11 make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in swimming. These findings reflect those of the previous inspection, with the exception of swimming, where standards have improved.

69 Pupils in Key Stage 1 work well in the warm-up and sustain good concentration. They understand the effect of exercise on the pulse rate. They skip appropriately in time to music and move confidently at different levels. They make good use of space, particularly when linking a series of turning movements together. They benefit from watching exemplars, which help them to raise the standard of their own performance. Older pupils co-operate well with partners when devising paired movements. They move well to a set rhythm and show good originality in movements. The great majority build a series of movements successfully into a set motif. Older pupils also enjoy the good provision for extra-curricular activities which take place after school and the wide range of competitive matches against other schools in football, netball, rounders and cross-country. All pupils benefit greatly from the well-developed swimming programme throughout Years 1 to 6 and, as a result, the great majority of them achieve standards

significantly higher than those expected of similar aged pupils. Pupils enjoy lessons, work hard and take particular pride in their achievements such as in swimming.

- 70 Teaching is good overall. Teachers have benefited from good quality inservice training during recent terms and pupils benefit from the good use of the co-ordinator's expertise when she teaches Years 2 – 6. Pupils also benefit from the high quality teaching input when they go swimming at the local pool. Teachers have an above-average subject knowledge and this is reflected in the teachers' ongoing assessment of pupils' work and careful selection of activities and practices.
- 71 The school has improved its resources since the last inspection and now has a good range of small apparatus, which is used well in lessons. Pupils also have access to a small yard and adjacent playing field for outdoor activities. As the school has no hall, all physical education lessons take place in the nearby village hall. Whilst this provides a satisfactory amount of space for the development of individual skills, it does not benefit from any fixed apparatus. This greatly restricts opportunities for pupils to work at different levels.

132 **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

132 **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

72 The school was inspected by a team of three inspectors who, over a period of three days completed a total of 7.5 inspector days. The time spent in the following activities appears below:

- ◆ Twenty-three lessons were observed for a total of 17 hours 35 minutes.
- ◆ Pupils were heard reading and discussions were held with them about their work for a total of 4 hours 55 minutes.
- ◆ Samples of pupils' work were examined for a total of 7 hours 35 minutes

The total time spent on all these activities was 30 hours 5 minutes.

- 1 In addition, 12 hours 15 minutes was spent on discussions with the headteacher, teaching and support staff, governors, parents and others associated with the school. Policy documents of the school and the school development plan were examined. Attendance registers, records kept on pupils and teachers' planning were analysed. Results of the parents' questionnaire and the views expressed at the parents' meeting were taken into account.

2 DATA AND INDICATORS

135

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	71	1	23	7

135 Teachers and classes

135 Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	3.68
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	19

135 Education support staff (YR – Y3)

Total number of education support staff:	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	22

Average class size:	24
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Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	137616
Total Expenditure	146191
Expenditure per pupil	2059
Balance brought forward from previous year	14208
Balance carried forward to next year	5633

Number of questionnaires sent out: 55

Number of questionnaires returned: 35

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	66	31	0	3	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	60	31	6	0	3
The school handles complaints from parents well	29	44	18	6	3
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	34	63	0	3	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	37	60	3	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	49	40	8	3	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	38	59	3	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	31	57	3	9	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	59	29	6	3	3
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	51	34	9	3	3
My child(ren) like(s) school	68	20	6	0	6