

INSPECTION REPORT

Boney Hay Primary School
Burntwood

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique Reference Number: 124206

Inspection No: 197265

Headteacher: Mr. D. Rowley

Reporting inspector: Mr. D. Brown
OIN: 8285

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 25th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707786

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

Type of control: County

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Chorley Road
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Burntwood
Staffordshire
W57 8PF

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. E. Drinkwater

Date of previous inspection: February 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr. D. Brown, RgI	Special Educational Needs Areas of learning for under fives Science Music	Characteristics of the school
Mr. S. Vincent, Lay Inspector	Religious education Equal opportunities	Attendance Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs. A. McAskie	English Information technology Geography Art	The quality of teaching The curriculum and assessment The efficiency of the school
Mr. A. Woodward	Mathematics Design and technology History Physical education	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Leadership and management

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The headteacher has made a very positive start to his work here
- Provides very good lessons for children under five years
- Helps children with learning difficulties to make progress
- Develops very good relationships between adults and children
- Encourages children to make predictions about what they are learning
- Fosters a keenness in the children to join in
- Promotes a good team spirit amongst the staff
- Works hard to make the rooms and spaces more attractive by displaying children's work

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Standards in English, mathematics and science at age eleven are not high enough
- II. Progress in writing at Key Stage 2 is not fast enough
- III. Not enough science is done at Year 6
- IV. There is not enough reference in curricular planning to the expected levels in the National Curriculum
- V. In some lessons the pace of working slows after the initial teaching
- VI. Too much of the school's budget is spent on the building, and there are not enough good quality resources for some subjects

The school is rapidly improving. These weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan to help the school improve further.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Overall, sound progress has been made in improving the school, and the pace of improvement is increasing. Attainment in reading is higher and work with computers is now meeting requirements. Children's attitudes are now much better, and their concentration and behaviour are good. The standard of teaching has risen from satisfactory to good, and now there is no unsatisfactory teaching. Curricular planning is generally better. Assessment of children's progress in lessons is now much better, and information is used to plan future work. Governors are becoming more involved in the curriculum, and the new school development plan is beginning to provide a longer-term view of what the school needs to do to continue to improve.

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
English	D	D	<i>average</i>	C
Mathematics	D	C	<i>below average</i>	D
Science	D	C	<i>well below average</i>	E

In the 1999 tests, standards for seven year olds were lower than average in writing, were average in mathematics and science, but well above average in reading. At seven and eleven, standards in information technology and religious education are average. At seven and eleven, standards in information technology and religious education are average.

· **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Very good	Good	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Very good	Good	Good
Science	N/A	Good	Satisfactory
Information technology	N/A	Insufficient evidence	Good
Religious education	N/A	Insufficient evidence	Good
Other subjects	Very good	Good	Good

The quality of teaching has risen since the previous inspection, and is now good overall. The lessons are stimulating and capture pupils' interest. Relationships between adults and children are very good, and these help children to try harder

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	Behaviour is mainly good, both in lessons and around the school. All staff work very hard to maintain good discipline.
Attendance	Attendance is average. Children are punctual and enjoy coming to school.
Ethos*	There is a growing determination to raise standards and to provide a better quality environment in which the children learn. A more precise overall school aim would improve the effectiveness of these processes.
Leadership and management	The new headteacher is providing very good leadership. He is giving the teachers a clear direction for the work of the school. The governors are becoming more involved in the whole life of the school.
Curriculum	The curriculum for children under five is very good. In the key stages it meets the needs of all pupils. Good links exist between subjects. Some lessons are exciting and capture pupils' imagination.

Pupils with special educational needs	The children do well. Lessons are planned to help them make progress. The support is very good.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	There are enough teachers and members of the support staff. There are not enough resources in some subjects. Much of the building space is not suited for teaching young children.
Value for money	Administration is of a good standard, and the school is well organised on a day-to-day basis. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

**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

- VII. The children like coming to school
- VIII. Being encouraged to play an active part in school life
- IX. Finding it easy to approach the school with questions or problems

What some parents are not happy about

- X. Not knowing enough about what is taught and
- XI. The amount of work their children are
- XII. The standards their children reach
- XIII. The way the school handles complaints
- XIV. Behaviour of some children in the

Inspectors agree that children like coming to school, and that parents are encouraged to play a part in the life of the school. Teachers are open and friendly, and easy to approach even for parents with complaints. Behaviour is good for most of the time. The school is planning to give parents more information about what is taught to supplement the three parent-teacher consultation evenings each year. The amount of homework set is to be organised better through a written policy, but the work already plays a big part in helping children learn more. Standards for eleven-year-olds are not high enough.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

- a. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is average when compared with all primary schools, but overall attainment is below average at the end of Key Stage 2. The governors and teachers should improve standards at Key Stage 2 by:
- XV. increasing the number of planned opportunities for the systematic development of writing skills
 - XVI. increasing the amount of science in Year 6
 - XVII. ensuring that curricular planning includes reference to National Curriculum levels in English, mathematics and science
 - XVIII. planning work in the lessons that more closely matches the different abilities of the pupils
 - XIX. ensuring that a good pace of work is maintained in the different parts of the lesson

(paragraphs: 18, 19, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 45, 49, 58, 61, 81)

- a. Make better use of the budget by:
- working with the local education authority to reduce the amount of space in the building for which the governors are responsible. More of the budget should be spent on educational provision. The building should become more suited to the education of young children.
 - strategically planning the use of funds towards the priorities in the new, longer term school development plan.

(paragraphs: 83, 87, 88, 89)

There are some minor issues which the governors should include in their action plan:

Although the members of the senior management team have already provided great support for the new headteacher, the governors should manage the budget so that a deputy head may be appointed to the school. This appointment should strengthen the leadership of the headteacher through a consistent partnership between the headteacher and deputy head.

(paragraphs: 74, 75, 76, 77)

The new headteacher has identified the need to improve relationships with parents. As part of this process the school should increase the range and improve the quality of information provided for parents and carers.

(paragraph: 72)

INTRODUCTION

- **Characteristics of the school**

1. Boney Hay Primary School serves the Boney Hay and Chase Terrace areas of Burntwood in Staffordshire adjacent to the beautiful open countryside of The Chase. The school provides education for children aged four to eleven years. It is housed in buildings that were originally a middle school. The primary school opened in the buildings in 1988.
2. Presently standing at 199, the school roll has dipped slightly in recent years. There are nine teachers, of whom one is the headteacher, and two who teach part-time. Children enter the school at the beginning of the term following their fourth birthday. Those starting school in September attend full-time and are taught in the reception class. Children starting school in January and after the Easter break receive part-time education in a separate group before entering the reception class full-time in the following September. The abilities of the children starting school are about average in early reading, a little lower in early writing, and below average in early mathematics and personal and social skills.
3. At present there is one class for each year group from Year 1 to Year 6. Overall, there is an almost even number of girls and boys, but the numbers are not well balanced in the year groups. For example, there are ten more girls than boys in Year 1, and seven more boys than girls in Year 3. In most year groups there are about the same numbers of children, and the average class size is 28. At about 12 per cent, a smaller percentage of pupils than on average appears on the schools register of special educational needs. There are five pupils with statements of their specific need in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice.
4. The area served by the school was originally formed as a result of coal mining. Additionally, housing was provided for manual workers from Birmingham as over-spill accommodation. Only one opencast mine remains, and one of the local coal-burning power stations has closed. Small industrial units have taken the place of the bigger industries, and some parents travel to Birmingham and Walsall for work. In recent months the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals has risen to over 26 percent, and this is above the national average. Statistics from the 1991 census indicate that fewer parents than on average hold qualifications in higher education. Other indicators of the socio-economic circumstances of the area fall into the "average" category. It is not possible to make comparisons between the group of children in the school at the time of the previous inspection and the present pupils.
5. The overall aims of the school are to respect each child as an individual, and to recognise and develop his or her full potential through a broad, balanced curriculum. The school also aims to foster pupils' independence, self-esteem and tolerance, and to encourage a sense of humour. Specific priorities identified in the current one-year school development plan are to develop the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school; to monitor the implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy; to develop teaching and learning in information technology; to improve procedures for assessing pupils' work; and to have implemented a home-school agreement.
6. Since the previous inspection a new headteacher has been appointed to the role, having taken up responsibilities only ten weeks before the current inspection. The previous deputy head has moved to a post in another school, and the governors feel unable at present to appoint a replacement because of financial constraints; two senior members of staff join the new

headteacher to form the senior management team. The Year 6 class teacher has retired, and a replacement teacher is in post. Plans are being finalised to make alternative use of some parts of the building, which is too large for the present number of pupils, and which is too costly to run in its present size.

6. **Key indicators**

7. **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	12	16	28

7. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils	Boys	11	8	11
	Girls	15	14	15
at NC Level 2 or above	Total	26	22	26
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	93	79	93
	National	82	83	86

7. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	15	15	15
at NC Level 2 or above	Total	26	26	26
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	93	93	93
	National	82	86	87

8. **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	22	10	32

8. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	14	15	14
	Girls	7	6	6
at NC Level 4 or above	Total	21	21	20
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	66	66	63
	National	70	68	80

8. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	13	15	14
	Girls	7	6	6
at NC Level 4 or above	Total	20	21	20
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	62	66	62
	National	68	69	75

9. **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	6.2
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.1
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

9.

10. **Exclusions**

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

11. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	25
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

11.
ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

PART A:

11.
EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

11. Attainment and progress

9. Children enter the school at the beginning of the term following their fourth birthday. All children have one year of full-time education in the reception class, starting in September each year. In addition, children starting school after Christmas have two terms of part-time education before entering the reception class full-time, and children starting after Easter have one term of part-time education. At the time of this inspection, all children attended full-time; ten had received two terms of education part-time, and eight had had one term's part-time attendance. Three children were new entrants.
10. Assessments carried out soon after entry show that overall ability in reading is about average, skills in early writing are below this, and children's personal and social development are also lower than average. Children's understanding of early mathematical ideas is below average. The quality of provision for children under five is particularly good, and the teaching is of a very high standard. In consequence, children make good progress, and most are likely to have achieved the desirable levels of attainment in all six areas of learning before they leave the reception class. This finding confirms the results of assessments carried out as children leave the reception class. Progress has been better in the school than in other schools in the local education authority and in schools taking part in the assessments nationally.
11. By the age of five, children's confidence and self-respect are high and their behaviour is generally excellent. They show care for one another, and are learning to work together. The quality of their programme encourages the children to develop as speakers and listeners, and to begin reading and writing common words. Attainment in mathematical understanding is already good, and many recognise three-dimensional shapes and describe them in suitable mathematical terms. Children learn a great deal about their world while playing in the "woodland" created in the classroom by the adults. The children use computers to support their learning, and gain increasing control of their movements. Creative work of a good standard is produced.
12. Results of the 1998 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests and assessments showed the percentage of pupils reaching the acceptable Level 2 and above in reading to be well above the average when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools – that is those having between eight and 20 per cent of pupils eligible for free meals - attainment was well above average. Attainment in writing was average for all schools, but below average when compared with attainment in similar schools. Attainment in mathematics and science was very high when compared with all schools and with similar schools.

13. The percentage of pupils eligible for free meals has risen in the last year, and the school is now compared with schools having between 20 per cent and 35 per cent of pupils eligible. The 1999 National Curriculum tests and assessments indicate that reading standards remained well above the national average and well above standards in similar schools. Writing standards were below the national average, but average when compared with standards in similar schools. Attainment in mathematics and science was average compared with all schools, and well above the standards achieved in similar schools. The average National Curriculum level achieved in reading, writing and mathematics by the seven-year-olds in 1999 compared with average levels in similar schools indicates that standards were well above average.
14. In the three years 1996 to 1998 girls performed better than boys in all but one test or assessment.
15. Results of the 1998 National Curriculum tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 show the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 and above in English and science to be at the national average, but to be below the average when compared with similar schools (8 – 20 per cent eligible for free meals). The percentage reaching the acceptable Level 4 and above in mathematics was below the national average and below average when compared with similar schools.
16. Results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests and assessments in English and mathematics show the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above to be below the national average, but average when compared to similar schools (20 – 35per cent eligible for free meals). The percentage of pupils reaching the acceptable Level 4 and above in science was well below average when compared with all schools and with similar schools. When compared with average National Curriculum levels achieved in similar schools, attainment was average in mathematics and science, but below average in English.
17. Over the three years 1996 to 1998, boys' attainment was higher than the girls in tests.
18. The previous inspection found attainment to be sound for children under five. Attainment was sound at the end of both key stages in English, mathematics, design and technology, geography, art, physical education and religious education. No judgement was made about history at either key stage or about standards in music at Key Stage 1. Standards in music at Key Stage 2 were satisfactory. Attainment in science was good at both key stages, and there was no judgement about standards in history. Standards in information technology were unsatisfactory at both key stages.
19. The present inspection finds that attainment in English is average at the end of Key Stage 1 and below average at Key Stage 2. Most seven-year-olds have developed sufficient fluency, accuracy and understanding to enable them to read aloud with expression and to effectively use books and worksheets for written assignments. They write simple stories, and poems.
20. By the time they are eleven, pupils read a range of both fiction and information books. Most read accurately and understand the context of their books. They learn to write for an

increasingly wide audience, but do not have sufficient opportunities to write at length. Standards of spelling are generally satisfactory but those in handwriting and presentation are more variable. Throughout the school, pupils listen carefully to stories and instructions. They show good recall of learning from previous lessons.

21. Good routines in English are established throughout the school and these enable most pupils to make at least satisfactory progress. Progress is generally better at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2, although the progress of pupils of higher ability at both key stages has improved recently. A well-planned and structured programme ensures that most pupils progress well in the development of literacy skills.
22. Attainment in mathematics is broadly average at the end of both key stages. Seven-year-olds know the value of coins, and using this knowledge work out the cost of a shopping basket and the change needed. They carry out mental calculations using two and three-digit numbers, and are accurate when doubling and halving tens and units. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are confident in carrying out mental calculations using the four rules of number. They round numbers up and down following rules, make accurate approximations, and sequence complex decimals.
23. Progress in mathematics is satisfactory overall at both key stages. At Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding because the work provided for them is sufficiently difficult and makes them think deeply about what they are learning. Some progress at Key Stage 2 is slower because of the pace of working and the acceptance of untidy written work.
24. Overall, attainment in science at the end of Key Stage 1 is average with above average attainment in parts of Experimental and Investigative Science and in Physical Processes. By the age of seven, pupils have a well-developed sense of making investigations fair by changing only one variable. They recognise the effects of the forces of pushing and pulling and know that forces can change the shape of different materials. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below average. By this time pupils have predicted the results of investigations into solids, liquids and gases, but the oldest pupils are given investigations designed for them by the teacher, and do not hypothesise about the results of their work.
25. Progress is good at Key Stage 1, where pupils in Year 2 build upon the work done in Year 1. Overall progress at Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory, as the pupils do not advance quickly enough through the expected levels, and pupils in Year 6 do too little science.
26. Attainment in information and communication technology is average at both key stages. Much work has been done to improve standards. Seven-year-olds use simple word processing skills, make pictures and enter data into a pre-loaded program. By the time they are eleven, pupils use a range of word-processing skills and use the CD-ROM to retrieve information. Some are skilled in the use of a digital camera.
27. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Paint and graphics programs are used particularly well throughout the school. Progress in control and sensing is less well developed because of the

lack of suitable hardware and software.

28. Attainment in religious education is generally at the levels indicated in the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus, while some work is of a particularly high standard. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know of the different sorts of celebrations held around the world in thanksgiving for the local and international harvests. They know of Buddha and his diet of a single grain of rice. By the age of eleven, pupils know about the ceremonial meals of the Sikhs. They explore their feelings about friendship, and form links between these feelings and the Christian reasons for prayer based upon the love of Jesus for all people.
29. Progress for all pupils is satisfactory at both key stages, although some earlier work from Year 3 is repeated in Year 6. Work based on a new agreed syllabus is being planned to ensure that the rate of progress is maintained.
30. Progress in art is good. Pupils use a wide range of media to explore colour, shape and texture. They learn about the work of important artists. Skills are systematically developed and used well to support learning in other subjects.
31. Not enough lessons were seen during the period of the inspection to make reliable judgements about progress in design and technology, geography, history or music. However, other evidence shows that pupils design vehicles using commercial construction kits, before evaluating their models as the next step in the design process. Final models are produced using other materials joined by suitable methods. Pupils learn a range of skills to interpret geographical and historical information, such as research skills when using Victorian census returns. They learn to use appropriate terms such as “rune”, and become familiar with the chronology of the Tudor period. Pupils learn about maps as they draw their journeys from home to school, and study the life-styles of people in hot and cold countries. In music, pupils learn how to sing with clarity and how to keep to a rhythm by clapping or by playing an instrument. They learn about musical instruments from different periods, and have the opportunity to learn to play recorders, keyboards and guitars.
32. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets specified in their individual education plans. Most of the targets are connected with language acquisition, and teachers and learning support assistants design and implement suitable lessons. Pupils learn to read and write new words, spelling patterns are learned, and emphasis is given to helping pupils develop their reading.
33. Good emphasis is given to the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy, and the time devoted to these daily lessons is efficiently spent. The basic skills learned are effectively used in other subjects of the curriculum, such as reading for information, writing in religious education, geography and history, and in handling data in a range of subjects.

36. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

34. The attitudes of most pupils are good. The majority of pupils listen carefully to their teachers and follow instructions well. They are usually confident enough to ask and answer

questions about the work that they are doing. Most pupils settle quickly to written or practical work, and they persevere even when some of the tasks are quite mundane. Concentration levels are good throughout the school, with many pupils showing an increasing capacity to work alone or in groups. They discuss their work sensibly and with growing maturity. All pupils respect books and equipment and many are careful in the presentation of their work.

35. Children in the reception class are generally confident enough to take part in all activities – just a very small number of children feel less confident in speaking to a large group. Because of the high quality of the provision, the children make good progress in their personal and social development, and learn how to play with one another. Their behaviour is excellent, and a sense of care and concern for one another is a strong feature of the class.
36. Most pupils enjoy lessons. The majority of pupils at both key stages behave in a positive manner and have good attitudes to their learning. In general, pupils are friendly, polite and courteous and they enjoy coming to school. However, a small number of older pupils at Key Stage 2 lack concentration and do not contribute enough to the lessons. Very occasionally they disrupt the work of other children. Instances are generally dealt with quickly by the teacher, but removal of a pupil from the class, usually into the corridor, means that curriculum time is lost.
37. In a significant number of lessons pupils behave very well. At Key Stage 1 some behaviour is excellent. There is a small minority of pupils at Key Stage 2 whose behaviour is unsatisfactory. However, the behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is good in lessons, and they move around the school in an orderly manner. Year 5 pupils attending a swimming lesson at the local swimming baths were very well behaved on the coach journey there and in the pool area during the lesson. All staff work very hard to maintain good discipline.
38. At their meeting some parents expressed concern and felt that the behaviour of some pupils was a problem, especially in the playground. No aggressive behaviour was seen during the week of the inspection in any part of the school. The headteacher regularly monitors behaviour on the playground, where it is boisterous and lively, but very well supervised. Pupils are suitably organised with established routines, which allow pupils' social skills to develop. Pupils show respect for the school building and the many displays and artefacts in their rooms. There have been no exclusions from the school during the past three years. The headteacher is aware that the present policy for behaviour is inadequate and that alternative procedures need to be introduced for the few poorly behaved pupils.
39. The very good relationships between staff and pupils are a strength of the school. The encouragement and praise given by staff to pupils is a feature of many lessons. They provide very good role model for pupils to copy. Relationships between pupils are good and most are willing to co-operate and collaborate with one another in lessons. They work well in groups in the classroom and are prepared to wait patiently for their turn. Pupils are encouraged to respond positively to the efforts of others and they often applaud with appreciation when good work is shared with them. When questions are being answered they listen carefully to one another and do not interrupt when others are speaking. They listen attentively in assembly and with genuine interest when certificates are presented to pupils for

good work. Pupils with special educational needs try hard in lessons because of the level of support they receive from adults and their classmates.

40. Pupils are involved in the daily routines of the school. They look after the materials and equipment and work hard to help keep the school and classrooms tidy. Older pupils are responsible for organising the hall for assemblies by operating the taped music and the overhead projector. The personal development of pupils is good.

43. **Attendance**

41. Pupils' attendance in the 1997-1998 academic year was broadly in line with the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence in the same year was below the national average. Pupils arrive at school punctually and lessons begin on time. In the returned questionnaires parents say their children enjoy coming to school.

44.

OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

QUALITY

44. **Teaching**

42. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. It is satisfactory in 34 per cent of lessons, good in 40 per cent and very good in 26 per cent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching was satisfactory overall but in some lessons unsatisfactory. Weaknesses were identified in the planning of activities which lacked challenge for the pupils of higher ability, and poor behaviour which disrupted lessons. While no incidences of disruption were seen during the inspection week, some lessons still have work that is too easy for pupils of higher ability.
43. In the reception class, where children are four and five years old, teaching is very good in 75 per cent of lessons and good in 25 per cent. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the recommended curriculum for children under five years and carefully plan lessons which will help children to gain knowledge and understanding. The stimulating range of activities captures the interests of the children. Teachers provide a very attractive, secure environment, where relationships are warm and supportive and praise is effectively used to build confidence. Very good support is provided for children with special educational needs so that all make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. The nursery nurse makes valuable assessments of progress during lessons. There are no weaknesses in the teaching.
44. At Key Stage 1, teaching is very good in 30 per cent of lessons and good in 40 per cent. In the rest, it is satisfactory. Lessons are well prepared and teachers identify what pupils are expected to learn. They take care to provide activities which help pupils to make progress. Throughout the curriculum particular attention is paid to literacy and especially to

developing and extending pupils' vocabulary. Lessons are usually conducted at a good pace, which helps to ensure that pupils concentrate well and persevere with their work. Learning support assistants are effectively deployed to support pupils' learning.

45. Teachers' classroom control and management of pupils are generally very good and pupils respond well. Staff know their pupils well and relationships are very positive. The adults seek opportunities to enable pupils to express their thoughts and feelings. Praise is used to good effect and sanctions are rarely needed. In the few instances where there were unsatisfactory aspects, planning was confused and learning objectives imprecise, or worksheets used were not difficult enough for the pupils of higher ability.
46. At Key Stage 2, teaching was very good in eight per cent of lessons. Forty-eight per cent of teaching was good and the remainder was satisfactory. Resources are prepared in advance of lessons, and learning support assistants are given clear instructions which enable them to effectively support learning. In a few lessons, time was not used efficiently. Teachers plan interesting lessons. They use questions skilfully and effectively to check understanding, extend vocabulary and raise the standard of the children's thinking. The emphasis on the development of pupils' prediction skills is very effective in helping pupils understand more about what they are learning. In discussions, teachers value pupils' contributions and use them to good effect. Teachers are generally confident in, and have a good command of, the requirements for teaching literacy. They develop reading, writing and speaking skills whenever appropriate opportunities arise, in all subjects. There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to develop the skills of extended writing. Teachers place strong emphasis on the direct teaching of basic skills, give clear instructions about the work to be undertaken and explain carefully what pupils have to do and what is expected of them.
47. Relationships are usually very good. Teachers effectively manage the behaviour of pupils, who generally respond with good co-operation and enthusiasm. Work is marked regularly and some teachers' comments are very helpful in giving pupils guidance on how they can improve. There are some instances of unsatisfactory elements in teaching. Teachers' expectations of standards of presentation and handwriting are variable and, although there are some good examples of the use of day-to-day evaluation of lessons, this process is not consistent throughout the school. Some judgements are insufficiently detailed. In some lessons the pace is too slow and tasks insufficiently stimulating, so that pupils become bored.
48. There is no formal homework policy, but teachers encourage pupils to read and learn spellings and undertake numeracy work on a regular basis. Pupils are sometimes asked to undertake research for the topics they are studying. Children also complete a weekly mathematics task at home.

51. **The curriculum and assessment**

49. The school has successfully addressed most of the issues raised in the previous inspection report. Much work has been done this term and curricular provision at Key Stages 1 and 2 is now good. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment are satisfactory. Provision for children under five is very good.

50. All pupils have equal access to the school's curriculum, which is broad and balanced. It is effective in promoting pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares them well for the next stage of education.
51. The curriculum for children under five is based on the national learning targets for five-year-olds. Teachers carefully plan a range of stimulating activities and pupils develop very positive attitudes to learning. Appropriate attention is paid to literacy and numeracy and pupils are prepared very well for work in the lower levels of the National Curriculum.
52. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the curriculum includes all appropriate National Curriculum subjects and religious education, which is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus and meets statutory requirements. There are suitable lessons in literacy and numeracy based on the National Strategies. The school has effective strategies for promoting literacy in each of the classes and across the curriculum. The school uses its discretionary time for National Curriculum subjects to good effect.
53. The school has useful policies in place for other areas of the curriculum, such as equal opportunities, special educational needs, behaviour and sex education. Much of the work on sex education is done through health education, as part of the science curriculum, but there is also a structured programme of sex education and drugs awareness for Year 6 pupils.
54. Pupils at Key Stage 2 benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities involving computers, recorders and guitars. Competitive team games include football, netball, basketball, rounders, gymnastics and athletics, and pupils compete in local leagues. More than 60 pupils attend the out-of-school clubs. The range of visits to places of interest and visitors, who come to the school and share their expertise with pupils, enhance the curriculum still further. Pupils in Year 6 visit an outdoor residential centre where they take part in valuable climbing, canoeing and problem-solving activities. All these activities enrich the curriculum and have a very positive effect upon the quality of education provided for the pupils. Pupils are given homework on a regular basis but there is no written homework policy.
55. Curriculum planning is developing. The recently introduced three-year school development plan is beginning to identify curricular priorities and introduces a systematic review of all subjects. New useful subject policies are being written and nationally prescribed schemes of work are being introduced. Long-term plans for subjects are being reviewed. Weekly plans are consistent throughout the school and the quality of the planning ensures continuity. However, too little reference is made to National Curriculum levels of work to ensure progression. In daily plans, objectives for the lesson are usually clear, and activities are planned for the different ability groups. However, in some lessons the activities are not sufficiently well matched to the needs of the pupils, especially the pupils of higher ability.
56. The school is developing effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating subjects. In English and mathematics, co-ordinators monitor work in the classrooms and offer effective advice and support. In other subjects, teachers monitor planning and it is planned for them

to monitor work in the classes when their subject is reviewed. The co-ordinator for information technology has worked hard to improve the quality of the curriculum and pupils now reach satisfactory standards.

57. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The teachers plan suitable programmes of work as soon as any difficulty with learning is encountered. In response to the Code of Practice, pupils at Stage 2 and above on the school's register of special educational needs have been given individual education plans which contain appropriate targets for their learning. No part of the curriculum is disapplied from any pupil. Throughout the school pupils benefit from a structured programme of activities and effective teaching from teachers, nursery nurses and learning support assistants.
58. The role of the governing body is developing. Governors fulfil their statutory duty to oversee the curriculum and a curriculum committee meets regularly. However, they do not adequately monitor and evaluate the curriculum, - a weakness identified in the last inspection report.
59. The school has a strong commitment to raising standards and has made a positive start to improving procedures for assessing attainment and progress. A useful draft policy has been produced and a system introduced for assessing the attainment of groups of pupils and for providing suitable targets for their future learning. A baseline assessment is carried out in the reception class, and the school makes use of standardised tests in reading, spelling, and mathematics and uses the optional National Curriculum tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. Staff are beginning to analyse test results in order to assess the learning needs of pupils, and to monitor their progress more closely. This has been particularly successful in assessing the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Portfolios of pupils' work in mathematics and science are used to monitor the consistency of assessments. Each child has a record book in which achievement and progress is recorded each term.
60. Teachers monitor progress during lessons and make written evaluations to aid future planning. This is particularly well developed in the reception class. In the key stages, however, the quality of the judgements made is variable and the information often lacks sufficient detail. There is a recently introduced written policy to guide marking, and, although work is marked regularly, standards are not consistent across the school. The use of comments on how pupils could improve their work provides them with useful feedback, but sometimes no action is taken by the pupil as a result of these comments. Arrangements for reporting to parents are satisfactory but the quality of written annual reports is variable.

63. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

61. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. As they grow older, pupils learn to discuss and express their own emotions and feelings. They sing in assemblies and play music which is uplifting. In religious education and some other lessons there are opportunities for reflection on the content of the lesson, but in many lessons these moments are unplanned and often missed. However, acts of collective worship are of a

good quality and provide many opportunities for children to experience awe and wonder as they hear poetry, or music such as Kennedy playing from the Four Seasons. Teachers leading the acts of worship also provide opportunities for pupils to develop feelings of awe as they show items brought from home and explain why these are very special.

62. The school makes satisfactory provision for moral development, principally through the school's rules for behaviour. Adults provide good role models for the pupils to copy, and relationships are very good at all levels. Classes have their own rules which are understood and, in discussions, the pupils demonstrate that they know what is expected. The teaching of the principles of the world's main religions allows pupils to develop an understanding of different beliefs and traditions. Provision also helps children understand the need to abide by rules, and they know right from wrong.
63. The provision for social development is good. There are good systems for rewarding effort, hard work and behaviour and pupils gain great pleasure from being so recognised. Pupils willingly undertake duties around the classroom and the school for the good of their friends and the smooth running of the school. Various charities are supported, helping children understand the need to support those less fortunate than themselves. The curriculum for personal and social education and the acts of worship support and reinforce the principles of respect, truthfulness, responsibility and care. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, in which pupils represent the school in the local community. A residential educational visit to one of the six Staffordshire outdoor education centres is organised for older pupils, providing more opportunities for personal and social development. Some older children also make day visits for activities on Cannock Chase.
64. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils study some of the major religions of the world and experience a range of art, poetry, music and literature. They study the ancient culture of the Egyptians and develop an understanding of the Viking invaders. However, there is a lack of multi-cultural displays and artefacts to illustrate the diversity of our own country, as well as the richness of cultures around the world. Pupils support work and cultural displays in the local church, and have visited local industries as part of the school's partnership with business. Practical work is done with local artists who visit the school, and pupils have the opportunity to learn to play musical instruments in extra-curricular activities, including guitars taught by the school site supervisor.
- 67. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**
65. The school's overall provision for pupils' welfare and guidance is good and is evident in the relationships seen at all levels.
66. The pupils' records are thorough and show considerable evidence of the development of personal skills and academic progress made in core subjects. This work of recording pupils' progress has improved since the previous inspection. Each pupil's family background is

well documented and this helps staff to understand each pupil and give the maximum support. Parents are involved promptly whenever there are problems, either social or academic, and the provision made for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school has well-established relationships with other professionals to offer specialist support. Particularly strong relations are enjoyed with the teacher from the local education authority's special educational needs support service. The school's procedures to encourage good behaviour and discipline are effective and contribute to the friendly atmosphere. All pupils know what is expected of them. Attendance is satisfactory and all absences and lateness are closely monitored.

67. Arrangements for the general well being of pupils are also good. The headteacher is the designated child protection co-ordinator responsible for procedures within the school and these are based on agreed local guidelines. Staff are fully aware of what steps are to be taken should they have concerns about any pupil. At all stages of their progress through the school, pupils are well prepared for moving on and the liaison with other schools is thorough. The personal and social curriculum helps pupils understand their own growth and development. Procedures are in place to ensure that all the matters of midday supervision, fire precautions and safety are dealt with to appropriate standards. Further first aid training is planned and there is suitable provision to deal with accidents and medicines.

70. Partnership with parents and the community

68. The school seeks parents' involvement in their children's education and the returned questionnaires indicate that parents feel encouraged to play their part. A good number of parents help the school by working in class, helping with practical activities and working with their children on an additional literacy programme. All are asked to read with their children at home. A small group of parents run the Home School Association, organising social and fund-raising events and these are well supported and there is a much-valued contribution to school funds as a result. Interior seating and work on the library have all been funded by the Association and there has been a recent commitment to purchase more library books. Parents play an appropriate part in school life and make a satisfactory contribution to the standards which their children achieve.
69. The school provides a basic range of information to parents and statutory requirements are met. The prospectus and the annual report of the governing body are comprehensive; there are regular newsletters informing parents about school life and events; there are parent consultations each term which give a formal opportunity for discussions about progress. The school now needs to consider how it can encourage more informal contacts and increase the amount of information for parents about the education provided. The pupils' written annual reports also need to be made more precise and include clearer statements of how improvements can be made. A homework policy is to be prepared and this will more clearly define the frequency and amounts to be expected. Parents of children with special educational needs are well informed about progress and are invited to contribute to periodic reviews. The teacher from the local education authority's special educational needs support service attends meetings with parents.

70. The school makes satisfactory use of the local community to support learning and extend pupils' experiences. There are strong links with the local churches. Local residents and the community policeman visit to support work in the lessons. There are frequent student visitors from other schools and colleges. Some work has been done with the Staffordshire Business Partnership and some useful visits have arisen as a result. More work needs to be done to extend these opportunities for experience and learning in the wider community.

73.
MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

THE

73. Leadership and management

71. Overall, the school has good leadership and management. The new headteacher is a realistic and capable leader. He has had a positive influence on the school in the brief period since his appointment. He has quickly demonstrated a decisive leadership and his expertise in many areas. His vision and the focus of his work have had an immediate effect, and he is providing a very clear educational direction for the school. His leadership has already become one of the strengths of the school.
72. At present, two senior teachers alternate the work of deputy head each half-term. Their roles have been clearly defined by the headteacher in detailed job descriptions that are to be reviewed annually. This new senior management team is being enthusiastically supported by governors, who increasingly recognise the school's recent history of instability and the negative effects this produced.
73. The governors are appreciative of the qualities of the new headteacher and realise the importance of developing and extending their role in school to complement his work. However, in order to continue the impetus gained from the headteacher's arrival, the appointment of a permanent deputy headteacher, to act as a 'critical friend' and provide valuable support, needs to be considered. The appointment of a deputy would further help the school towards its goals of raising pupils' standards of attainment and reduce the potentially excessive workload of the headteacher.
74. The headteacher, assisted by an advisor from the local education authority, has already begun monitoring teaching and learning by conducting observations in every classroom. Discussions about his findings are held with the teacher. In addition, the headteacher regularly monitors the curricular plans of all teachers. The senior management team is gaining an overview of curricular planning at each key stage. Roles of the senior teachers should be reviewed and refined to avoid some duplication of work.
75. Staff are working well together as a team and are extremely positive. They are clear about their roles and responsibilities, but the headteacher is aware that the monitoring and evaluation role of the subject co-ordinator needs to be developed. At present only the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators have visited classrooms. Standardised tests are suitably used to monitor the attainment and progress of pupils. A full analysis of these results and assessments is undertaken in English and mathematics and provides valuable information for teachers about individual and groups of pupils. Useful subject portfolios are being developed in the core subjects.
76. The teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating the provision for pupils with special educational needs (SENCo) is a successful manager of the necessary administration and of the teaching of pupils on the school's register. She has organised documents to be easily completed and readily understood by parents, with whom she has very good relationships.

The SENCo has also developed very good relationships with a teacher from the local education authority's special educational needs support service, and the school benefits from this close relationship. Under her leadership, the teachers plan work of a suitable level for pupils who are having difficulties with their learning before they are placed on the register; this work is generally successful and is the reason for a smaller percentage of pupils than average appearing on the register.

77. Work of a high standard provided for children under five years is overseen by a member of the school's senior management team as part of her role in leading provision for children in their early years and for work at Key Stage 1. The work is of such a high standard that many children reach the targets for their learning before the age of five.
78. Increasingly, governors, especially those with responsibility for the curriculum, are realising the full implications of their monitoring and evaluation role. Individual members of the governing body are beginning to take greater responsibility and are visiting during the day to increase their knowledge and understanding of the work of the school. For example, during the next two terms, the governor with responsibility for mathematics plans to visit all classrooms to observe numeracy lessons. It is intended that feedback to the governing body will be provided on matters such as organisation and resources for learning. In this way the governors will fully meet their statutory responsibilities.
79. The new headteacher has recognised deficiencies in the cycle of review and development of the school. A great deal of work has been done already to produce a number of new up-to-date and relevant policy documents. He recognises that the school must have a systematic revision of all of its policies, beginning with a review of its aims. A shorter statement about the aims of the school would provide a sharper shared sense of purpose for headteacher, staff and governors to be applied to all decision-making.
80. The headteacher has inherited an inadequate development plan that provides no real future view of the school. In response he has produced a short statement on strategic planning which identifies April 2000 as the deadline for producing a three-year strategic plan to move the school forward. The headteacher has already begun the process by involving the senior management team in the production of the new school development plan, and he plans that eventually all staff and governors will be involved. He has a clear vision of how this process will be organised and carried out annually to take account of all national and local initiatives. As a result, planning will become more appropriate to the identified needs of the school and improved educational provision will be derived.
81. There is a positive ethos in the school based upon the commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors. This optimism needs to be retained and built upon to improve the provision and standards achieved. The school meets all statutory requirements.

84. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

82. The school has a satisfactory number of well qualified and experienced teaching staff to

teach the National Curriculum and religious education. Staff are deployed with responsibilities for subjects and various aspects of school organisation, appointed with due regard to skills and experience. The number of support staff is also satisfactory and they are suitably experienced and work closely with class teachers. They have a positive effect on overall attainment, including the achievements of pupils with special educational needs.

83. The arrangements for professional development and training are satisfactory. As the next school development plan unfolds, there will be clearer linkage between the school's priorities and the training needs of individual members of staff, including support staff. The staff appraisal programme continues to be used to identify needs for further training.
84. The school stands on an open site, with extensive grassed and hard areas. The buildings were designed for a much larger number of older pupils. Judged simply in terms of space, the school has good accommodation. However, there are substantial areas of the school which are unused and unusable; the maintenance and occupation costs are excessive and consume funds which could be spent more directly to benefit the pupils; standards of interior decoration have fallen. Some classes of older children are dispersed and this reduces the "corporate" feel that is present in most schools. At present the accommodation has a detrimental impact on the school's ethos. A clear development plan has been proposed, which would create a consolidated and much-improved teaching space and a computer suite, as well as improve the interior décor. These objectives are entirely appropriate and both the school and the local education authority wish to implement them if they are given approval.
85. There are still some important deficiencies in resources in three of the five core subjects. The library is still significantly short of books; the school's computers are a mixture of machines, some of which are obsolete; for religious education there is a shortage of multi-cultural artefacts and reference books. In the foundation subjects, resources are broadly satisfactory, but for no core subject can the school be said to be lavishly equipped. Any reduction in operating costs that can be derived from a more economical building would be better spent on educational provision.

88. The efficiency of the school

86. The school has still not overcome all the weaknesses highlighted in the last inspection report. Financial planning is still weak and budget setting is not sufficiently aligned to educational objectives in the school development plan. Too much money is diverted to premises costs at the expense of spending on staffing and resources. In consequence, the allocation of funds for resources has until recently been unsatisfactory. Under the leadership of the new headteacher, the school has addressed the recommendations in the latest auditor's report, some of which were carried forward from a previous report of the school's financial arrangements.
87. The overall management and control of the school's finances are satisfactory. The headteacher has day-to-day responsibility for the budget and school expenditure, and is well aware of the need to improve financial planning. The governing body retains oversight of

budget developments through the reports it receives from the finance committee and is now more pro-active in monitoring the budget. The school receives regular printouts from the local education authority and these are checked against the school's own records. The local education authority bursar gives valued support and advice when setting the budget and also at regular intervals through the year.

88. Although there is currently a budget surplus, the number of pupils in the school has declined. Spending for the current year exceeds income. The budget needs to be carefully managed. The headteacher and governors are looking at ways to increase the number of pupils.
89. The school administration is of a good standard and the school is efficiently organised on a day-to-day basis. All financial administration requirements are in place. Lessons begin promptly and effective use is made of teaching time. Teaching staff and accommodation are suitably deployed. However, there are a few times when inefficient use is made of the time and skills of the learning support assistants. Teachers fully utilise the accommodation. Funding made available for training purposes needs to be more closely linked to the new, longer school development plan. Resources are used efficiently. Appropriate use is made of funds to support pupils with special educational needs.
90. Expenditure per pupil is broadly in line with schools of a similar size. In the light of educational standards achieved and the quality of education provided, its context and income, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

93.
CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

PART B:

93.
LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

AREAS OF

91. Children enter the school at the start of the term following their fourth birthday. Those who start in January and after the Easter break attend a small class part-time, taught in a room adjacent to the main reception class area by the suitably qualified and competent nursery nurse. This arrangement enables a gradual entry into the school, and opportunities are found to give the younger children experience of the larger reception area, the other teachers, and the larger school.
92. These children then form the full-time reception class in September, and are joined by the September intake of pupils. This was the situation at the time of the inspection, and all children were attending full-time. Ten children had started in January, and had had two term's education in the school, and eight had had one term's education, having started following the Easter break. One child started mid-term, and had one-and-a-half term's education in the school. Three had started full-time in September, just ten weeks before the inspection.
93. Early in their school life, children are assessed using nationally-approved criteria, and results of the analyses show that overall ability in reading is about average, skills in early writing are below, as is children's personal and social development. Children's understanding of early mathematical ideas is also below average. The quality of the provision for children under the age of five is very high, and it is likely that all will achieve the targets for their learning before the age of five. The curriculum provided is broad, balanced and exciting. Very helpful links are made between the areas of learning so that children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding.
94. Children's personal and social development is very well catered for, and as a result, they are confident learners. They enter the rooms quietly talking to one another, hang up their own coats, and follow the routines that help to develop a sense of security. They answer their names by returning the adult's greeting. In all activities, behaviour is of the highest standard because of the quiet caring attitudes of the adults. Children readily share equipment, taking their turn and not interfering with others. Younger children work along side their friends – for example, when learning more about three-dimensional shapes by using different containers in the wet sand. Older children work together when, for instance, they build using wooden blocks. In "Circle time", children show a care and concern for others as they consider the feelings of an undressed doll, and cover the doll before singing a lullaby "to make the doll feel better". Individual children take responsibility for serving their group – for example, at drink and snack time – and all children involve themselves in the prayer of thanks for their food.
95. Children attain well in language and literacy. They listen with care to what they are being told by the adults and to what their friends have to say. In turn the children talk about

themselves, such as the colour and length of their hair, before recording these facts in early writing or through pictures. Individual children talk at length about the weekend adventures of Curly Bear, the class's teddy that goes home with children in turn. A class book of his adventures is being written week by week, and is a spur for children's early reading skills. In lessons based upon the National Literacy Strategy, children use a range of skills, such as predicting the sequence of events in a story about the day of a child. Older children are more experienced with books, and predict a book's contents from its cover. Children of higher ability recognise a small number of commonly used words. All children recognise and attempt to write their own names. They are learning to recognise single letters by their shape and sound, and some children are recognising the initial sound of common nouns such as "cake" and "hat". Many children are beginning to copy under the adult's writing, while the younger children and children of lower ability trace over the words. Some children are beginning to write their own words – for example after hearing a poem about new shoes. Upper and lower case letters are recognised as children use the computer keyboard.

96. In mathematics, children are competent in recognising and using language to describe three-dimensional shapes. For example, they know that a cuboid has sides that may be square or rectangular, and that some sides are longer than others. They are competent in recognising which shapes will roll and which will slide, and are beginning to explain the reasons, using appropriate language. Children count forwards and backwards to ten, and many count forwards to 20 and beyond. Older children count in tens to 100. At registration time, children take away the number of absent children from the class roll, and are generally successful in their calculations. In their notebooks, children learn to draw digits to five, and correctly label groups of differing size. Children are learning about mathematical patterns as they recite the days of the week or work out patterns of colour using differently coloured flower heads.
97. Another strong area of learning is that known as knowledge and understanding of the world. Children talk about events involving their families, and use time-lines to identify the toys they played with before the age of four, when they were four, and their toys after the age of four. An excellent role-play area representing a woodland area of the Chase enables children to study features in their environment and to explore living and made objects. In the woodland area children plant and care for bulbs in a hollowed-out log, and see wild animals such as deer, squirrel and fox. They recognise pattern and change as they look at leaves and wild fruit such as acorns and chestnuts. Children have selected materials to cut and join to make "binoculars" which they use in the pretend "hide" which is an important part of the woodland role-play area. They record their observations using words from around the area. Children use computers to support their learning. They know how to use a mouse and tracker ball to control programmes, and use keyboard keys to copy words on the screen. Using a drawing program, children draw the correct number of legs on "Incy Wincy Spider" before printing out their pictures. They understand that there is a sequence of operations to close down a computer, know how to remove a CD-ROM, and how to switch off the system.
98. The programme successfully fosters children's physical development, and there are no instances of children bumping one another as they move around the rooms. When preparing for physical activity in the hall, the vast majority of children are able to put on their own plimsolls and suitable clothing. As they learn to move and dance in ways representative of woodland mini-creatures, children develop an increasing control of their bodies and an

increasing awareness of space. Models from found materials are of a high standard, showing joints made from sticky tape or glue. Suitable hammers are used to drive nails into small pieces of wood, and other hand tools such as paint brushes and felt-tip pens are used with increasing control.

99. For their creative development, children use paint and texture to represent themselves as plate pictures with hair and a school tie. They paint pictures of the adults, and draw features of their own faces as part of the work on the colour and style of their hair. Boxes and other found materials for their three-dimensional models are selected with care, and are used creatively to good effect. Colour displays using a range of media and materials of different texture show the creative response of the children. Role-play in the woodland and dance in physical activity, enable children to respond creatively to what they see or imagine. Malleable materials are used creatively to represent letters of the alphabet, and construction equipment is used creatively as models are built.
100. The quality of teaching is very good, provided by the partnership of three members of staff, two teachers and a nursery nurse, all of whom work part-time. The partnership is very effective in providing a high quality place in which young children may feel secure and learn. The teachers undertake planning, and all three members of staff are involved in creating an exciting, attractive suite of teaching spaces. Lessons are very interesting, and there are many valuable links between the areas of learning so that children's learning is more coherent. The organisation of lessons is very good, and after the initial teaching time, the children divide into groups for further teaching by an adult. Relationships between the adults and the children are excellent. The adults foster a strong sense of security in the children so that they always try hard. A particularly strong element of teaching of children under five years is the procedure for assessment of progress. The nursery nurse makes careful notes of the performance of a child or group of children at particular times in lessons and, along with other observations carried out during lessons by all three members of staff, these notes are used to help compile individual records as well as plan future lessons that help the children make more progress.

103.
MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

ENGLISH,

103. **English**

101. Results of the 1998 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests and assessments showed that the percentage of pupils reaching the acceptable Level 2 and above in reading was well above average in comparison with all schools and in comparison with schools having pupils from similar backgrounds. The percentage reaching the higher Level 3 was average for all schools, but above average for similar schools. Attainment in writing at Level 2 and above was average in comparison with all schools, but below average when measured against the performance of similar schools. Writing attainment at Level 3 was below average when compared with both sets of schools. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests and assessments, the standard of reading was maintained, and the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 and above was well above average in comparison with all schools, and with similar schools.

Reading attainment at Level 3 was average for all schools, and above average when compared with similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 and above in writing was below average when compared with all schools, but average when compared with similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 3 in writing was well above average when compared with both sets of schools. When compared with similar schools, the average National Curriculum levels in reading and writing were well above average.

102. Results of the 1998 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests and assessments showed the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above in English was average for all schools, but below average when compared with similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 5 was low in comparison with all schools and with similar schools. Results in the 1999 national tests showed that the percentage reaching Level 4 and above in this subject was below average when compared with all schools, and average in comparison with similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was below average when compared with all schools, but average when compared with similar schools. The average National Curriculum level achieved was below average when compared with similar schools.
103. The inspection finds that at the end of Key Stage 1 attainment of the majority of pupils is above average in speaking and listening and in reading. In writing, attainment is close to the national average. Although a substantial number of pupils reach Level 2, the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in writing is below average. At the last inspection standards were satisfactory but no pupils reached the higher levels.
104. Seven-year-olds are confident readers. Most have developed sufficient fluency, accuracy and understanding to enable them to read aloud with expression and to effectively use books and worksheets for written assignments. When using their class readers they know that the back cover has a summary of the story and can name the author and illustrator. They successfully use a range of reading cues to help them to read unfamiliar words. They spell simple words correctly from memory and the pupils of higher ability competently use simple dictionaries to help them spell more complicated words. Worksheets are usually filled in correctly but in free writing, capital letters and full stops are not used consistently. Pupils write simple stories letters and poems. Sometimes they work successfully in groups to produce booklets. Examples were seen of stories made up by groups of pupils after reading the story of Oliver's Wood. Pupils use computer programs to reinforce and consolidate their knowledge of phonic blends and to write stories and poems, especially in shared work.
105. Standards of attainment of the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are below average. Standards in speaking and listening and in reading are higher than those in writing. At the last inspection, attainment was broadly satisfactory but the most able pupils were not always achieving high enough standards.
106. Eleven-year-olds read a range of both fiction and information books. Most pupils read accurately and understand what they are reading. They talk confidently about the content of their books and of their preferences, giving reasons for their choices. Pupils of higher ability can discuss styles of writing used by different authors and say which styles they prefer. They use CD-ROMs to find information for topics they are doing. In lessons pupils are sometimes reading books at an inappropriate reading level. Pupils write for a variety of

purposes and audience such as character studies, book reviews and newspaper reports. They are beginning to understand the difference between fact and opinion and to express points of view. They use grammar and punctuation appropriately. However, pupils do not have enough chances to practise the skills they are learning in the literacy hour, as opportunities for drafting and refining work are limited.

107. Throughout the school pupils listen carefully to stories and instructions. They show good recall of information given in previous lessons. They are generally confident when talking to one another and to adults and most are keen to answer questions in class. They express their thoughts and feelings clearly; for example, when choosing appropriate adjectives for class stories or poems.
108. They are particularly good at making predictions, which reflects the quality of teachers' questioning techniques. Older pupils speak clearly and express their opinions as seen in a lesson where pupils were discussing the diary of Anne Franck. Pupils know that they are expected to work independently on tasks during the literacy hour but a minority of pupils lack concentration and produce insufficient work. Standards of handwriting and presentation are variable across the school.
109. Literacy is given a high priority in the curriculum and the school is beginning to see the benefits of the structured programme of work. Good routines are established throughout the school, which enable pupils to make progress. In half the lessons seen at Key Stage 1, pupils made good progress and progress was satisfactory in the other half. The use of the 'Read' project in Year 1 is having a significant effect on the progress of these pupils. At Key Stage 2 pupils made good progress in twenty per cent of lessons and in the rest it was satisfactory. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 make more progress in free writing than the oldest ones because they write at length more frequently. Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress. Although some progress has been made, the higher attaining pupils do not always make sufficient progress.
110. Each class has one hour every day of clearly focused literacy activities where the time is very well used to develop the necessary skills. A well-planned, structured programme contributes to the progress made by pupils, and the constant reinforcement of skills enables them to develop their understanding of grammar, punctuation and spelling, which they then use successfully in their pieces of work. Through the various tasks given, they are becoming independent learners. Pupils apply their skills across the curriculum - for example, when writing about the water cycle in geography or writing about personal feelings in religious education. Older pupils make notes and use the library and CD-ROM for research when, for example, they investigate the lives of the Tudors. The use of these skills has a positive impact on attainment in these areas.
111. The quality of teaching is never less than sound. At Key Stage 1 a half of teaching is satisfactory and the remainder is good and very good. At Key Stage 2, forty per cent of teaching is good and the rest satisfactory. Teachers plan in detail an interesting range of activities. Lessons are usually well organised and whole-class presentations involving question and answer sessions are of a high standard. Emphasis is put on developing the pupils' vocabulary, especially the necessary technical words. Classes are well managed and

good use is made of praise to encourage improved performance. Where teaching is most effective, clear appropriate objectives, effective monitoring and high expectations of the amount and quality of work expected have a very positive effect on standards and progress. Where teaching is less successful expectations are too low; for example, the pace of lessons is too slow and activities are not well matched to the needs of the pupils.

112. Although some issues arising from the last inspection have been successfully addressed there are still some weaknesses. The quality of marking remains inconsistent. There are examples of constructive and encouraging comments but sometimes these are not followed up. Throughout the school there is too much emphasis on the use of worksheets some of which do not provide sufficient challenge, especially for pupils of higher ability.
113. The school development plan identifies English as a major priority for development and much work has recently been done to improve planning and assessment in order to ensure continuity and progression. The co-ordinator effectively monitors standards and progress. She has already identified writing as an area of weakness and has a strategic plan for future development. The library is inadequate. Some temporary improvements have been made to the furniture and many out-of-date books removed. However, there is still a lack of attractive books, especially ones with an appropriately controlled vocabulary for younger or less able pupils. The school uses the library loans service to supplement the inadequate stock.

116. **Mathematics**

114. Results of the 1998 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests and assessments showed that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 and above was very high. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was average for all schools and for schools with children from similar backgrounds. Results in the 1999 tests showed the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 and above to be average for all schools, but to be well above average when compared with similar schools. This inspection finds attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 to be average for all schools.
115. Results of the 1998 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests and assessments showed the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and above to be below average for all schools and when compared with similar schools. The percentage reaching the higher Level 5 was below average for all schools, and well below average when compared with similar schools. Results in the 1999 tests and assessments were a little better. While the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above was still below average for all schools, it was average when compared with similar schools. The percentage reaching the higher Level 5 was average for all schools, but was above average for similar schools. When compared with similar schools, the average National Curriculum level achieved was average. This inspection finds attainment to be at the nationally expected level. Since the previous inspection, standards of attainment at both key stages have been maintained.
116. By the age of seven most pupils add and subtract numbers up to twenty accurately, and

recognise the pattern of odd and even numbers. They identify missing numbers in a simple sequence. They use standard measures to read the time and some pupils recognise the difference between an analogue and a digital clock. Many pupils know the value of coins and are able to use this knowledge effectively to calculate simple shopping bills and work out change. A significant number are competent when carrying out mental calculations with two- and three-digit numbers and they accurately halve and double tens and units. Some pupils know the names and properties of common two- and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils have begun to use standard measures to find the length of objects and lines, and a few are starting to estimate. Many pupils are developing a sound mathematical vocabulary.

117. By eleven years, many pupils are confident with mental calculations which use the four rules of number. They have sound multiplication tables skills and recognise equivalent and improper fractions. Some pupils can add mixed numbers. More able pupils can read and write very large numbers and they can divide and multiply them by a hundred and a thousand. They can round numbers, make accurate approximations and sequence complex decimals. They are familiar with the terms “factor”, “multiple”, “prime number” and “square number”. Their mental strategies are well developed. Pupils solve complicated problems involving money that require several operations. Some younger children can read the time accurately, including seconds. Mathematical vocabulary is limited; pupils are unable to identify the vertical or horizontal axis on a graph, or the terms “circumference” and “radius”. The use and application of mathematics in our everyday lives requires more attention throughout the key stage.
118. Throughout both key stages, all pupils are developing their knowledge, skills and understanding of number work through daily intensive mental arithmetic activities, which they practise at the beginning of every lesson.
119. Progress at both key stages is satisfactory overall. At Key Stage 1 all pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of time because of the challenging activities in the main part of the lesson and the high expectations of the teacher throughout. At Key Stage 2 best progress occurs when the written activities are suited to the needs of groups of children who learn at different rates. Less progress occurs when there is an over-reliance on worksheet activities and too little direct teaching of different ability groups in the main part of the lesson. At Key Stage 2 the progress of many pupils, including the more able, is sometimes hindered by teachers’ low expectations, the provision of work that is too easy and an acceptance of unsatisfactory written work. At both key stages pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory progress. However, on occasions they make good progress because of the quality of support provided.
120. At both key stages most pupils are interested in mathematics. Pupils’ attitudes to the subject are never less than satisfactory. Their responses were good or very good in well over half the lessons seen. In one-third of the lessons it was very good. When the teacher is speaking the pupils concentrate, listen carefully and behave well. In all classes the vast majority of pupils enjoy the mental activities at the start of each lesson and they are enthusiastic to answer questions. However, in some classes individual pupils choose not to be involved. Most pupils at Key Stage 2 have satisfactory levels of concentration, even when some of the activities are rather mundane. However, some of the work in their books was of

unsatisfactory presentation, and not enough attention was given detail. Pupils at both key stages follow instructions well, wait for their turn and work co-operatively in their groups. They explain their work and try to give sensible answers when asked questions.

121. The quality of teaching is good, overall. At Key Stage 1 the teaching is good and in some lessons it is very good. At Key Stage 2 the teaching is never less than satisfactory and at times it is good or very good. Generally teachers have secure knowledge of the subject. They have good relationships with their pupils and use praise and encouragement wherever possible. The best lessons are divided into distinct sections and teachers make reference to clear learning objectives that are brought to the attention of the pupils. The best teaching uses knowledge gained from previous lessons as a starting point. Also, some teachers ask open questions which tease out answers and they set time targets for the work in group activities. In some lessons there is an over-reliance on worksheets and these adversely affect the quality of learning. Teachers provide different work for children of different abilities, but few lessons have appropriate extension activities for the more able pupils. At Key Stage 2 the pace and impact of some lessons were reduced by a lack of teacher intervention during the group work, and as a result the progress achieved by many pupils suffered. Also in these classes, a few pupils are allowed to produce very little work in the time available. The use of day-to-day assessment to help inform future planning is variable and pupils' work, especially at Key Stage 2, needs to be marked in greater detail so pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve. Learning support assistants are deployed effectively when available.
122. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has established a balance in lessons at both key stages. The subject is managed by an enthusiastic and able co-ordinator who carefully monitors standards throughout the school. Good practice has been developed in the analysis of standardised tests to identify groups of pupils, including those with the potential to achieve very good results. Also, the detailed study of pupils' performance in these tests is identifying areas of weakness in the mathematics curriculum. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

125. Science

123. Overall, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is generally average by comparison with all schools, with higher attainment in parts of *Experimental and Investigative Science* and in *Physical Processes*. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below average. These findings bear out the results of the 1998 and 1999 end-of-key-stage National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments. At the time of the previous inspection, attainment was good at the end of both key stages.
124. Teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998 showed that all pupils achieved at least the expected Level 2, and this was very high when compared with all schools and with similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was below average when compared with national standards and with schools having pupils from similar backgrounds. In 1999, teacher assessments indicated that an average percentage of pupils reached both the expected Level 2 and the higher

- Level 3. When compared with similar schools, standards at Level 2 were well above average, while the percentage reaching Level 3 was above average.
125. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and above in the 1998 Key Stage 2 tests was average, while the percentage reaching the higher Level 5 was below average. In comparison with similar schools, attainment was below average at both levels. In 1999 the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above in the National Curriculum tests was well below average, and the percentage reaching Level 5 was below average. In comparison with similar schools, attainment was well below average at Level 4 and above, and was average at Level 5. The average level achieved by pupils in the 1999 tests was average for similar schools. In the three years 1996 to 1998 results of the National Curriculum tests show average attainment of boys to be slightly higher than girls, by about three months.
126. By the age of seven, pupils have a well-developed sense of *Experimental and Investigative Science* and the importance of making investigations fair by changing only one variable. This was evident in an end-of-lesson discussion in which pupils had measured the distances travelled by toy cars after rolling down an inclined ramp. They had predicted that cars would travel further on a polished floor compared with those rolling onto carpet. In the discussion at the end of the lesson, pupils stated that only the angle of incline should be changed and not the starting point of the cars, the method of release, or the floor covering. This work also helped the pupils achieve highly in *Physical Processes* as they recognised the effects of the forces of pushing and pulling. Pupils know that forces can change the shape of materials, and recognise when different forces are used in more complex situations such as a building site.
127. In the one Year 6 lesson observed, the eleven-year-olds had less understanding of *Experimental and Investigative Science* than the seven-year-olds. As part of work on light, pupils were given investigations designed for them by the teacher, and did not hypothesise about the results of their work. Measurements were not accurate, and variables were not maintained. There was little work in the science books of these older children, and attainment in *Physical Processes* was below average for many pupils, with pupils of higher ability working at Level 4, which is not high enough.
128. However, scrutinised work of the Year 5 pupils was of a higher standard. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, had predicted the results of investigations into solids, liquids and gases. The pupils know that some changes are reversible and some are not, and have investigated the effects of evaporation and of burning. In this part of science attainment is at Level 4, as is their work in *Experimental and Investigative Science*.
129. Progress of all pupils is good overall at Key Stage 1. There is some slower progress for pupils of lower ability. Good progress is made in *Experimental and Investigative Science*. In *Physical Processes* progress is very good in Year 2, building on the sure foundations laid at Year 1 where, for example, children learn about the effects of wind on movement. The pupils know about electricity generated by windmills and how sailing boats are propelled.
130. Progress slows down in Key Stage 2 as a result of the two-year cycle of planned work. The

planning makes too little reference to the levels specified in the National Curriculum, and generally similar work is provided in Year 3 and 4, and in Years 5 and 6, although in the current year too little work is provided for Year 6. Pupils of average ability in Year 3 learn about the human body, including the joints and the different types of teeth. In Year 4 the pupils measure the different lengths of parts of the body, and learn about maintaining a healthy mouth. Progress between Years 5 and 6 is too slow, with work in Year 5 exceeding the standard of work in Year 6 as indicated earlier.

131. The attitudes of pupils at Key Stage 1 are very good. They are enthused by the exciting lessons and concentrate well on what the teacher is saying. The pupils offer suggestions about the investigations, so learning more about making predictions. When carrying out investigations they work well in a group, abiding by the rules of fair testing, even when there is no direct adult supervision. At lower Key Stage 2, pupils often concentrate well on the teacher's initial teaching, but sometimes become restless if this is too long, wanting to begin their work. The pupils quickly settle to the work, able to organise the resources they need for their work. In group work, the children negotiate their responsibilities so that time is spent effectively. In Year 5, pupils work together extremely well, discussing and recording their ideas before carrying out investigations. The oldest pupils find the initial teaching far too long, and lose interest in what is being said. In the investigations, they work well together, sharing responsibilities, but work without the scientific rules seen in other classes.
132. In the one lesson observed at Key Stage 1 the teaching was very good. The teacher's knowledge was very secure, and her management of the pupils was very good. The lesson plan had very clear, precise statements about what the children were expected to learn; these objectives were very appropriate for the pupils' stage of learning and for the content of the lesson. Day-to-day assessment procedures were directly linked to what the children were expected to learn. The pace of working was fast, and this helped the pupils make very good progress.
133. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. There are strengths in the teaching, but also some weaknesses. Most teachers have good knowledge, but the organisation of the lesson in Year 6 showed insecure knowledge of scientific rules. Most lesson plans include clear statements about what the children are expected to learn, and resources are very well organised. In about a half of lessons the initial teaching time is effectively used to explain the new work; this initial input is too long in some lessons and the pupils stop listening. In the better lessons, teachers plan for and give time to the development of pupils' understanding of investigations, starting with the formulation of questions to be answered. In other lessons, little time or attention is given to this essential learning. Pupils are managed very well in some lessons, but a good pace of working is a feature of fewer lessons.
134. In order to overcome problems over progress and to raise attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, the co-ordinator is planning the introduction of a new scheme of work, based upon a yearly model rather than the two-year cycle used at present. She plans to base the new scheme on the suggested model published by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority, and to modify it for the school, which is now a one-form entry establishment. To support teaching and assessment, the co-ordinator has led the staff in compiling a comprehensive subject portfolio.

137.
SUBJECTS OR COURSES

OTHER

137.
technology

Information

135. Standards of attainment in information technology are in line with the expectations of the National Curriculum for pupils aged seven and eleven. At the last inspection attainment was judged to be below average because of inefficient use of the equipment.
136. The youngest pupils are given a very good start in their learning. They have regular access to a computer. They operate simple programs, follow instructions and use keyboard commands. By the time they are seven, they are proficient in their use of the arrow keys and the mouse and have developed word-processing and picture-making skills which they use in topic work - for example, plans of towns, drawings of teddy bears and abstract patterns to be used on a calendar. They use programs to reinforce work done in English and mathematics and have been introduced to simple control techniques using a programmable floor turtle.
137. By age eleven, pupils have experience in all the required areas of information technology. They can draft and edit written work, using text and graphics, and use a music program to create tunes. They use the CD-ROM to gather information on a variety of subjects, such as the journey of a river. They handle data relating to mathematics, science, and geography such as indoor and outdoor temperatures and rainfall. They become skilled in using a digital camera.
138. At both key stages pupils make satisfactory progress. The youngest pupils make good progress. Progress is limited by the inadequacy of some resources. Progress in control and sensing is less well developed because of the lack of suitable hardware and software.
139. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy using computers and concentrate well on their tasks. They work well as individuals or in pairs, and are keen to demonstrate their skills.
140. The small amount of teaching seen was good at both key stages. Teachers are developing confidence in teaching relevant skills, and plan a range of suitable, structured work for the pupils. They give clear instructions, taking care to ensure that pupils understand what is required of them. Careful assessments of progress are made. Work supports learning in other subjects very well - for example, where pupils compared methods of working by hand to create paintings in the style of Serat with generating pictures by computer. Pupils also enter data from spelling tests to make graphs and spreadsheets. Sometimes more efficient use could be made of equipment, thus giving pupils more opportunities to practise skills.
141. The school recognises the growing importance of information technology as a core subject

and its role in helping to raise standards across the curriculum. It has been included as a priority on the school development plan. It is planned that next year new equipment will network the school's link to the Internet. This should have a very positive impact on standards and progress.

144.
education

Religious

142. Attainment at the end of both key stages is generally in line with the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus. Similar attainment was recorded at the time of the previous inspection. A new syllabus has been compiled, and the school is introducing new units of work to comply more closely with the new document.
143. By the age of seven, pupils have an awareness of the importance of harvest to people around the world. They learn about the production and processing of milk in our country, and analyse their own diets as part of work on healthy and unhealthy eating. This knowledge is widened and used to understand the dietary problems faced by people in poorer countries around the world. The work of important personalities, such as Mother Teresa and Bob Geldof, in helping to combat these difficulties is also studied. The pupils draw comparisons with the work of Jesus in caring for others. By this age, pupils know of the different sorts of celebrations held in different countries in thanksgiving for the local and international harvests. They know of Buddha and his diet of a single grain of rice.
144. Eleven-year-olds have studied the map of the Eastern Mediterranean with specific reference to the journey to Bethlehem undertaken by Mary and Joseph. They have learned about important elements of world faiths, such as religious symbols and signs, including the importance of a flame to the Jewish people. In a study of Judaism they have learned about the Creation, and they know about the ceremonial meals of the Sikhs. Pupils explore their feelings about friendship, and form links between these feelings and the Christian reasons for prayer based upon the love of Jesus for all people.
145. Progress for all pupils is satisfactory at both key stages, although some earlier work from Year 3 is repeated in Year 6; the new scheme of work is designed to eliminate such repetitions. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop a deep understanding of the impact of food on daily lives, and learn bible stories of how Jesus cared for others. At Key Stage 2, the central theme of friendship and feelings is well developed. The "family-feel" of the school, based upon the very good relationships between adults and children, also helps this development of caring for one another. Acts of collective worship are particularly good and effective in helping pupils develop an appreciation of those things that are particularly important to them.
146. In the three observed lessons, pupils' attitudes were very good. Pupils are generally confident in talking of their likes and dislikes, and in expressing their feelings. For example, in one lesson based upon the value of light (some of which was held in a darkened room), pupils talked about their fears of the dark. They reflected on the value of light, considering the feelings of the blind and the hostage, and the attitudes of the pupils contributed much to

the high quality of the lesson. Older pupils are excited by the activities organised for them, and their application to work is good, the presentation of their work is neat, and they maintain a good pace of work.

147. In two of the observed lessons the quality of teaching was good, and in one it was very good. Teachers are good at developing an appropriate atmosphere, such as the time for reflection in the

Year 2 lesson when a candle was lit and soft music was played. Themes for the lessons are developed thoroughly but with sensitivity, and this helps children feel confident in expressing their feelings. In the Year 5 lesson, the teacher used her excellent subject knowledge to help pupils gain a deeper understanding of the belief of the Jews that a flame symbolises the presence of God. Interesting activities were planned for the pupils so that they used learning in other subjects, such as writing newspaper reports in English, to support their progress in this subject. Teaching in the acts of collective worship is also of a high standard. Times of reflection are guided so children think more deeply about others and about the important things in their lives. A sense of awe is developed in many of the assemblies, and this helps children's spiritual development.

148. At present there are two co-ordinators, each leading the subject in their different key stages. They act as points of reference and advice to the other teachers, and now need to compile a subject action plan to ensure that the new scheme of work is systematically introduced in such a way that standards rise even further. This would also help in the acquisition of further resources to support the new work.

151.

Art

149. Overall, pupils make good progress in art and enjoy the interesting range of activities. By the end of Key Stage 1, they are developing useful skills in two- and three-dimensional works, using a wide range of media. They experiment with pencils, paint and textiles to create colour and texture. They are introduced to the work of famous artists, such as Hockney and Van Gogh. They look closely at natural and man-made objects, then produce observational drawings and paintings. Examples were seen of well-painted portraits and colourful paintings and prints of autumn.
150. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their skills. Work is often linked to other subjects. Following a lesson on healthy foods, pupils produced good quality pastel drawings of fruit. Older pupils have done detailed sketches of insects when studying mini-beasts. They compare the styles of various artists, old and new, and try to copy their techniques in their paintings and pattern making. They create patterns in the style of William Morris, using embroidery. By the end of the key stage, they have experienced a structured programme of interesting activities. They have used the specific skills and knowledge they have acquired in their high quality painting and drawing and three-dimensional work. Some pupils have recently had the opportunity to work with a sculptor and have produced imaginative clay work.
151. Pupils enjoy their art lessons. They learn the importance of attention to detail and usually work with concentration and involvement and show pride in their work. They use equipment sensibly and store it away carefully at the end of lessons.
152. Not enough teaching was seen at Key Stage 1 to make firm judgements about teaching. The limited amount of teaching seen at Key Stage 2 was good. Teachers carefully plan interesting activities using a good range of resources. They give clear instruction and guidance and have high expectations of the quality of work produced. Good use is made of praise and encouragement. Skills are systematically developed and work is often planned to support learning in other subjects. Occasionally in lessons, teachers give too much direction and allow insufficient time for pupils to experiment - for example, when mixing paints or choosing colours.
153. Artwork on display throughout the school, which includes pupils' own work and that of famous artists, enhances the appearance of the rooms and spaces and makes a positive contribution to the ethos of the school. The subject policy has recently been updated and the scheme of work is being revised. Work is carefully organised, so that over a period of time all strands receive equal coverage. Overall there are sufficient resources, although the problem of there being too few books raised at the last inspection still remains.

156.

technology

Design and

154. As only one lesson was seen in this subject it is not possible to make secure judgements

about progress or teaching. However, discussions with staff, scrutiny of pupils' work and displays around the school indicate that a suitable programme is provided.

155. At Key Stage 1 pupils make and evaluate vehicles made from construction kits. They use these models to generate their own designs before making simple moving vehicles from a variety of other materials. They are beginning to join these materials in various ways and many pupils are familiar with the words "body", "wheel" and "axle". Also at Key Stage 1 pupils have investigated different fruits when designing and making their own fruit salad. They are starting to make judgements about the product that they have made.
156. At Key Stage 2, pupils are developing their understanding of the design process. Year 5 pupils look closely at musical instruments before designing their own. They produce an action plan, with notes about the materials needed and how these are to be joined. They follow their design closely as they make their models. Finally, an evaluation of the success of the process is carried out. Pupils in Year 6 use their previous knowledge to generate ideas for calendars with moving parts. However, many pupils at Key Stage 2 appear to lack the range of skills needed to turn their design ideas into finished products of good quality.
157. The attitude of Year 6 pupils is generally good. They are interested, enthusiastic and enjoy the work. Most make good suggestions about mechanisms for moving calendars and they are confident when explaining their first ideas to the class. Although a few pupils are producing increasingly detailed and labelled sketches, which usually include measurements, most of their drawings lack accuracy. Some pupils are beginning to discuss and evaluate their work as it is developing.
158. Work in this subject supports and extends learning in other subjects. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has only recently taken responsibility for this area of the curriculum and his role in monitoring, evaluating and supporting the work of other teachers has not yet been sufficiently developed. An audit of resources has identified areas where more are needed.

161.

Geography

159. No teaching was seen during the inspection, so there is insufficient evidence to make firm judgements about progress, attitudes and the quality of teaching. However, teachers' planning and the small amount of work seen indicate that pupils are receiving an appropriate curriculum based on the National Curriculum programmes of study.
160. At Key Stage 1, pupils study the local environment. They look at the design of the school and draw plans of their journey from home to school. They make direction finders in their technology lessons to help with work on direction. They learn about famous buildings such as the Eiffel Tower and the Tower of London.
161. At Key Stage 2 pupils study places further afield and make comparisons between their own area and that of big towns or small villages. They study weather around the world and notice similarities and differences in lifestyles in hot and cold countries and also rich and

poor countries. Teachers try to make topics more real by using the theme “What’s in the News?” Pupils make good use of reference books and CD-ROM’s to find information, but there is a need to increase the range of these resources.

164.

History

162. Only one history lesson was observed during the inspection. Judgements are based upon the scrutiny of pupils’ work, examination of planning documents, the displays around the school and discussion with pupils. In addition some time was spent observing a “Viking Day” held in the school hall for pupils in Years 3 and 4. There is sufficient evidence to show that appropriate time is given to the subject, but no judgements can be made about the quality of teaching.
163. Overall, work seen in books suggests that pupils’ progress is satisfactory in both key stages. At Key Stage 1 pupils are developing an understanding of the past in lessons, using family trees and simple timelines. They are beginning to make distinctions between their own lives and those of previous times by learning about famous buildings such as the pyramids and the Eiffel Tower.
164. At Key Stage 2, pupils follow a two-year cycle of work. Older children compare Victorian inventions and transport with those of the present day and they study population lists of the Burntwood area from a hundred years ago. In some very interesting work, old census returns are used as a source of historical evidence to discover the most common Victorian names and occupations. From this activity many pupils improve their research skills and increase their knowledge and understanding of the Victorians. Younger pupils at Key Stage 2 produce interesting work about the Vikings. They learn important keywords such as “longship”, “rune”, “raid” and “settle” as well as obtaining evidence from maps and artefacts. Their work in folders is well presented and it is reinforced by time-lines, large pictures, artwork and books on display in the classrooms.
165. Pupils discuss their work in history with enthusiasm and talk confidently and accurately about work done previously. Pupils in Year 5 possess good knowledge about the Tudors. They can list the Tudor monarchs in chronological order and discuss Henry VIII’s wives, Elizabeth I, the Mary Rose and Tudor houses. They can locate history books in the school library and they know how to use a contents page and an index to find information. They are familiar with the use of a CD-ROM as a history resource.
166. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 are given the opportunity to sample life as a Viking for a whole day. They dress up in appropriate clothes and take part in a variety of activities and role-play. The work that they have covered in class is brought alive by these first-hand experiences, which are of great value and thoroughly enjoyed by everybody. The day also provides very good opportunities for supporting and extending learning in other subjects.
167. Curriculum planning in history covers the requirements of the National Curriculum. A recently reviewed policy is being implemented, alongside new schemes of work that are to be

monitored next year. The role of the recently appointed co-ordinators is developing and resources are adequate for the teaching of the subject.

170.

Music

168. It was possible to see only one lesson during the period of the inspection, so reliable judgements cannot be made about progress, attitudes or teaching. From the one lesson, from the scrutiny of work and other evidence, and from discussions with the subject co-ordinator, it is clear that the school enables children to develop their musical abilities and understanding.
169. At Key Stage 1, pupils distinguish between sounds that are pleasing or unpleasant, and clap the beat or keep the pulse using percussion instruments. At Key Stage 2, pupils learn about the scale of 'C', recognise musical notes by name and duration, and use appropriate computer software to compose their own tunes. They appreciate a change in dynamics as instruments from different sections of the orchestra are added in well-known pieces such as "Mercury" from Holst's Planet Suite. In the history of music, children learn about instruments from different periods, and are learning to identify them by sound.
170. Pupils enjoy singing hymns and songs in acts of collective worship. The pronunciation of words and the "attack" on the notes provides a pleasing and professional sound. Extra-curricular activities include opportunities for pupils to learn the guitar, keyboard, and the recorder. Groups of pupils represent the school at local festivals each year.
171. Although one of the school's part-time teachers, the subject co-ordinator successfully leads an important part of the school's life.

174.
education

Physical

172. During the period of the inspection it was not possible to see lessons covering the whole range of work in this subject. However, work in the lessons observed was suitable for the ages of pupils but no judgements about progress can be made. One swimming lesson was observed during the inspection.
173. At Key Stage 1 only one lesson was seen. Pupils in Year 2 know the importance of a warm-up activity and they can describe the effect of exercise on their bodies. All pupils have a good awareness of space and most can bounce and throw a ball accurately when working on their own. They co-operate very well when playing as a member of a team, and they show a willingness to take turns and abide by the rules of the game.
174. In Year 3, pupils produce imaginative travelling movements to link balances together and

produce a simple sequence. In Year 4 pupils are beginning to practise and refine rhythmic movements, using the beat of a ticking clock to create a group dance. Most pupils in Year 6 show increasing control as they repeat a short sequence of rolls and balances on a mat.

175. Most pupils enjoy physical education and work with enthusiasm and interest. They listen well to instructions, respond positively to exercise and most work hard to improve their performance. When given the opportunity they generally appreciate the work of other children, and pupils in Year 6 are keen to discuss their work when asked. The majority of pupils behave sensibly when working alone or with others. However, in some lessons a small number of pupils are silly and immature when asked to demonstrate their work to the class or to work as members of a group. All pupils handle equipment and apparatus with care and show an awareness of safety. A significant number of older pupils are inappropriately dressed for physical education and this hinders the quality of work that can be achieved, especially in gymnastics and dance.
176. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and all lessons have a series of planned activities that attempt to build pupils' skills. The better lessons provide challenging and varied activities that maintain the pupils' attention and enthusiasm and extend their skills. This helps learning to take place. Less effective teaching produces too many periods of inactivity, teachers do not intervene enough to give feedback to the pupils about their work, and there is no opportunity for pupils to discuss the work of one another. In some lessons there are useful links with other subjects such as music and mathematics.
177. Resources for physical education are satisfactory overall, although there is a shortage of suitable gymnastic apparatus for pupils at Key Stage 1. Also, the carpeted concrete gymnasium floor is not ideal for work in all aspects of the subject. The subject co-ordinator provides a range of activities for both girls and boys after school.

180. **Swimming**

178. The inspection of this school included a focussed view of swimming which is reported below.
179. The attainment of the majority of pupils leaving the school at the end of Key Stage 2 in the last two years is well below the national expectation. Only seven per cent of the 1998 leavers achieved the national standard of 25 metres, and ten per cent of the 1999 leavers achieved the standard. It is not possible to make judgements on the proportion of pupils in the current Year 6 who are expected to achieve or exceed the National Curriculum requirements by the end of the key stage.
180. During the period of the inspection, only one swimming lesson was seen. In Year 6 the majority of the class are close to achieving the National Curriculum requirement. They are developing confidence in the water. Many swim twenty five metres and know how to rest, float and adopt support positions in the water. A few pupils, who are very good swimmers, are achieving well above the National Curriculum requirement.

181. On the journey to the swimming baths the quality of teaching is good. Firm control, clear instructions and well established routines mean that all safety issues are given a high priority. The instructor at the baths shows good knowledge and organisation. Lesson planning and teaching are provided by the instructor employed by the local education authority at the local swimming baths. Her qualifications are appropriate for the teaching. She has good knowledge of how to teach swimming to the age of pupils observed. Instructions are clear, and she encourages children to try hard.
182. Challenging activities for the three different swimming groups are provided and effective use is made of support staff who work with either the group of competent swimmers or those less experienced. The instructor supervises the teaching of pupils in follow-on group work. She teaches the majority of the class, most of whom are achieving the national standard of swimming 25 metres. Stroke techniques are taught so that the pupils become more confident and capable swimmers. A small number of pupils who swim well and have already achieved the levels specified in the National Curriculum are taught to improve their performances further by a parent volunteer who is associated with a local swimming club; this parent has established clear routines that enable pupils to make good progress. The small number of inexperienced swimmers are taught by their class teacher, who sets suitable challenges that help the children make progress in the development of their skills.
183. In the one lesson observed all pupils made satisfactory progress in stroke technique and general water confidence. A few pupils made good progress in water safety and personal survival.
184. The pupils are very enthusiastic about swimming. They all possess the appropriate kit and change very quickly to ensure that no time is wasted. All pupils listen very carefully and respond eagerly to their instructions. They co-operate very well in their groups, where they work very hard and enjoy all the activities. Their behaviour to and from the swimming pool is very good
185. Arrangements for swimming are suitable, and enable pupils from Years 2 – 6 to receive six swimming sessions of half an hour each school year. Teaching is provided at the local swimming baths, which are about one-and-a half miles from the school. The pool is of diving depth, and is used by the public outside teaching hours. Funding arrangements have been delegated to schools through their general budget, but the cost of the teaching and the transport costs are not fully covered by the “swimming” element of the budget.

188.
INSPECTION DATA

PART C:

188.
OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

SUMMARY

186. The inspection was carried out during the first term of the 1999/2000 academic year by a team of four inspectors who spent a combined total of 14 days in the school. Previously the inspectors had scrutinised documents provided by the school and had interpreted the performance of seven- and eleven-year-olds in National Curriculum tests. These standards were compared with the performances of pupils of the same age in all schools, and with the standards achieved in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds to those attending Boney Hay Primary School. Initial judgements were formulated as a result of this research.
187. During the week of the inspection, 68 observations were carried out of the work of the school, taking 48 hours. These included 47 visits to lessons. Acts of collective worship were visited to judge their contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to religious education. Other observations included the review of previous work completed by a cross section of pupils from each year group, and the scrutiny of the many displays around the building. Registers of attendance were scrutinised. Meetings were held each evening after the close of school to discuss aspects of the work under inspection. A final meeting was held to bring together all considered judgements.
188. Inspectors talked to pupils about the work in the lessons visited. Groups of pupils talked to inspectors about the work in different subjects. They talked about the responsibilities they had to organise parts of the school day, and older pupils talked about the ways they helped younger children. Pupils talked about behaviour around the school, and how they accessed support if it was needed.
189. Teachers discussed the planning and organisation of the lessons with inspectors. Teachers, nursery nurses, learning support assistants and administrative staff answered questions about their roles and responsibilities. Members of the governing body talked about how they carried out their duties in supporting the work of the school. Questionnaires returned by parents were analysed, and the minutes of the meeting for parents were used as part of the evidence base for the inspection.

192.
INDICATORS

DATA AND

193. **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	199	5	26	48
Nursery Unit/School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

194. **Teachers and classes**

194. **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	8.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	25

194. **Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	6
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	77
Average class size:	28

195. **Financial data**

Financial year: 1998/99

	£
Total Income	340,762
Total Expenditure	334,282
Expenditure per pupil	1,584
Balance brought forward from previous year	3,840
Balance carried forward to next year	10,320

196. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	199
Number of questionnaires returned:	33

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	38	59	3	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	39	55	0	6	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	12	49	27	12	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	24	58	9	6	3
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	15	61	9	12	3
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	30	55	12	3	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	18	67	9	3	3
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	15	64	6	12	3
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	9	64	15	9	3
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	6	46	33	9	6
My child(ren) like(s) school	39	58	0	0	3

The above table represents only 17 per cent of the distributed questionnaires.

196. Other issues raised by parents

Parents who had children in the school at the time of the previous inspection explained to the inspectors that the reputation of the school had gone down as for too long there had been no firm hand at the helm. The new headteacher had much to do; he had made a very positive start, and they backed him one hundred percent.