

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MANOR HILL FIRST SCHOOL**

Stone, Stafford

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124131

Headteacher: Mrs Pauline Francis

Reporting inspector: Mrs Hazel Callaghan  
22254

Dates of inspection: October 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> 2001.

Inspection number: 197447

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

© Crown copyright 2001

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

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-9
Gender of pupils:	mixed
School address:	Manor Rise Walton Stone Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST15 0HY
Telephone number:	01785 812418
Fax number:	01785 812418
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J.G. Beecham JP
Date of previous inspection:	September 15 <sup>th</sup> - 18 <sup>th</sup> 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22254	Hazel Callaghan	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Foundation Stage	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19361	Keith Ross	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
31334	Barbara Atcheson	Team inspector	English History Geography Music Special educational needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and pupils' personal development. How good are the curricular other opportunities offered to pupils?
25577	Bill Jefferson	Team inspector	Mathematics Art Physical education Religious education	Equal opportunities

The inspection contractor was:

Evenlode Associates Ltd.  
6 Abbey Close  
Alcester  
Warwickshire  
B49 5QW

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

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

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Manor Hill First School teaches pupils from the age of three to nine years of age. The school serves the families mainly in the Walton area of Stone, although the nursery admits children from a wider area. They enter the nursery soon after their third birthday and most transfer to the reception class in the September or January in the year in which they are five. About half of the children transfer to other schools in the area that are nearer to their homes, but do not have a nursery. At the time of the inspection there were 52 children attending part-time in the nursery, either mornings or afternoons. There were 122 pupils attending the main school taught in a reception class and four other single age classes. Pupils come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, but unemployment in the area is low. Nine pupils claim free school meals (6 per cent), which is below the national average. There are no pupils with English as an additional language and a very small number of pupils come from other minority ethnic groups. Twenty-one pupils have been identified as having special educational needs (14 per cent), which is a smaller proportion than is found nationally. The main areas of difficulty being moderate learning difficulties, one pupil with specific difficulties and two with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The proportion of pupils having a statement of special educational needs is about average. Children enter reception with a broad range of attainment that is similar to that found nationally. At nine years pupils transfer to one of the two local middle schools. The previous long-standing headteacher has recently retired and a new headteacher took up post four weeks prior to the inspection.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school provides, overall, a satisfactory education for its pupils. The quality of teaching is generally good, but aspects of the management of the school have not been satisfactorily developed to enable the staff to evaluate its work, to identify areas of weakness and to develop strategies for further improvement. Insufficient consideration has been given to long-term financial planning to ensure that all monies available are used effectively to support pupils' learning. The school has not sufficiently planned the use of finances at its disposal and so provides unsatisfactory value for money. The new headteacher has successfully identified many of the areas that require improvement, but has not had the time to put most of her strategies in to place.

#### **What the school does well**

- Children in the nursery and reception classes are given a good start to their education.
- Pupils achieve well and by seven years of age attain standards that are above average in reading, writing and science. Standards in art are good throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching is good overall through the school, which results in pupils' positive attitudes to work and good gains in their learning in several subjects.
- The accommodation and grounds available are very good and have great potential for further development.

#### **What could be improved**

- Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and the use of information about pupils' learning to develop activities better matched to their needs and more effective methods of teaching.
- The monitoring of the quality of teaching and pupils' learning, so that weaknesses are identified and strategies for improvement are developed.
- Opportunities for further developing pupils' literacy skills in all subjects.
- Long-term financial planning so that governors have clear priorities for effectively supporting all pupils' learning.

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

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

The school was previously inspected on September 15<sup>th</sup> 1997. Since that time there has been overall satisfactory improvement. Standards in reading, writing and science have improved and been mostly above the national average. Standards in art have also improved. The quality of teaching has been maintained. Most of the concerns identified in the previous report have been satisfactorily addressed. The curriculum

provided is now broad and mostly well balanced. Results of National Curriculum tests are analysed and used to identify groups of pupils who required greater support in order to improve. There has been insufficient progress, however, in developing strategies for monitoring the work of the school.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	A	C	B	A
Writing	A	C	A	A
Mathematics	C	C	C	C

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

Standards over the last four years show some fluctuation due to the changing proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. However, pupils' standards at the age of seven are usually above average in reading and writing. In 2000, pupils attained standards above average in reading and well above average in writing. In the teacher's assessment, pupils attained high standards in science that were in the top five percent in the country. In comparison with schools in similar social-economic areas, pupils at Manor Hill attained standards well above average in reading and writing, but average standards in mathematics. The table above does not include the results of the most recent National Curriculum tests, as the national comparative data is not yet available. The results of the tests in 2001 were not as high as those achieved in 2000. Most pupils achieved the expected standards, but a smaller proportion achieved the higher than expected standard of Level 3. However, these standards are the result of a good proportion of pupils making good gains in their learning and building well on the standards that they attained at the end of the reception year.

During the inspection, pupils in the Year 2 class, were not seen to be working at satisfactory standards. Pupils are of a wide range of ability, including a good proportion of pupils with the potential of achieving standards above those expected. However, a significant proportion of pupils in this class have emotional and behavioural difficulties, which have a negative impact on their learning and the rest of the class. The school has started to allocate additional support for these pupils, but too little has been done in the past to support teachers and to ensure that the pupils learn effectively. It is unlikely for pupils to achieve the expected standards unless appropriate levels of support are provided. From the scrutiny of pupils' past work it could be seen that pupils continue to make good progress at the start of Key Stage 2 but this levels off in Year 4 so that pupils attain standards that are generally in line with those expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. Standards in design and technology, music, physical education and religious education are generally in line with those expected at seven and nine. In geography, history and information and communication technology standards are below those expected at nine, but generally in line at seven. In art, however, pupils make good achievement through the school and attain standards that are usually above those expected for their age.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils generally show good levels of interest and involvement in their work. Most concentrate well and persevere with their activities, trying hard to do well. In the nursery and reception classes children come happily to school and settle well to their activities, showing good attitudes to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons. However, a small proportion of pupils find difficulty in behaving well in the playground, and sometimes in lessons, and this reduces the quality of behaviour overall.

Personal development and relationships	Relationships in the school are good. Between the teachers and the pupils it is often very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The proportion of unauthorised absence is below average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 and 4
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Satisfactory

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

Overall the quality of teaching is good, but there are differences between subjects and inconsistencies between some classes. In the nursery and the reception classes the teaching is good and the overall provision is often very good which enables these young children to settle quickly and develop good attitudes to their work resulting in good progress through the Foundation Stage. The staff are very effective in preparing the children for the next stage of their learning. Between the ages of five and seven pupils continue to make good progress, particularly in English and science, due to the good quality of teaching provided. The quality of teaching is more mixed in the older classes, which results in pupils making better progress in Year 3 than in Year 4, in several subjects. All teachers manage the pupils well, enabling them to focus effectively on their work. The teachers' own subject knowledge is good and they use demonstration effectively to help pupil gain good understanding. Teachers know their pupils well and monitor their day-to-day work effectively so that tasks are usually well matched to their needs. Weaknesses in the teaching are the over use of worksheets. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to do their own research and to record their work in their own way and so develop their independent learning skills. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall, but pupils have insufficient opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge and skills in other subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported and they make good progress in their learning. In the present Year 2 class, however, insufficient support has been provided for those pupils with behavioural difficulties. Teachers have managed the best they can in the past, but the lack of support has resulted in pupils' unsatisfactory achievement.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is appropriately broad and mostly satisfactorily balanced. All subjects meet the requirements and a good range of clubs, visits and visitors to the school enhances pupils' learning. The curriculum for the children in the nursery and reception classes is well planned and provides a rich variety of learning experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Most pupils are well supported and their individual learning targets provide clear guidance for staff. Pupils with behavioural difficulties in one class have not, however, been sufficiently supported through the use of additional staff.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good. Provision for pupils' spiritual development, although satisfactory overall, is under-developed. Teachers do not sufficiently plan opportunities to develop pupils' spirituality in their teaching of subjects such as music, art and science.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The pastoral care is good and pupils feel secure and well cared for. However, procedures for monitoring aspects of health and safety and child protection are unsatisfactory.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The new headteacher has had very little time in which to make an impact on the management of the school. Early indications show a clear purpose for developing the leadership and management of the school. New procedures to promote pupils' effort and good behaviour have already been introduced. Good relationships are being developed with the staff, and the headteacher and deputy headteacher have a shared commitment to improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors satisfactorily fulfil most of the statutory responsibilities, but they do not have effective procedures for monitoring health and safety in the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The deputy headteacher has made an effective start on analysing the schools test results and identified pupils who need further support to achieve expected standards. The school has not yet made use of the data available to clearly identified areas of weakness and developed strategies for improvement. The governors do not apply the principles of best value.
The strategic use of resources	Strategic planning in the school has been unsatisfactory. A very large surplus of monies has been built up over the years, but there has been very little long-term planning to identify priorities for improvement so that finances are used to improve the quality of education provided for all pupils.

The school benefits from a large building with many additional rooms that have the potential for development. The grounds are also spacious and provide many opportunities to promote pupils' learning. Resources are generally no better than satisfactory. Many are old and in unsatisfactory condition. The learning support staff provide good levels of expertise, which are used well to support and promote pupils' learning in the Foundation Stage and through the school. There is insufficient support staff provided in one class to give guidance and support to pupils with behavioural difficulties.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents are supportive of the work of the school. They are generally pleased with the education provided and feel their child makes good progress.</li> <li>They are pleased that their children enjoy coming to school.</li> <li>Most parents would feel comfortable about coming into school to ask questions or to discuss a concern.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There were no significant concerns.</li> </ul>

The inspection team endorses most of the parents' comments. Their responses show that they are generally content, but many parents do not feel fully informed about aspects of school life. This is an aspect that was highlighted in the previous report and is still an area of concern. Parents are not enabled to be fully involved in their child's learning at school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

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

1. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children make good progress in many aspects of their learning. Children enter the nursery with a range of attainment, similar to that found nationally. They settle into the nursery class very quickly and make good progress in developing their personal and social skills, and their speaking skills, so they are able to communicate with confidence, and work and play happily with the other children. They develop positive attitudes to their activities so that they are ready for the new challenges in the reception class. The children continue to make good progress in their acquisition of their communication, language and literacy skills so by the time they enter Year 1 many are already attaining standards above those expected. Progress in developing their knowledge of the world is also good. Children's curiosity is effectively promoted in the nursery, and well developed in the reception class, so that children are eager to know and to question. Progress in the other areas of learning, in mathematics, and in their creative and physical development is satisfactory, overall, so by the time children move into Year 1 the majority have achieved the standards expected in the Early Learning Goals.
2. Over the last four years pupils have continued to make good progress in developing their literacy skills so by the age of seven, most pupils have achieved the standards expected and many higher. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests, pupils attained standards above average in reading, and well above average in writing. An above average proportion of pupils also attained the higher than expected standard of Level 3. Standards in mathematics are broadly average. They have been so over the last four years and are similar to those judged at the previous inspection. In the teacher's assessment, pupils attained high standards in science that were in the top five per cent in the country because all pupils attained the expected standard and almost a quarter also achieved the higher standard of Level 3. In comparison with schools in similar social-economic areas, pupils at Manor Hill attained standards well above average in reading and writing, but average standards in mathematics. The good standards attained in English and science are an improvement on those judged in the previous report and have been effectively maintained since the 1997 National Curriculum tests.
3. The results of the tests in 2001 are not as high as those achieved in 2000. Most pupils achieved the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics, but a smaller proportion achieved the higher than expected standard of Level 3. The school recognised that this was a potentially weaker group of pupils and focused on those that needed most support to enable them to achieve the standards expected by the age of seven. This resulted in a significant proportion of pupils making good progress over the standards that they attained at the end of the reception, particularly in reading and writing. There is no significant difference in the standards attained by the boys and girls, but mathematics has been the weakest area of attainment over the last four years.
4. During the inspection, standards in Year 2 were seen to be below those of the previous few years. There is a similar range of abilities in the class, including those with the potential of achieving above average standards. The class has, however, a large proportion of pupils with significant emotional and behavioural difficulties, which has had an impact on their learning. It prevents them from concentrating effectively and they often make it difficult for others in the class to learn. At the present rate pupils are not likely to achieve the standards expected at the end of the year. The new headteacher has recognised the need for additional learning support staff in the class and aims to remedy the problem as soon as is possible. Over the last few years, this group of pupils with special educational needs had not been sufficiently supported to enable them to make satisfactory progress. The teachers of the class over the years have all worked hard to support those pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, and satisfactory progress has been made in enabling them to settle to their work. This has often been at the cost of enabling all pupils to

make good progress as insufficient support staff have been allocated to the class to ensure all pupils achieve well. Pupils with other forms of special educational need, through the school, make satisfactory progress by the age of seven, and good progress by the age of nine towards meeting their learning targets and in relation to their initial attainment.

5. From the scrutiny of pupils' past work it is judged that pupils continue to make good progress in Year 3, especially in developing their literacy skills, but this progress reduces in Year 4 so that the high standards in English and science attained at the age of seven are not maintained. Pupils' standards at the age of nine are only similar to those expected for their age in English, mathematics and science.
6. In art, pupils of all ages make good progress in their learning and attain standards that are above those expected, showing good levels of skill and creativity. In the other subjects, most pupils at the age of seven and nine achieve the standards expected in music and physical education. Standards in geography, history and information and communication technology are satisfactory at seven, but below those expected at nine. In religious education standards are in line with those expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards in information and communication technology are below those expected at the age of nine because they have insufficient opportunities in Year 4 to learn new knowledge and skills, and to use them in other areas of work. In design and technology pupils through the school make steady progress in making a range of artefacts, but they have insufficient opportunity to develop their skills of planning, of drawing and perfecting their designs.

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

7. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good, which is similar to that found at the previous inspection.
8. Children in the nursery settle quickly into class routines and make good progress in developing their personal and social skills, so that by the time they move into the reception class they have good attitudes to their tasks, and they work and play with the other children well. In reception these good social skills enable children to work in pairs and groups, as well as individually, sharing resources toys and ideas sensibly. They follow instructions with care, and understand the need to be kind and fair.
9. Pupils in the main school like to come to school and the youngest are mainly confident in leaving their parents or carers. When pupils come into school at the start of the day they stand quietly in the playground, talking in groups or with their parents. On the bell they line up quickly and the teachers come out to meet them.
10. Most pupils show interest in their tasks and have a positive attitude to their work. Younger pupils are keen to answer questions. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were eager to contribute when asked for a response. Older pupils engaged well in class discussions, for example, pupils in Year 4 co-operate well in sharing ideas. They are happy to discuss their own opinions and listen well to that of their peers. Most pupils show interest in their work, but the standard of presentation throughout the school is inconsistent. Where it is good it indicates that pupils take a pride in their work and respond well to the expectations of their teachers.
11. Pupils listen attentively in lessons. Where teaching is good and lessons are interesting, pupils are well involved in their work. Most pupils have good concentration and are well involved in their activities. A significant number of pupils in the Year 2 class, however, find this difficult and, when there is no extra classroom assistance to support them, the unsatisfactory behaviour of a few pupils makes it difficult for the class to concentrate effectively. When these pupils are supported or withdrawn from whole class lessons, the rest of the pupils are able to settle well to their work. In a lesson observed, for example, they gave the teacher rapt attention as she brought a toy out of a bag to use as a resource to stimulate pupils' vocabulary.

12. Behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is good. Some instances of inappropriate behaviour were seen, but teachers dealt with these very well. Pupils recognise that when sanctions are used they are fair and deserved. Behaviour around the school, in the playground and at lunchtime is good. The school functions as a very orderly community; pupils are polite and courteous to adults and each other. The school has recently taken part in a behaviour audit and has involved parents and the wider school community in the discussion. The audit found that the school has a caring ethos and that relationships within the school are positive.
13. Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy taking responsibility and their tasks are carried out sensibly and usually reliably. Pupils in all classes take the register to the office and act as helpers on a class basis. Pupils are confident and have a high regard for their teachers. They use their initiative well, anticipating what needs to be done, for example, in setting things out for choir or assembly. Relationships through the school are good. All adults in the school provide very good role models for the children to which the pupils respond.
14. Attendance is satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average. The level of authorised absence is close to the national average and that of unauthorised absence is better than average. Nearly all pupils arrive on time and, as a result, lessons start promptly at the start of the day. Parents are happy with the positive attitudes and values that the school promotes and feel they have a beneficial effect on their children.

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

15. The quality of teaching throughout the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) is good which enables children to settle quickly, develop effective personal and social skills, and make a good start to their education. The staff in both classes have a good understanding of the needs of the young children and together plan a rich and stimulating environment in which children grow and develop. They provide good levels of support and stimulate the children's curiosity and interest in learning so they concentrate on their activities and enjoy their tasks. Children are well prepared for the National Curriculum and the more formal lessons they meet in Year 1. Staff in the nursery and in the reception class work well together as effective teams to support children's good learning.
16. Teaching is also generally good throughout the school, although there are some differences in some subjects and in some classes. From the lessons observed and the scrutiny of pupils' past work, it can be seen that the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. In Year 1, lessons are well structured and many very effective strategies are used to stimulate pupils' interest and involvement. In a science lesson, for example, the teacher used the video facility in a CD-Rom to very effectively illustrate how different animals move. She was able to replay the tape several times so that the pupils' ideas were stimulated and a wide-ranging discussion developed. In Year 2, the teacher's good levels of expertise and experience have enabled pupils to make good gains in their learning and achieve high standards, particularly in English and science. In the current Year 2 class, however the teacher has considerable difficulties in meeting the range of pupils' needs. This is due to the high proportion of pupils with behavioural difficulties that require additional support. When this additional support is available all pupils are provided with appropriate levels of work and opportunities that enable them to learn effectively. In lessons where support was not available, teaching became less effective and pupils' learning suffered as several pupils found it very difficult to attend quietly and focus on the work at hand. This meant much of the teachers' time had to be spent focusing on a few pupils, rather than the whole class.
17. The quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory, overall. There is evidence of good teaching in different subjects in both classes, but pupils' learning in English, science, information and communication technology, history and geography is less effective towards the end of their

time in the school, so that good standards decline and are generally satisfactory when they leave school at the age of nine.

18. The teaching of English is good, and the National Literacy Strategy has been effectively implemented. In Year 3, for example, the teacher's very good subject knowledge enabled her in a lesson observed to provide the pupils with a good structure in which to work that gave good levels of support. Pupils of all abilities were challenged and stimulated so they made very good progress in developing a wide range of descriptive language. An area of weakness in many subjects, however, is that pupils have insufficient opportunities to use their literacy skills to record their findings and ideas. Over use of worksheets that pupils fill in, provide limited opportunities for them to develop their ideas. Pupils also have insufficient opportunities to do their own research and to record their work in their own way, and so develop their independent learning skills.
19. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory. The National Numeracy Strategy has been appropriately implemented, but insufficient opportunities are given to further develop pupils' skills and understanding in other subjects. The teaching of information and communication technology is generally satisfactory, but pupils in Year 4 are not provided with sufficient opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in a variety of ways and across subjects, which results in some pupils feeling unsure and lacking in confidence. The teaching of art is good. The nursery nurse in reception and two learning support assistants in Key Stage 1 and 2 have had a significant impact on the enthusiasm for teaching and learning in art through the school. Their art club has had a significant impact on standards, and they provide good levels of support for other staff.
20. General strengths of the teaching through the school include teachers' good subject knowledge that they use to give effective demonstration to help pupils gain good understanding. Teachers use good questioning to find out what pupils' know and to probe their understanding. High expectations for pupils' good behaviour enable them to settle quickly and concentrate on their tasks. Teachers know their pupils well and monitor their day-to-day work effectively, so that tasks are usually well matched to their need. Very good relationships, between the teachers and the pupils, results in pupils wanting to listen and learn, for example in the introduction of the developing a play script in a Year 4 literacy lesson. Planning is thorough and lessons build systematically on pupils' previous learning. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to the school that enhance pupils' learning. They stimulate pupils' interest and develop their knowledge and skills through first-hand experience.
21. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is usually good. Pupils are either supported in class or withdrawn for short periods in order to provide a sharper focus on their targets in their individual education plan. One pupil, for example, who had had difficulty in understanding that instructions for the group also relate to him, made effective gains in learning when working for a short period in a one to one session with a learning support assistant. He gained obvious joy at being able to match all of the correct pictures to the sentences that he has just read. In a Year 3 lesson, six pupils stayed on task making secure gains in their learning in an additional literacy group. The learning support assistant had good subject knowledge and addressed pupils' misconceptions, explaining the work in a clear, careful and enthusiastic way. They were so involved and enthusiastic to learn that they continued even after the lesson has finished. Homework is given out to this group, which they say they enjoy. Teachers, classroom assistants and learning support workers operate as an effective team to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in class discussions and lesson activities. Teachers work well with classroom assistants to plan individual education plans, from specialist recommendations, for pupils with special educational needs. In the Year 2 class, however, insufficient staff have been allocated in the past to effectively meet the needs of all pupils. This is being rectified.
22. Teachers monitor pupils' learning effectively and step in when more support is required so learning continues at a good pace. Marking is used well to support and encourage pupils providing

praise and rewards to which they respond well. It is inconsistently used to reinforce pupils' knowledge of what they need to do in order to improve and so does not sufficiently enable pupils to make good progress. Homework is satisfactorily used to support pupils' work in lessons and usually builds effectively on the skills and knowledge being taught.

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

23. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) is good. It is planned effectively to take account of the six areas of learning for these young children: their personal, social and emotional development, their communication, language and literacy skills, in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and in their creative and physical development. The planning provides a systematic development of children's learning, from their entry into the nursery through the recommended "Stepping Stones" of knowledge and skills, to prepare children for attaining the standards expected in the Early Learning Goals by the time they move into the National Curriculum in Year 1. In both the nursery and reception classes the children are provided with a stimulating curriculum that promotes their good acquisition of skills and knowledge, and the children's curiosity and enjoyment of learning. The curriculum has been effectively developed since the previous inspection to take account of new recommendations, but the quality, breadth and balance have been effectively maintained.
24. At the time of the previous inspection the curriculum for pupils in the main school was broad, but not sufficiently balanced, with over-generous allocations of time in some subjects. There has been an improvement, and the curriculum is now far more balanced, although, less time is allocated for the teaching of music than is found usually.
25. The quality and range of learning opportunities is satisfactory, overall. It provides for pupils intellectual, physical, personal and social and health education. There is a weakness, however, in planning opportunities to develop pupils' enquiry skills in some classes. Pupils' religious education is provided in accordance with the locally Agreed Syllabus. This is a similar judgement to that of the last inspection, but the school has made effective improvements in the consistency of teachers' planning and the effective implementation of changes in line with national initiatives and guidance. The National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies have been introduced successfully and are having an impact by raising pupils' standards in English and mathematics. The strategies are appropriately used in support of other subject learning. For example, pupils have developed confidence in speaking and listening skills. Pupils use and understanding of mathematical terms and vocabulary are not, however, sufficiently emphasised in some mathematics lessons. The school makes satisfactory provision for swimming, which is unusual in a First School.
26. All pupils are given equality of access to the curriculum irrespective of their age, ethnicity, social circumstance or prior attainment. Careful attention is paid to the individual and to his or her needs. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and leads to good progress for these pupils where their learning is adequately supported by a classroom assistant. Where pupils with behavioural difficulties do not have this support their progress, and that of their fellow pupils is hindered. Provision for pupils with statements of special educational need is good. Statements and reviews are up to date and the provision outlined in the statement is fully implemented. Arrangements are made to support pupils, especially in literacy and numeracy so that pupils gain access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Key members of staff know the provision and the contents of the statements, and they contribute to reviews when they take place.
27. The school provides a good number of extra-curricular activities for a school of this type, which support pupils' learning and introduces them to additional expertise. There is a popular art club, a recorder group, choir, football and a computer club where pupils have opportunities to extend their interests and develop further skills.
28. The school has appropriate links with partner institutions and the community to support pupils learning. The school provides training opportunities for work experience and trainee teachers through its links with Stafford and Stoke colleges of further education and Wolverhampton and Keele Universities. There are also curriculum and other links with the Stone pyramid of schools.

Walton Gardens Allotment Association has provided funds and expertise to help the pupils improve the school grounds. Other links include those with Question Mark, a local Christian group, the "Staffordshire Newsletter", the British Telecom schools support initiative and a local potter. These and other links make a good contribution to curricular opportunities that pupils enjoy.

29. The provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good, overall, which in most aspects is similar to that found at the previous inspection.
30. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Many aspects of the religious education curriculum make a significant contribution. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to consider the concepts of belonging, believing, symbolism and faith. They are encouraged to reflect upon the effect that these ideas have on their own lives. During whole and part- school assemblies, the Bible and a lit candle are displayed to create a separate time and atmosphere, but their meaning and purpose are not always shared with the pupils. Some good opportunities are made to help pupils reflect such as in a good school assembly observed when pupils were encouraged to close their eyes and consider those that they ought to thank. There are, however, no opportunities for pupils to present their own assemblies and produce their own prayers or words of thanks. The "Wild Area" provides an ideal location for studying and reflecting upon the wonders of nature, but not enough use is made of this provision. There is insufficient contribution to pupils' spiritual development from other areas of the curriculum. For example, a good opportunity was missed during a numeracy lesson, when a group of pupils spontaneously expressed their amazement at how much the window-ledge based seedlings had grown.
31. Provision for moral education is good. The development of responsible attitudes is fostered when pupils discuss with their new teacher the rules they wish to live by in their own classroom. These rules are then left on permanent display. A 'good work' assembly is held each week and this is effective in promoting confidence and self esteem. It encourages the pupils to appreciate the efforts of others, regardless of age, ability or gender. A recently introduced system of progressive awards for the numbers of house points gained, is clearly valued by the pupils, as is the 'Child of the Week' reward. Reception children prefer, and greatly value, rewards of 'smiley stickers'. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong which is reflected in their mostly good behaviour. The opportunity for moral discussion in 'Circle Time' is currently being introduced.
32. The arrangements for pupils' social and cultural education are also good. A sound range of extra-curricular activities including recorder, violin, choir, country dancing and art groups all add significantly to develop pupils' social skills. The school raises money to support local, national and global charities, further developing pupils' awareness of their social responsibility. Good opportunities to promote Year 4 pupils' social awareness are missed, however, by not giving them responsibilities in helping to run the school. The residential weekend for pupils in Year 4, before they leave school promotes their independence and inter-dependence well. It offers very good opportunities for personal and social development. All adults demonstrate their high expectations of good social behaviour and are very good role models.
33. Pupils learn about British and other cultures through art, geography, history and music. They visit museums, theatre and other cultural areas such as Shugborough Hall. Theatre groups and a local potter visit the school to work with the pupils. Festivals from other faiths and cultures are studied and make positive contributions to pupils' knowledge and understanding of our multi-racial community. Pupils work in the style of world famous artists, such as Monet and his Water Lillies and they use earth colours to copy Aboriginal bark pictures. Children in the Foundation Stage made very good imitations of African masks. The whole school was involved in a celebration of the Chinese New Year. During school assemblies, good opportunities are missed when the music being played is not identified to the pupils. The school celebrates 'National Art, Poetry and Book Days' and pupils in Year 4 take part in their future Middle School' Concert, sharing the stage with pupils from the other First schools. These varied activities have successfully raised pupils'

awareness of the rich heritage of cultural achievement in their own communities and also across the world. The provision for cultural development has improved since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory.

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

34. Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory overall. The pastoral care is good, but there are weaknesses in the procedures for supporting pupils' academic progress. All staff are caring, know the pupils well and relationships are good. Parents are appreciative of the care and support provided.
35. Whilst there are well-established informal systems to ensure the safety, care and protection of pupils, there are some weaknesses. For example, risk assessment, which is a statutory responsibility of the governing body, is not fully carried out and this is unsatisfactory. The current documentation does not show a full and accurate awareness of any potential risks to pupils' safety. Although the governing body regularly discusses health and safety concerns at their meetings, the school does not have procedures to report health and safety concerns and to record any remedial action taken. Safety checks of portable electrical equipment are long overdue. The school is aware of these concerns and has plans to take action to resolve the issues as a matter of urgency. Satisfactory first aid procedures are implemented, and there are sufficient staff trained in first aid. The school has a suitable medical room and appropriate procedures are in place for recording accidents and informing parents where necessary.
36. Formal procedures for child protection are satisfactory. The school has an appropriate child protection policy, and the head teacher is the designated responsible person. Staff, however, are in need of up to date training on how to identify and react to child protection issues. The new headteacher is aware of this concern and is awaiting confirmation of a date when training can be given. There is suitable liaison with outside agencies to support pupils' well-being and academic progress.
37. Procedures for monitoring pupils' good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. Discipline is maintained in a fair and consistent manner, with the emphasis on positive reinforcement and rewards for good and improved behaviour. The school has recently taken part in a behaviour audit in order to involve the wider school community. The audit found that the school has a caring ethos and that relationships within the school are positive. Areas recommended for further consideration were the teaching of behavioural skills and increasing the involvement of parents in the management of pupils' behavioural difficulties. As a preliminary step towards these areas the school is including "Circle Time" in the timetable.
38. The school has efficient procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour both in and out of lessons. Procedures for supporting pupils' academic progress are unsatisfactory where pupils with special educational needs for behavioural difficulties are not sufficiently supported in lessons.
39. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but pupils with behavioural difficulties need further support in the class situation. Provision for pupils with special educational needs in Years 3 and 4 is good. Provision for pupils with statements of special educational need is good. Statements and reviews are up to date and the provision outlined in the statement is fully implemented. Arrangements are made to support pupils especially in Literacy and Numeracy so that pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Key members of staff know the provision and the contents of the statements and contribute to reviews when they take place.
40. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory overall. Records of attendance are properly maintained and comply with statutory requirements. Administrative arrangements are very efficient and all unexplained absences are investigated. Procedures for helping children to settle in the nursery and reception class are good, ensuring that children enjoy coming to school. An appropriate programme is in place to ease pupils' transfer to their next stage of education. Whilst teachers know their pupils well and monitor their personal development

satisfactorily, systems are informal and inconsistent in practice.

41. At the time of the previous inspection, systems for assessment were satisfactory but inconsistent across the school. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress particularly in English and mathematics. These include regular tests and assessments against the targets set in literacy and the optional National Curriculum tests. These procedures however are still inconsistent throughout the school. A computer program for the management of assessment data has been installed but, as its use has not been a priority on the School Development Plan, no time has been budgeted to allowed to input the information.
42. Regular reviews of pupils' work have started in some subjects, but this is only just beginning to be used, for example in literacy, in order to plan further learning. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is unsatisfactory. At present co-ordinators have no secure way of knowing standards in their subjects. They cannot take informed decisions on how to improve them, although national test are now analysed to help improve teaching so that standards can be raised in the core subjects. The school conducts analysis of Baseline Assessments, National Curriculum Assessment Tests and the government recommended optional tests in English and mathematics in Years 3 and 4. Baseline assessments are used to predict pupils' performance in Year 2 and to inform planning to target and support those pupils who are likely to achieve 2B and above.
43. In English and mathematics, pupils are set individual targets for improvement, which helps them to make better progress, but generally pupils are not aware of how they are improving in their learning. Marking is inconsistent throughout the school. Where it is good it helps pupils improving their strengths and supports work on their weaknesses. Reading records are satisfactory, with comments on effort and progress from the adults involved.
44. Educational and personal support and guidance for pupils are good. Teachers encourage pupils to co-operate with others and to work with persistence and application. The school builds effectively on its assessment procedures when identifying pupils with special educational needs to comply with the Code of Practice. Staff are on course to implement the planned changes in special educational needs requirements. Effective and consistent procedures are used for placing pupils on the register and for deciding what further help is needed in accordance with the guidance in the code.

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

45. The parents' views of the school are good. Parents are appreciative of the education provided by the school and the provision for their children's welfare. They report, for example, that their children like coming to school and that they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or concerns. Parents feel welcome in the school, but the number of formal opportunities when they are invited to come in and share the life of the school is smaller than is found in most schools. There are no class assemblies, for example, and parents do not attend assemblies except on special occasions. Parents of children in the nursery do not generally enter the classroom in the mornings, although they feel confident to chat to staff if there is a concern. Parents appreciate the help their children are given to become mature and responsible. The positive views of parents are endorsed by the findings of the inspection. The previous report was also positive about the partnership with parents and these links have been maintained.
46. Appropriate steps are taken by the school to evaluate its effectiveness in working with parents. For example, parents were asked to complete a questionnaire as part of a recent behaviour audit. Returns to the wide-ranging questions underline that parents are, overall, very positive about the school.

47. Frequent newsletters, and additional letters where necessary, keep parents well informed about school matters, key dates and events. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Several notice boards inside the school ensure that parents are kept up to date and give them information about what their children are about to learn each term. In addition, some class teachers send parents details of forthcoming class work at the beginning of each term.
48. The prospectus is comprehensive, well presented, and gives parents a helpful insight into many aspects of the school's work. The governors' annual report contains useful and relevant information about the work of the school and of the governing body, but does not include a statement on the admission of disabled pupils and the facilities provided. The annual reports to parents are of satisfactory quality overall, and meet statutory requirements. Reports show some targets for improvement, but insufficient reference is made to pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. The school provides parents with an appropriate number of opportunities to discuss their children's progress, which includes annual written reports. However, the evening arranged to discuss the contents of annual written reports is reported as not being well attended. In the past parents have not been actively encouraged to attend these meetings, being given the impression that if they had no concerns or questions they need not bother.
49. Parents with children having special educational needs, especially those with statements of need are kept well-informed and involved in their children's work and progress. Regular reviews are usually well attended and each child's future targets are discussed so that home and school work together to support the pupil.
50. The school has benefited from LEA and government initiatives, which have had a positive impact on the schools partnership with parents. For example, the county PALS project linked to the schools induction programme. This scheme encourages early pre-school liaison with parents through reading and a 'take home pack' facility. The school has also benefited from a home school grant, which has enabled the school to purchase additional resources. For example, story sacks, pre-recorded tapes, mathematical games and a change of the reading scheme for reception class children.
51. The impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school and their contribution to their children's learning, both at school and at home, is satisfactory overall. A small number of parents provide effective help in school on a regular basis. They give time to activities such as supervising the library, helping with swimming and listening to readers. Pupils reading diaries are used effectively to encourage reading at home and parents enter comments on reading progress. These activities have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
52. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a small but highly committed group that organises many fund raising events and makes a substantial contribution to school funds. Contributions include subsidising the cost of coaches for educational visits, £1,000 towards the purchase of new books for home readers, and a gazebo, plants and picnic benches for the school's grounds. They have also provided many much needed resources in the nursery. This support is much appreciated by the school and increases pupils' learning opportunities.

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

53. The new headteacher had just taken up her post and only been in school for three weeks prior to the inspection. She has made a good start in getting to know the school, its staff and pupils and in identifying many of the areas in need of improvement. It is too early to fully judge the effectiveness of her leadership, but initial signs are good as she is already providing staff with clear expectations and guidance, and developing an effective climate for change. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have begun to develop an effective working relationship and share many

of the same priorities for the future development of the school. Some changes have already been made, particularly in raising the focus and improving the structure of rewards for pupils' good effort and behaviour, which are already having a positive impact on pupils' attitudes.

54. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Standards in reading, writing and science have improved since the previous inspection, and have been mostly above the national average. Standards in art have also improved. Most of the concerns identified in the previous report have been satisfactorily addressed. The curriculum provided is now broad and mostly well balanced. There has been insufficient progress, however, in developing strategies for monitoring the work of the school and in this aspect the previous management was unsatisfactory.
55. The previous senior management team provided good pastoral leadership and a caring ethos in which learning was promoted effectively. The school's aims and values are well met. Staff are fully aware of the need to ensure pupils have equal opportunities to learn and succeed, and they work effectively to ensure that boys and girls are treated equally.
56. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is a considerable strength as pupils make good progress towards achieving their targets. The special needs co-ordinator provides good leadership. She makes good use of the expertise of the Local Education Authority learning support team for guidance and support. She is effective in planning and organising the work of the pupils and the special needs support staff available. Procedures are good, and are clearly linked to the Code of Practice and there is a shared commitment to help pupils succeed. Most pupils with special educational needs are well supported and enabled to find success in their activities. In the current Year 2 class, however, insufficient support has been given in the past for both the class teacher and the pupils, to ensure that those children with behavioural difficulties are provided with appropriate learning opportunities, and that all pupils in the class have good opportunities to achieve. The difficulties experienced by this class and their teachers in the past had not been appreciated and insufficient assistance had been given. The current headteacher recognises the concern and has already planned ways to remedy the problems.
57. The school is beginning to effectively use data from National Curriculum tests and assessments to track pupils' progress and to identify areas of weakness in English and mathematics. Pupils in need of further support are appropriately identified and strategies for their good achievement have proved effective. This is an improvement on that found at the previous inspection. The teachers consistently set class targets in English to help pupils focus on what they need to do to improve their writing. Mathematics, although satisfactory, was recognised as the weakest area of pupils' learning and a course of training has been planned. School assessment procedures in most subjects, however, are not sufficiently developed or consistently implemented. Information from these tests is not used effectively to adapt the curriculum and ensure that all pupils are provided with the activities that build on previous learning so they achieve well.
58. The Foundation Stage is well led, and staff have worked well together to implement the new curriculum, and develop their planning to incorporate the new "Stepping Stones" towards the Early Learning Goals for children's attainment. The staff are all skilled early years practitioners. They understand the learning needs of the young children and work well together to evaluate and improve their planning and ways of working. The three nursery nurses have good levels of expertise and are very committed to the children's effective learning. The good provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school.
59. The management role of the subject co-ordinators has not been fully developed and they are not yet having sufficient impact on standards pupils achieve. Schemes of work, based on the nationally recommended documents, are used for all subjects and there is now a more balanced curriculum than at the time of the previous inspection. The co-ordinator for English provides good leadership and management in the subject. She gives good levels of support and guidance for colleagues, and she has been successfully involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. Other

co-ordinators have not been given the opportunity to observe teachers in the classroom, and most have not taken steps to monitor the quality of pupils' learning. They do not have, therefore, a full appreciation of the quality of education provided in their subjects. Most are keen, however, for this aspect of their role to be further developed.

60. The governing body is very supportive of the school and fulfils the majority of its statutory responsibilities through an appropriate range of committees. The governors have not, however, set up procedures to ensure that aspects of health and safety are regularly checked and problems addressed. Many of the governors are new and they do not have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Insufficient opportunities have been made by governors to monitor the work of the school and there is not a clear strategic plan for the future improvement. The school development plan outlines the priorities for future development, but it is not an effective management tool as there is very little detail provided on what needs to be done and how. There is no clear mechanism for monitoring the effectiveness of the action or whether it meets the targets set. There has also been a lack of clear financial planning. A large carry forward has been retained to support the budget as the number of pupils on role has declined over the last few years. This very appropriate aim has not however been fully considered and discussed, and there is very little awareness of whether this is in the best interests of the pupils currently in the school. There is also a substantial sum in reserve with no clear purpose for its retention. Long-term financial planning is unsatisfactory and the principles of best value are not being followed. Additional grants and the funding for the support pupils with special educational needs are appropriately used.
61. There are good numbers of teachers and most classes have less than 26 pupils. The number of learning support staff is satisfactory overall. They work well with the teachers, and pupils having special educational needs benefit from their expertise and support. The nursery nurse in reception and two learning support assistants in Key Stage 1 and 2 also provide very good expertise and commitment to the teaching of art, which is having a very positive impact on standards through the school. There is satisfactory provision for performance management, but not all staff have job descriptions that set out their co-ordinator responsibilities, which makes this aspect of performance management difficult. The programme for staff development is good. Office staff are competent and show good levels of professional initiative that leads to smooth and effective day-to-day school administration. There is always a smiling welcome for parents, pupils and visitors.
62. The school has generous accommodation that is set in attractive grounds. Classrooms are light and airy with good ventilation. There is a separate dining hall, in addition to a large hall that provides ample space for indoor games, gymnastics and assemblies. There are several spare rooms around the school and two library areas. The accommodation is generally satisfactorily maintained, but many areas are rather drab and in need of redecoration and refurbishment. A substantial number of window frames have been replaced and the school awaits a date for the replacement of the remainder. Outside, there are many attractive features, such as an extensive grassed area and hard standing, adventure play area and attractive gardens that enhance the learning environment and give pupils freedom of space when they are outside at break times. The children in the nursery have a large outside play area which is used well to support children's physical and social development. The cleaning staff make a strong contribution to the life of the school by maintaining a very clean environment.
63. Resources through the school are satisfactory overall. In reception and the nursery resources are good, providing a good range of learning opportunities. There is a satisfactory range of information and communication technology equipment through the school. A good number of new computers have been purchased, which has improved the opportunities for pupils' learning. Elsewhere, however, many resources are old and tired. Given the large financial reserves available to the school, this is unsatisfactory.
64. Taking all sources of evidence into account, such as :

- the standards of children's attainment on entry to the school,
  - pupils' good achievement and usually good standards at seven in English and science,
  - the generally good quality of education provided,
- and balancing them against

- the lack of appropriate support for one class,
- no better than satisfactory resources to support learning in most areas of the school,
- the very large financial resources available

The school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

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

**Develop and implement a whole-school system for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment in all subjects so that activities are provided that build on pupils' prior learning and extend their knowledge and skills.**

(see paragraphs 41-44,57)

**Improve the quality of pupils' learning, especially the higher attaining pupils, by**

- providing good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills to research for information and to record their ideas and findings in a variety of ways
- improving the opportunities for pupils to carry out their own investigations and develop their own designs.

(see paragraphs 18, 82, 101, 120, 126)

**Develop a clear appreciation of the quality of teaching and pupils' learning in all subjects in order to identify areas of weakness and raise standards, by**

- clarifying the role and responsibilities of co-ordinators, and providing training so they can be successful managers of their subject areas,
- implementing systematic procedures for monitoring, so that staff are able to evaluate their practice and develop effective strategies for improvement.

(see paragraphs 54, 59)

**Develop a clear and agreed strategic plan for school improvement closely linked to the finances available, so that the best education possible is provided for pupils in the school.**

(see paragraphs 60-61)

The issues below are of a lesser importance but are statutory requirements and so the governing body might wish to add them its action plan.

Develop and implement procedures for regular health and safety inspections and risk assessment.

(see paragraphs 35)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	36
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	19	10	1	0	0
Percentage	0	17	53	28	2	0	0

*The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	122
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	9

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	20

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.2

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)**

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	15	16	31

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	14	14	15
	Total	27	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (97)	81 (97)	90 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	14
	Girls	14	15	15
	Total	27	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81	90	94 (100)
	National	NA (82)	NA (88)	NA (88)

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

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	121
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

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

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

### *Teachers and classes*

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.3:1
Average class size	20

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64.5

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### *Financial information*

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	353,531
Total expenditure	347,539
Expenditure per pupil	1904
Balance brought forward from previous year	58,130
Balance carried forward to next year	64,122

### *Recruitment of teachers*

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0

Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0
--	---

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

*Results of the survey of parents and carers*

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	145
Number of questionnaires returned	64

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	37	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	46	0	2	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	48	5	0	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	48	8	0	17
The teaching is good.	44	49	2	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	44	5	2	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	32	3	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	46	0	0	10
The school works closely with parents.	38	49	6	2	5
The school is well led and managed.	34	42	3	2	19
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	44	3	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	34	8	0	24

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

65. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good, which is similar to that found at the previous inspection.
66. Children enter the nursery with a broad range of attainment similar to that found nationally. They settle quickly in to class routines and make good progress in developing their personal and social skills, so that by the time they move into the reception class they have good attitudes to their tasks, and they work and play with the other children well. Children's make good progress in developing their language, literacy and communication skills, so that their speaking and early reading skills are above those found nationally at the end of reception. The good achievement made in the nursery continues in the reception class and by the time children enter Year 1 they are well prepared for more formal lessons and have above average standards in speaking and reading.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

67. Staff in both the nursery and the reception classes put great emphasis on promoting children's personal, social and emotional development, and the quality of teaching in this aspect of children's learning is good. Many opportunities are made to support children in making relationships with the other children and learning to work and play together sensibly. Consequently, after only a few weeks in the nursery, children share resources and toys without fuss and often play together, which is unusual at this age. Children often share the large wheeled vehicles so that one drives whilst the other acts as passenger. Teachers develop the children's awareness of the need to finish a task and to clear away afterwards, to which the children respond well. They develop good levels of concentration and perseverance, especially when working with an adult. In their own activities, children make choices about what they want to do and are able to select the resources they require. These early skills of independent learning are well fostered in the reception class. Children organise themselves well, choosing from the stimulating range of activities on offer. In the free creative area for example, pens, scissors, glue and paper are all easily to hand and children settle happily to make their own spectacles or decorate their own canal boat jug, using the range of materials available. Children quickly recognise class routines and follow them well, recognising in which activity area their group is to work next, and happily setting to the tasks provided. Most children in the reception class achieve the standards expected (Early Learning Goals) and many achieve higher standards than are usually found.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

68. Staff in both nursery and reception classes used skilled questioning to promote children's listening and speaking skills. They model appropriate speech patterns, building the children's knowledge of language, and broadening their vocabulary. Good opportunities are created to stimulate the children's imagination in the role-play areas. In the nursery, for example, staff play with the children in the home corner developing their awareness of life roles and patterns in speech, so they can re-enact them later for themselves. Similarly in the reception class, the creation of the canal barge is used to develop further children's imaginative language and conversational skills. In both classes, teachers promote an interest in books and a love of stories. Children listen with good levels of interest in the nursery, responding to the characters and beginning to draw parallels with their own experiences. Children's early reading skills are well promoted in the reception class so that most are well launched into the early stages of reading. They know that print carries meaning, recognise many key words, and use a variety of picture and letter cues to help them tell the story. They are beginning to convey their ideas in simple written phrases using letter strings for words, showing a developing knowledge of letter sounds and satisfactory letter shapes. Children's language and literacy skills are well developed in the reception class as they are introduced to the beginnings of the literacy lesson in preparation for the work they will meet in Year 1. The good

quality of teaching in this area enables children to achieve well and to attain the standards expected by the time they enter Year 1. Many children exhibit above average skills of reading.

### **Mathematical development**

69. The quality of teaching in mathematics is satisfactory overall. Opportunities to develop and consolidate children's counting and tallying skills are used in all areas of work, so that in the nursery most children recite numbers to five and the more able count objects accurately showing the one-to-one correspondence as they count. Staff provide opportunities to develop the children's awareness of repeating patterns and regularly refer to colours and simple shapes in their activities. Children's knowledge of mathematical language develops steadily so that, by the time they are in reception, children are using terms such as smaller, larger, longer and shorter fairly consistently. Staff in the reception class build effectively on the knowledge and skills children have gained in the nursery, providing opportunities to further develop children's understanding. Activities such as pairing the socks on the washing line, sorting objects using a variety of characteristics, such as size and/or colour, and the discussion of the shapes of the sandwiches children made, are just a few of the strategies used to develop children's mathematical concept. Children in the reception class are also introduced to the beginnings of the numeracy lesson. They enjoy playing simple counting games and singing number songs as they explore number concepts, such as, one more and counting on. Children make satisfactory gains in learning and most achieve the standards expected on entry to Year 1.

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

70. Teaching is good in both the nursery and reception classes in this area of children's learning. Staff are skilled at stimulating children's interest and eagerness to learn. They provide stimulating learning environments where children have opportunities to experiment, investigate and explore. Children in the nursery were fascinated by the objects that would sink, those that would float, and were delighted by those that popped back to the surface of the water after being held down. They watched with wonder; the more able gaining the confidence to suggest what would happen as each new object was put into the water. In water play, the staff's good questioning helps children be aware of many new ideas, such as how water flows, when using funnels in the nursery and the affect of using whisks in soapy water, in reception. Children's interest in living things, and how to care for them is well promoted. Their knowledge of the wider world through looking at people's houses, roads and journeys all stimulate children's questions and desire to know more. In the reception class, the teacher played with groups of children creating a model canal with bridges and fields, recalling a visit to the local canal and developing their awareness of how roads and bridges connect. She effectively promoted their spacial awareness so they created bridges that were tall enough for their boats to pass underneath. The use of construction equipment develops children's knowledge of structures so they recognised what must be done to make their models stable. Children make good progress in developing the skills of using a computer. Both the nursery and reception staff provide meaningful opportunities for children to develop their skills of controlling the mouse, and awareness of the uses of information and communication technology, whilst playing games. Children's curiosity and interest in the world around about them is well fostered in both the nursery and reception classes, so many children have above average standards in their knowledge and understanding of the world as they enter Key Stage 1.

### **Physical development**

71. Children make satisfactory progress in their physical development due to the many appropriate opportunities provided. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Children's spacial awareness, co-ordination, control and balance are developed when using a range of small games equipment and gymnastics apparatus. In the nursery they develop confidence when using climbing frames and good control when using the large wheeled vehicles in the playground. In reception, children show satisfactory skills of organising themselves during a games lesson being able to return to "their own space" after an activity, and controlling a range of different sizes and shapes of ball. Children are given good opportunities to use pencils crayons, paintbrushes, as well as a range of tools to develop their fine control and co-ordination. Hammer and nails were used with satisfactory skill by children in the reception class to fix coloured shapes to form a picture. They used scissors with

satisfactory control to cut paper and different materials when making their pictures, models and designs. By the time children transfer into Year 1 most have developed satisfactory levels of control so they write their names legibly and write numbers and letters with satisfactory levels of accuracy. Most attain the standards expected.

### **Creative development**

72. Overall the teaching and provision for children's creative development is satisfactory. Displays in both the nursery and reception classes are testimony to the many opportunities provided for the children to express themselves creatively. Their paintings are full of life, bright and colourful. Care is taken in enabling the children to think about colour and observe carefully and the self-portraits made in the reception depict a growing awareness and maturity over those painted in the nursery. The youngest children are encouraged to experiment with paint. They enjoyed painting and printing with their hands much more than printing with leaves. In reception, the basic components for children's work are provided to ensure children are successful, and there are plenty of opportunities for them to explore, colour and texture of various materials to develop their own ideas. Some very individual sunglasses were made in this way. Regular opportunities are made for children in both classes to enjoy music, to sing simple nursery rhymes and repetitive songs. They enjoy playing untuned percussion instruments and in reception are showing satisfactory awareness of rhythm and beat. Children's imaginations are well promoted in a good number of creative areas, including the hibernation cave, the vehicles and dressing up clothes in nursery, and the canal boat and small world play in reception. Children make satisfactory gains in learning and most achieve the standards expected on entry to Year 1.

### **ENGLISH**

73. Standards in the 2000 National Curriculum assessments for pupils aged seven were well above average in reading and writing in comparison with all schools. This was due to the high proportion of pupils achieving the higher than expected standard of Level 3. In comparison with schools in similar social-economic areas, pupils attained standards well above average in reading and writing. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests, standards in English were not as high as those in 2000, but most pupils attained the standards expected. Attainment on entry to Year 1 is above average in reading and speaking and generally average in writing. The majority of pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 to reach a standard that is usually above that expected for pupils at the age of seven. Standards have been good over the last three years. Most pupils make similar progress irrespective of their gender, ethnicity or social circumstance.
74. The previous inspection judged standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing to be in line with the national average at seven. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of nine, standards were judged to be satisfactory, and pupils were on course to attain levels expected at the end of Year 6. Standards have improved since the previous inspection, although they have fallen in the current Year 2 class due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs.
75. Pupils' speaking skills are good at both key stages. Pupils' listening skills are also usually good, and they concentrate with good levels of attention. Not all the pupils in Year 2, however, have the concentration needed to enable them to attend well, but when they are listening effectively, good standards are apparent. Pupils, for example listened intently when a teacher described what might be in a feely bag. They are able to respond appropriately to the questions that the teacher posed and, whilst developing their own ideas, were able to incorporate the new vocabulary that the teacher introduced. In a Year 1 class pupils reflected on what it might be like to be in a jungle. All pupils were eager to contribute and they listened to each other's ideas with interest. In Year 4 pupils listen well to the teacher's introduction in many lessons asking sensible questions to clarify their understanding. Pupils speak with confidence in groups and to the class developing a satisfactory awareness of the formal occasions and discussions.

76. During the inspection most pupils in Year 2 were reading at levels generally in line with those expected for their age. Teacher in Years 1 and 2 work with small groups to develop reading skills. They provide regular opportunities to develop pupils' strategies for decoding new words and developing an understanding of the text. In Year 2, higher attaining pupils read accurately and discussed the book that they are reading, whilst the lower achieving pupils had difficulty in recognising familiar words. These pupils needed the support of an adult for them to make progress. In a guided reading lesson observed, the teacher helped pupils gain confidence by discussing the pictures prior to reading the book. Her skilful questioning supported the pupils' thinking skills, and enabled them to make satisfactory gains in learning. Most pupils in Year 2, read with reasonable fluency and express favourite aspects of the story. They used various cues to establish the meaning of words and have a satisfactory knowledge of letter sounds to help them suggest new words. The less able pupils are still rather hesitant. They match words, one to one, and enjoy their book, but the boys often find it difficult to remain on task for the whole period. They turn over the pages and predict what will happen when prompted by the teacher, but have difficulty in remembering the purpose of the contents. Many pupils enjoy reading and are supported at home with trips to the library and parents who read to them.
77. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their reading skills so that by Year 4, pupils' attainment in reading is in line with standards expected for their age. Some pupils in all year groups read quite complex texts aloud, but have difficulty in understanding some of the words and making sense of the text, which impedes learning. This was also identified as an area for improvement in the previous inspection report. Some pupils, but by no means all, practise their reading at home every day and some older pupils read for sheer enjoyment. This makes a significant contribution to their achievement. Many pupils know how to select an information book from the library and higher attaining pupils can skim and scan texts for information. The Library is housed in a large common area. The amount of books in the library is quite small. A significant number of books in the library and in class libraries are out of date and are not a satisfactory resource for research.
78. From the scrutiny of pupils' past work it can be seen that most pupils attained standards in writing that were similar to those expected for their age in both Years 2 and 4. By the age of seven, pupils usually write with well formed letters, but there is still an inappropriate use of capital letters. Some pupils in the current Year 2 also work at this standard, but in the work produced by the low attaining pupils, some letters written are still unrecognisable, making their work untidy and difficult to read. Handwriting is not joined and the volume of written work produced is below that expected at this age. High attainers spell accurately with few errors and can build regular words using their knowledge of letter sounds.
79. In Year 4, pupils produce a wide range of work, which includes fiction, poetry, book reviews, information and instruction writing. This represents satisfactory achievement from attainment on entry in Year 3, where the teacher has had to work very hard to encourage good writing skills. The majority of pupils take a pride in presenting their work neatly in all subjects, but not all pupils form their letters correctly or make appropriate joins when using cursive script by the age of nine. During the inspection, most pupils settled very quickly to their writing tasks during the literacy hour and produced a reasonable amount of work in a short space of time. Where the task was not appropriately matched to the needs of lower attaining pupils in Year 4, the amount of work produced was unsatisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to read through and redraft their work and pupils' spelling is improving. This year the school has made writing the focus and targets are set to improve pupils' work. This is beginning to raise attainment for many pupils.
80. Pupils with special educational needs in most classes make good progress from the time of entry. Specific work is planned for pupils with special educational needs during the literacy hour and pupils receive good support from the special needs team. The work they receive is matched well to the learning targets identified in their individual education plans, which contributes to their good

achievement. The pupils in the current Year 2, however, have not received assistance from additional learning support staff to enable them all to make appropriate success.

81. Pupils use their developing literacy skills appropriately in other subjects. However, many lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs find writing very difficult. Some teachers are skilled at devising varied and easier ways of recording, however, in some classes insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to use their reading and writing skills in some subjects. An over use of worksheets limits opportunities for writing and in history and geography, and pupils are not sufficiently enabled to carry out their own research. Information and communications technology is used satisfactorily to record pupils' English work, although, this is sometimes limited to higher achievers using word processing skills to transcribe work that they have finished already, which is not a satisfactory use of information and communication technology.
82. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Some very good lessons were observed during the inspection in Years 1 and 3 Teaching and learning was never less than satisfactory in lessons seen. In the very good lessons, teachers show confidence and very good knowledge and understanding of English. In a lesson in Year1, pupils used a Big Book well as a model for a story. All pupils were clear about the main points of the story and understood the meaning of the 'setting' of the book. Pupils of all abilities were provided with activities that built well on their prior learning and challenged their thinking. Pupils with special educational needs were well supported and enabled to find success in their tasks. The plenary was well used to both reinforce and extend the pupils' learning. In a lesson in Year 3, the teacher helped pupils to use their five senses to describe fruit, which stimulated their ideas and exciting language. She gave a good model to follow, clear instructions and her planning provided appropriate levels of work for pupils at all levels of learning. As a result the pupils made very good gains in learning.
83. Relationships in all classes are good. Pupils are valued and teachers skilfully convince them that they can succeed. Work is often planned to be challenging and builds on pupils' knowledge, which raises attainment. Pupils realise that, with effort they can achieve and work hard to reach their teachers' high expectations. Teachers' interest in the subject successfully inspires pupils with their own love of literature. Pupils in Year 3 demonstrated an ability to use descriptive language effectively because the teacher had skilfully conveyed her enthusiasm, enriching pupils' learning experience. Teachers set good examples to the pupils with their clear diction. This year additional staff had been allocated to the Year 2 class, which enabled all pupils to make at least satisfactory progress in their learning. Where teaching is less effective the lessons planned lacked the challenge needed to increase the rate at which pupils learn. In some lessons, the good teaching used in the initial parts of the lesson were not sustained, and the pupils' activities were not sufficiently carefully planned to extend the higher achievers or to support the learning of the less able.
84. The school has effectively introduced the National Literacy Strategy and the literacy hour has been successfully established in all classes. The present English co-ordinator is a strong leader who has a good knowledge and understanding of her subject. She is very experienced, and makes a significant personal contribution to the subject with her enthusiasm and hard work. She has the necessary knowledge and determination to lead and implement change. She is aware of standards achieved and takes an active role to address weaknesses. Teachers' planning and assessment have been improved since the previous inspection, and there is a shared commitment by all staff to improve standards. The current focus on writing has helped teachers to have a better knowledge and understanding of the subject. Resources for English are satisfactory overall. A good number of new books have been purchased, but the library does not have the expected number and range of books. It lacks the variety of books needed to support pupils' independent research.

## **MATHEMATICS**

85. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests, pupils in Year 2 attained average standards compared with all schools, and also when compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils that achieved a level higher than expected was close to the national average. Standards have been maintained since the previous report when standards were judged as in line with those expected by pupils in Year 2, and at the end of Year 4. During the current inspection, however the Year 2 class contained a significant number of pupils with special educational needs who were not achieving the expected levels and standards in Year 2 are below those expected for their age. In Year 4, pupils were attaining standards that were similar to those expected for their age. Most pupils make satisfactory progress through the school. Last year the higher achieving pupils in Years 3 joined those in Year 4 and were given additional challenge, which enabled them to make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they also make good progress towards their targets in Years 3 and 4.
86. A study of pupils' past work shows that in the previous year standards were in line with those expected. Almost all pupils in Year 2 understood the pattern in number to one hundred, and place value of tens and units. Most understood the concept of inverse operations. They recognised that division is a process of equal sharing and that multiplication is counting 'lots of'. All pupils made sensible estimates of length, weight and capacity, before using both non-standard and standard units to measure. Understanding of the properties of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes is secure, and many can recognise these shapes by an examination of faces, edges and corners. Problem solving related to number is well developed, as is the understanding of reflective symmetry. Most pupils can interpret pictographs and block graphs well. In the current Year 2, standards are not as high. The significant number of pupils in the class that find difficulty in settling to their tasks, has had an impact on the class's overall standard and, at the present rate, a significant number will not attain the expected standards at the end of the year. During the inspection, additional support was provided in some lessons and this enabled greater concentration and progress in pupils' learning.
87. By the age of nine, pupils can solve a good variety of number problems, including function machines, magic shape, missing number and interpretation of Venn Diagrams. Most pupils can subtract hundreds, tens and units using decomposition and can multiply h t u by tens and units. Most have a good understanding of fractional parts of shapes and countable objects and the higher achieving pupils understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. They develop their vocabulary and understanding of three-dimensional objects and measure the area and perimeter of regular and irregular shapes with accuracy. Pupils recognise and name acute, obtuse and right angles in shape. More able pupils measure radius and diameter accurately and understand their relationship with the circumference. Most pupils interpret tally and frequency charts correctly, but have insufficient opportunity to collect and represent their own data.
88. The quality of teaching observed in mathematics was never less than satisfactory and half of the lessons observed were very good. However, on considering all the evidence available, teaching is judged as satisfactory overall, as it enables pupils of all abilities to make generally sound gains in their learning. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented appropriately. Lesson objectives are consistently shared with the pupils at the beginning of lessons, but they are not always revisited during the plenary session to identify the quality of learning that has taken place. The start of lessons is used satisfactorily to develop the pupils' mental mathematical skills, but in some lessons, insufficient attention is paid to extend skills of pupils of all abilities. Where lessons are good or very good, group tasks of differing levels of difficulty are set. Some teachers evaluate their lessons effectively as they progress, by identifying those pupils who are experiencing difficulty with a concept and immediately give support. This is very good practice. However, a scrutiny of pupils' workbooks and worksheets from the previous year often highlights the fact that pupils of different abilities are given the same task. When this happens, activities either fail to challenge the more able, or the task is too difficult and some pupils make unsatisfactory progress.

89. In the past, insufficient classroom support has been provided for pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2 and this has had a negative impact on the learning of all pupils in the class. In Years 1 and 2 there is some over-reliance on workbooks. Coverage of National Curriculum requirements is fully met, but scrutiny of last year's workbooks indicates insufficient opportunities for language development, related to the variety of ways that mathematical processes can be expressed. There are insufficient opportunities for all pupils to fully understand the concept and use of 'time'.
90. In Year 3, very good progress is made in encouraging pupils to set out their work neatly and accurately. This is particularly important because pupils do not experience the use of mathematics exercise books in their infant years. The quality of marking overall is satisfactory. In junior classes, pupils have insufficient opportunity to collect, organise, represent and then interrogate data. This does not support pupils' knowledge and understanding of their own learning.
91. In a very good lesson in Year 1, the teacher's very good subject knowledge enabled her pupils to develop the concept of the passing of time well. High quality resources supported a very well presented period of practical-based teaching. There was a buzz of excitement when the pupils suddenly appreciated their own increase in learning. The lesson objective was achieved and the pupils found that mathematics could be fun. The plenary session was used to highlight what had been learned and in a practical way, to make further good progress in developing the concept that time passes when we do something,
92. Similar very good teaching was observed in the Year 4 class. Pupils were well involved in a range of appropriate tasks related to the measurement of perimeter. The teacher's good subject knowledge, practical activities, good day-to day assessment and a relaxed classroom atmosphere all supported pupils' learning very well. Pupils' interest and overall good attitudes and behaviour enabled them to concentrate and make steady gains in their learning. When talking to pupils in Year 4, most included the subject as among their two favourite curriculum areas. When behaviour is very good, it reflects the quality of teaching. Most pupils are keen learners and demonstrate great respect for their teachers.
93. Although all teachers have implemented the Numeracy Strategy and its principles, the co-ordinators' role is insufficiently developed and he does not support other teachers in their classroom or give demonstration lessons to share his expertise. He has no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning, and is not sufficiently involved in the screening of pupils' achievement in mathematics. Performance data, gained from both statutory and non-statutory testing, is insufficiently used to identify weaknesses in the areas of the mathematics curriculum or to identify those pupils who are making unsatisfactory progress in particular attainment target areas.
94. Resources for the subject are satisfactory overall, although there are insufficient CD-ROMs to enable information and communication technology to support the teaching of mathematics.

## **SCIENCE**

95. Standards in science have improved since the previous inspection. In the 2000 National Curriculum assessments, all pupils aged seven attained the expected standards and almost a quarter attained the higher than expected standard of Level 3. This shows good achievement for pupils of all abilities. They successfully build on the interest and curiosity developed in the reception class, so that by seven, pupils had acquired a good range of scientific knowledge and skills. In the most recent National Curriculum teacher assessments in 2001 standards were not quite as high. Most pupils attained the expected standard, but fewer pupils attained the higher Level 3, but this still represents good achievement overall. In comparison with similar schools pupils' attained average standards. By the time pupils leave the school at nine, standards are broadly in line with those expected, which is similar to that judged at the previous inspection.

96. From the scrutiny of previous work it can be seen that by the age of seven pupils have a secure understanding of the characteristics of living things. They know that many creatures, such as the butterfly, frog and humans change through their lives in a cycle of development. They know that all living creatures need water and food to survive. They recognise that many materials change when heated and that some materials are better for some purposes more than others. They learnt that some materials are affected by magnetism, and how to make a simple circuit to light a bulb. The knowledge and information they gain is enhanced by the investigations they make, so pupils recognise patterns and predict outcomes sensibly. Pupils make suitable observations and satisfactorily record what happens in their tests and experiments using pictures, simple measurements and written explanations.
97. From the scrutiny of work it is judged that pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 3 so that a good number of pupils achieve standards at least in line with those expected for their age, and many higher. Pupils' investigative skills are effectively developed in Year 3 when pupils explore how sound and light travels. They understand the need to make a fair test, but not always how that should be done. They develop a good understanding of the need to eat a balanced diet, but are not always clear about which foods provide the essential ingredients to help them to be healthy.
98. There was very little evidence of the work of pupils in Year 4. The class had two teachers during the previous year and much of the work from both the supply teacher and class teacher has not been retained. However, from the evidence of the quality of work already covered this term, and from the teachers' planning from last year, it can be seen that insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their investigative skills through the year. The range of knowledge taught is satisfactory, but the teaching is not effective in promoting pupils' good achievement. Pupils' standards decline in Year 4 and are broadly in line with those expected for their age when they leave the school.
99. The quality of teaching for pupils aged five to seven is usually good, enabling pupils to build on their previous learning and achieve well. However, the usual good progress apparent in the scrutiny of past work and the often high standards achieved by pupils at the age of seven, were not seen during the inspection. Standards in the current Year 2 class were seen to be below those attained last year, in the same term. This is due to the large proportion of pupils with behavioural difficulties who find it difficult to concentrate and focus on what they need to do. At the present rate, pupils are unlikely to achieve the good standards attained in the past two years. In the past, insufficient additional help has been provided to support these pupils and their teacher, and so pupils of all abilities in the class have made less progress than they are capable of. The need for additional learning support has been recognised by the new headteacher who is developing a range of support strategies until permanent arrangements can be made.
100. Strengths of the teaching include good subject knowledge that enables teachers to give effective demonstrations and clear explanations so that pupils develop good understanding. This was seen in the initial part of a lesson on seed dispersal in Year 2. In the most effective lessons, resources are used well to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. The teacher in the Year 1 class used the video facility in a CD-Rom to illustrate how different animals move, very effectively. She was able to replay the tape several times so that the pupils' ideas were stimulated and a wide ranging discussion developed about how the cheetah uses his tail to balance and how he kept his head still so he continues to focus on his prey. A general weakness in the teaching is the over use of worksheets in several classes, reducing the opportunities for pupils to record their ideas and findings in their own way. Consequently pupils' literacy skills are not sufficiently well developed and the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged to develop a variety of methods of recording, including the use of their own tables or graphs. The oldest pupils have insufficient opportunities to find out through investigation, and knowledge is gained mainly from the teacher or worksheets. Pupils' numeracy skills and information and communication technology are not

always used sufficiently to support pupils' work, although some teachers do so more readily than others.

101. The curriculum is effectively broad and well balanced. Teachers' planning is guided by the use of the government recommended scheme of work, which provides a systematic development of pupils' knowledge and skills. However, some teachers do not sufficiently promote the more investigative side of science work. Pupils' work in science plays a satisfactory part in promoting their social, moral and cultural development. During the inspection, for example, pupils in Year 3 were learning about how people sometimes choose to eat a different diet and some have to because of health considerations. It is therefore important to know which foods provide you with a healthy diet. The lesson not only consolidated their learning, but also developed an awareness of social issues and the needs of other people.
102. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and although she has not had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching through the school, regularly looks at samples of work in other classes to monitor the range of experiences and balance of the curriculum. She has developed a simple recording procedure, which requires teachers to judge the attainment of the pupils, but it has not yet been fully implemented. The results of tests or teachers' assessments have not as yet been analysed to identify any areas of weakness. Resources are generally sufficient, but the range and quality of many pieces of equipment, such as magnets and electrical equipment, are unsatisfactory and reduce the opportunities for more open-ended investigations to improve their skills scientific skills of enquiry. The school makes good use of the school grounds and the "wild area" in aspects of science work, such as habitats providing first hand experience, which stimulates pupils knowledge and understanding.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

103. Standards of work in art and design are above national expectation throughout the school. Pupils of all ages, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be similar to those expected nationally.
104. The strength of the subject is due to many factors, such as the very keen co-ordinator, who is given very good support by two of the school's learning support staff and nursery nurse in reception. There are very good resources to support teachers in delivering an interesting curriculum and a designated art and design room where pupils have plenty of space to work.
105. Good standards in all age groups are evident in the displays around the school. One display shows how pupils effectively experimented to find the right shades of colour before using brush and tissue paper dabbing to recreate Monet's style in his painting of 'Water Lilies'. Their work was based upon their observations in the school's "Wild Area". Pupils in Year 2 benefited from a visit from a local potter. He demonstrated throwing pots in clay and then enabled pupils to have a try. Their pots, which were later decorated with paint, were of a good standard.
106. From the evidence of pupils' work and good achievement it is judged that the quality of teaching through the school is good. It was possible to see only one lesson during the period of the inspection because the other classes have their lessons towards the end of the week. The very good lesson observed in Year 4 was well planned and provided pupils with lots of choice in materials and in the subject for their work. The activities were linked to their topic in history related to Greek mythology. Pupils made choices about a suitable topic to be depicted in a frame, to represent scenes and events from that period in history. They were given the choice of pencil, paint, or a good variety of different textured paper, to develop their chosen representations in a wide variety of ways, including collage and montage. Pupils made thoughtful observations about the starting point of their work when, group by group, they are taken out of class by the classroom

support assistant. A digital camera was used to record a variety of different locations around the school. The learning support assistant gave pupils very good guidance and suggestions for their choice of potential frame. Back in the classroom, pupils quietly shared information, and took, as well as gave, each other's advice about how best to develop their ideas.

107. Standards in art and design are very well supported by a popular and thriving, 'Art Club'. This Club operates in after-school hours under the guidance of the classroom assistant and the Nursery staff. Pupils complete a wide variety of quality displays in a number of different mediums.
108. Art supports work in almost all curriculum areas and adds significantly to the pupils' cultural development. Very well produced African masks are effectively displayed in the Early Years 'Art Gallery'. Pupils selected earth colours, to match bark paintings drawn by Australian Aboriginals. The Chinese New Year was celebrated and pupils' work included the production of a huge, colourful and very effective Chinese dragon and lanterns.
109. At the time of the previous inspection there was no co-ordinator to manage the subject and procedures to assess pupils' attainment and progress had not been developed. The new co-ordinator provides good leadership and has planned to develop a portfolio of pupils' work to support teachers' planning, lesson preparation and moderation of standards. She has had no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning, but talks to teachers and examines pupils' work as an informal way of monitoring the quality of education provided. There is now an easily read policy and the school has adopted the national recommended scheme of work to ensure good coverage of national curriculum requirements. At the time of the last inspection resources were satisfactory, they are now very good and used well to develop pupils' skills and creative response.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

110. Design and technology was not a focus of pupils' learning during the inspection and so it was not possible to see any lessons. Much of pupils' work had been taken home at the end of last term and so evidence was collected from teachers' planning, a few samples of pupils' previous work, from discussion with pupils about design and technology, and from photographs taken by the co-ordinator of pupils' artefacts from last year.
111. From the work and photographs seen, standards are judged as broadly in line with that expected. The different stages of the process of designing, making and evaluating are evident, but pupils have more opportunities to make than to develop the skills of designing through the development of plans. There is very little evidence of pupils' own designs, and this is an aspect that pupils in Year 4 said they have not had opportunities to develop effectively. Designs and labels to be used by pupils in Year 3 on their packaging, however, showed satisfactory awareness of the need to use bold designs and bright colours. Pupils in Year 2 also drew their sock puppet, showing what they had done and the materials they used.
112. The curriculum for design and technology is satisfactorily underpinned by the use of the government recommended scheme of work, which provides a clear structure for the systematic development of pupils' knowledge and skills. A satisfactory range of materials are used, both malleable and rigid, and an appropriate range of learning experiences are planned, including the use of textiles to make puppets in Year 2, and food technology, such as making a fruit salad in Year 1. Pupils have looked at a variety of structures and examined a variety of artefacts to evaluate their effectiveness. Pupils in Year 4, for example, looked at a wide range of purses before designing and making their own, and in Year 3 pupils looked at a variety of packaging before creating their own designs on packages made from simple two-dimensional nets.
113. From the evidence seen it is judged that the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers focus on the teaching of skills, as can be seen from the work on joining textiles in the purses made

by pupils in Year 4 with a supply teacher. Pupils in Year 1 also developed simple mechanisms to create pop-up cards for Christmas. From the discussion with pupils it can be seen that teachers are successful in promoting pupils' interest and involvement in their tasks. Teachers satisfactorily use pupils' literacy skills to record what they have done in design and technology, and pupils' numeracy skills are satisfactorily used and further developed, for example, when measuring and studying the nets of three-dimensional shapes. There is very little evidence of the use of information and communication technology to support pupils' work in design and technology, although the co-ordinator said that the Internet had been used by pupils to look at a variety of commercial designs. Shortcomings in the otherwise satisfactory teaching are the lack of focus on developing the discipline of making an artefact to fit a design, and the insufficient emphasis on the skills of developing plans that provide detail of the work to be done and showing the materials to be used.

114. The curriculum is sufficiently broad but not always effectively balanced. Teachers do not use any formal procedures for assessing pupils work and the development of skills and knowledge. Not all teachers follow the scheme of work completely. Some focus on the teaching of a specific skill, which is not then used in a practical task. Other teachers focus on the activity without thoroughly developing the skills required to carry out similar tasks in the future. Without a clear record of what is done and how well the pupils have learnt, it is not possible to ensure effective progression of pupils' knowledge and skills.
115. The subject has not been effectively led or managed in the past. The co-ordinator for design and technology has not had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' learning, and apart from keeping a photographic record of some of the artefacts made, little monitoring and evaluation is carried out to ensure good quality education is provided. The co-ordinator is also the deputy headteacher and her time has been consumed by teaching the reception class and her other management responsibilities. A review of how time can be given to the effective monitoring of design and technology needs to be made. A satisfactory range of consumable resources is available, but many of the tools are old and resources are barely sufficient in promoting pupils' knowledge and skills.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

116. Due to lesson timetabling only one lesson was observed during the inspection and so evidence of standards and of teaching was gained from scrutiny of pupils' past work, in discussion with pupils and evidence of teachers' planning.
117. Standards of attainment are in line with those expected of pupils at the age of seven, but below those expected by the time they are nine. Standards have not been maintained since the previous inspection. This is partly due to the reduced time given to geography with the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There is also a weakness in planning and a lack of resources to develop pupils' enquiry skills, particularly in Year 4. Most pupils, including those having special educational needs, make similar progress to each other.
118. By the age of seven pupils have a satisfactory awareness of the area around the school. Pupils in Year 1 draw simple maps of their journey to school. In the older classes in Key Stage, however, pupils' geographical skills are not sufficiently developed within the context of geographical enquiry at Key Stage 2. Many pupils in Year 4 have unsatisfactory understanding of geographical concepts in fact they are not at all clear what the study of geography is all about. They are able to use an atlas to locate the town of Stone, and they remember about topics on food and farming that they did the previous year. Pupils are given insufficient opportunities to explore and discover geographical knowledge for themselves. When asked how they remember, they explain it is because the teacher told them or they found it in books. They also remember the fieldwork done in Year 1, but are not secure in their knowledge and understanding of areas covered in geography.

119. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, but unsatisfactory overall in Years 3 and 4 because pupils' geographical skills are not sufficiently developed. Pupils in Year 2 are introduced to simple fieldwork skills as they investigate the school car park and hypothesise on what would make it safer. In the lesson observed in Year 3, pupils used textbooks to collect and report information on how a market garden worked. Although the teacher worked hard to guide the pupils' learning, the resource materials were not of a high level of interest for the pupils and did not hold their attention. In many lessons there is an over reliance on worksheets. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are not effectively developed through the learning in geography. The Internet is being used as a satisfactory resource of information, but information and communication technology is not generally used to present or record pupils' ideas or findings.
120. The curriculum for geography is satisfactorily broad, but not well balanced in terms of developing pupils' research and investigative skills. The co-ordinator is new to the school and at the time of the inspection had only been in post for a few weeks. However, she is keen to take an active and decisive role in improving standards in the subject. There has been no focus on monitoring the quality of teaching or learning, or on raising standards. Resources are limited and most are not of good quality, although, there are some good photographic resources of the locality and a contrasting locality (Barcelona).

## **HISTORY**

121. Due to timetabling constraints, only one lesson was observed during the inspection and so evidence of standards and of teaching was gained from scrutiny of pupils' past work, in discussion with pupils and evidence of teachers' planning.
122. By the age of seven pupils attain standards in line with those expected nationally but below those expected by the time they are nine. Standards in history are not as high for the oldest pupils as they were at the time of the last inspection. This is partly due to the reduced time given to the teaching of history since the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There is also a weakness in the provision for older pupils to do their own research and develop a full range of historical skills.
123. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 as pupils are beginning to develop the concept of historical enquiry and an understanding of chronology. In lessons seen in Key Stage 2, teaching was satisfactory, but scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils show that pupils are not doing as well as they should by the time that they leave the school aged nine. This is because key concepts such as chronology, change over time and the skills required to make their knowledge coherent, are not sufficiently developed and overall teaching is therefore unsatisfactory. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make similar progress.
124. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils discussed the old toys that they had brought in from home, giving reasons why they thought that the toys were old, difference between toys in the past and toys today. These are the beginnings of historical enquiry. In the Year 2 lesson observed, both the teaching and pupils' learning were good. The teacher told the pupils the story of the fire of London with an enthusiasm that inspired the pupils. Books were used for reference in the lesson, but they were neither at an appropriate level nor of sufficient quality to develop the pupils' research skills. Despite this pupils had a good understanding of the event and the order of the happenings. In discussion, some Year 3 children were also able to recall the story and facts when discussing the history that they had done in Key Stage 1. All the pupils had a satisfactory knowledge of the facts and people involved in and they understood and could explain the cause of the fire and the resulting changes. Pupils knew that information about events in the past could be gained from books, but did not know if it was always true.

125. Scrutiny of work showed there to be little recorded work at either key stage. Pupils' literacy skills are not effectively developed through their learning in history. The Internet is being used as a satisfactory resource of information, but information and communication technology is not generally used to present or record pupils' ideas or findings. Work recorded by the older pupils at the top of the school is mostly on worksheets, or copied either from the board or from books. There is no evidence of research or historical enquiry carried out by pupils in Key Stage 2.
126. There are no effective systems for assessing and recording the attainment and progress of individual pupils and as a result it is difficult for teachers to track pupils' learning from year to year or to match work accurately to their needs.
127. The curriculum for history is satisfactorily broad, but not well balanced in terms of developing pupils' research and investigative skills. Since the previous inspection the history co-ordinator has worked with the middle school to adapt the government recommended scheme of work to better fit the needs of the school. She acknowledges that the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have had a negative impact on the subject and that history is not now a high priority for development. There has been no focus on monitoring the quality of teaching or learning in order to raise standards. There has been insufficient recent leadership in the subject but the co-ordinator is keen to take a more active and decisive role in improving standards in the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

128. Only one lesson was taught during the inspection and there was little evidence of pupils' past work to be seen. Pupils were observed, however, to use their skills of information and communication technology knowledge in a number of different lessons. Standards are therefore judged on this range of evidence, on talking with pupils, particularly those now in Year 4, and on scrutiny of teachers' planning.
129. Standards at the age of seven years are broadly in line with those expected, but by the time pupils leave the school at nine most pupils are not attaining the expected standards. Pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory gains in knowledge and skills in Years 1, 2 and 3 but insufficient opportunities are provided in Year 4 and pupils' attainment is unsatisfactory overall. This indicates a satisfactory maintenance of standards through the school, except in Year 4 which are now below those judged at the previous inspection.
130. By the age of seven, pupils record their ideas in a variety of ways. They use simple word-processing programs to write stories and record information. They know how to use the various keys to create capital letters, leave spaces between words, delete mistakes and move to the next line. They use simple data handling programs to create graphs showing information collected about the weather and seasons. In Year 3, pupils composed their own simple tunes and then printed the notation so it could be seen as well as heard. They use simulation programs to explore ideas, develop strategies and to modify their plans in order to complete the adventure.
131. The quality of teaching is satisfactory except for the oldest pupils in the school. In Year 4 the teacher lacks confidence and expertise and consequently pupils do not have the range of experience needed to further develop their knowledge and skills to a satisfactory standard. In the lesson observed in Year 1, the teacher showed a good understanding of the needs of the pupils and provided a systematic development of concepts that enable all pupils to become aware of the early stages of sorting and categorising objects, ready for data handling tasks. The pupils were well involved and challenged to find common links between the good range of assorted objects provided. In most classes, teachers regularly make opportunities to use and develop pupils' word processing skills further in literacy lessons. In Year 1, for example two pupils recorded their story ideas and in Year 3 pupils used a planning sheet, provided by the teacher on the computer, to explore descriptive language. Pupils' information and communication technology skills are also

used satisfactorily in many other subjects. In Year 2, pupils used a simple table to record their information gathered in a science lesson, and pupils in Year 4 were shown by the headteacher how to use the Internet to research for information about the human skeleton. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning in mathematics through the exploration of data handling in science, and the use of computer generated graphs showing information about pupils' hair and eye colour in Year 1, and the development of weather charts in Year 2. Number programs also support the development of pupils' numeracy skills. A floor robot introduces pupils to knowledge of how to develop simple control programs and the awareness of right-angled turns, as well as developing their spatial awareness. The Internet is being used as a satisfactory resource in many subjects, including science, history and geography. Pupils in Year 3 logged to vote for their favourite poem as part of National Poetry day. A weakness in the quality of teaching is the lack of opportunity for all pupils to have regular use on the computer. In one class there is insufficient time given to the teaching of skills and the consolidation of this new knowledge in effectively managed activities and tasks.

132. The curriculum for information and communication technology is satisfactorily broad and balanced, except in Year 4. Teachers use the government recommended scheme of work to support their planning and ensure that all aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum are covered. The school has made good use of the government initiative to provide schools with additional funds to improve their equipment and resources, and to provide training for staff. Most teachers are now fairly confident in their use of computers and in the teaching of the information and communication technology curriculum.
133. The learning opportunities of the older pupils are considerably enhanced by membership to the computer club. Pupils are developing good levels of expertise, having produced their own web site and using a publisher program to design their own pages. Not all pupils in Year 4 attend the club and so do not benefit from this additional input to balance their learning and address their needs. Pupils from the club do, however, support other pupils in class and act as "helpers" for some staff.
134. There has been satisfactory leadership in the management of information and communication technology. The co-ordinator for information and communication technology is knowledgeable and has a satisfactory awareness of the work carried out in information and communication technology through the school. She provides guidance and support for staff, but has not had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching or of pupils' learning in order to identify the areas of weakness that need to be addressed. She has introduced a simple but effective system of recording pupils' standards of attainment, but it has not yet had time to be put into use. The quality of resources available to support pupils' learning is satisfactory. A number of new computers have been purchased to provide two in each class. The school also has a number of old computers, which still function and provide a variety of software that staff enjoy using. They do not however provide an effective basis on which pupils have frequent and regular opportunities to practice the skills being taught. The school has not as yet considered how they will meet the recommended ratio of one computer to 12 pupils.

## MUSIC

135. Pupils achieve standards by the age of seven that are in line with national expectations. By the time they leave the school at the age of nine they are on course to attain national expectations at 11. There has been little improvement since the previous inspection. This is because of the impact of literacy and numeracy lessons on the timetable. Teaching is satisfactory overall. There is some good teaching. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory gains in their learning over time.
136. Pupils in Year 1 are taught to listen to sound. They move to the music before beating time, which they all do accurately first time. When the beat was a little more complex, two boys found it difficult.

Pupils learn to play 'homemade' instruments carefully and quietly because the teacher stops them and reminds them that instruments can be played quietly. The teachers' good subject knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject informs her decisions on how to move pupils' learning in appropriate steps to achieve the learning objective of the lesson.

137. In discussion with pupils in Year 3, they were most enthusiastic about music. They like to play rhythms on instruments, singing and clapping to the beat. They could name a favourite instrument, but found it difficult to name a song that they liked to sing. They could not name a famous composer and were not sure what a composer did. They did not have knowledge of significant composers or different styles of music.
138. A Year 4 class, who have experienced using untuned percussion to accompany songs, were introduced to the difference between beat and rhythm. They were guided by the teacher and made good progress in increasing and decreasing both volume and pitch in a controlled way. The teacher then asked the pupils to evaluate their own performance, which helped them to understand their own particular skill in performing. The pupils were able to explain the difference between beat and rhythm and to tap out beat and rhythm following the good model of the teacher. The teacher also gave the pupils homework as an extension of the lesson, asking them to try to tap out the beat and rhythm of Michael Finnegan on their own.
139. In hymn practice, the singing is tuneful and enthusiastic, although there are no words displayed upon which the pupils could focus their attention, and a minority of boys did not join in. Younger pupils sat and listened, some of the girls joined in familiar phrases and choruses, but the majority of the boys were soon distracted. Opportunities to extend pupils' enjoyment and knowledge of music are missed in assemblies. Taped music is played as pupils enter and leave, but pupils are not encouraged to listen and neither the name of the piece of music, nor the composer was mentioned. Music is satisfactorily used to extend pupils' awareness of other cultures.
140. Choir is a voluntary activity, but held during school time for pupils in Years 3 and 4. Its aim is to stimulate pupils' enjoyment in singing. Pupils sing tunefully and with enthusiasm. They are able to use their singing skills to sing in a round. This is a good use of time for the majority of pupils, who are both enthusiastic and co-operative.
141. The curriculum is satisfactorily broad and balanced in terms of developing pupils' skills and knowledge, and underpinned by an adaptation of the government recommended scheme of work. Less time is given than is found usually and this impacts negatively on the opportunities for teaching of music and for pupils' good learning. There has been insufficient leadership provided in the development of music. The subject is not part of the school development plan and the subject manager has not been consulted about the place of music within the school. There has been no focus on monitoring the quality of teaching or learning. The range of resources is satisfactory, but many are rather old and lacking in variety.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

142. Overall standards in physical education, at the age of seven and at nine, are similar to those expected for their age. This is in line with the previous report. Standards in swimming are well above those expected, with almost all pupils, including those with special educational need, being able to swim over 10 metres by the end of Year 3.
143. In two of the three lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good and in the third lesson it was satisfactory. Overall it is judged as satisfactory, because of the sound progress pupils make. When teaching is good, it is supported by very good class management skills and good subject knowledge, which enables pupils to develop and refine their knowledge and skills. These qualities also enable pupils to work safely.

144. In dance, pupils in Year 1 made good progress in practising and developing movement in response to music. They change speed and direction smoothly when working individually. Slow, soft movements change quickly to more energetic marching, chopping and throwing actions. They perform with confidence in front of their peers.
145. In gymnastics, Year 4 pupils devise and perform satisfactory sequences of movements on the floor, and using small apparatus. They learn to co-ordinate movements to finish with  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$  or full turns, landing with satisfactory balance from the benches.
146. When talking to pupils, they demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the effect of exercise on their bodies. They explain the importance of warming-up and cooling-down sessions related to periods of exercise. They say that they enjoy physical activities and describe skills coaching activities when they have games lessons. They have a positive attitude in lessons and the standard of behaviour in two of the lessons observed was very good.
147. The curriculum for physical education is good. Pupils experience swimming lessons from Year 1 onwards. Allied to good teaching, this is the reason for high standards at an early age. Once pupils can swim confidently, they undergo training in water confidence and survival. This is very good provision. They have opportunities for a full range of physical activities and develop skills and knowledge satisfactorily through the school. There are no whole-school procedures for assessing pupils' attainment or records of their progress in skills development and so teachers have little information on which to plan activities that enable pupils to make good achievement.
148. The recently appointed head teacher is the subject co-ordinator. She has not had the opportunity to monitor teaching in physical education. Teachers' planning incorporates all requirements of the national curriculum and physical education well supports the social development of all pupils.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

149. Religious education is taught in all classes, following the guidelines of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils' knowledge and understanding, at the age of seven and at the age of nine, is in line with what is expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. This is the same judgement as in the previous report.
150. It was possible to inspect only one lesson because of the planning of the school's timetable. From the scrutiny of pupils work it is judged that teaching is satisfactory overall. The teaching and learning in the lesson seen with lower infants was, however, good. The lesson followed on from discussion relating to what it is to belong to a family or particular group of people. The concept of welcoming a baby into God's family was dealt with in a sensitive, but practical manner. Pupils representing the Godparents stood by as the events of the sacrament of baptism were carefully explained. The teacher used a doll and constantly questioned the pupils about their own experiences of witnessing a baptism. This added realism to the lesson and all pupils listened and responded with great respect to a very positive presentation. Pupils demonstrated good knowledge of the special artefacts of the Jewish faith and the celebration of Hanukkah.
151. An overall judgement on pupils' standards and progress was made by examining teachers' planning and by talking to Year 4 pupils. They know a good number of facts about major world religions for example Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Christianity. They have satisfactory awareness of the importance of holy books to the members of different faiths. They are aware of the Ten Commandments, and understand the concept of faith. Much of their work is covered through discussion, which enables all pupils to take an active part in lessons, irrespective of their prior skills in literacy.

152. The subject has been satisfactorily led in the past. The recently appointed head teacher is the subject co-ordinator. She has not had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. The curriculum identified in teachers' planning, meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Religious Education makes a significant contribution to the spiritual development of all pupils.