

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLDBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Waltham Cross

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117091

Headteacher: Mrs K Scudamore

Reporting inspector: Mrs L Woods
21079

Dates of inspection: 22 – 25 May 2000

Inspection number: 197477

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Alexandra Way Longcroft Drive Waltham Cross Hertfordshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Brock
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs L Woods	Registered inspector	Under fives Science Art Design and technology	Summary of the report How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Mrs C Webb	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? (Staffing, resources and efficiency)
Mr D Houghton	Team inspector	English Physical education Religious education Travellers	How well are pupils taught? (Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development)
Mrs E Pacey	Team inspector	Mathematics Information technology Geography and history Music Equal opportunities Special educational needs English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils? (Assessment)

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holdbrook Primary School is a small and friendly school situated in the centre of a housing estate in Waltham Cross. Currently there are 148 boys and girls on roll between the ages of three and 11, including 16 children in the nursery who attend school part time. The majority of pupils come from the local housing estate and 38 per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals which is above the national average. Pupils come from a variety of social and cultural backgrounds. Sixteen per cent of pupils are learning English as an additional language, which is high compared to the national picture, with six pupils at an early stage of language acquisition. Forty per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is well above the national average. Sixteen of these pupils are at Stage 3 and above of the Code of Practice for the identification of such pupils and three have statements of special educational need¹. In addition, the school regularly welcomes children from travelling families, several of whom arrived in school during the week of the inspection. Pupils' attainment on entry to full-time education is broadly average, through the very good foundation provided by the nursery class. Sadly, however, there is a high turnover of pupils in the reception class so that this solid foundation does not provide a secure base for teaching in older classes in Key Stage 1.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a warm and welcoming environment for the pupils. It is very effective in providing support for and promoting pupils' personal and social development and raising their self-esteem. Teaching is good. All staff know the pupils very well and are deeply committed to providing an interesting education and raising standards in the school. Provision for pupils with special educational needs or behavioural problems, and for those learning English as an additional language, is particularly good. The school is well led and managed. The headteacher and governors, together with the staff, have worked energetically to improve the ethos of the school and pupils' attainment and progress with considerable success. It has successfully overcome the serious weaknesses identified in its last inspection and now provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The dynamic leadership of the headteacher, with the full support of governors, deputy headteacher and all staff, has moved the school forward well over the past two and a half years.
- The shared commitment to improving the quality of learning and the teamwork between all staff creates a warm and positive ethos in the school.
- The quality of teaching overall is good, which is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
- Children make a good start to their education in the nursery.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs, those learning English as an additional language and the travellers' children who are welcomed periodically into the school, is very good.
- Pupils are proud of their school, take good care of the environment and love coming to school.
- Pupils behave well for the most part and the systems in place for, and teachers' management of, pupils' behaviour are very good, contributing to the positive ethos.
- Support for pupils' personal, moral and social development is very good.

What could be improved

- There is still work to be done on raising standards further in English and mathematics.
- The curriculum for information technology does not meet requirements and standards are below expectations.
- Curriculum planning as a whole needs reviewing to secure a broad and balanced programme.
- The school needs useful and manageable systems for collating assessment information.
- Management responsibilities need to be shared more widely.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

¹ Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.

The school was last inspected in September 1997 and has made good progress in addressing the issues identified at that time, particularly in relation to the pace of learning, pupils' behaviour and raising standards in the core subjects of English and mathematics. Attainment in English and mathematics was identified as a serious weakness and the school's success is clearly evident in the steadily improving standards in the end of Key Stage 2 standard assessment tests. Teachers have had appropriate training in and implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively. Teaching in ability groups at Key Stage 2 for English is having a positive impact on attainment and progress for all pupils. The behaviour policy is rigorously and consistently implemented. Behaviour overall is good throughout the school and pupils now enjoy good relationships, which generates an effective learning atmosphere within the school. Addressing these central issues has sensibly taken the highest priority. Whilst standards in information technology have improved since the previous inspection, they remain below national expectations. Improving resources and standards in this subject and raising levels of attainment in science are the next priorities in the school development plan. The school is also aware of the need to improve the breadth and balance of the remainder of the curriculum, particularly in light of the new requirements for Curriculum 2000.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	E*	E	D	A
Mathematics	E	E*	C	A
Science	E	E	B	A

Key	
Very high	A*
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E
Very low	E*

The table shows that in the 1999 standard assessment tests, attainment in English, mathematics and science was well above average compared to schools with a similar intake of pupils. Compared to the national picture attainment was below average in English but average in mathematics and above average in science. The table also shows the considerable success the school has had in raising standards year-on-year. Results from the standard assessment tests for Key Stage 1 in 1999 were very low in reading, writing and mathematics, being in the lowest five per cent nationally and well below average compared to similar schools. This group of pupils, however, had a particularly high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Inspection evidence indicates that results from the 2000 tests will show a considerable improvement for the current Year 2 pupils.

Inspection findings show that children under five in the nursery and reception class make a good start to their education. By the age of five their attainment is good in personal and social development. Attainment is in line with the expectations in the Desirable Learning Outcomes in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment is broadly average in mathematics and science, although it remains slightly below average overall in English. The school has sensibly concentrated its efforts on raising standards in the core subjects of English and mathematics to enable pupils to consolidate and make progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. However, whilst standards in information technology have improved since the last inspection, they remain below national expectations at both key stages. Standards in religious education are in line with expectations in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils attain standards appropriate to their age in art, design and technology, history and physical education. Standards in geography are below expectations and too little emphasis is placed on the subject throughout the school. In music standards are appropriate to pupils' ages at Key Stage 1 and are good at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good and often very good progress both in lessons and over time and attain standards appropriate to their abilities.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy their lessons and want to be involved in all activities. They work hard, co-operate and concentrate well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The key issues from the last inspection have been addressed successfully. Pupils behave well in class, in assemblies and when moving round the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good overall. The school provides very good support for pupils' personal and social development and pupils respond well to all opportunities provided. Relationships between pupils and between adults and pupils are good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils love coming to school and almost all arrive before time in the morning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good and makes a significant contribution to the warm ethos and the positive attitudes pupils develop towards school. It was satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons, good or better in 65 per cent and very good in 27 per cent. One lesson was excellent and only four per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. This shows a considerable improvement since the last inspection when only 11 per cent of teaching was very good and 17 per cent of teaching was reported as being unsatisfactory. Teaching for children under five and for pupils with special educational needs is of a consistently high standard. Examples of very good teaching were seen in literacy, numeracy, religious education and music at Key Stage 2. The additional teaching support provided for pupils who are learning English as an additional language and for those who are travellers is consistently good. This good standard of teaching is having a positive impact on learning, clearly shown by the improvement in standards in literacy and numeracy by the time pupils leave school. Literacy is almost always taught well, although very occasionally the focus is lost when different parts of the literacy hour structure are not clearly defined. Numeracy lessons all begin with oral work, which is contributing positively to building and reinforcing pupils' mental agility and calculation strategies. The basic skills are now taught well. Overall teachers' expectations are good, although some are still not always high enough. In the very few lessons when lesson plans are not adhered to the pace drops and pupils do not learn as much as could be expected.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Just satisfactory. The curriculum for children under five is based firmly on the recommendations in the Desirable Learning Outcomes ² . At Key Stages 1 and 2 the curriculum is broad and includes all required subjects, with a high emphasis on developing pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills. However, statutory requirements are not being met fully in information technology. Much of the curriculum is taught in topics but the school lacks an overview of the topics taught to each class. This makes it difficult to monitor the amount of time allocated to subjects to maintain balance. For example, not enough time is spent on geography or aspects of information technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. These pupils are very well supported both in class and in small-group teaching. Provision is carefully monitored by the co-ordinator and their individual education plans are regularly updated. They make good progress.

² Desirable learning outcomes – these are goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills. These will be replaced with the Early Learning Goals in September 2000.

Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. The support provided by the local education authority is very effective in developing pupils' confidence and competence in English and consequently pupils make very good progress
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision is very good for pupils' personal and moral development through effective use of group discussions known as circle time. Provision is good for their social development and sound for their spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. The care provided for their health and well-being is very good. The school regularly assesses their academic performance, but does not make sufficient use of the information gained to monitor individual pupils' progress or set them targets to aim for.

Good links have been established with parents, who feel welcomed into school. They are kept well informed about the work of the school overall and their attendance at consultation meetings is excellent.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The energy and dedication of the headteacher and the commitment of all staff are central to the significant improvements made over the past two and a half years. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work very closely together as an effective senior management team. Co-ordinators now need to take a greater role in monitoring standards in their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors take a keen interest in the day-to-day work of the school and have taken an active, personal role in raising standards and improving pupils' behaviour through their 'Governors' Awards' for personal achievement. The governing body and its committees meet regularly to review and discuss development targets. Their role in deciding and monitoring long-term targets needs developing.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall. The school consistently reflects on and evaluates its performance, but priorities for further development are not clear from the current school development plan format. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is good, but monitoring of teachers' planning and the work pupils do is less well developed.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The budget is set carefully and monitored closely. Specific grants are well targeted and supplemented from the school's own resources. Governors are adopting best value principles when making spending decisions and money carried forward from the last financial year has been appropriately allocated to provide another classroom and teacher.

The school has sufficient well-qualified and committed staff to meet the needs of the pupils. The school uses its generous accommodation effectively. Learning resources have been much improved since the time of the last inspection and these are now sufficient for all areas of the curriculum, except in design and technology and information technology.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school. • The school is well led and managed and approachable when they have problems. • The school has high expectations, teaching is good and their children make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents feel that behaviour still requires improvement. • Some feel that the amount of homework is not right. • Some would like more activities outside lessons.

Most parents are pleased that their children are able to come to this school and many regret that the school's profile is not higher in the community. Inspectors fully support their positive views about the school. Behaviour overall is good and the school manages the challenging behaviour of a minority of pupils very well. Inspectors judge that the range of activities outside lessons is satisfactory and appropriate homework is set.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children under five in the nursery and reception class make a good start to their education. At the time of the inspection almost all children in the reception class were over five. Their earlier work shows that their attainment by the age of five is in line with expectations in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development and they are now working confidently within the first stages of the National Curriculum. Their personal and social development is good. Pupils' attainment on entry to full-time education is broadly average. Sadly for the school, however, there is a high turnover of pupils in the reception class so that this solid foundation does not provide a secure base for teaching in older classes in Key Stage 1.
2. In comparison with the national picture the percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is well above average, with 40 per cent of pupils being on the school's register. Sixteen per cent of pupils are learning English as an additional language, which is high, and 38 per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals which is above the national average. These factors lead to considerable variation in standards of attainment for each year group and make it difficult for the school to establish trends over time. However, the school sets challenging targets for each year group. Inspection findings show that the school has had considerable success in raising overall levels of attainment and improving pupils' progress in English and mathematics, which were identified as a serious weakness by the last inspection report.
3. In the 1999 standard assessment tests at Key Stage 1 attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was very low in comparison with the national average. Teacher assessment of attainment in science was also very low. Compared to similar schools attainment in reading, writing and science was well below average and in mathematics it was very low. This group of pupils, now in Year 3, has a high proportion of special educational needs but effective teaching is ensuring that they are making steady progress. Over the past four years standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been consistently low but show considerable variation between years. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy is having a noticeable impact on standards throughout the school and provisional results for the 2000 tests show a very encouraging picture. The National Numeracy Strategy is at an earlier stage of implementation but is already having a positive impact on standards. Boys' performance overall has tended to lag behind that of girls in the Key Stage 1 tests, although again there is considerable variation between different years.
4. In the 1999 standard assessment tests in English at Key Stage 2 whilst the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and above was close to the national average, pupils attainment at the higher Level 5 was below and overall performance was below average. In mathematics the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and above was well above the national average, but performance at the higher Level 5 was well below, presenting an average picture overall. In science the overall picture was above the national average with attainment at the expected Level 4 or higher being well above average. In comparison with schools having a similar intake of pupils performance in all three subjects was well above average. Apart from a slight dip in mathematics in 1998 the school's results have shown a significantly rising trend over the past four years. Credit is due to the school's overall determination to improve standards for all its pupils and in large part to the high quality teaching for the oldest pupils. Again, girls have tended to outperform boys over the past four years although as at Key Stage 1 there is

considerable variation between years. The school has recognised redressing this balance as a priority and inspection findings did not note any significant variations in attainment between boys and girls in lessons.

5. Inspection findings show that attainment for the current pupils in Year 2 is average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In Year 6 pupils' attainment is broadly average in mathematics and science, although it remains slightly below average overall in English. Throughout the school, however, pupils are making good progress in English, through effective use of the literacy hour to group pupils according to ability at Key Stage 2 and the overall good quality of teaching in the subject. Progress in mathematics is sound. Although the numeracy hour is at an earlier stage of implementation, its impact is already taking effect. Pupils make reasonable progress in science, but the school acknowledges that insufficient time is spent developing pupils' experimental skills and lack of detailed planning leaves teachers at the end of Key Stage 2 with considerable gaps to fill.
6. The school has sensibly concentrated its efforts on raising standards in the core subjects of English and mathematics to enable pupils to consolidate and make progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Provision for, and standards in, information technology have improved since the last inspection but remain below national expectations at both key stages and progress overall is unsatisfactory. Both science and information technology have a high priority in the current school development plan. Standards in religious education are in line with expectations in the locally agreed syllabus.
7. Pupils attain standards appropriate to their age in art, design and technology, history and physical education. Standards in geography are below expectations and too little emphasis is placed on the subject throughout the school. In music standards are appropriate to pupils' ages at Key Stage 1 and are good at Key Stage 2 as a result of the expertise and enthusiasm from a member of staff. Pupils make sound progress in lessons in these subjects and good progress in music at Key Stage 2. However, lack of planning for the progressive development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding means that over time progress is less satisfactory. Evidence shows pupils repeating work at the same level in different year groups.
8. Good use of classroom support and effective teaching in ability groups in the literacy hour mean that pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good and often very good progress both in lessons and over time. Class teachers and the co-ordinator work closely together to establish their needs and ensure that they are given appropriate, challenging work, matched to the targets in their individual education plans. As a result, they attain standards appropriate to their abilities. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection report. Pupils from travelling families are quickly integrated into classes when they arrive and many are well known to the school. They receive a high level of support from the local education authority. This enables them to settle smoothly into the routines of the class and work steadily at levels appropriate to their abilities.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Children develop very positive attitudes towards school and become interested in learning from the time they start in the nursery. The stimulating and supportive atmosphere they enjoy ensures that they quickly establish confidence and a good work ethic. Children under five acquire good social, moral and personal skills during their time in the nursery ready for their transfer to the reception class.

10. Children and pupils are eager to come to school and almost all arrive on or before time in the morning. Their attendance is satisfactory. They are very enthusiastic about their lessons and want to be involved in activities. Pupils in Years 4 and 5, for example, preparing for a later science lesson on making switches are keen to get started and show a good knowledge of work they have done previously on electrical circuits. Pupils at Key Stage 2 willingly share their books when reading a play during an additional literacy support lesson and enjoy finding the rhyming words in them. Pupils co-operate and work well in groups and pairs when asked to do so. Younger pupils in Years 2 and 3, for example, very much enjoy the game of Fizz Buzz in maths in which all participate enthusiastically. The atmosphere in most classrooms is hardworking and concentration is good when there is sufficient challenge for all. Pupils are sensitive towards those less fortunate than themselves and are interested in other cultures and traditions. Pupils speaking English as an additional language, those with special educational or other needs and travellers' children are well supported by, and integrated with, their peers.
11. The school has successfully addressed one of the key issues from the last inspection and pupils' behaviour is now good overall. They understand what is expected of them and enjoy the rewards they receive. These are celebrated regularly in assemblies. Awards from both the headteacher and the governors, given for academic achievement, attitude and effort, are eagerly sought and greatly valued. Pupils behave well in class, in assemblies and when moving round the school. Although play outside can be boisterous, any incident is accidental and pupils regard sanctions as fair.
12. Pupils' personal development is good. In group discussions known as circle time pupils appreciate sharing their special memories and discussing their problems. In assembly all pupils paid rapt attention when watching Years 5 and 6 enacting scenes from the life of Martin Luther King. Although opportunities for taking responsibility are limited, pupils respond well to them and are keen to volunteer their assistance whenever they can. Relationships between pupils and with all adults are good, contributing to the warm and positive school ethos. All pupils are friendly and polite and want to help volunteering eagerly when adults ask for their assistance. They are proud of their school and take good care of their environment.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is good and makes a significant contribution to the warm ethos and the positive attitudes pupils develop towards school. It is satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons, good or better in 65 per cent and very good in 27 per cent. One lesson was excellent. Only four per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection when only 11 per cent of teaching was very good and 17 per cent of teaching was reported as being unsatisfactory. Teaching for children under five is of a consistently high standard. It is never less than good and during the inspection the use of literacy within a physical development lesson was excellent. At Key Stage 1 whilst 40 per cent of lessons are good or better, about one in 10 have weaknesses. At Key Stage 2 all teaching is at least satisfactory and nearly eight out of 10 lessons are good or better. Examples of very good teaching were seen in literacy, numeracy, religious education and music at Key Stage 2. The additional teaching support provided for pupils who are learning English as an additional language and for those who are travellers is consistently good. This good standard of teaching is having a positive impact on learning, clearly shown by the improvement in standards in literacy and numeracy by the time pupils leave school.
14. There are many consistently good features and few weaknesses in teaching throughout the school and these are helping to raise levels of attainment. Pupils are very well managed, particularly those with behavioural difficulties, and good relationships between

pupils and teachers characterise all lessons. This has a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes, which in turn contributes to the positive and purposeful learning environment. All pupils, including children under five, are skilfully encouraged to participate in activities and discussions and this improves their levels of understanding. Pupils work well both as individuals and in small groups, often without direct supervision, although the use of the library for independent research is under-developed. The few weaknesses that do occur are due largely to less satisfactory management of time, which results in a slow a pace of learning.

15. Staff in the nursery have a detailed knowledge of the needs of young children and the requirements within the Desirable Learning Outcomes. At both Key Stages 1 and 2 teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. All teachers have received appropriate training in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, both of which have been fully implemented. This was a key issue in the last report which has been fully addressed. The impact of both strategies is having a positive effect on the quality of teaching. Basic skills are now taught well, which is reflected in the improvement in standards in English and mathematics since the last inspection. The teaching strategies involved are now being used in other subjects, as is evident from planning documents, and this is having a positive impact on the pace of learning in other subjects.
16. Teachers plan well to meet their focused lesson objectives. This ensures that most lessons are well paced with clear expectations and this contributes to the good levels of learning for most pupils. Teachers work hard to provide appropriate activities for pupils with different levels of ability in most lessons. This key issue in the last report has been successfully addressed. However, there is some lack of consistency in what pupils of the same age in different classes are being taught. New schemes of work are being introduced which take account of the new curriculum requirements and to ensure that pupils' skills are developed sequentially. Overall teachers' expectations are good, although some are still not always high enough. In the very few lessons when plans are not adhered to the pace drops and pupils do not learn as much as could be expected.
17. All teachers prepare a range of interesting lessons carefully, such as those related to the life and work of Martin Luther King. Almost all share the object of the lesson with pupils clearly to ensure that they know what they are expected to learn. They use a wide range of teaching strategies, including direct instruction, group working and explanation, which maintains pupils' concentration well. High quality questioning in most lessons maintains pupils' interest fully and reinforces and extends their learning. Literacy is almost always taught well, although very occasionally the focus is lost when the different parts of the literacy hour structure are not clearly defined. Numeracy lessons all begin with oral work, which is contributing positively to building and reinforcing pupils' mental agility and calculation strategies. Teachers use resources effectively, such as artefacts in religious education lessons, to help raise pupils' levels of understanding. Information technology is used to support some lessons, such as literacy, but overall its use in other subjects is limited and unsatisfactory. Additional classroom help is generally used well to support pupils, especially those with behavioural or learning difficulties. However, on some occasions learning support assistants are not used efficiently, for example when they spend too long listening whilst the teacher is working with the whole class.
18. Teachers know their pupils very well and are constantly assessing what they can do. Some record their assessments on planning sheets and use the information effectively when planning lessons. However, this is not yet consistent either between teachers or subjects. The oldest pupils are set clear targets in literacy. This gives them a specific knowledge of their own learning. However, this good practice is not consistent throughout the school. In some classes, for example, pupils have been set targets in

literacy but these have not been kept up to date. Whilst the quality of marking is variable, much of it is good. Helpful comments enable pupils to focus on where improvements can be made in their work. Homework is used effectively to support pupils' learning, such as in reading and learning tables and in some topic work.

19. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is very good. All these pupils are provided with additional support both within lessons and through extra help outside the classroom. This support is particularly good in literacy at Key Stage 2 where pupils are placed in classes according to their ability. Those who need additional individual help work in small groups and teachers use specially prepared materials. This is having a significant impact on their learning and the number of older pupils requiring specific specialist teaching is reducing substantially. Special classes are held for those with English as an additional language, where the proficiency of the teacher enables them to make impressive progress. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Although the school does not have any dual language books of its own, these are provided by the local authority support services when required. Traveller pupils are welcomed and the additional support provided both in and out of the classrooms is good and enables them to integrate well in lessons. The small number of particularly able pupils in the school are given work which challenges them appropriately within lessons.

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

20. The curriculum for children under five is based firmly on the recommendations in the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Children enjoy the wide range of interesting activities provided, both for free choice and in focused small group work. At both Key Stages 1 and 2 the curriculum is broad and includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum including sex education, education about drugs misuse and religious education. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good and is a strength of the school. However, although there has been an improvement in the provision of computers and programs for information technology, statutory requirements are not being met because the full range of activities in the National Curriculum is not possible. For example, there are few usable programmable toys for pupils to control objects.
21. The majority of the curriculum is taught in topics which teachers work hard to make interesting for the pupils. However, there is no whole-school overview of the topics taught to each class. As a result there is a lack of awareness about exactly what pupils have been taught previously and some repetition occurs, for example, when pupils learn twice about the Tudors in history and electrical circuits in science at the same level. The lack of an overview also makes it difficult to monitor the amount of time allocated both to subjects and elements within subjects. For example, not enough time is spent on geography or aspects of information technology other than word processing. The imbalance of time devoted to some subjects means that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are not sufficiently developed in all areas of the curriculum.
22. Strategies for teaching literacy are well developed and are having a very good effect on pupils' learning. The numeracy strategy is also being implemented well, although it is still too early to judge its full impact on learning. The school has adopted a range of published schemes of work in other subjects, but these are not being used consistently or developed to meet the specific needs of the school, for example in geography and information technology. This is because the school has made a conscious decision to wait and prepare schemes so that they are ready for the imminent changes to the curriculum. However, it does mean that for the time being when planning topics teachers have little support with and guidance on the content or the required development of skills,

knowledge and understanding for pupils in different year groups and this hinders their attainment and progress. Teachers termly topic planning is good. However, it does not yet include the level of work to be expected from each year group in the mixed-age classes. Good evaluation of the work carried out for some subjects helps guide the planning for future work, for example in mathematics. However, this has not been developed for other subjects and is not being used consistently.

23. The curriculum provided is equally accessible to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. To balance the role models available in the school a visiting football coach provides a good example for boys as well as enriching the physical education curriculum. All pupils have the opportunity to go on a residential visit which enhances their personal and social development effectively. However, there is some inequality in the provision of swimming and in extra-curricular activities in the class which spans the two key stages. The school is aware of this and taking measures to correct the imbalance.
24. Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory, with tap dancing, ocarina and seasonal activities such as netball and birdwatching. For older pupils there is the opportunity to go sailing and rock climbing at a local facility. Links with the local community and other schools are promoted well when pupils join another school for drama and participate in musical events such as singing in the shopping centre at Christmas.
25. Provision for pupils' personal development is good overall. Their spiritual development is fostered satisfactorily, not only through effective acts of collective worship, but also in lessons. Assemblies are also used well to celebrate the achievements of others, such as those learning to play musical instruments. Specific lessons, such as those for personal and health education and circle times, give pupils good opportunities to talk about their own feelings. Pupils learn to consider the feelings of others and their own reactions to different opinions, for example when Year 6 pupils discuss the place of black people in society in the past. They show amazement and respect when they realise that some of their peers can speak and read two languages. Pupils, especially those with behavioural difficulties, are given space to reflect, when they cannot cope with everyday things. However, teachers do not always plan to take advantage of opportunities in lessons to raise pupils' awareness of the wonder of the world around them, for example the magic of growth in science.
26. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good, which is a considerable improvement on the position reported at the last inspection. The school has worked very hard to reach this standard and this is reflected in the positive ethos within the school. Morals and values are constantly emphasised in assemblies and other lessons. Rules are clearly understood by all pupils, who behave well in school. The behaviour policy is applied consistently and there are good strategies in place to deal with pupils who have behavioural difficulties. These are well known by the pupils concerned and the older ones often apply the strategies they have been given without intervention from the class teacher. All staff provide good role models which support the good provision the school makes for pupils' social development. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively together in all lessons, for example in group work in literacy and numeracy lessons. Lunchtime staff encourage pupils successfully to play together harmoniously. The school provides a good range of games that involve pupils in playing together sensibly, all of which contribute positively to the development of their social skills. A satisfactory range of visits to places of local interest and the residential visit provide further opportunities to develop pupils' social interaction. Local senior citizens are regularly entertained by the oldest pupils, for example with singing and tap dancing. They are invited to plays and concerts and are delighted to receive harvest gifts in the autumn.

27. As at the time of the last inspection the school continues to make sound provision for pupils' cultural development. Effective use is made of visits and visitors, for example theatre groups, to raise pupils' cultural awareness and the school has a satisfactory range of books about other cultures. Pupils enjoy the opportunities provided to play instruments from other countries, for example steel drums, listen to a wide range of music and study the work of different artists. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for life in a multicultural society. The school's diverse cultural population is celebrated well and a Hindu parent-governor is returning to answer more questions about her faith in the next religious education lesson for one year group.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. Pastoral care is a strength of the school and greatly valued by parents. Teachers know pupils and their home circumstances very well and give them very good support and guidance. They are always ready to listen and pupils know their concerns will be dealt with effectively. Mutual trust and support are the foundation of the school's good ethos. Mid-morning breakfast, for example, is available for all at minimal cost and over 50 per cent of pupils take advantage of this. Children in the nursery enjoy a supportive and stimulating learning environment. They share a regular 'learning through play' session with reception children for one hour a day which supports their smooth transition into the main school. Pupils with special educational and other needs, those who speak English as an additional language and travellers' children are very well supported by the school's provision and well integrated with their peers to the benefit of all.
29. Pupils' health, safety and well-being have a high profile. Procedures for monitoring this are sound with safety and security under regular review. Every adult at the school attended the short first-aid course held recently, a trained first aider is always on site and practice of first aid is good. Child protection procedures are satisfactory but the school is waiting for a local education authority course to be arranged to ensure that more than one adult has training in child protection issues, which will then be shared with staff. The school was apprised of a number of health and safety concerns noted during the inspection, which included the need to ensure that school gates are always kept closed when pupils are on the premises and to look at the size of the toilets which nursery and reception children use.
30. The school keeps good records of children's and pupils' attendance although there is no late book. Registers, not all of which contain the same symbols for denoting reasons for absence, are regularly monitored by the headteacher and educational welfare officer. The latter is appropriately involved when circumstances dictate. Parents know that they must provide reasons for any absence and are encouraged with reasonable success not to take holidays during term time.
31. Very good procedures are now in place to promote and monitor good behaviour, thus addressing one of the issues from the last inspection report. The policy is known to all and consistently implemented by staff. Pupils understand what is expected of them and what sanctions to expect if they do not follow the school's rules. Any instance of bullying is dealt with swiftly and effectively. There have been no recent exclusions and the school's policy of inclusion works well.
32. The school has satisfactory procedures to promote and monitor pupils' personal development. Older pupils are given sufficient opportunities to take responsibility and respond to these conscientiously, for example carefully operating the cassette recorder and overhead projector in assemblies. Assembly themes, circle time and visits from police, road and rail safety representatives inform pupils about the dangers and difficulties

outside their school environment. Pupils understand citizenship and are ready for the next stage in their education when they leave.

33. Pupils' attainment is assessed carefully when they enter full-time education. This assessment is used effectively to help identify pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. These baseline tests are followed by very regular, systematic testing as pupils progress through the school. The school then uses these assessments to predict and target the levels that large groups of pupils will achieve in the end of key stage tests. Targets are set for individual pupils in some subjects and in some classes. However, practice is inconsistent and as a result pupils do not always know what they have to do in order to improve their work and achieve their predicted levels.
34. Teachers know their pupils very well and use their knowledge extremely well during lessons when they continuously monitor, assess and guide pupils in their tasks. Most teachers maintain some records of pupils' day-to-day work. However, there is no consistently used, formally agreed method of recording what pupils have achieved in lessons. As a result there is no detailed picture of what they know which can be used to guide teachers' planning for the next stage of learning. Although a great deal of time and effort is successfully spent on pupils' personal and social development there is no system for recording their personal achievements. Some teachers attend meetings with other schools to ensure that they share the same understanding of the levels to be achieved by pupils in different year groups and there is a useful school portfolio of work in English which contains examples of levelled work. However, there are no collections of work in other subjects to support teachers in their assessments. As a result some teachers' expectations of their pupils' levels of work are not always high enough. By contrast work in literacy is assessed and monitored closely. The information is used so that pupils needing it are given good additional and intensive support in order to help them progress.
35. Assessment and recording of attainment and progress for pupils with special educational needs are good. These pupils have clear, achievable but challenging targets in their individual education plans, which are regularly reviewed and updated to plan the next stage of their learning. As a result they make good progress, which shows a good improvement on the position found by the last inspection report. Pupils with English as an additional language have their progress monitored closely and in great detail. As a result the work planned for them matches their needs very closely and they make very good progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. The school strives hard to involve parents in their children's lives at school and to develop a good working partnership with them. Good links have been established and parents feel welcomed into school, although few are able to stay and help in the classroom. There is no parent-teacher association, but successful fund-raising events run by welfare assistants are well attended and the money used for the benefit of pupils. All home-school agreements have been signed and parents queue up for school productions. Their attendance at consultation meetings is excellent. Parents are pleased that their children are able to come to this school and many regret that the school's profile is not higher in the community.
37. Parents receive satisfactory information from the school through the prospectus, governors' annual report, news and other letters sent out. Letters are displayed in classrooms and the secretary is always ready to help with form-filling if parents need this. There is a wide range of bilingual support personnel to assist those parents who do not speak English as a first language, although their services are rarely required. Parents of children with special educational or other needs are involved in individual education

programme reviews. They and parents of children speaking English as an additional language are well informed about their children's progress. Most do what they can to help the school and are appreciative of the support given to their children. Parents like the annual reports. These set targets for children to achieve in English, mathematics and their personal development, but did not contain all the statutory information required last year.

38. Parents support the school's aims and ambitions for their children and most help them at home where they can. The school arranges for extra help in reading if pupils are not able to share this with their parents. Whilst 21 per cent of responses to the parents' questionnaires felt that children were not given the right amount of homework and about a third did not feel that the school provided a sufficient range of activities outside lessons inspection findings do not support these views. The school's strong commitment to improving and developing its partnership and links with parents, coupled with parental support, educational visits made and visitors to the school, makes a positive contribution to pupils' achievement, widens their experience and enhances their personal development.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

39. The school is well led and managed. The dynamic and dedicated leadership of the headteacher together with the commitment of all staff to improving standards and the quality of learning is central to the significant improvements made in the past two and a half years. The quality of teamwork between all who work in the school is a strength and creates a warm and positive ethos which pupils and parents appreciate and value.
40. The governing body is deeply committed to the school. Governors take a keen interest in its day-to-day work and visit frequently to see this at first hand. They have taken an active, personal role in raising standards and improving pupils' behaviour since the last inspection through their 'Governors' Awards' for personal achievement. These are eagerly sought and valued by the pupils. Governors bring a significant degree of expertise to the school, for example in finance and health and safety, and attend appropriate training to keep up to date with educational developments. The governing body and its committees have appropriate terms of reference and meet regularly to review and discuss development targets. Governors are kept well informed about progress towards achieving these through regular reports from the headteacher. Governors, however, are aware that their role in deciding on and monitoring long-term targets is under-developed.
41. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work very closely together as an effective senior management team, setting high standards by example and monitoring the day-to-day work of the school closely. The headteacher visits all classes daily and regularly offers support in lessons. She has a clear picture of the quality of teaching and learning through both formal and informal monitoring. The deputy headteacher keeps an effective overview of work in literacy and numeracy through monitoring planning and occasional lessons. Pupils' work in English and mathematics is monitored termly by the whole staff and governors together to ensure that standards are improving. In other areas of the curriculum co-ordinators are enthusiastic but have very limited input into monitoring planning, teaching or standards in their particular subjects. Staff plan a half-term's work together but there is no effective overview of the breadth and balance of the curriculum or whether pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are developed progressively. The school development plan is discussed with staff and governors to establish areas for improvement, although it is not clear from the current format which of these have the highest priority. The role of co-ordinators in determining the action to be taken to improve their area of responsibility is under-developed.

42. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs is experienced and provides effective support for staff and pupils in the preparation of individual education plans. Close liaison between the co-ordinator and other agencies makes a valuable contribution to the very good provision for these pupils throughout the school. Provision is further enhanced by the high number of support staff, most of whom have had training and are clear about their roles. Where they are less efficient they do not take sufficient note of teachers' planning for the pupils they are working with. The governor for special educational needs takes a very close interest in the work of the school. However, her more formal role is not well defined for the benefit of the parents. The teacher for pupils with English as an additional language manages their needs very well and they benefit very much from the very good specialist teaching that they have.
43. Travellers' children are welcomed into the school, sometimes for five or six weeks, at certain times of the year. They are well supported not only by the Hertfordshire travellers' support team but by the school's own procedures and ethos of inclusion, which ensure that their time at the school is profitably spent. They are well integrated with their peers and enjoy their time at the school. Hertfordshire has pioneered a progress card for these children to take to every school they attend. If these are kept up to date it will not be necessary to assess children each time they attend a new school.
44. There are sufficient well-qualified and committed teachers to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. Well-trained teaching assistants give good support to pupils with special educational and other needs in the classrooms and for additional literacy support. The nursery is well staffed with three qualified nursery nurses who give children a very good start to their education. The teacher for pupils with English as an additional language and those from the Hertfordshire travellers' support team work hard to ensure that their pupils enjoy equal access to the curriculum. The school has good induction procedures to support and guide newly-qualified teachers. All teaching staff are encouraged to go on courses identified through their professional development interviews and linked appropriately to the school development plan. The secretary runs the office efficiently and contributes considerably to the smooth running of the school.
45. The school uses its generous accommodation effectively. The cleaner in charge works tirelessly and classrooms, hall and dining area are spotlessly cleaned. Walls are enlivened with colourful displays, some of which celebrate pupils' good work. The carefully constructed millennium dome model in the main hall, for example, reminds pupils of their recent visit. The school has spacious, well-kept grounds with perimeter fencing in good condition. There is little vandalism. Lower-school pupils use a separate playground from those in the upper school, who also enjoy the use of the field and shrubbery when the weather permits. Nursery children enjoy their enclosed outdoor play area, although this is somewhat small for 'vigorous pedalling'! The overall condition of the tarmaced areas is satisfactory, although some drain covers have sunk and others have risen over time.
46. Learning resources have been much improved since the time of the last inspection and there are now sufficient for all areas of the curriculum except in design and technology and there are few control toy robots for information technology. The library has an adequate number of fiction and non-fiction books, although there are none with dual-language text. The school makes good use of the library loan service, borrowed artefacts for history and religious education and outside resources such as residential centres and museums.
47. The school's financial procedures are sound. The budget is set after careful consideration of priorities identified in the school development plan and good use is made

of the local education authority's financial services to allocate and manage resources. Monitoring of expenditure against budgeted figures by the finance committee, headteacher and secretary is satisfactory and day-to-day administration is efficient. Specific grants are well targeted and monitored and supplemented well from the school's own resources. Governors are adopting best value principles when making spending decisions and money carried forward from the last financial year has been appropriately allocated to provide another classroom and teacher. There are, however, still some recommendations from the last auditor's report not yet adopted, for instance, an up-to-date inventory.

48. The school copes very well with a significant turnover of pupils, with around 28 per cent of pupils joining or leaving during each academic year. Forty per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs and 16 per cent are learning English as an additional language. Pupils from travelling families are warmly welcomed throughout the year and well integrated into classes when they arrive. The quality of teaching is good and the school has sensibly concentrated efforts on improving pupils' behaviour and raising standards in literacy and numeracy with considerable success. It is aware of the need now to improve provision for and standards in information technology and work on creating greater breadth and balance in the curriculum as a whole. Relationships are good and staff and pupils are proud of their school. Taking these factors into account the school provides sound value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors, headteacher and staff should now:

- continue sterling efforts to raise standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science; (*paragraphs 3, 4 and 58-80*)
- raise overall standards in information and communication technology by ensuring that the requirements of all aspects of the National Curriculum are met; (*paragraphs 6, 17, 20, 46 and 89-92*)
- build on the existing good planning to improve the quality and range of the overall curriculum by:
 - completing schemes of work in all subjects;
 - reviewing the school's cycle of topics to ensure that pupils do not meet the same ones in different year groups, and that sufficient time is allocated to all subjects;
 - incorporating information on the level of work to be expected from each year group into the planning, so that pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are developed systematically and progressively, particularly in mixed-age classes;
 - sharing and developing systematic recording and evaluation of planning, to help guide future lessons; (*paragraphs 6, 7, 16, 21, 22, 84, 85, 88, 95 and 102*)
- establish useful and manageable systems for collating the wealth of information gathered through assessment in order to:
 - provide a detailed picture of the attainment, progress and personal achievement of individual pupils;
 - set targets for individual pupils and establish the value added by the school; (*paragraphs 18, 33 and 34*)
- improve the overall management of the work of the school through shared responsibility by:
 - reviewing the structure of the school development plan to identify areas of highest priority;
 - involving governors and staff in producing action plans to identify the development of their areas of responsibility;
 - extending the role of co-ordinators to involve them in monitoring the planning, delivery and outcomes of lessons in their individual subjects, and the standards attained;
 - ensuring that key staff, in particular the deputy headteacher, have sufficient time to fulfil their roles effectively. (*paragraphs 40 and 41*)

In addition to the issues identified above the following points should be included in the action plan:

- improve pupils' investigative skills in science and the use of mathematics across the curriculum (5, 72 and 80)
- plan more consistently for pupils' spiritual development in lessons (25)
- eliminate the very small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching (13 and 14)
- provide dual-language texts and improve the overall use of the library (14, 19, 46 and 62)
- ensure that registers are marked consistently and address health and safety issues (29 and 30)
- ensure that pupils' annual reports meet statutory requirements (37)
- address equality of opportunity for pupils in mixed-age classes (23)
- ensure that recommendations in the auditors' report are met (47)
- consider providing an up-to-date computer for the nursery children (54)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	25	38	31	4	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	8	132
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	-	52

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	53

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	21

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	30

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	6.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	10	8	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	5	4	5
	Total	11	10	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	61	56	61
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	4	5	5
	Total	10	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	56	61	61
	National	82	86	87

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	6	7	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	5	5
	Girls	7	6	7
	Total	10	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77	85	92
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	5	5
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	10	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77	92	92
	National	68	69	75

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	2
White	95
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	3	1
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 - Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR - Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	100

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of unqualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per unqualified teacher	16

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

Number of pupils per FTE adult	5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999 / 2000
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	£
Total income	328 225
Total expenditure	331 799
Expenditure per pupil	2 258
Balance brought forward from previous year	42 202
Balance carried forward to next year	38 628

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	148
Number of questionnaires returned	46
Percentage returned	31

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	35	2	0	4
My child is making good progress in school.	55	43	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	47	20	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	33	18	4	18
The teaching is good.	61	35	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	24	11	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	26	4	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	33	0	0	10
The school works closely with parents.	46	39	13	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	65	33	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	33	10	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	33	23	7	13

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

Personal and social development

49. Children's personal and social development in the nursery is good. They enjoy coming to school and settle quickly and confidently in the morning to the extensive range of activities provided by the staff. All staff in the nursery know the children very well and their sensitive intervention as children work encourages them to persevere and extend their skills very well in the other areas of learning. As a result, children's concentration is good and they are eager to try new things. Although some are shy and reserved, almost all children are happy to explain what they are doing and they share and take turns with the play equipment appropriately for their age. Teaching is good as staff effectively encourage children to be independent and considerate and children respond well to these high expectations. They know precisely where everything is kept in the nursery, and tidy up quickly and efficiently when asked to do so. As they recall what they have done children sit quietly and listen sensibly to their peers and accept their drink and snack with a polite 'Thank you'. These good values are effectively reinforced by the staff who gently remind children of the expected code of behaviour if they forget. Children from reception join the nursery for an hour each morning and their personal and social development is supported well through sharing the wide range of activities provided.

Language and literacy

50. Children attain standards appropriate to their age in language and literacy in both the nursery and reception classes. Children's language skills and range of vocabulary are low when they start school and development of these has a high priority in the early years. In the nursery teaching is very good as all staff encourage children to think and talk about what they are doing. They develop children's language skills and broaden their vocabulary well in small group activities related to all the areas of learning. When matching animals to their young, for example, good-humoured intervention and careful prompting reminded children that baby frogs are tadpoles. Staff read stories expressively and consistently encourage children to comment on the story, explain what words mean and join in with familiar parts. Around half join in enthusiastically, but low levels of language skills are evident in the reluctance of some children to contribute and their lack of knowledge of meanings, for example of 'narrow'. Very good teaching focuses specifically on those children with least confidence and the quality of learning is very good as they noticeably gain understanding.
51. Children enjoy role-play and organise their 'pet shop' well, talking enthusiastically and unsentimentally about selling the dogs and cats! They handle books carefully and study the pictures closely. In the nursery very good teaching introduces children to individual letters and their sounds in lively and exciting sessions. Children respond well to these sessions and by the age of five most recognise and write letters correctly. In both classes children regularly experiment with writing and through effective teaching progress steadily from mark-making through trace and copy writing to writing simple words and phrases independently.

Mathematics

52. Children's attainment in mathematics is in line with expectations by the age of five. In the nursery children complete jigsaws of increasing complexity successfully and confidently recognise simple shapes such as circles and squares. In a small group session they chat

enthusiastically about which shapes fit together, encouraged effectively by the staff. Very good teaching allows a group making fairy cakes to weigh the ingredients independently and develops mathematical vocabulary effectively as children discuss whether it is too heavy or not. All children concentrate very hard, although about half participate in silence unless directly questioned by the staff. In another session counting skills are developed well as children count the bears' eyes during the story, although other opportunities such as counting milk cartons are occasionally missed.

53. By the age of five children in the reception class count confidently to 10 and beyond. They recognise symmetrical shapes by matching ladybird spots and share their findings enthusiastically with each other as they work. They recognise and write numbers with reasonable accuracy and more able children complete simple sums involving number bonds to 10. Sound teaching in the reception class provides interesting and relevant activities well matched to the abilities of the children, which enables them to make steady progress.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

54. By the age of five children have a sound knowledge and understanding of the world through the wide range of interesting and relevant activities provided in both nursery and reception. Their ability to explain and question how and why things work, however, is less well developed through limited language skills gained outside school. Teaching is very good in the nursery as staff work hard to overcome this by talking and discussing activities as the children work. Around half of the children respond chattily, but the remainder is more silent and reserved. They explore the properties of sand and water with serious concentration and enjoy demolishing their sandcastles as soon as they are built. During role-play confident children discuss their families, pets and homes enthusiastically. They understand the needs of animals to keep them healthy and care for the class goldfish well. Reception children were very well prepared for and consequently thoroughly enjoyed their visit to a local nature reserve to hunt for bugs. Nursery children carefully weighed and mixed the ingredients for their fairy cakes and recalled the process with reasonable accuracy when questioned carefully. During the early morning activity sessions small groups of children use the computer mouse confidently with good control to dress teddy and match initial letter sounds. Unfortunately, however, the nursery has no up-to-date computer of its own so that opportunities to develop these important skills are limited.

Physical development

55. By the age of five children's physical development is in line with expectations for their age. In the nursery staff are committed to providing the children, who for the most part live in flats, with a wide range of outdoor activities. Children develop their co-ordination well, pedalling tricycles and other wheeled toys and using other apparatus competently and confidently. Staff interact effectively with the children, encouraging them to throw and catch balls, build with large apparatus and play imaginatively in the nursery garden. Most children are well co-ordinated moving around the classroom and thoroughly enjoy their movement lessons in the hall. In this session teaching was excellent as very effective links were made between the story in class and the subsequent dance, mime and movement activities. The whole session moved at an exciting pace; children made very good progress and were totally engrossed in making long strides, short steps and tip-toeing around the room. Children in reception continue developing their co-ordination and skills of co-operation well through playing competitive and non-competitive games.
56. In both nursery and reception children make satisfactory progress in controlling and using tools and equipment such as pencils, paint brushes, construction kits and jigsaws. They

enjoy the many and varied activities provided and work happily together when modelling, painting and building.

Creative development

57. By the age of five children's creative development is in line with expectations, although their lack of expressive language impacts on their ability to use their imaginations fully in play. Children enjoy painting and use colour effectively, for example painting daffodils in spring in the nursery and life-size self-portraits in reception. In both nursery and reception children are keen to join in music sessions. In the nursery they watch anxiously as instruments are put out, but wait their turn patiently and sensibly! They play competently and enthusiastically and recognise the names and sounds of different instruments. Teaching is good as children are effectively encouraged to participate in shared music making and work together co-operatively. Reception children also play instruments confidently and in both classes children sing familiar songs with gusto and reasonable musicality.

ENGLISH

58. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above in reading was well below the national average. In writing the percentage reaching Level 2 was very low. In comparison with similar schools, based on the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, but not on the turbulence element³, the overall attainment in reading and writing was well below average in 1999. These results are similar to those reported at the last inspection. The poor performance is attributable to the under-developed language skills of some pupils when they enter school and the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the group. Girls tend to perform better than boys in both reading and writing which is similar to the national picture.
59. Since the last inspection the trends in standards at Key Stage 1 have been erratic and are likely to remain so as year-group sizes are small. In addition the high degree of disruption caused by pupils who only stay at the school for a short time such as those who come from families that are being rehoused has a significant impact on the end of key stage results. Inspection evidence indicates, however, that the current group of pupils is on target to achieve results that are nearer to national averages both in reading and in writing. This is partly due to difference in the levels of attainment of different groups of pupils but also to the literacy hour which is beginning to have a positive impact on standards in the school. Teachers place a high priority on developing pupils' spoken and written language and make good use, for example, of the shared reading and writing parts of lessons to help pupils' understanding. This is exemplified in the good quality questioning that occurs in most lessons even at story time. Whilst standards are still low and remain a concern they are not the serious weakness reported at the last inspection.
60. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above in the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 tests was close to the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was above the national average when compared to similar schools but below the national average for all schools. Overall this resulted in standards being well above average when compared to similar schools but below average when compared with all schools. This represents a considerable improvement in standards since the last inspection when they were well below average. The trend since then has been improving rapidly and at a greater rate than the national trend. Current Year 6 pupils are on target to achieve standards similar to those last year. Girls have been out-performing boys over

³ Turbulence – this is created when children join or leave the school during the school year.

the last four years but the gap is gradually decreasing as the performance of boys is improving.

61. Standards of speaking and listening are average. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils listen attentively and most speak clearly. Reception pupils, for example, talk about a recent visit to a nature reserve confidently and excitedly. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 listen attentively to stories and most answer questions sensibly. They are eager to talk to adults in the room. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils speak confidently. This is because teachers encourage pupils to offer opinions through good questioning, and value their answers. In an assembly based on class work, for example, older pupils gave strong opinions about the relationships between black and white people in America during the 1950s. Overall pupils make good progress with their listening skills and most listen to their teachers politely.
62. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment in reading varies considerably and there is a wide difference between the standards of the more able and those achieved by the less able pupils. At this key stage pupils enjoy their books and are reasonably confident when reading to adults. The average and more able readers talk about the books they read, demonstrate good levels of understanding and read expressively. A significant minority, however, are hesitant and only just beginning to use appropriate strategies to work out unfamiliar words. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards in reading are average. The average and above average pupils are confident readers. They read with good levels of expression and readily relate the story, draw inferences from the text and discuss their favourite characters. Pupils read non-fiction texts kept in the classrooms to gather information for their topics but not enough use is made of the library. As a result, although the more able pupils begin to skim and scan texts for information, their library skills are under-developed. Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. This is indicative of the upward trend in English at this key stage. However, there are a significant number of pupils at both key stages who have special educational needs and who have poor reading skills. Additional help is provided for these pupils and overall they make satisfactory progress.
63. Overall standards in writing, particularly at Key Stage 2, remain below average due largely to the high number of pupils with special educational needs and again vary considerably. At Key Stage 1 pupils begin to use capital letters and full stops with the more able using speech marks correctly. They spell simple and common words correctly but some have difficulties with more complex words such as 'horrible'. Their handwriting becomes more uniform and legible and they make good attempts at using joined writing. They write for a range of purposes such as diaries, letters and a little poetry. Initially they write in simple sentences but these become more complex towards the end of the key stage. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils write for a much wider range of purposes such as report, persuasive, instructional and descriptive writing. Pupils use their writing skills effectively in other subjects such as religious education, history and science when writing about different religions, the Tudors and the Vikings and when describing experiments. The quality of handwriting continues to improve and by the end of the key stage most pupils write legibly in ink. Overall there has been a sound improvement since the last inspection in this area.
64. Pupils' learning throughout the school is satisfactory. Many begin school with poor language skills. They make a good start in the nursery and gradually build on their skills in Years 1 and 2. Although progress is often slow, it is satisfactory overall as teachers place a strong emphasis on the basic skills of reading and writing. Progress in Key Stage 2 gathers momentum and the quality of learning in the oldest class is good.

65. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Many of the older pupils initially had very low levels of attainment but through the skilful use of specialist teaching materials standards have improved substantially. The school now expects to be able to concentrate its efforts on helping the younger pupils with special educational needs. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make very good progress, for example some of the more able readers were selected from these pupils and they read well.
66. The introduction of the literacy hour has had a significant impact on standards, especially at Key Stage 2. Since its implementation two years ago standards in the school have risen at a faster rate than those nationally and whereas they were very low at the time of the last inspection they are now similar to the national average when pupils leave school. Pupils learn effectively through good quality provision which builds successfully on previous learning in a structured way. For example, Year 6 pupils use dictionaries and thesauruses naturally to support their work. The school is also beginning to promote literacy effectively through other subjects such as religious education and history.
67. There has also been a considerable improvement in pupils' attitudes to learning. They enjoy the literacy hour and are interested in the texts they read. Most behave well in lessons and listen quietly and attentively. They concentrate well when working and when set clear targets try hard to achieve them. This improvement in behaviour has had a very positive impact on pupils' learning and on the standards they achieve. The majority of pupils now take a pride in their work and this is often well presented. They are happy to discuss it with visitors.
68. The quality of teaching is good, especially at Key Stage 2 where all the lessons seen were judged to be good or better. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They fully understand the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy and implement them effectively. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work. Planning is good and lessons have clearly stated objectives with work being well matched to pupils' levels of attainment in most cases, although expectations of the level of work are not always high enough in some classes. Most teachers write evaluations of their lessons, which are used effectively when planning further work. Much of the marking is good and helps pupils to improve their work, but there is some inconsistency. Some teachers give their pupils learning targets which make them well aware of what they are expected to achieve, but again this is inconsistent. Assessment procedures are good. Teachers know their pupils well and keep annotated samples of work to show the progress they are making. The school is building a portfolio of moderated work to provide further guidance about different levels of work. It also keeps detailed records of reading and other tests in order to track individual pupils as they progress through the school. These are then used to highlight any discrepancies in the expected levels of attainment for individual pupils and also to highlight general curriculum weaknesses such as writing at Key Stage 1. This information is then used to identify any training needs. Good monitoring procedures by the school, which involve the local authority literacy consultant, help to maintain high quality teaching.

MATHEMATICS

69. The 1999 end of Key Stage 1 tests showed that standards were very low when compared to other schools nationally and when compared to similar schools. However, standards in the scrutiny of work and lessons observed indicate that current Year 2 pupils are attaining standards expected for their age. At Key Stage 2 the 1999 test results show that standards are average compared to schools nationally and well above average when compared to similar schools. Current inspection findings indicate that pupils are again attaining average standards at the end of the key stage. This is a great improvement on

the position found by the last inspection report.

70. At both key stages the trend in results over four years reflects variations due to the high turbulence within the school population and the significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs in year groups with small numbers of pupils. During the inspection there was no discernible difference in the performance of boys and girls. The differences in last year's tests are a reflection of the number of boys with special educational needs at the end of both key stages.
71. The youngest pupils at Key Stage 1 estimate answers to sums with numbers to 15 using 'more than' and 'less than' successfully. They understand which numbers are odd and even. They talk about and show a good understanding of symmetry in simple shapes and objects. They build their own very good symmetrical shapes with construction kits and use mirrors well to complete drawings of symmetrical objects. By the end of the key stage pupils count accurately in multiples of 2, 5 and 10 to 100. They have a good knowledge and understanding of shapes and classify them quickly and accurately according to their properties. They discuss their mathematics clearly and well, showing a sound understanding of the concepts involved.
72. At Key Stage 2 pupils use two figure co-ordinates confidently and correctly on a treasure island map. They make their own sums involving money sensibly and understand the multiples of coins that make pounds. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 work quickly and well with prime numbers, multiples and factors in mental arithmetic. They investigate number patterns enthusiastically to predict and complete Pascal's Triangle and explain the patterns clearly and logically. Their work shows that a broad range of mathematical topics is taught, which is an improvement since the last report. However, the use of mathematics in other subjects of the curriculum such as science and geography is underdeveloped.
73. Throughout the school pupils make steady and satisfactory progress. Oral sessions are used effectively in all classes to develop pupils' mental agility. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a positive impact on the structure of lessons and the quality of teaching, although it is still too early to assess its impact on pupils' learning. The school has made good progress in addressing the key issue in the last report to improve basic skills in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are catered for well in mathematics lessons. As a result they make good progress and attain levels appropriate for their abilities.
74. Pupils enjoy mathematics; they are keen to join in discussions and show teachers that they know answers to questions, sometimes jumping up and down saying 'I know! I know!'. They work hard and like to compare their efforts with those of other pupils; 'How many have you done?' They listen closely and contribute thoughtfully and in one lesson moved closer and closer to the board in their interest in the lesson. They concentrate well, sometimes becoming totally absorbed in their tasks and unaware of others around them.
75. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and in nearly half of lessons seen it is very good. Teachers have a satisfactory understanding of mathematics. They plan activities to match the different ability groups within their classes very well, making them challenging but achievable. The very good teaching is characterised by a good blend of direct teaching and encouragement of pupils' own investigations. Very clear direct teaching means that pupils understand their tasks as well as finding them interesting and stimulating. Planning sheets have useful sections for recording and assessing the work carried out. However, whilst there are very good examples of these being used to plan the next stage of learning, this is not consistent practice. Teachers keep samples of work

for each pupil, some of which show the levels of attainment and they keep records of annual test results that give a long-term view of progress. However, these are not yet shared with the pupils. So whilst there are targets set for groups of pupils to reach at the end of the key stages, there are not yet any targets consistently in place for individual pupils to know what they have to do to improve their own work. The co-ordinator, who has a clear view of the direction for mathematics, is aware of areas that are still to be developed and has plans to address them.

SCIENCE

76. Teacher assessment of pupils' attainment in science in the 1999 standard assessment tests at Key Stage 1 was very low and well below average compared with similar schools. In the tests at the end of Key Stage 2, however, attainment was above the national average and well above average by comparison with similar schools. This represents a significant improvement over results in previous years and reflects the school's determination to raise standards of attainment year-on-year. The school is, however, realistic about the variation in levels of ability between different year groups. Inspection findings indicate that attainment for the current pupils in Year 6 is on target to be average by the time they leave the school.
77. At Key Stage 1 the youngest pupils thoroughly enjoy their visit to a local nature reserve to hunt for mini-beasts, although some are disappointed that the long grass is not long enough! They talk knowledgeably about the creatures they have found and those they have studied in class. Good teaching encourages them effectively to consider the needs of living things and care for the environment, and to make close observations of what they find. In Years 1 and 2 pupils understand that humans change as they get older. Enthusiastic discussion of the photographs of teachers as children is carefully guided by staff to encourage pupils to recognise features and identify who is who with a reasonable degree of success.
78. At Key Stage 2 pupils know that a complete circuit is needed to enable electricity to flow. They discuss intelligently the use of electricity in the home and have a clear understanding of conductors and insulators and the dangers electricity poses. Good teaching encourages all pupils to take part in the discussion and pupils enthusiastically prepare for the afternoon's practical lesson. The oldest pupils conduct an experiment to investigate the solubility of different substances with serious concentration. They explain clearly the need for fair testing, make sensible predictions and set about testing these enthusiastically. Very good teaching provides an interesting challenge with sufficient resources for paired work, which ensures that all pupils take a full, practical part in the lesson. High expectations and close involvement with pupils as they work ensure that the pace and quality of learning are very good and pupils make good progress.
79. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons seen is good overall. Teachers' knowledge of and enthusiasm for the subject are effectively communicated, and well-prepared lessons capture pupils' interest and imagination fully. Teachers are careful to involve all pupils in discussions, including those who are more reluctant to share their thoughts, and ensure that those learning English as an additional language understand what they are expected to do. Most commonly all pupils engage in the same activities, but the high level of classroom support and careful intervention by adults in the room ensures that pupils with special educational needs take a full part in the lessons. As a result, pupils enjoy science, particularly the practical investigations, and work with a good level of concentration and co-operation for the majority of the time. In lessons they make at least sound and often good progress.

80. Pupils cover an appropriate range of topics throughout their time in school in all aspects of the science curriculum. However, apart from that of the oldest pupils the presentation of work in pupils' books is disappointing. Much is scrappy and incomplete and teachers' comments lack scientific content designed to improve understanding and challenge pupils' thinking. The co-ordinator is aware that a greater emphasis is required on the systematic development of pupils' scientific knowledge, skills and understanding throughout the school in order to improve progress over time and eliminate the need to fill in gaps for the oldest pupils prior to the national tests.

ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

81. Timetabling arrangements meant that only one art lesson was seen during the inspection period and no lessons occurred in design and technology. Evidence shows that pupils undertake an appropriate range of projects in both subjects and attain standards appropriate to their age and ability. Work on display shows that pupils enjoy using a wide range of media, including pastels, paints, collage, fabric and modelling materials to produce attractive and interesting art and design work. The school hall, for example, is decorated with lively self-portraits done by all pupils in the school, which show good attention to detail. Those done by the oldest pupils are well proportioned and portray movement effectively. Further self-portraits as Tudor characters are attractively displayed. Pupils develop appropriate skills in observational drawing, from well-observed pencil drawings of bicycles in Years 1 and 2, copies of Egyptian artefacts in Years 2 and 3, to carefully shaded representations of shoes in Years 5 and 6. These oldest pupils also practise different pencil techniques to shade and fill.
82. In design and technology pupils consider their own inventions, for example flying cars and mobile watches, drawing these and describing the component parts and how they work in detail. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 design 'planets' in connection with their science work and enjoy describing the life of their inhabitants. Older pupils will use their knowledge of electricity to design and make torches after half term.
83. In the lesson seen the quality of teaching and learning is good as pupils begin to create figures to sit in the very effective chairs they have designed and made earlier. The teacher's careful planning, detailed knowledge and careful explanation keep pupils fully engaged and interested in what they are doing and ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, are totally involved. Pupils made good progress and their figures took recognisable form by the end of the lesson, ready to be dressed. Throughout the school pupils enjoy these practical activities and their sense of pride in achievement is enhanced by extensive, well-mounted displays of their work.
84. In both subjects, however, whilst teachers pay careful attention to the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding within their short-term planning for individual projects and within lessons, the lack of coherent schemes of work means that these are not developed progressively as pupils move through the school. As a result, whilst progress in the short term is satisfactory, over time this is not secure. The school does not use sketch books or design and technology folders to monitor the progress of individual pupils. Both co-ordinators are beginning to collect examples of pupils' work to form a basis for assessment but these are at a very early stage of development.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

85. The previous inspection reported that standards in both geography and history were sound. In history pupils attain standards appropriate to their age and provision for the subject remains sound. However, insufficient time is allocated for geography in the

school's curriculum and as a result both pupils' attainment and their progress are unsatisfactory. Only three lessons were seen in history so other evidence was obtained from displays, a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with children and staff. Due to the school's timetable no lessons were seen in geography.

86. In history pupils learn about an appropriate range of historical eras. Through their studies of events and famous people connected with them they develop satisfactory historical research skills and understanding. For example, pupils at Key Stage 1 make comparisons when they look at similarities and differences between Victorian schools and school today. They discuss sensibly the importance of Florence Nightingale's work for us today. They enjoy learning about major events in the reign of Henry VIII such as his having eight wives. At Key Stage 2 pupils understand the lives of the ancient Egyptians and Romans. They study events that took place during the time of the Tudors, although much of this work is the same as that found in Key Stage 1. Pupils make good deductions about Viking artefacts seen on a television programme and carry out individual research to find out what happened during the dates on a time line. Some pupils use the Internet to find articles about the Vikings, which stimulates their interest in the period. Unfortunately, when pupils are using CD ROMs to find out about the Egyptians there are insufficient computers for all children to gain access to them.
87. There is no evidence of work carried out in geography at Key Stage 1 and pupils could not remember or talk about any work that they might have covered. At Key Stage 2 younger pupils carry out work about rivers and their development as part of a topic about water. Older pupils study different climatic regions of the world and consider how climate affects the way people live. These older pupils are able to talk about and consider the importance of the destruction of the rain forests. However, pupils at both key stages have insufficient time to spend on the acquisition of geographical skills and knowledge and as a result make little progress.
88. Pupils clearly enjoy their work and are interested in the world around them. Older pupils talk about the work that they have carried out and some aspects of their work such as Viking legends make good contributions to their literacy development. Insufficient teaching was seen in history to make a secure judgement about its quality and no teaching was seen in geography. However, work scrutiny indicates a tendency towards an over-dependence on copying or filling in missing words on worksheets rather than building up historical skills of enquiry and research. The school has made a deliberate decision to suspend its overview of the curriculum until it can be reorganised when the curriculum changes in the near future. The humanities co-ordinator is now aware that insufficient attention has been paid to the teaching of geography and has plans to ensure that it is given sufficient emphasis when new topics are planned.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

89. The previous inspection report found that standards in information technology were well below expectations and progress was poor. Current inspection findings show that the key issue to meet National Curriculum requirements has yet to be fully addressed. Although provision for the subject has improved, with new hardware, software and a connection to the Internet, and some progress has been made, standards are still below expectations at the end of both key stages.
90. There was little evidence of the use of information technology at Key Stage 1 during the inspection. At Key Stage 2 computers are mainly used for word processing. Pupils type their work and experiment with different fonts before printing out the finished piece. Computers are sometimes used to give practice in basic number work but there is little evidence of its use for data-handling or other areas of mathematics. Although good

simulations are available to support work in history, the number of compatible machines available to use the programs means that pupils have insufficient access to them. In the Years 4 and 5 class pupils have used a graphics program to support their artwork and accessed the Internet successfully to find information about Vikings in history. There is, however, little evidence of information technology being used for other areas of the curriculum such as science or geography. Each class is equipped with tape recorders and there is a video camera available for use by older pupils but there is no evidence that they are being used sufficiently often or consistently enough to develop pupils' skills appropriately. The school has some programmable toys but they are old and frequently out of action and therefore pupils are not having sufficient experience of the controlling or monitoring aspect of the curriculum. The requirements of the National Curriculum at both key stages are therefore not being complied with and progress in the key skill of information technology is unsatisfactory.

91. When given the opportunity pupils enjoy using the computers and are happy to share their expertise with each other. However, many have gained more skills and experience at home than at school. In most classes pupils do not automatically consider using information technology as an aid to learning in other areas of the curriculum. The lack of time allocated to the subject means that pupils are not making sufficient progress in acquiring information technology skills. Few classes had any displays or examples of work in information technology.
92. There was insufficient evidence of teaching to make a sound judgement of its quality. The mixture of computers means that although there is a sufficient range of software, some programs are incompatible with some machines. There is no scheme of work for information technology to guide and support less confident staff. The co-ordinator is aware of this and the subject has a high priority in the school development plan.

MUSIC

93. Standards in music are appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils at Key Stage 1 and are good at Key Stage 2. Younger pupils use percussion instruments well. They recognise the sounds that they make and use their names correctly. They develop a good sense of rhythm when chanting words and marching in time to their own singing. All pupils in the school enjoy music very much and learn a variety of songs, some in three parts, which they sing competently and with great gusto. Singing at both key stages is often accompanied by actions. At Key Stage 2 earlier work is built on and extended when pupils enthusiastically learn to play ocarinas and eagerly include tuned percussion instruments such as steel drums in their percussion work. Progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2, where teaching is carried out by the co-ordinator who is a music specialist. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language participate fully in the activities and make good progress.
94. Pupils respond very well to music and look forward to their lessons. There are cheers when instruments are brought out and the quality of learning is good as pupils concentrate hard and work co-operatively at their activities. They enjoy performing for one another in assembly and appreciate one another's work. Behaviour is very good as pupils do not want to miss any part of the lessons.
95. Teaching in music is at least satisfactory and most often is very good. The very good teaching is characterised by a very good knowledge and understanding of music and an enthusiasm, which infects and inspires the pupils. Since much of the teaching is carried out by the co-ordinator she uses her specialist knowledge to ensure that musical skills are developed sequentially by pupils as they progress through the school. However, there is no scheme of work for music to support non-specialist teachers at the moment because

the co-ordinator is waiting to rewrite one in time for the implementation of the new curriculum in the near future. Resources for music are satisfactory. There is an adequate range of both tuned and untuned percussion. Music is used successfully to forge links with the community, as when pupils sing in the town centre at Christmas.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

96. Standards in physical education have been maintained since the last inspection and are appropriate to the age and abilities of the pupils. Progress is satisfactory. During the inspection the focus was on the development of games skills. Younger pupils learn to move in different ways such as striding and skipping. They respond well to instructions, for example stopping quickly or changing direction when required. Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils consolidate these skills, for example in warm-up sessions when they move in different ways changing movements and direction rapidly. They catch and throw balls of different sizes accurately and use space sensibly. They begin to play competitive games and to work as a team co-operatively. These skills are developed further at Key Stage 2 where pupils strike balls with reasonable accuracy, for example in quick cricket. They co-operate well in team games and develop a competitive spirit. All Key Stage 2 pupils swim regularly and by the time they leave school those who have participated in the full programme can swim the required 25 metres. The older pupils also have a valuable opportunity to visit a local water-sports centre and to participate in adventurous activities such as sailing and canoeing.
97. The quality of teaching is good. Lesson planning is detailed and ensures that skills within lessons are developed sequentially. Class control and management are effective. All aspects of physical education such as gymnastics and dance are included in the long-term curriculum plan. However, there is no detailed scheme of work or appropriate assessment procedures. This means that there is no systematic development of skills over time and on occasions similar skills are taught at the same level to pupils in different age groups. The quality of learning for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, remains satisfactory due mainly to the long-term plan. The provision for pupils who have physical disabilities is good. Additional adult support is provided so that these pupils have the opportunity to take a full part in all lessons as well as doing specific work to help with their disability. The school also employs a local football coach to provide additional support in teaching games skills to pupils at both key stages.
98. All pupils enjoy their lessons and join in enthusiastically. They listen attentively, especially when a series of movements depends on the story that is being told such as in the nursery when children mimed the story 'We're going on a Bear Hunt'. All pupils show a good team spirit and realise the importance of co-operating in team games to achieve success. The range of extra-curricular activities to support pupils' learning is satisfactory. They include the opportunity to take part in team games such as football and netball as well as the adventurous activities that take place at the water-sports centre.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

99. As in the last inspection report standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of both key stages and pupils make satisfactory progress.
100. At Key Stage 1 pupils understand that artefacts symbolise key religious beliefs. In Years 1 and 2, for example, pupils know that a cross is a Christian symbol and that it represents the death of Jesus. They gain a sound knowledge of stories from the Bible such as the Plagues of Egypt and realise how some stories have an impact on our lives today. Year 2 pupils, for example, write modern-day versions of the Good Samaritan. At Key Stage 2

pupils become increasingly aware of other religions such as Judaism, Islam and Hinduism whilst still learning about Christianity through the old and the new testaments of the Bible. They recognise the similarities and differences between other religions and Christianity and show respect for the beliefs of others. Year 6 pupils, for example, all washed their hands before touching the Qu'ran. Pupils also study famous people who have had an influence on our lives today. The older pupils were particularly impressed by the story of the life of Martin Luther King and the work he did to bring about equality between people from different backgrounds.

101. At both key stages pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. They celebrate Christian Festivals such as Easter, Harvest and Christmas as well as those of other religions. Assemblies contribute effectively to religious education and to moral beliefs and values that are important when living in the community. The school takes full account of its religious diversity and the library contains books from different religions such as Buddhism, Raster and the Seventh Day Adventists. Regular visitors to the school include the local parish priest and a school governor who is a Hindu. All of this contributes to the good attitudes that pupils have in lessons and the positive ethos within the school.
102. The quality of teaching in most lessons is satisfactory and one very good lesson was observed. Lessons are well planned with clear objectives. In the very good lesson the high teacher expectations support the spiritual and cultural development of the pupils well, which is reflected in the work that they produce. When asked to think about an important quotation for the world one pupil wrote 'Love children like your children... Use your heart and your head...'. Teachers all have a sound knowledge of the subject and a valuable part of most lessons is the discussion about moral values and beliefs. Good use of artefacts such as the Cross, the Qu'ran and the Bible enhances the quality of learning and helps improve pupils' level of understanding. Teachers make effective use of the skills that pupils learn in literacy, for example writing stories about famous people such as Florence Nightingale. However, whilst teachers plan closely together to try and ensure that there is continuity in the development of skills, not all pupils learn about the same things due to pupils of the same age being in different classes. Assessment lacks formal and consistent procedures to ensure that pupils' knowledge is developed progressively.