

INSPECTION REPORT

CAVERSHAM PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

READING

LEA area: Reading

Unique reference number: 109925

Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Parish

Reporting inspector: Mr Brian Gosling
22453

Dates of inspection: 12 - 15 March 2001

Inspection number: 197801

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Queensway Caversham Park Village Reading Berkshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Catherine Bennett
Date of previous inspection:	March 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22453	Brian Gosling	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology History Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19660	Deborah Pacquette	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?
20815	Pat English	Team inspector	English Art and design Music Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	
26519	Margaret Hatfield	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Geography Religious education Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	24
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Caversham Park Primary School is smaller than most other primary schools. There are 160 pupils, 84 boys and 76 girls. Nineteen pupils come from minority ethnic groups and the proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is higher than most schools. Thirteen pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and Statements of Special Educational Need is close to the national average.

The background of the pupils attending the school has changed during the last four years. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals has almost doubled and their attainment when they enter the school is now close to the county average. There has also been much pupil mobility and almost 20 per cent either arrived or left the school at times other than the usual time in the last year. The school remains popular with parents and the number of pupils at the school has risen by ten per cent since 1996. There have also been significant changes in the teaching staff with four teachers arriving in the last two years. The headteacher took up the substantive post last term.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Caversham Park Primary is an effective school that gives value for money. Children enter the school with generally average levels of ability. By the time pupils leave the school, they attain high standards in mathematics and science and satisfactory standards in English. This is achieved through good teaching by a new and relatively inexperienced staff that works well together as a team and shares the headteacher's commitment to raising standards.

What the school does well

- Standards are good in mathematics and science by the time the pupils leave the school.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good. They enjoy school and are enthusiastic about lessons.
- Teaching is good in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- The provision for pupils' personal development is good.
- The school has established good links with partner institutions.
- Annual reports to parents on their children's progress provide good information to parents.
- The staff forms an effective team that is supportive and shares a strong commitment to succeed.
- All members of the school's staff demonstrate a genuine care for the pupils.

What could be improved

- Children do not make enough progress in the Foundation Stage.
- Standards are not high enough in English.
- Standards in information and communication technology are not high enough in Key Stage 2.
- The school has not implemented procedures sufficiently effectively to monitor its performance and track pupils' progress closely enough.
- Strategies for curriculum co-ordinators to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning have not been developed sufficiently.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectors in March 1999, following an earlier inspection in 1997 that required urgent improvements to the curriculum, teaching and the role of co-ordinators. The school's improvement continues to be good.

The school has improved standards in mathematics and science as well as religious education, geography and in Key Stage 1 for information and communication technology. However, the school has not managed to improve standards in English and information and communication technology in Key Stage 2. The improvements in standards are due to the improved teaching in the school that now sets high expectations for pupils. Work in pupils' books indicates that standards are set to rise further. Co-ordinators are more involved in leading their subjects but need a greater involvement in a monitoring role. The balance of the curriculum has been much improved and the governing body is now well organised to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

In addition, the school has made general improvements to the curriculum and teaching groups that allow it to address pupils' needs more effectively. Lessons are more practical, particularly in science, targets are set for pupils each year and the school has installed a computer suite to enhance teaching and learning across the curriculum.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	D	B	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	E	E	A	A	
Science	D	E	B	B	

Results in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 showed significant improvement in mathematics and science although they fell a little in English. Improved mathematics test results are due to improvements in teaching brought about by the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. The recent changes in the teaching staff have strengthened the teaching. Standards are higher in mathematics than they are in English throughout the school and the trend of pupils' attainment is rising broadly in line with the national trend in all three subjects.

Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. This was disappointing as results, although remaining low, had risen in the previous two years in writing and mathematics. However, the school was closed due to a health hazard for seven weeks shortly before the tests and this had a negative effect on these young pupils. The lower attainment of pupils when they start school has also had a negative effect on standards in Key Stage 1 and the school has not reacted quickly enough to this change in establishing an effective Foundation Stage provision. Consequently, standards are low when they enter Year 1. Low standards in reading affect pupils'

performance in all subjects although, as a result of good teaching, pupils make good progress and achieve well by the time they leave the school. There has been a large turnover of teaching staff in the last two years and inspection evidence shows that standards are currently higher at the end of Key Stage 1 as a result of good teaching.

Standards are good in religious education in Key Stage 2 and gymnastics, but unsatisfactory in information and communication technology in Key Stage 2. Standards are satisfactory in all other subjects. The school has set suitable targets for pupils' attainment in the next two years.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic and they enjoy lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well both in the classroom and around the school. They are courteous, friendly and polite.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils enjoy very good relationships with other pupils and adults. They show a clear respect for the values of other people.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Two-thirds of the teaching observed was good or very good and 96 per cent was satisfactory or better. Only two lessons were unsatisfactory and these were in the Foundation Stage. Four teachers have arrived at the school in the last two years and teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection in 1999 when almost one lesson in five was unsatisfactory. The skills of literacy and numeracy are now taught effectively in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 following the effective introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy.

The school has recognised children's lower attainment when they start school and has responded appropriately by creating a separate class for these children. However, due to local recruitment difficulties, the school has been unable to appoint a fully trained teacher with experience of this age group to establish an effective provision for the children in the Foundation Stage.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The broad and balanced curriculum in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is strengthened for pupils by a good variety of visits. However, the curriculum provided for the children in the Foundation Stage is not sufficiently matched to their learning needs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The school identifies pupils with learning difficulties and provides them with individual education plans to support their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Links with outside agencies identify pupils' needs and they generally attain the standards expected of them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and good for social and cultural development. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development and pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and the effects of their actions on others. This encourages them to be thoughtful and caring.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Pupils are supervised suitably in and out of lessons.

The school has developed a satisfactory partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is committed to high standards and leads an enthusiastic team who shares this commitment. The role of curriculum co-ordinators has not been developed sufficiently for them to monitor strengths and weaknesses in their subjects effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities effectively. They are well organised and they have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and subject co-ordinators monitor planning regularly but the school does not track pupils' progress in sufficient detail to identify weaknesses in their learning.
The strategic use of resources	The budget is clearly linked to the school improvement plan and the school applies the principles of best value.

There are a suitable number of teachers, although there is no experienced specialist of early years' education. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

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 school.• The progress their children make.• The good quality of the teaching.• The school is approachable.• The high achievement of the pupils.• Their children become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework provided.• The information they receive about their children's progress.• The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. The amount of homework and the range of activities outside lessons are generally similar to that provided in most schools. The annual reports of pupils' progress have recently been improved and now provide good information to parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children who are five years of age by March 31 enter the school in January and those children whose birthday is later in the year start school in April. Assessments of the children's attainment when they start school show that the attainment of pupils now in Key Stage 1 was not as high when they started school as it was for the children currently in Key Stage 2. Children's attainment when they start school is now generally close to the county average. In response to this lower attainment, the school established a separate reception class last year for these children, who were previously taught alongside Year 1 pupils. However, due to local recruitment difficulties, the school has been unable to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced teacher to establish this new provision for children in the Foundation Stage. The class was initially taught by a temporary teacher and now by an unqualified teacher. This lack of suitable expertise at the school has led to an unsatisfactory curriculum provision for pupils under five. Most children do not attain the Early Learning Goals¹, particularly in the important areas of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, by the time they enter Year 1.
2. Pupils' attainment² in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 was well below the national average in reading and mathematics and very low in writing. (Very low indicates that the school's performance was in the lowest five per cent in the country.) Compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' attainment was very low in all three tests. Pupils' attainment in teachers' assessments for science in 2000 was also well below the national average and the average of similar schools. Only one pupil attained the higher than expected Level 3³ in mathematics and no pupil attained this in English or science.

¹ On Early Learning Goals: QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the time they start the National Curriculum in Year 1 in six areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development, and personal social and emotional development. The Foundation Stage continues until pupils enter Year 1 when they begin Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.

² On pupils' attainment: An average points score provides schools with a single statistic to compare the overall grades attained by their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in other schools. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the National Curriculum levels of attainment are given a score. For example, in mathematics Level 1 = 9 points and Level 2 = 15 points, and so on. The average test score achieved by a school is calculated by adding up all the scores achieved by the pupils and then dividing by the number of pupils who took the test. These comparisons are the ones used in the figures printed in the summary of the report. When the percentage of pupils attaining a particular level is compared to other schools, this is stated clearly in the text.

³ On Levels: The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils, by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels. It is a national expectation that all pupils should reach Level 4 by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils who reach Level 5 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected level for their age.

3. The trend in pupils' attainment had risen between 1997 and 1999 in writing and mathematics but results fell in 2000. Results in reading also rose from 1997 but fell in 1999 and again in 2000. It is significant that the school was closed for seven weeks in February and March 2000 due to a health hazard posed by the drains. This had a clear and negative impact on the learning of these young pupils. Further, the attendance rate in the Year 2 class during this period of disruption was well below both the school's usual rate and the national average and pupil mobility resulted in a quarter of these pupils arriving or leaving during the key stage. Nevertheless, the school has begun to analyse the results and sought to understand fully the reasons for pupils' low attainment in 2000. This analysis has identified weaknesses in pupils' reading and writing that also affected their attainment in mathematics and the school is addressing this issue. Standards are, nevertheless, rising because of the effective introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy.
4. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in the national tests in 2000 was well above both the national average and the average of similar schools in mathematics, above both these averages in science and close to the averages in English. These are good results, particularly in the light of low attainment in Key Stage 1 and the disruption of the school's closure during the spring. The trend in pupils' attainment is rising broadly in line with the national average with a clear improvement in all three subjects since the results in 1998.
5. The distribution of pupils with special educational needs varies across year groups with a greater proportion of these pupils in Key Stage 1, which is broadly reflected in the results of the national tests. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards targets set in their individual education plans as they move through the school. Pupils who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in extending their knowledge and the use of English vocabulary and grammatical structures. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls but the school does not analyse the results of pupils with English as an additional language. The school has set realistic targets for improvements in pupils' attainment in English and mathematics.
6. Standards in literacy are unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 but satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 2. By the time they leave the school, most pupils are effective readers of a range of texts. They enjoy reading and readily talk about the books and authors they prefer, supporting their preferences by referring to the texts. They use non-fiction books well to find information but they lack sufficient experience of using the library for independent research. Pupils develop a range of writing styles, such as autobiographies, play scripts and news reports. They develop an understanding of how established writers use specific words and sentence structures to gain the attention of the reader and begin to incorporate these into their own writing. Spelling, grammar, punctuation and grammar are taught systematically but not all pupils apply this knowledge in their independent writing. Literacy is developed well across the curriculum and they learn to use words that are specific to certain subjects correctly.
7. Standards in numeracy are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Pupils have a good mental recall of number facts and multiplication facts that helps them to complete mathematical computations quickly and efficiently. Pupils have a good understanding of the strategies they use to solve problems and they check their answers by using inverse operations. Pupils develop a good understanding of the number system, including fractions, decimals, percentages and negative numbers. Numeracy is developed well in other subjects, particularly science and design and technology.

8. Standards in science are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Pupils' learning is effectively ensured through practical investigations and experiments. They attain well in their knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. They develop good methods of scientific enquiry and conduct experiments and investigations. Pupils measure the movement of shadows and investigate the link to the movement of the sun, they compare speeds as toy vehicles move down inclines with different surfaces and they heat different materials to explore how they will change.
9. Standards in the non-core subjects are generally satisfactory in both key stages with a few variations. Standards are good in religious education in Key Stage 2 because the school celebrates and benefits from the fact that pupils belong to different religions. In physical education, attainment is good in gymnastics but less so in swimming as many pupils do not swim the expected 25 metres when they leave the school. The provision for information and communication technology has improved and, although standards are satisfactory in Key Stage 1, these improvements have not had their full effect on all pupils and standards remain unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2.
10. Pupils' achievements are generally good. They arrive at the school with generally average levels of attainment and by the time they leave, attainment is good in mathematics, science, religious education and gymnastics. Pupils do not achieve consistently well in all stages of their education and in all subjects, however. They do not achieve well in the Foundation Stage, particularly in language and number work, and they achieve better in Key Stage 2 than they do in Key Stage 1. The achievements of pupils are better in mathematics than in English. These variations are due to the many changes that have taken place in the school in recent years, not the least of which is the large change in the teaching staff. Nevertheless, this is in the context of general school improvement and higher achievements for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils demonstrate very good attitudes to learning with positive values and good behaviour that has a positive effect on their overall progress. Pupils with special educational needs have equally positive attitudes to learning and all are well integrated into the school. This is evident in whole-class activities and when pupils are working together in mixed-ability groups on research exercises.
12. Some pupils enter the reception class with personal and social skills that are below those usually expected. However, as they progress their attitudes improve tremendously. They develop the ability to sustain good levels of concentration and are interested in what they are learning. They settle quickly to their tasks and most pupils demonstrate a good enthusiasm for work and an eagerness to succeed. Pupils sustain good levels of interest and concentration in lessons and this enables them to make good progress.
13. Behaviour is good. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and movement about the school is orderly. A small minority of pupils behave inappropriately in some lessons. These tend to be the younger pupils and teachers manage them well, setting high expectations of behaviour. Teachers encourage good behaviour and emphasise self-discipline, which has a positive effect on behaviour. There are no exclusions of pupils from the school. No incidents of bullying were observed during the inspection and discussions with staff and parents revealed the conviction that such incidents would be

quickly and effectively resolved. The behaviour of pupils with special educational needs is equally good. They respond well to their teachers and to learning support assistants with whom they work. The sensitivity with which pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are managed enables them to take a full part in school life.

14. Pupils are polite, friendly and courteous to visitors, greeting them warmly, holding open doors and offering directions when asked. When invited to do so, they speak freely about life in school and willingly share their experiences. Pupils are generally honest and trustworthy and show due respect for school property and that of others. Most parents expressed satisfaction with the school's standards of behaviour and support its behaviour policy. Good attitudes and behaviour are reinforced by the way examples are rewarded and by the consistent and positive support of pupils' efforts by the staff.
15. Throughout the school the quality of relationships between pupils and with adults is very good. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are well integrated into the school. This is a strong feature of the school and the high level of mutual respect has a significant impact upon the standards achieved. Pupils co-operate well in lessons and are often observed helping and supporting each other.
16. The personal and social development of pupils is good. They are secure and confident about rules and routines and enjoy taking responsibility when given the opportunity. For example, pupils successfully participate in an enterprise project, help in assemblies, deliver registers and play an active role as classroom and lunchtime monitors. When required to work in pairs or groups in lessons, most pupils do so successfully. They co-operate well with each other and share resources responsibly. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility for their own learning.
17. Attendance overall is satisfactory and in line with the national average, although there were high levels of absenteeism amongst the younger pupils during the last year when lessons had to be conducted at another school. Pupils enjoy coming to school and most pupils are punctual. The school has a comprehensive policy on attendance and has implemented a number of effective strategies to maintain good attendance.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 but unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Ninety-six per cent of the lessons seen were satisfactory or better; 63 per cent were good or better and eight per cent were very good. Teaching was generally better in Key Stage 2 than it was in Key Stage 1. In the Foundation Stage, some good teaching was seen but two lessons were unsatisfactory. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when almost 20 per cent of lessons seen were unsatisfactory and only a little over a third were good or better. There has been a large turnover in the teaching staff and the four teachers who arrived in the last two years have strengthened the quality of teaching.
19. The school has been unable to appoint an experienced specialist for the newly formed Foundation Stage class, which is currently taught by an unqualified teacher. Teaching in this class is good for personal, social and emotional development. The class is managed well and resources are used effectively by a caring and committed teacher. However, knowledge and understanding of the needs of children of this age are insecure and inappropriate planning guidance fails to address the need to lead

children's learning in a structured way with the small steps necessary for children of this age.

20. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum, although there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement in information and communication technology in Key Stage 2. They plan lessons with clear references to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and the learning intentions of lessons are explicit and shared with pupils so that pupils are clear about what is expected of them. Teachers clearly identify opportunities in the lesson to assess pupils' learning and lessons are structured well with a good balance between class and individual or group activities. Teachers use questions well to assess what pupils know and to further extend pupils' thinking.
21. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented effectively and these help to provide a structure for many lessons in other subjects. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught effectively and pupils' learning is supported in other lessons. For example, the correct language is taught in different subjects, such as force and gravity in science, and pupils use their numeracy skills well in other subjects such as science and design and technology.
22. There are high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. An extra teaching group is provided in Key Stage 2 to allow English, mathematics, science, history and geography to be taught in year groups. This has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning as tasks are more easily matched to the learning needs of pupils. The setting of targets for pupils has been introduced in English and mathematics and some teachers use these well although this good practice is not consistent across the school. The particular needs of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are met well and teachers are familiar with their individual education plans. Teachers plan appropriate work for these pupils and the learning support assistants are aware of the purpose of each lesson. Teachers work very closely with the very effective learning support assistants to achieve a useful balance of support within the classroom and in small withdrawn groups, such as those for additional literacy support. The management of pupils with behavioural difficulties is very good so that they and other pupils working with them are enabled to make progress.
23. Lessons are prepared well and suitable resources are used effectively to support pupils' learning. For example, in a history lesson on exploration, the teacher used an overhead projector, a flip chart and prepared maps for pupils to chart the voyage of Sir Francis Drake. This enabled all pupils to receive information clearly and to be fully involved in the lesson. Relationships are very good throughout the school and this helps teachers to ensure that pupils are managed very well and the standard of behaviour is high. Teachers react quickly and firmly when pupils lose concentration, providing further guidance and motivation for the activity. The slow pace, noted in the last inspection report, has been addressed and a brisk pace is maintained with pupils fully involved in their tasks, sharing their ideas enthusiastically when working in groups.
24. The marking of pupils' work is good and teachers take advantage of this opportunity to assess pupils' learning. Assessments are used well to inform their planning for future lessons, which helps to ensure that the tasks set are relevant to the needs of the pupils. For example, following a lesson on halves and doubles in Key Stage 1, the teacher's assessments showed that most pupils had not grasped this concept sufficiently well. Consequently, she planned an extra lesson of practical work to consolidate this learning before progressing to the next stage of introducing the idea of multiplication. Pupils are provided with a suitable amount of homework, some of which

is set regularly and some of which arises with particular studies. For example, in a science project on life and living processes, pupils take prepared worksheets home to record observations of the seeds of different fruits they have at home.

25. Pupils' learning is good in both key stages and this is a direct result of the good quality of the teaching. They are very clear about what they are learning in each lesson as teachers share these intentions clearly with pupils. They maintain good concentration and work with a good deal of enthusiasm and effort at their tasks, showing much enjoyment.

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

26. The previous inspection report in 1999 highlighted the need to review the balance of the curriculum to ensure that the most effective use is made of teaching time. The school has made good progress in addressing this concern by the very effective reorganisation of the timetable to make sure that no time is wasted. The three teaching periods in the morning session give sufficient time to teach the basic skills and ensure enough time for other subjects to be taught effectively.
27. The school's curriculum is suitably broad and balanced to meet the interests and needs of the pupils. Statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are met. However, the Foundation Stage curriculum is unsatisfactory, overall. It is in a very early stage of development. A general curriculum framework, based on the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals for children of this age, is currently being introduced. However, it does not address the needs of the children sufficiently to enable them to make satisfactory progress in the short time many of them have before they begin Key Stage 1. Appropriate provision is made for sex education, which is taught through the science curriculum and personal, social and health education and with the use of appropriate videos, supported by the school nurse. Awareness of the misuse of drugs is also addressed appropriately through the science curriculum and personal, social and health education.
28. The school effectively follows the national strategy for the teaching of literacy and gives high priority to the teaching of reading and writing. Although some improvement is indicated which is beginning to raise standards, further improvements are needed, especially in independent writing. Daily well-organised literacy sessions, which follow the national framework, are taught in each class. Pupils' literacy skills are developed appropriately in geography and religious education. The school is effectively following the National Numeracy Strategy and good emphasis is given to numeracy. Numeracy skills are developed well in other areas of the curriculum. For example, they are used well in science and in design and technology.
29. Members of staff successfully promote equality of opportunity and access to the curriculum, which is assured for all pupils. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and the school meets the requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice⁴. Where it is judged that the best interest of the

⁴ On SEN 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.

pupil is served by working in withdrawn groups the sessions are limited in time and teachers endeavour to minimise the effect of time out from subjects other than that in which the pupil is having special support.

30. The school introduced the use of national schemes of work a year ago. These provide effective guidelines for staff in planning. The school has already identified the need to review and evaluate its schemes of work to further adapt them to meet its specific needs. The quality of curriculum planning is satisfactory and ensures continuity and the progressive development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. The school has developed a format for teachers' planning to ensure consistency. Detailed long-term plans are in place that effectively reflect the schemes of work. Long and medium-term plans appropriately relate to the requirements of the curriculum the school offers and are carefully translated into detailed weekly and daily plans. To help to raise standards, targets are set for Year 6 pupils in English, mathematics and science. The school provides extra support for pupils and organises additional literacy support groups, 'booster' groups and extra-curricular mathematics and grammar as strategies for raising standards. They are also developing 'story sacks' to further involve parents in their children's learning. The school has also increased the number of learning support assistants to work with groups in class and they provide effective support to teachers.
31. The contribution that the community makes to pupils' learning is good. The school has an 'open-door' policy and welcomes parental involvement. The active parent/teacher association, the 'Friends of Caversham Park School', is very supportive. The school is involved with an environmental organisation called 'Globe' and pupils have worked in the local area on a 'clean up' campaign. Pupils have designed carvings for posts that local craftsmen have carved. The school hall is used as a church on Sundays and there are good links with local churches with a lay preacher visiting regularly to take assembly. 'Caversham Park Enterprise' is a fund-raising organisation run effectively by pupils in Year 6. The school has positive links with the 'Milestone Centre', which is the local community centre. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 entertain local senior citizens. Pupils raise money for charities, such as 'Red Nose Day' and 'Shelter' and they held a 'singalong' session to raise funds for children in Uganda.
32. The school has very constructive relationships with its partner secondary schools. For example, the headteacher is a leading mathematics teacher with the local education authority and has taught demonstration lessons in a local secondary school, whilst a secondary teacher reciprocated by teaching some mathematics lessons to the Year 6 class. Further curricular liaison is planned, with another secondary school offering support for information and communication technology and for swimming. The headteacher and two class teachers have attended in-service training in design and technology with a secondary head of department. Relevant members of staff, including the special educational needs co-ordinator, liaise very effectively before pupils transfer to secondary school and transition arrangements are smooth. Pupils' records are transferred to the relevant secondary schools with the pupils' on entry. Close links are maintained with local pre-school providers. The headteacher liaises with the headteachers of local nursery schools and is chairperson of the playgroup that shares the same site and have visited school weekly in the past. It is planned that this will be resumed in the summer term. There are strong links with outside agencies, such as the local education authority's support team for pupils with English as an additional language.

33. The curriculum is enriched by visits such as those to the 'Victorian Experience' in Swindon and the local Clayfield Copse to observe shire horses working, and by visitors, such as the Berkshire Young Musicians String Quartet. Year 6 pupils experience a residential visit to North Wales, taking part in outdoor activities. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities available for pupils. These include football, tag rugby, art and craft clubs for both key stages, choir and 'Springboard Mathematics' all of which enrich the curriculum. A number of pupils support these activities and members of staff are involved in their organisation.
34. Overall, the school makes good provision for the personal development of pupils, which includes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This reflects the views expressed by most parents and meets the stated aims of the school. Provision of this quality makes a significant contribution to the attainment and progress pupils make as they move through the school.
35. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted effectively. All pupils are encouraged to share their ideas and feelings and those who work with them consistently respect and value them. This is evident in all day-to-day activities and in the weekly celebration assembly. This support for the self-esteem of all pupils has a particularly positive impact on pupils who have special educational needs. In areas of the curriculum such as English, history and religious education pupils have opportunities to consider the feelings, values and beliefs of peoples of other times, places and cultures and to make personal responses from their own experiences. For example, one pupil in Year 6 wrote in the role of Mary, the mother of Jesus with great sensitivity and pupils in Year 2 expressed concern at the conditions experienced in hospital at the time of Florence Nightingale. Pupils know about the major beliefs and customs of Hinduism. The assemblies and daily acts of collective worship provide both valuable opportunities for pupils to experience a sense of belonging and time to reflect on values or dilemmas common to us all. This was illustrated well in a school assembly on the excitement and fears faced by famous space explorers and how they relate to those fears we all experience. However, the time provided during assembly for pupils to quietly contemplate is often very short and so limits its effectiveness.
36. Very good provision is made for fostering pupils' moral development. The school places a high priority on this aspect. The school behaviour policy, developed in collaboration with the governors, ensures that rules are expressed in positive terms, rewards and sanctions are appropriate and that teachers, support staff and helpers have a consistent approach and equally high expectations of pupils' behaviour. From entry into the reception class and throughout the school, pupils learn to recognise right and wrong, as well as honesty and fairness. This is achieved through the personal example of all the adults who work in the school, in stories and discussion of issues as they arise as well as through direct teaching. Pupils are consistently encouraged to consider the consequences of their actions both on themselves and others. Positive behaviour is consistently acknowledged and incidents of unacceptable behaviour are managed discretely and sensitively. This approach is particularly well used in supporting those pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.
37. The provision for pupils' social development is good. This has a particularly positive effect on the progress made by the youngest children in their personal and social development and on those who have special educational needs. All members of staff consistently show considerable respect for pupils. They are good role models in demonstrating social conventions and how relationships are initiated and sustained. These features, coupled with the sensitive use of direct teaching opportunities, make a

considerable contribution to the development of pupils' social skills and the very good relationships in the school. The day-to-day discussions within whole-class and varied groups during lessons and in extra-curricular activities support the development of inter-personal skills well. The development of responsibility is fostered appropriately through opportunities to help with class and school routines such as returning registers to the office and taking turns as class monitors. Older pupils gain much from the opportunities provided during a residential visit and direct involvement in enterprises such as a summer term musical production to raise funds for school and for those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils' understanding of the special responsibility in representing the school in the wider community is effectively fostered by their involvement in inter-school activities, educational visits and in welcoming visitors to the school. However, opportunities to develop independence in learning are too often overlooked. Older pupils, for instance, systematically learn a range of strategies for retrieving information yet they are unfamiliar with using a library for independent research.

38. Good provision is made for pupils' cultural development. Through subjects such as art, music, English and religious education pupils' cultural knowledge and understanding are effectively developed. For instance, pupils experience traditional and modern stories and poetry. They learn to empathise with people of other times in history when studying historical periods such as the Victorian era. Through religious education they learn about the Christian influence that permeates British heritage. The religious education scheme of work ensures that pupils know about the values, beliefs and customs associated with major faiths such as Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. This is significantly enhanced by the willingness of the pupils from other cultures within the school to share the varied aspects of their cultures with their classmates. For example, through art they learn techniques and designs associated with beliefs and traditions of Islam and Hinduism.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school's procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory. There is a staff member with overall responsibility for child protection and all members of staff are aware of lines of accountability. Procedures are well established and clear guidelines are available to all staff. Pupils receive adequate supervision by staff during lunch and break times. Overall, pupils respond well to the care and support given by staff. The provision for medical care and first aid is good. The school maintains effective links with health professionals to ensure pupils are well cared for. The school undertakes regular routine checks of the premises to identify any potential hazards. All members of staff contribute to the caring environment and they show a genuine care for the pupils.
40. The school has satisfactory procedures to monitor the pupils' academic performance and personal development. There are good procedures to assess pupils' attainment at regular intervals. However, this information is not organised well enough to identify weaknesses in pupils' learning and so guide curricular planning as there is no assessment of pupils' attainment between the time they first enter the school and the national tests when they are seven. The school uses a variety of tests as well as the optional tests provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority at the end of each year in Key Stage 2. This practice has not been extended to Key Stage 1 and no assessment is made between starting school and the end of Key Stage 1 national tests. Appropriate procedures are in place to assist in the identification of pupils with learning difficulties. However, the use made of these is underdeveloped and this has a

limiting effect on the accuracy with which pupils' needs are addressed and their progress is monitored.

41. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. They are systematic and well implemented. The school uses strategies such as target setting and carefully checks any unauthorised absences and lateness, through regular contact with the educational welfare officer and follow-up letters to parents. Good attendance is also promoted through newsletters and celebration assemblies.
42. The school has good procedures to monitor and promote acceptable behaviour and to eliminate bullying. These have a positive impact on the attitudes and behaviour of pupils. Self-discipline is promoted through a variety of strategies that involve rewards and sanctions. These are understood clearly by pupils and include certificates that are awarded at weekly celebration assemblies. The school has clear rules to ensure good conduct and discipline. These outline in a positive way the school's expectations of pupils' behaviour and they make a significant contribution to the good standard of behaviour throughout the school.
43. Educational and personal support and guidance in the school are good. They are consistently of a high standard and take account of pupils' views. Pupils have reading diaries in which they are given the opportunity to write comments. Pupils also sign the school's 'Home School Compact', which is a three-way agreement between pupils, their parents and the school and relate to homework and behaviour. Parents support the view that the school cares effectively for their children. The school offers good pastoral care for pupils with emotional problems and their needs are addressed fully.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parental views of the way the school helps their children learn and make progress are satisfactory. The majority of parents responding to the questionnaire, and in discussion with inspectors, stated that their children like school and that they make good progress. A significant proportion of parents felt that they did not receive adequate information about their children's progress, although annual reports have recently been improved. The quality of the links between home and the school are good and well developed.
45. Parental links, including the involvement of parents in the work of the school and in their children's learning, are satisfactory. The school has an 'open door' policy and encourages parental involvement in the school. Some parents and other volunteers help in the classroom and other activities, such as visits. The school also has a parent/teacher association, which is active in fund-raising and organising social events, mainly for the pupils. Funds raised by the parent/teacher association are used to supplement the budget by providing additional facilities, for example, a mini football pitch and blinds for the hall. Parents also positively support the school's 'Home School Compact' and a large proportion of parents sign the agreement. Overall, parental involvement has a positive impact on pupils' education.
46. The quality of information provided for parents is good. The annual reports about their children's progress give clear information about what has been learned and what should be learned next. The school provides helpful information for parents in the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents. They are attractive in presentation and meet statutory requirements. Parents receive regular reports and newsletters and they are invited to curriculum evenings and other consultative meetings that they find useful. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are informed at all stages of

the provision. They are encouraged to be involved in supporting their child's progress. Opportunities are arranged for parents to discuss and sign all individual education plans as they are reviewed.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The headteacher, who was appointed to the substantive post in October 2000, is committed to high standards and leads a team who clearly share the same commitment. In addition to her management role, the headteacher has a substantial teaching commitment and is the co-ordinator for mathematics, art and design, music, assessment and special educational needs. This effectively makes full use of her teaching and subject expertise but limits the time available for her to monitor teaching and learning. The acting deputy headteacher supports the headteacher well. There has been a lack of stability in the leadership and management of the school over recent years and there have been numerous changes in the teaching staff. Nevertheless, a number of the teaching staff have successfully taken on responsibilities in a temporary capacity and the school has secured significant improvements in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection.
48. The school has noted the changing attainment of children when they start school and has established a separate reception class for these children, although the provision for these children requires improvement. There are also procedures to monitor pupils' attainment as they move through the school. This allows subject co-ordinators to begin to identify areas that can be improved. For example, analysis of the results in the national tests in mathematics shows that pupils have most difficulty when problems are presented in words. The deputy headteacher has sought to identify reasons for the low attainment of pupils in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1. This highlights difficulties in reading and spelling, as well as the low attendance of groups of pupils during the period when the school was closed due to a health hazard and the pupils were taken by bus to be taught at a local school. This is useful information that the school is using to improve its performance and reasserts the importance of regular attendance. However, there is no assessment of pupils' attainment between the time they first enter the school and the national tests when they are seven. Throughout Key Stage 2, assessments are carried out each year but the information is not organised in such a way as to make strengths and weaknesses clearly accessible to analysis.
49. Curriculum co-ordinators regularly monitor the planning for their subject to ensure that all aspects of each subject are taught and that activities become progressively more challenging as pupils move through the school. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that planning includes sufficient challenge for the more able pupils. However, curriculum co-ordinators do not monitor pupils' work nor observe the teaching in their subjects. Due to the large turnover in the teaching staff over the last few years, some teachers have responsibility for a lot of subjects but no teacher is identified as having responsibility for the newly created class for the Foundation Stage.
50. Governors form an effective and committed team and play an active part in shaping the direction of the school. They are led by an experienced chairperson who is a regular visitor to the school. She has formed a good partnership with the headteacher and they hold weekly meetings. Governors have organised themselves well to improve their understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Each governor has been assigned to at least one curriculum area and they organise two half-day visits to the school with an agreed focus. However, there is no written record of these visits although they share their experience and insights verbally and informally with the whole

governing body. Governors have collaborated on the development of the behaviour policy and a governor with special responsibility for special educational needs has been appointed so that the governing body is informed appropriately. Statutory requirements are fully met.

51. The school improvement plan is a concise document and is an effective tool in guiding school development. It is based on a realistic evaluation of what needs to be done and focuses appropriately on raising standards in English and mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 1, and methods for the headteacher to monitor and manage improvements to teaching and learning. All staff and governors are fully involved in the development of the school improvement plan and progress is monitored as part of the school's performance management. The school evaluates the impact of the school improvement plan with a detailed analysis of the progress made and the opportunities and constraints that arise.
52. The governing body has recently resumed control of the school budget and financial planning is sound. The finance committee works in partnership with the headteacher to set the budget, which is closely linked to the school improvement plan, and this is agreed by the full governing body. The finance committee meets twice each term to monitor the budget and they receive budget statements that are organised so that important elements are easily accessible to governors. Monies for specific funds, such as special educational needs, are used appropriately. There is currently an underspend in the budget that is higher than that recommended. This is due to the difficulties encountered locally in appointing staff and the governors are looking for ways to reduce this underspend. The school bursar manages day-to-day finances well and the school makes effective use of new technology. The expenditure per pupil is in the upper quartile. However, in view of the effectiveness of much of the teaching, the leadership shown by the headteacher and governors and the capacity for improvement, the school provides satisfactory value for money.
53. The number of staff at the school is generally suitable to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and the local agreed syllabus for religious education. However, due to local recruitment difficulties, the school has been unable to appoint a fully trained and experienced teacher to establish an effective provision for the children in the Foundation Stage. The number of support staff is suitable to meet the needs of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. Their commitment and enthusiasm make a major contribution to the academic and personal development of pupils. The teachers who are new to the school have been inducted well with training and mentoring proving effective. The staff handbook provides good information to new teachers on school routines.
54. The accommodation has been adapted to meet the school's current teaching and learning requirements for separate teaching areas and is maintained in a satisfactory state despite there being no caretaker currently. There is, however, no secure and separate outdoor play area for children in the Foundation Stage. Resources are satisfactory for all areas of the curriculum, although there is a lack of outdoor play equipment for children in the Foundation Stage. The school has recently carried out a necessary audit of books that has led to unsuitable material being discarded but there is now an insufficient range of non-fiction books in the library.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to raise standards in English, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Establish an effective provision for children in the Foundation Stage by:
 - (a) implementing a curriculum that meets the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals for children of this age; (Paragraphs 1, 27, 60)
 - (b) ensure the teacher responsible for the Foundation Stage is suitably trained and has sufficient experience to be effective; (Paragraphs 19, 49, 58, 61)
 - (c) improve children's progress in language and mathematical development; (Paragraphs 1, 57, 59, 64, 65)
 - (d) provide a safe, secure outside play area with suitable resources to promote children's physical and social development. (Paragraphs 54, 67)
- (2) Build on children's improved language skills in the Foundation Stage resulting from (1) above to improve standards in English, particularly in Key Stage 1. (Paragraphs 2, 4, 10, 69-79)
- (3) Continue to improve standards in information and communication technology in Key Stage 2. (Paragraphs 9, 117-122)
- (4) Establish effective practices to monitor the school's performance and track pupils' progress through the school. (Paragraphs 5, 40, 48, 50)
- (5) Consider the allocation of subject responsibilities and develop the role of curriculum co-ordinators to identify clearly strengths and weaknesses in order to raise standards. This should include monitoring and evaluation of teaching, planning and pupils' work in the subject. (Paragraphs 47, 49, 79, 89, 104)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	8	55	33	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	160
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	32

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	18

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	12	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	8
	Girls	9	8	9
	Total	15	14	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	68 (76)	64 (88)	77 (88)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	9	8
	Girls	8	9	9
	Total	14	18	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	64 (88)	82 (97)	77 (94)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

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
		2000	16	4

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	--	--	--
	Girls	--	--	--
	Total	15	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (78)	90 (59)	90 (63)
	National	75 (70)	72 (68)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	--	--	--
	Girls	--	--	--
	Total	16	17	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (78)	85 (67)	85 (67)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

The table above does not include boys and girls' results, as there were fewer than ten girls who took the tests.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	4
Pakistani	6
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	3
White	126
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.6
Average class size	24.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	119

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	293,309
Total expenditure	287,348
Expenditure per pupil	1,942
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,003
Balance carried forward to next year	28,964

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	160
Number of questionnaires returned	52

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	33	10	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	38	50	12	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	50	10	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	44	29	4	0
The teaching is good.	33	60	2	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	44	13	10	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	31	8	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	44	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	27	52	13	6	2
The school is well led and managed.	33	45	13	2	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	31	54	8	2	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	37	33	8	6

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

56. Children whose birthdays are before March 31 start in the reception class in January and those children whose birthdays are later in the year start in April. Effective arrangements are in place for them to attend for short times before starting school to ensure a smooth entry. All have experienced some form of pre-school education and links with pre-school organisations are good, with regular weekly contact with a playgroup that shares the same site. At the time of the inspection, there were 15 full-time children in the reception class who started school in January.
57. Children are assessed when they first start school and these assessments show that their attainment is not as high as it was and is now broadly average but wide-ranging, in all the areas of learning. In their speaking and listening and personal, social and emotional development, most children are on course to achieve the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals for children of this age by the end of the Foundation Stage, mainly because of the good quality of teaching in this area of learning. However, by the end of the Foundation Stage, inspection evidence shows that many children are not on course to attain the Early Learning Goals, particularly in the important areas of learning of communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. This is due to the overall unsatisfactory provision and teaching in the Foundation Stage.
58. The school has responded to children's lower attainment when they start school by establishing a reception class. However, due to local recruitment difficulties, the school has been unable to appoint a qualified, trained and experienced teacher with sufficient expertise to establish the Foundation Stage curriculum effectively. As an interim arrangement, a very caring and talented person, employed previously as a learning support assistant at the school but who is unqualified as a teacher, has agreed to teach the class this year with support from other members of the school staff.
59. Before the present arrangement, children under five had been taught in the Year 1 class and sometimes as a group by a temporary teacher. It is significant that many pupils have experienced only one term as reception children. Inspection evidence shows that in previous years, children in the reception year have not benefited from an appropriate early years' curriculum to prepare them for the National Curriculum. Therefore many had not securely attained the expected standards for children at the end of the reception year, particularly in language and literacy and in their mathematical development. This has meant that children have entered Key Stage 1 with attainment that, overall, has been below average for their age. This is confirmed by the scrutiny of pupils' work at the beginning of Year 1. This has had a negative impact on pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1.
60. The Foundation Stage curriculum is unsatisfactory, overall, although it is in a very early stage of development. A general curriculum framework, based on the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals for children of this age is currently being introduced. However, it does not sufficiently address the recommended 'stepping stones' for learning. These are small structured steps in learning that lead towards attaining the Early Learning Goals for children at differing stages of development. The current provision is insufficiently detailed and structured to support the unqualified teacher's planning. Much planning is inappropriately based on the Key Stage 1 Programmes of Study for the National Curriculum, rather than the Foundation Stage.

Some lesson plans are informal and emphasise activities, rather than what children need to learn. Assessment and recording procedures are not used to enable staff to gain a clear picture of what children know, understand and can do in order to plan the next steps in learning, or to track children's progress.

61. The quality of teaching varies between unsatisfactory and good, but overall it is unsatisfactory, particularly in the key areas of learning of language and literacy and mathematical development. This impacts negatively on the progress of the children, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. In personal, social and emotional development, the quality of teaching is good. It is satisfactory for knowledge and understanding of the world and for physical and creative development. Lesson planning is not effective, particularly for language and literacy and mathematical development. This is mainly because the unqualified teacher is provided with inappropriate planning guidance which does not address the need to build on children's learning in a structured way and in small steps to enable them to make sufficient progress. This leads the unqualified teacher to expect too much from the children so that levels of challenge in activities are too high, the pace of learning becomes slow and children do not acquire appropriate basic skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, they are expected to count in twos and in tens, when many are unable to count up to ten. The unqualified teacher's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and of the needs of children of this age are insecure. For example, in a language activity some children are given dictionaries to use to put words into alphabetical order when their phonics knowledge is not secure and they lose interest.
62. A very effective feature of the teaching is the good class management that encourages children to behave well. The caring approach of the staff and their effective interaction with the class encourage children to listen attentively and sustain concentration. The teacher's enthusiasm motivates the children who try hard to do well. For example, in 'circle time'⁵ they respond eagerly to the teacher's lively approach when a teddy bear is taken out of a bag to encourage them to talk about their feelings. Lesson preparation is good and effective use is made of resources. Lessons are well balanced between activities set by the teacher and those the children choose to do for themselves. The unqualified teacher receives support from her mentor who is also acting deputy headteacher. During the inspection, they responded very positively to identified weaknesses by implementing changes immediately. This is to their credit and demonstrates a commitment and determination to do their utmost for the good of the children.

Personal and social development

63. Most children are on course to attain the expected Early Learning Goals in this important area of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage and they achieve well, reflecting the good teaching in this area of their development. Members of staff provide good role models, treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect. This leads to very good relationships between children and staff that contribute well to the development of positive attitudes and very good responses to learning. Children work together well and some begin to show an awareness of their own needs and the needs and feelings of others. For example, through listening to a well-chosen story about a lonely sparrow they begin to be aware of how others feel and of how they can help others. They are encouraged to reflect on, and talk about their own feelings, which

⁵ On 'circle time' - this is the provision of a discussion period which provides good opportunities for pupils to talk about issues that face them in everyday life.

enhances the development of their speaking and listening skills, as well as their spiritual development. Children behave well and most are aware of what is acceptable behaviour in the classroom and playground, and of what is right and wrong. At the end of each day, the teacher praises the child who has tried hardest, putting their name on the 'Star of the Day' board and children respond very positively to this.

Language and literacy

64. Provision for children's language development is unsatisfactory, overall. Many children are not on course to attain the Early Learning Goals for children of this age, except in speaking and listening. Appropriate interaction by staff and the quality of talk have a positive impact on the sound progress children make in speaking and listening. Members of staff naturally model good spoken language so that support for spoken language development permeates the life and work of the reception children. Children enjoy stories and listen to them with increasing attention and they join in, some with limited confidence, with such nursery rhymes as 'Humpty Dumpty'. A 'literacy hour' is provided for this area of learning. However, the tasks go on for too long and are inappropriate for the needs of young children, as many lose interest and concentration. For example, some are confused when asked to find words beginning with 't' and they keep pointing to pictures, as few understand what a 'word' is. More able children follow the text as the teacher reads from a large print edition of 'Old Macdonald had a Farm' and they attempt to read aloud with the teacher. Some children understand that print carries meaning and many are aware of the way stories are structured and they handle books carefully. However, insufficient use is made of language games to promote the development of phonic skills. Many children make 'marks' and understand that these can carry meaning and a few copy the teacher's writing underneath and form letters correctly.

Mathematical development

65. By the end of the Foundation Stage many children are not on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals, mainly because the activities are too challenging and too formal. Through singing number rhymes and songs, such as 'One, two, three, four, five, once I caught a fish alive', children understand counting and putting numbers in the correct order. Some count to five, with support. Many begin to recognise numerals one to five, and are able to match the numeral four to a picture with four objects on it, for example. A few understand the terms 'more' and 'less'. Children become aware of higher numbers through, for example, the effective use of the date. Some more able children count to ten with sound understanding but using a 100 square to count in tens is too challenging for most of them. Children create simple patterns, using shapes in their constructional activities but identify basic shapes with limited success.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. Planning lacks specific details of what children should learn but the unqualified teacher provides a range of well-prepared, interesting and purposeful play activities, enabling the children to learn about the world in which they live. Good use is made of the school grounds for them to experience first-hand observations. On a 'spring walk' around school, some listen carefully to the birds and observe and talk about the trees, grass and flowers with increasing understanding. They express delight and wonder on seeing the daffodils and hyacinths at the front of the school, but many cannot identify colours and only one child knew the name 'daffodil'. They talk happily about past experiences, their families, homes and the different ways they come to school, many with a limited awareness of direction, distance and time. Children select from a range

of constructional apparatus to create houses safely and with growing skill. With adult support, they have experience of using programmable toys and a computer with increasing confidence.

Physical development

67. Suitable opportunities are provided for the development of children's physical skills. They are taught skills such as cutting, threading, lacing and handling small tools, such as writing implements, paintbrushes and scissors, to help children gain safe control of these finer movements. In physical education lessons, children are developing their awareness of space and of others. They begin to move confidently, safely and imaginatively around the hall, with increasing co-ordination and control. The unqualified teacher encourages the understanding of positional language, such as high, low, above, under. However, the development of the children's large bodily skills, such as climbing, scrambling, sliding and swinging, and opportunities for structured, outdoor, imaginative and co-operative play are limited by a lack of suitable equipment and a safe, secure place to use it.

Creative development

68. Children explore colour, texture and shape in painting pictures of daffodils and butterflies, although many do so with limited skill and confidence. They join in singing familiar songs and rhymes, such as 'Humpty Dumpty' with gusto. Although many lack confidence and need support, the enthusiasm of the unqualified teacher in music-making activities has an infectious and positive impact on learning. Some children happily explore how sounds are made by using a variety of untuned instruments. Many clap out simple repeated sounds and patterns with support. The 'Three Bears Home Corner' encourages role play but its use is underdeveloped. Opportunities to develop imaginative play and also to extend language and support children's personal development are missed because members of staff do not intervene sufficiently in their role play.

ENGLISH

69. The results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 showed standards in English were close to both the national average and the average of similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining better than Level 4, which is the level expected of pupils at the age of 11, was well below the national average. However over the last four years attainment has risen broadly in line with the national trend.
70. The results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 show that reading standards were well below the national average and very low in comparison with schools of a similar background. (Very low indicates that results are in the lowest five per cent of schools.) Standards in writing are very low when compared with all schools and with similar schools. No pupils attained above the nationally expected Level 2. Whilst over the past four years attainment, overall, has been below average it is significant that the major disruption experienced by pupils prior to the 2000 tests is likely to have had a particularly negative impact on the pupils' performance in those statutory tests.
71. By the age of seven standards in reading and writing are below average. This represents some improvement when compared with previous inspection judgements and is the result of the effective introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. It is also

the case that four teachers have joined the school in the last two years. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 2 is not significantly different from that which is expected but few pupils are attaining beyond expectations. This reflects previous inspection judgements and the most recent test results.

72. Most pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress and a few make good progress. On entry to Year 1 a significant minority of children have not attained all the recommended Early Learning Goals associated with communication, language and literacy development. Overall, pupils make good progress as they move through Key Stage 2.
73. Standards in speaking and listening at the end of both key stages are broadly in line with those expected of pupils at these ages. Some pupils enter Year 1 with overall standards in speaking and listening below what might be expected. For example, a significant minority of pupils has a limited range of words they use confidently and do not accurately hear the order of sounds within a word. This has a limiting effect on the acquisition of early reading and writing skills. Teachers place great emphasis on extending both knowledge and skills in this aspect in order to ensure appropriate progress. Year 1 pupils are introduced to technical vocabulary associated with all areas of the curriculum and because they are consistently encouraged to use them when talking about their work they quickly gain in confidence. Year 2 pupils listen attentively and, when answering questions or explaining ideas, more able pupils add information to help the listener. Most follow a series of instructions and raise questions to clarify their understanding. As pupils move through Key Stage 2 they learn to listen well and respond to open questions with increasing detail. They continue to acquire and use an ever-increasing vocabulary and most pupils explain their thinking with appropriate fluency. In Years 5 and 6, most pupils take note of the views of others and develop their own thinking further. The progress pupils make owes much to the good role models teachers provide for them, the value placed on pupils' oral contributions and the direct teaching given to extend pupils' working vocabulary. This is particularly so for those pupils who have learning difficulties. However, the development of skills and techniques associated with speaking to a variety of audiences for a range of purposes is insufficiently structured. Opportunities to support improvement in this area are too often overlooked. This has a limiting effect on their overall progress.
74. Year 1 pupils handle books carefully, know that the print and pictures carry the content of the story and higher attaining children recognise a range of initial sounds and link them to letters. They develop their reading skills by recognising an increasing number of frequently recurring words, single letter sounds and some simple letter combinations. They use these and the clues found in pictures to read simple texts. Pupils in Year 2 continue to build up their knowledge of phonic rules and strategies for tackling unfamiliar words. More able pupils use punctuation effectively to improve fluency and understanding. The systematic approach to teaching these skills has a positive impact on the progress all pupils make. Most pupils enjoy reading and readily talk about the characters and the stories they read. They know about fiction and non-fiction books, tables of content and that dictionaries are organised in alphabetical order. However few are familiar with exploring a library. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2. The teaching of more complex letter strings and irregularities is continued and pupils have regular opportunities to read to each other and to talk about what they read with the teacher. This was illustrated in Year 3 when pupils read a reference book together. This combined with the support of parents and support staff has a significantly positive effect on the progress that pupils make in reading as they move through the school. Pupils in Year 4 use evidence such as the author, the presentation

of a book and the style of language used to identify the targeted audience for a book. Pupils in Year 5 read confidently using a well-established range of strategies and make appropriate deductions and inferences. By the end of the key stage most pupils are effective readers of a range of texts. Most enjoy reading for pleasure and explain preferences. When talking about their reading they readily refer to the text to support their opinions. Through specifically structured classroom exercises most pupils know how to retrieve information from a range of texts by the end of the key stage. However their practical experience of library organisation and independent research is underdeveloped and this has a limiting effect on attainment and progress.

75. Most pupils enter Year 1 with attainment in writing below expectations for pupils of that age. Throughout the key stage they make satisfactory progress but on entry to Key Stage 2 attainment is still below average. Most pupils in Year 1 use pictures and copied words to write instructions, record ideas or label parts of a computer. Higher attaining pupils use their developing knowledge of letter sounds to record their group's ideas for a number poem. Pupils in Year 2 write for a suitable range of purposes following the advice of the National Literacy Strategy. They use appropriate structure when, for instance, recording the instructions for cleaning teeth or retelling such stories as 'Preston Pig'. Overall, pupils use their knowledge of sounds to attempt the spelling of relatively difficult words but the writing of common words with irregular spellings is insecure. Most pupils are able to use dictionaries. A significant minority of pupils continues to need prompting to remember to use basic punctuation. Very few pupils attain above expectations for pupils of this age. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils generally make good progress so that those who do not have identified learning difficulties attain broadly in line with age related expectations. Knowledge of spelling, grammar, punctuation and vocabulary are systematically taught through specific exercises but a significant minority of pupils fails to apply these to their independent writing. Pupils extend their range of formal and informal writing. For instance, pupils in Year 3 write autobiographies and plan a play script based on 'Princess Smartypants' while pupils in Year 4 compose a news report on a fire and try using dialogue to improve the story of 'A Starship Rescue'. Older pupils show an increasing awareness of how established writers effectively use words and varied sentence structures to help retain the attention of the reader. For instance, an account of a Year 5 visit to the Great Western Museum is structured using paragraphs and opens with, 'The beautifully restored engine is just one of ...' In Year 6, one story opens with, 'After a lot of thinking and giving sympathy I... ' whilst in another the scene is set effectively with, 'Rain cried a sea of tears...'. The links teachers consistently make between speaking, reading and writing promote progress. Pupils throughout the school practise a joined script but presentational skills are underdeveloped.
76. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans. This progress owes much to the flexible use of the National Literacy Strategy and the specific programmes to support the development of phonic skills that are used by a committed team of classroom assistants. However, the targets set in individual education plans are not always expressed in small measurable steps that are achievable. Pupils who have English as an additional language are well supported within the school and at home so that they make appropriate progress.
77. Pupils throughout the school have positive attitudes towards this subject. Most pupils are eager to be involved in whole-class activities and settle to group and individual activities responsibly, sustaining attention and collaborating well. Their consistently good behaviour and attitude make a major contribution to their progress.

78. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This makes a significant contribution to the progress all pupils make. All teachers use the National Literacy Strategy effectively. Good teaching is characterised by the setting of clear objectives that are shared with pupils so that their learning activities have a clear focus. A good balance of class and individual or group activities is achieved to ensure a good pace is maintained. Opportunities are provided for pupils to learn through suitably challenging tasks. Open questions are used effectively to encourage pupils to contribute their ideas and more specific questions are posed to assess pupils and extend their understanding. Weaknesses occur in lessons where teachers do not ensure that pupils understand instructions before they settle to tasks. Teachers too often overlook opportunities to set pupils individual, pertinent, purposeful targets for improvement and to use opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to use previously learned skills for independent work.
79. Overall the provision for English is effectively managed. The co-ordinator has successfully instituted the National Literacy Strategy. However there is insufficient guidance to support teachers in planning for the systematic development of speaking skills and techniques and to ensure the systematic development of handwriting and presentational skills. From the analysis of statutory test results, scrutinising planning and sampling pupils' work the co-ordinator has prepared a useful action plan to improve standards in reading and writing. However, without a current programme for monitoring teaching the information by which to evaluate provision is limited. Satisfactory assessment procedures are in place but the information from these is not yet used efficiently to plan individual targets for improvement. While general resources are satisfactory, library provision and its use are unsatisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

80. Pupils' attainment in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 was well above the national average and the average of similar schools. Most pupils attained the expected Level 4 and a quarter of the pupils attained the higher Level 5.
81. In the national tests in 2000, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was well below the national average and very low in comparison to similar schools. (Very low indicates that results are in the lowest five percent of schools.) Pupils' attainment had shown a small improvement in both of the previous two years but fell in 2000. This is largely because the school was closed due to a health hazard for seven weeks shortly before the national tests and pupils travelled to a local school for their lessons for this period. School records show that attendance was very poor during this period for this year group and, therefore, the results of the national tests in this year are unreliable.
82. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' attainment in the current Year 2 is close to the national average and most pupils meet national expectations. The school has analysed the test results and identified pupils' limited comprehension skills. Extra practice is now given to help pupils develop strategies for solving mathematical problems. Work in pupils' books shows increasing skill in tackling these problems and the school has set targets for all pupils in mathematics.
83. The reason that attainment is lower when compared to national averages in Key Stage 1 than Key Stage 2 is found in the fact that the attainment of pupils when they enter the school is now lower than it was. This presents a particular challenge to the school in meeting the changing needs of the children in the Foundation Stage. Due to local recruitment difficulties, the school has been unable to do this effectively and the

children enter Key Stage 1 without making the expected progress in their mathematical development. Consequently, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is average despite making good progress.

84. There is little difference between the attainment of boys and girls and pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
85. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with low attainment in mathematics. Many have difficulty in writing numerals and there is confusion over the use of add and take away, as well as limited understanding of terms such as bigger and smaller. However, pupils make good progress and by the end of the key stage many add and subtract numbers to 20 securely with a sound mental recall of number facts. Pupils understand the fractions, such as half and a quarter and some pupils are beginning to divide by ten and two. They use non-standard measures, such as cubit and span, and recognise simple two-dimensional shapes, such as squares, rectangles and triangles and three-dimensional shapes including cylinders, spheres and pyramids. Some pupils are beginning to recognise simple lines of symmetry and find the perimeter of a square.
86. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop a good understanding of the number system. They have a good mental recall of multiplication facts and place value. Pupils order fractions well by converting them to a common denominator. For example, they convert $\frac{2}{3}$, $\frac{3}{5}$ and $\frac{5}{6}$ to $\frac{20}{30}$, $\frac{18}{30}$ and $\frac{25}{30}$. Pupils also use percentages well and they convert fractions to decimals and work with numbers to two decimal places. They find the difference between positive and negative numbers, such as $7-14=-7$. Pupils find the perimeters of rectangles and regular polygons and they increase their knowledge of three-dimensional shapes to include the trapezium, rhombus and parallelogram, which they identify with reference to the number of edges, faces and vertices. Pupils create graphs of the area of a variety of classroom objects, such as doors and tables.
87. Standards in numeracy are good and the school has effective provision for developing pupils' numeracy. The headteacher provides an extra teaching group that allows mathematics to be taught in year groups. Some pupils are taught in a different year group to provide a more appropriate challenge for them. The school has analysed test results to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. This has shown pupils' language limitations when solving problems. Consequently, pupils in Key Stage 1 create number stories and they interpret statements, such as 'I want a ruler that is twice as long as my friend's, which is 10cm long' as 10×2 . Teachers in Key Stage 2 develop older pupils' ability to consider the method they use to solve problems and to check their answers by using inverse operations. For example, one pupil checked $2943+3037 = 5930$ by $5930-3037$. By the time they leave the school, pupils are adept at solving problems such as finding the price of a car in pounds when it costs 87,000 francs when $\pounds 1=8.7$ francs. They have a good mental recall of number facts and multiplication facts and this helps them to complete mathematical computations quickly and efficiently.
88. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. All teachers are trained in the National Numeracy Strategy and they demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Lessons are planned carefully and teachers use information gained from pupils' learning in previous lessons. For example, following a lesson in Year 2 on halves and doubles, the teacher's assessment of pupils' learning showed that further practice was necessary so an extra lesson was organised before moving on to the next stage in considering multiplication. Clear learning intentions are identified for each lesson and these are shared with the pupils. Consequently, pupils

have a good understanding of what they are learning and why and they respond with good concentration and enthusiasm. Pupils are managed well and on the rare occasions that some pupils do not sustain concentration, teachers stop the lesson and provide extra guidance. This maintains a good, brisk pace to the lesson and supports pupils' learning.

89. The headteacher is the subject co-ordinator and she has been a leading mathematics teacher for the local education authority. She has been instrumental in raising standards through providing demonstration lessons based on the National Numeracy Strategy and leading staff training focused on planning to ensure that lessons build on tasks that become progressively more difficult. She monitors planning regularly, although her teaching commitment does not enable her to monitor teaching in the subject fully.

SCIENCE

90. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in the national tests in 2000 was above both the national average and the average of similar schools. This represents an improvement since the last inspection in 1999 when attainment was average at the end of Key Stage 2. Records show that these pupils had made very good progress as their attainment was below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. The trend of pupils' attainment since 1996 has been rising above the national trend despite a small fall in 1999. Inspection evidence confirms that the attainment of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 2 is above average.
91. In teachers' assessments for science at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 and above was well below both the national average and the average of similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that the standard of attainment of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly average, with some on course to attain the higher Level 3.
92. The continuing improvement in standards is being achieved as a direct result of consistently good teaching following significant staff changes in the last two years. This includes an improved curriculum with a high priority given to pupils experiencing first-hand investigative science and the introduction of target setting in science. Pupils are now taught in separate year groups and the subject is managed very effectively. There is little difference between the attainment of boys and girls, which shows that the achievement of boys is better than it is nationally.
93. Scrutiny of pupils' work reveals that a significant minority of pupils had not securely achieved all the recommended Early Learning Goals on entry into Key Stage 1. Their attainment was below average in the science aspects of their knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the foundation year. Teachers identify the weaknesses in pupils' learning and work very hard to support them. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment broadly meet national expectations because of good teaching and the very effective provision for practical investigative activities to promote scientific enquiry. As a result, most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those pupils with English as an additional language, achieve well and build on their previous learning in a structured way. In lessons, pupils attain appropriately in the investigative aspects of science and in their knowledge and understanding of aspects of life processes and living things, and of physical processes. Their attainment in aspects of materials and their properties is slightly better although still satisfactory overall.

94. Pupils in Year 1 carry out investigations using their senses to explore, observe and describe properties of a range of papers, although some display limited skills. More able pupils identify properties of texture and begin to sort papers according to shininess and hardness. Many use terms such as rough, smooth, shiny and dull with increasing understanding. Pupils recognise and name external parts of the body and many identify a range of sources of light and sound. During a very effective practical investigation, Year 2 pupils successfully compared the speed of vehicles moving down a slope. They developed a sound understanding of how these toy vehicles slowed down, using sandpaper, corrugated card and plasticine. They used correct scientific language such as force and gravity. Some pupils predicted what might happen and they carried out fair tests with assistance. Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and what humans need to stay alive. They describe how some materials change when heated. Many pupils record their observations in writing, in simple tables and charts, using appropriate scientific language. Some pupils use their knowledge and understanding to explain their findings.
95. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, attain well in their knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. Pupils' attainment in scientific enquiry is also good. This is a direct result of consistently good teaching throughout the key stage. Teachers plan a good range of practical activities that ensure pupils develop their investigative skills. For example, the teacher taught them how they could present their results as graphs or tables. The pupils produced some clear explanations to go along side these using words such as orbit, axis, predict and observe.
96. Pupils in Year 3 learn that shadows are formed when light is blocked during a practical investigation in the playground. They draw around shadows at different times in the day to observe changes. A few pupils begin to understand that the change in the sun's position effects the shadows. Year 4 pupils know about different plants and animals that occur in different habitats and they identify ways in which an animal adapts to its environment, such as fish and pond creatures living in water. Pupils in Year 5 investigate the life cycle of plants and demonstrate a good understanding of pollination and germination. They identify such organs as petals, stamen and stigma in various plants. Year 6 pupils develop a good knowledge of the earth and beyond. They understand how day and night are linked to the earth's spinning on its axis. Higher attaining pupils explain clearly the effects caused by the earth's movement, such as the length of the day or year. Year 6 pupils carry out experiments to find out how to separate insoluble solids from liquids by means of filtration. They carry out fair tests and explain why they are fair. They observe, predict and measure accurately and they use simple equipment confidently. Higher attaining pupils know that scientific ideas are based on evidence and all pupils present their work well.
97. The overall quality of teaching is good in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, teaching was never less than satisfactory in the lessons seen and the scrutiny of pupils' work confirms that teaching is good and pupils make good progress. Teaching of the basic skills is clear and contributes effectively to the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding. In Key Stage 2 teaching is consistently good. Teachers' subject knowledge is very secure; explanations are clear and questions challenge pupils to extend their thinking. This was very effective in a Year 6 lesson on the earth and beyond. Planning is effective with clear learning objectives. Teachers involve pupils in the purpose of lessons, enabling pupils to know what is expected of them. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and match learning activities to their prior learning and

this contributes well to pupils' good progress. Teachers interact well with pupils to check their understanding and ensure they maintain concentration on their tasks, as was seen in a Year 2 investigation on forces. Teachers manage their classes well and pupils behave, respond and concentrate well and try very hard to do their best. They relate very well to each other and to adults. These very good relationships motivate pupils of all abilities well and make a significant contribution to their very good attitudes to learning. Teachers use resources effectively to provide pupils with practical experiences, such as investigating the properties of materials in Year 1. Homework is provided when it is appropriate. For example, Year 5 pupils are given worksheets to record observations of seeds of different fruit they have at home.

98. Assessment and recording procedures, although appropriate do not give teachers a clear enough picture of what pupils know, understand and can do because they do not clearly track pupils' progress. Links with literacy and numeracy are effective. For example, teachers encourage the use of correct scientific vocabulary and pupils measure and count in a range of contexts and use tables, charts and graphs to record findings. The school grounds are used very effectively as a resource for investigative work, including a pond area. The curriculum is enriched by the effective use of visits to Clayfield Copse and the local woods as well as to a local pond, for science investigations.

ART AND DESIGN

99. Only one complete lesson was observed in each key stage. Judgements are based on these lessons, evidence from pupils' work, an examination of planning documents and discussions with staff and pupils. At the end of both key stages attainment in art and design is broadly in line with national expectations.
100. Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils explore primary colours and how to achieve secondary and tertiary colours which they see used in the work of established painters such as Kandinsky and Mondrian. They use the style of these artists to express their own ideas of shape and pattern. The pupils in Year 1 use the effects of folding, twisting, curling and cutting a range of papers to express their ideas about springtime in a pattern. The development of drawing from close observation is good. Using crayons, pastels and pencils, pupils record a vase of daffodils, and the faces of friends showing good skill in the positioning of features. This was well illustrated in Year 2 where, stimulated by their work in history about the Victorian era, pupils drew the portrait of a friend dressed in appropriate costume and made sketches of historical artefacts. They use their experience of mixing paint to achieve appropriately dark colours when painting a portrait of Florence Nightingale. Pupils use fabrics to create a collage representing the seasons successfully and choose 'cold' colours in paper and fabrics to weave snowflakes.
101. Pupils develop their observational skills further in Key Stage 2. For example, pupils in Year 4 work on still-life studies of fruit and by Year 6 pupils create good observational drawings of architectural features. Throughout the key stage pupils explore pattern making. Year 3 pupils design mosaics after studying them in history and older pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 prepare blocks from which to create repeating patterns. After studying the style and techniques that Matisse used in creating his collage of a violinist, Year 6 pupils planned a similar collage and showed good understanding of how the artist used colours and shape to convey mood. Samples of work indicate that pupils have an appropriate experience of working with malleable material to create three-dimensional images as they move through the school.

102. In the lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory and better and pupils' attitudes were good. They enjoy creative activities and use resources responsibly. Behaviour is good because activities are interesting and, indeed, pupils are reluctant to break off in time to clear up. Pupils with learning difficulties make equally good progress. Resources are good and easily accessible to pupils.
103. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of literacy skills. In the lessons observed teachers consistently use subject-specific language and pupils are encouraged to talk about their ideas and opinions. The opportunities to introduce pupils to the work of established artists and craftspersons supports their spiritual and cultural development well. Skills in information and communication technology are supported where pupils have the opportunity to generate patterns and pictures using a computer. In both key stages evidence indicates that the work is closely linked to current topics and regularly supports subjects such as history, music and religious education. This was illustrated well in Years 3 and 4 where pupils create their own Rangoli patterns.
104. The provision for this subject is managed effectively. Planning documents and pupils work are monitored but currently there is no programme for monitoring teaching and this has a limiting effect on evaluating the quality of provision.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. Most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language attain standards expected for their ages at both key stages.
106. In Key Stage 1, pupils generate ideas through handling materials and use pictures to show what they want to do. Suitable opportunities are provided for pupils to work with and select from a variety of materials to develop cutting, shaping, joining and sticking skills. Year 1 pupils design and make models of a range of playground equipment using construction apparatus and recyclable materials, assembling, joining and combining materials appropriately. They design and make a card with a simple moveable part using a split pin. Pupils in Year 2 discuss their ideas and work in pairs to design and make a simple vehicle with an axle that is fixed and the wheel free to rotate around it. They select their own tools, techniques and materials and develop appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding.
107. In Key Stage 2, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are built on and extended appropriately. Year 3 pupils design and make a 'moving monster' and plan what to do next, using pictures and words to explain their designs. Pupils in Year 4 understand that designs have to meet a variety of needs. They use tools and equipment with developing accuracy to make a story book with a 'pop-up' mechanism, using levers and pneumatics. Year 5 pupils design and make 'wind up' cars with cams. They label their design sketches, showing some awareness of constraints. Pupils in Year 6 produce step-by-step plans and labelled diagrams to design and make slippers. They gather information and use it to generate ideas, taking into account the purpose and use of finished products. Pupils' literacy skills are developed appropriately when they label diagrams in their design sketches and vocabulary is appropriately extended by using such words as make, design and reinforce. Numeracy skills are used effectively when they measure, mark and cut out simple shapes to make products.
108. The quality of teaching varies from satisfactory to good and is good overall. Planning is effective, with clear aims and structure for the lesson. A good range of tools and

materials are used effectively and they are prepared well for lessons. Class control is good, the organisation of group work is effective and pupils work collaboratively as well as independently. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is secure and aids pupils' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding and they try hard to do their best. Teachers' high expectations contribute to the brisk pace of pupils' working and to the development of good attitudes and behaviour. Pupils show interest, behave well and enjoy designing and making simple products. Good attention is given to safety and pupils handle tools carefully and take pride in their work.

GEOGRAPHY

109. During the period of the inspection it was possible to observe only one lesson at each key stage. Therefore no secure judgement can be made on the overall quality of teaching. Judgements of attainment are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, displays and discussions with pupils. Pupils at both key stages attain standards expected for their age. This represents an improvement in Key Stage 1 since standards were last reported.
110. In Key Stage 1, pupils study their immediate environment, identifying local features and recording their observations in pictures and writing. Year 1 pupils find out about different types of transport. They record their work pictorially, labelling the various types of transport. They talk about their journey to school and identify familiar features, completing a simple mapping grid with support. Year 2 pupils study their local environment and develop appropriate knowledge and understanding of local scale studies. They produce simple maps adding and describing features. Some pupils demonstrate an awareness of localities beyond their own, such as the Isle of Struay in Scotland.
111. Pupils in Key Stage 2 consolidate and extend their previous learning appropriately. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Years 3 experience a field study of the local area by going out into the community to look at features such as shops and restaurants. They name and position them accurately on a simple map and make simple, effective guidebooks describing the locality. Year 4 pupils learn about Ordnance Survey maps and find the school and other features on this using simple grid references. In this way they apply their numeracy skills to everyday situations. Year 5 pupils compare and contrast two different localities in the British Isles. They describe and contrast physical and human features between Reading and Pembrokeshire and know that different places may contain similar and different characteristics. At the end of the key stage, pupils demonstrate appropriate geographical skills, knowledge and understanding in comparing environmental influences on settlements in Reading and in Mexico. They study the effect of water on the landscape and people, including the physical features of rivers and the processes of erosion and decomposition. They develop an appropriate geographical vocabulary, using words such as delta, estuary and meanders with confidence. Pupils' numeracy skills are employed effectively in using grids and maps and literacy skills are effectively enhanced in written records.
112. On the evidence of the two lessons seen, planning is effective with clear learning objectives. Resources are used well and contribute to the pupils' enjoyment and to the development of geographical skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers manage the class well, which keeps pupils on task, maintaining their interest and concentration. Teachers constantly check that pupils understand their tasks, for example when Year 3 pupils are learning how to use a grid reference, and most pupils make good efforts to

do well. Teachers' expectations of their pupils are appropriately high and this has a positive effect on their pace of working and the development of good attitudes to learning. Visits, for example, to the local Clayfield Copse and to the seaside appropriately enhance the curriculum.

HISTORY

113. Pupils' attainment meets national expectations at the end of both key stages. It was possible to observe only two lessons in Key Stage 2 and one lesson in Key Stage 1, during the inspection. It is, therefore, not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching in the subject. Judgements on standards in the subject are based on these lessons, a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, and talking with teachers and pupils.
114. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop an understanding of change over time by looking at photographs of themselves as babies. While they enjoy trying to guess which classmate is shown in the photograph as a baby, they realise that all things, including themselves, change. Pupils study famous people, such as Florence Nightingale and by sequencing the events in her life, which they display across the classroom as a timeline, they show an increasing sense of chronology.
115. In Key Stage 2, pupils study a variety of past periods of British history and ancient civilisations. They enjoy a visit to a World War 11 exhibition in London where they experience a mock 'blitz'. Pupils have the opportunity to dress in clothes of the period including gas masks and they demonstrate a good knowledge of the differences in gas masks for adults, children and babies. They also consider how many domestic items, such as cookers, have changed since this period. Pupils gain a familiarity with the age of exploration and focus on certain explorers, including Sir Francis Drake and his circumnavigation of the world. They listen to a recording of a sailor who accompanied Drake on his voyage and they realise that this cannot be authentic, but read by an actor, because there were no tape recorders at that time. Pupils also learn about ancient Egypt and the Aztecs in their work on past civilisations. Pupils describe the characteristics of Aztec civilisation that particularly interest them. For example, they explain that the religion of the Aztecs involved sacrifices and that Aztecs believed in reincarnation with warriors returning as hummingbirds. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 use both books and CD-ROM to find information and are encouraged to consider the relative benefits of each source of information.
116. Although pupils' achievements indicate teaching has been satisfactory across both key stages, the quality of teaching in the three lessons seen was good. Teachers plan lessons well with a clear indication of what they want pupils to learn. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and they use questioning effectively to challenge pupils. Relationships are very good and teachers manage pupils well, ensuring they maintain concentration on the task and work hard. Pupils respond well; they are aware of what is required of them and they engage in tasks with enthusiasm, showing evident enjoyment and commitment. The variety of resources used during a lesson about Sir Francis Drake encouraged lower attaining pupils to ask a good range of questions and helped them record the significant events.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

117. It was possible to observe only two lessons in Key Stage 2 and one lesson in Key Stage 1, during the inspection. This provided insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching. Judgements on standards in the subject are based on these lessons, a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning. Further evidence was gathered by talking to pupils in both key stages about their work in the subject and working with them on the computer.
118. Standards in information and communication technology have improved in Key Stage 1 since the last inspection and seven year olds are meeting national expectations. However, standards remain unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2 and by the age of 11 standards are below expectations. The improvement in standards is due to improvements in provision and greater attention to the subject in Key Stage 1. In the last year, the school has established an information and communication technology suite with 14 computers. This provides increased opportunities for teaching and learning in the subject. However, there has been insufficient time for this to improve standards to a satisfactory level for all pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2.
119. In Key Stage 1, pupils are improving their skills and they load and save their work on the hard drive and floppy disks. Pupils adapt their work on a word processor by changing the font size and colour. They scroll through their work expertly and highlight areas of text to make changes. Pupils are developing good skills in using a drawing program and they gather data in a traffic survey, using it to create graphs that they interpret correctly. They also use a programmable toy and a computer program to explore control technology. Teachers keep good records of pupils' developing expertise. For example, teachers' records note that one pupil with English as an additional language showed concern that the toy had a long way to travel but laughed as he realised that he was the one that decided on the distance.
120. In Key Stage 2, there is little evidence of pupils' work in the subject. However, by the end of the key stage, pupils learn to insert pictures into their text and they 'cut and paste' text from one location to another. They have limited experience of using a database and control technology is limited to a simple computer program for moving a toy across the screen. The school has purchased a suitable program to monitor external events, such as recording temperature, but no teacher has yet been trained in its use.
121. In the lessons seen the teaching was satisfactory overall, with some aspects of good teaching. All lessons took place in the information and communication technology suite and teachers organised pupils well to ensure that they all had experience of using the computers. Clear learning intentions were established but these were low level skills necessarily due to the limited previous learning in the subject. For example, a Year 4 class was learning how to save and retrieve their work on floppy disk. Pupils are managed well and they respond by working enthusiastically on the computers. However, there has not been sufficient teaching of a satisfactory standard for pupils in Key Stage 2 to make the nationally expected progress in the subject.
122. The school has produced an action plan to improve standards in the subject but this relies on first ensuring that all teachers become confident in teaching the subject. Their confidence is not encouraged by the use of complex programs that were designed for adults and the school does not have more simple programs designed for pupils of this age.

MUSIC

123. During the inspection only one singing lesson was observed in Key Stage 2 and none in Key Stage 1. Evidence was also gathered from the musical content of assemblies, teachers' planning documents and discussions with teachers and pupils. However, this is insufficient to make secure judgements about the standards of attainment and the quality of teaching.
124. The singing in assembly was similar to that of most pupils of these ages. Pupils enter Year 1 with an appropriate repertoire of rhymes and songs, which they sing from memory, and have suitable experience of making music with non-tuned instruments. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils sing well with good articulation and sustained pitch. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 sing in tune and maintain their own part when singing alongside two or three other parts. They appraise their own performance, after listening to a tape recording, and clearly identify areas for improvement. Most pupils readily practise to improve their performance.
125. In the lesson observed and when singing in assembly, pupils enjoy music making and are eager to improve their performance. They sensibly offer ideas to improve performance. Their behaviour is good and this makes a major contribution to progress.
126. An overall judgement on teaching is inappropriate but in the lesson observed planning was detailed and linked directly to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The deployment of the learning support assistant to support pupils with challenging behaviour was effective and enabled all pupils made suitable progress. Overall resources are satisfactory but older instruments need replacing. The involvement in extra-curricular events such as festivals and school performances enhances the curriculum for most pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127. The standards demonstrated in gymnastics lessons by seven and 11 year olds are above expectations. In dance and games skills standards are similar to those expected of seven and 11 year olds.
128. Pupils make good progress in gymnastics as they move through Key Stage 1. Pupils enjoy warming-up activities. They are aware of the need to do so and of the effects it brings about. Most pupils show good co-ordination and control when running, jumping and balancing. They use space well, showing a good awareness of themselves and others. For example, they used an interesting variety of paths to link their different balances. Pupils are sensible when discussing each other's performance and readily use such observations to improve the quality of their own work. For instance, a pupil commented, 'She did a clever patch balance because she bent her head back to meet her toes' prompted many pupils to think about the quality of their movement.
129. In Key Stage 2, pupils made good progress in the lessons observed. They show a readiness to work hard to develop good quality movements in gymnastics. In Years 4 and 5 pupils develop linked sequences of travelling with clear starting and finishing points. They change speed, direction and level appropriately. Pupils show appropriate control when travelling to pass and receive a ball. They show a good understanding of how to avoid contact when running at speed and employ basic techniques of attacking and defending in simple games. By the end of the key stage, pupils collaborate effectively to devise dance sequences to interpret native American music. They use some traditional steps, their knowledge of the cultural traditions and the texture and

structure of the music to choreograph their dance. Pupils make mature evaluations of their own performance and that of others and are eager to practise to bring about improvement in the quality of their movement. For example, after presenting their dance to the class, one group identified the need to improve their use of space and 'concentrate on strong movements'. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have swimming lessons but not all pupils are able to swim 25 metres when they leave the school. The access to swimming facilities is limited and this has a negative impact on the progress of some pupils in this aspect.

130. Most pupils work with enthusiasm and clearly enjoy these lessons. They work co-operatively, are sensitive when commenting on the performance of others and are ready to practise to improve the quality of their own work. Behaviour is very good and they use resources responsibly. Pupils with special educational needs respond with the same enthusiasm and make equally appropriate progress. The opportunities to work with partners and in larger groups and the constant expectation to work safely support the personal and social development of all pupils.
131. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching as not all aspects of physical education were seen. However, the teaching of gymnastics lessons was good. Teachers were thorough in their planning; identifying clearly what pupils should be able to do by the end of the lesson. This is shared with the pupils and they work hard and are keen to meet expectations. The management of pupils is good because the structure of the lesson ensures that a good pace is maintained and pupils are engaged in purposeful activity throughout the session. Teachers show good subject knowledge and consistently seek to help pupils to improve the quality of their skills. Opportunities to be involved in inter-school sports meetings and matches and residential experience at an activity centre enriches the provision in this subject.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

132. During the period of the inspection it was not possible to observe any religious education lesson in Key Stage 1. As a result, there can be no secure judgement on the quality of teaching in this key stage. Judgements of attainment are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' plans and discussions with staff and pupils.
133. A scrutiny of pupils' work in Key Stage 1 reveals that their standards of attainment are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know about religious celebrations, such as the Christian festival of Shrove Tuesday and about the season of Lent. They gain a satisfactory level of knowledge of Christianity and the life of Jesus. They understand the importance of ceremonies, such as Christenings on the lives of Christians and compare these with Buddhist birth ceremonies and rituals. They develop an appropriate understanding of the beliefs of other faiths through learning about Hinduism and Sikhism. This is enhanced by the willingness of the children of other faiths within school to share the varied aspects of their culture.
134. By the age of 11, standards of attainment exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve well. This is an improvement since the 1997 inspection when standards were in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is a direct result of the consistently good teaching at Key Stage 2. Pupils' prior learning is built on in a structured way and their knowledge and

understanding are effectively consolidated and extended. All pupils have equal opportunity and equal access to all activities.

135. In Year 3, pupils learn about Hinduism and develop a good knowledge of the spring festival of Holi and of the festival of light, Diwali. They name many Hindu gods, such as Shiva and Ganesh and begin to understand that religion is an important part of many people's lives. Most pupils develop a good understanding of religious signs and symbols. Year 4 pupils know that a dove symbolises peace and harmony and suggest what particular symbols mean, with confidence. Pupils in Year 5 know Old Testament stories, such as the stories of Abraham and Isaac, Jacob and Esau and the story of Joseph. Year 6 pupils learn in greater detail about the life of Jesus. They develop a good understanding of Christianity as the main religion in Britain. They learn about the key beliefs of Islam and understand that religious beliefs can be incorporated and valued in daily life. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils acquire a good knowledge of Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Studying these faiths gives pupils a good insight into other cultures and their festivals. They develop an understanding and respect that other people's beliefs are important to them. This contributes well to their spiritual and cultural development. Good opportunities are provided for reflection in assemblies that support the religious education curriculum.
136. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is consistently good. Teachers' knowledge of the locally agreed syllabus is secure and contributes well to pupils' developing knowledge and understanding of the major world religions. Good, open-ended and well-targeted questions effectively raise pupils' awareness of the differences and similarities between different faiths and encourage pupils to think independently, as was seen in a Year 6 lesson on the keys of Islam. Effective revision of previous learning and the involvement of pupils in the aims of the lesson, ensure that pupils know what is expected of them. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour and involvement are high and encourage good behaviour and effort. Class management is very good and evokes very good responses and attitudes from pupils and maintains a brisk pace of working. This has a positive effect on the attainment and progress of pupils.
137. Resources are adequate, accessible and are used well. A part-time member of staff who is Hindu contributes effectively to work on 'signs and symbols' by bringing in her own artefacts, for example a puja, which is a plate for prayer. Very effective displays, such as one about the Chinese New Year, enhance both the curriculum and pupils' cultural development. Effective use is made of visits to a synagogue, for example, to enrich the curriculum and a lay preacher visits each month to take assembly.