

INSPECTION REPORT

PEASMARSH CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Peasmarsch, Rye

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114518

Acting headteacher: Mrs. Rosemary Osborn

Reporting inspector: Robert Greatrex
19924

Dates of inspection: 22 - 25 May 2000

Inspection number: 198464

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:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Lane Peasmarsh Near Rye East Sussex
Postcode:	TN31 6UW
Telephone number:	01797 230325
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	The Reverend C. Hopkins
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Robert Greatrex	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
		Geography	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements
		History	How well are pupils or students taught?
		Information technology	How well is the school led and managed?
Gail Ellisdon	Lay inspector	N/A	How high are standards? b) 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?
Shelagh Halley	Team inspector	Science	N/A
		Music	
		Physical education	
		Religious education	
		English as an additional language	
		Under fives	
Mo Ashby	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?
		Art	
		Design and technology	
		Equal opportunities	
		Special educational needs	

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
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33 Kingsway
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Peasmarsh is a small village school with 98 boys and girls on roll, from 4 to 11 years of age. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school covers a wide range but is generally below average. The school has 19 pupils identified as having special educational needs. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Peasmarsh Primary is an improving school. Standards in English, mathematics and science are good and have improved year-on-year over the last four years. The quality of teaching is good. The recently-promoted headteacher and governing body have given the school a very clear educational direction. They have worked very effectively together and this has been a major factor in the successful drive to improve the quality of education offered and successfully raise standards. The positive attitudes of pupils also contribute to the good climate for learning. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Good recent improvement in standards in English, mathematics and science has been maintained and built upon successfully.
- The quality of teaching is generally good.
- The governors' role in shaping the direction of the school is excellent.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good, and the good provision for personal and social education is an important factor in this.
- Relationships between pupils and pupils, and between pupils and staff, are very good.

What could be improved

- The curriculum provision for reading and writing is too narrow.
- Not enough use is made of assessment and teachers' marking to track pupils' progress, give them the guidance they need, or plan future work.
- Parents do not have enough information about how their children are doing at school, or sufficient advice about how they might best help them with their learning out of school.
- Some aspects of the accommodation, such as the hall, are inadequate.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, the school has made good improvement since it was found to have serious weaknesses when it was previously inspected in 1997. The weaknesses in teaching, particularly in Key Stage 1 but also in the overall quality, have been successfully met. Standards of attainment have risen in all subjects criticised in the previous report, but particularly in mathematics and investigative science where they are now much higher. Many more pupils are working at higher attainment levels in English, mathematics and science. Satisfactory progress has been made in enabling pupils to gain greater understanding of the richness and diversity of the society in which they live. Although the new headteacher has yet to arrive, given the governors' excellent role in shaping the school's direction, and the staff's commitment, the capacity to improve further is good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. In these comparisons it should be remembered that cohorts of pupils at Peasmarsh are often small. Consequently data can be misleading and care is necessary when interpreting change from one year to the next.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	D	D	B	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	E	E	B	B	
Science	E	E	A	A	

Standards reached by eleven-year-olds improved dramatically in 1999 following steady and sustained improvement over the previous three years. Results included a good proportion of pupils at higher levels. This reflects the school's much improved effectiveness since the previous inspection report in matching the level of work to pupils' capabilities in English, mathematics and science. Current targets for further improvement are challenging but realistic and achievable.

Standards reached by seven-year-olds in 1999 were below the national average in reading and writing. Although the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was close to the national average, the proportion exceeding it was below. In mathematics, standards were well above the national average. Again, standards overall have risen over the previous three years.

Standards in numeracy are improving significantly, largely because the school has focused closely on this important subject. Standards in literacy are improving in literacy lessons, and in the development of the 'tools' of reading and writing such as phonic knowledge and understanding of spelling and punctuation. However, the school does not sufficiently engender a love of books nor give pupils sufficient opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes and audiences. This adversely affects standards in these areas. Standards in all other subjects are satisfactory except physical education, where they are limited in gymnastics and dance by the accommodation, design and technology in Key Stage 1, and geography and history at the end of Key Stage 2.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Positive. The vast majority love school and approach their learning with interest and enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The vast majority of pupils behave well in and out of class, and are courteous and friendly towards one another, staff and visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between all members of the school community are very good and the school is harmonious.
Attendance	Satisfactory, a little above the national average but lower than at the time of the previous inspection. The vast majority of pupils are punctual.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching during the inspection was good overall. It was satisfactory or better in every lesson observed. In four in every ten of these lessons teaching was good, and very good or excellent in two in every ten. There was a small proportion of very good teaching in Key Stage 1. Teaching was consistently very good in Key Stage 2 and particularly in Years 3 and 4.

The teaching of English is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. Much time and effort have been put into implementing the national strategy for literacy. In older classes particularly, teachers enthuse their pupils who consequently show great interest in their work and apply themselves diligently to it. The teaching of mathematics, again closely following the national framework, is good. Strategies for the three parts of the lesson are effective and help create a positive climate for learning in which pupils develop their ideas well. Strengths are found in teachers' planning which ensures work is matched closely to pupils' levels in most subjects including English, mathematics and science. Specialisms are used effectively in some subjects in Key Stage 2. Teachers are less effective in using marking to help pupils recognise what they are doing well and where they need to improve.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Literacy and numeracy are emphasised appropriately but there is a insufficient coverage of elements of art, music, design and technology, history, geography and physical education. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Much is done to enrich and extend the curriculum. For a small school, the range of activities out of lessons is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Support, by both teachers and support assistants, is of good quality. Pupils' needs are identified quickly and effective support provided. Targets on individual education plans are appropriate and used carefully to generate learning activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for personal development is good overall. Provision for spiritual development is good and gives pupils insight into values and beliefs. Provision for moral development is good and pupils know the difference between right and wrong. Provision for social development is good and the school functions as a caring community. Provision for cultural development is good in pupils' own culture and satisfactory in other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pastoral care is very good and pupils feel secure in the warm and trusting environment. Staff develop pupils' self esteem well and do much to promote good behaviour. 'Circle time' is used effectively to help pupils understand their rights and responsibilities to the school community. Pupils' safety and welfare are carefully considered. The use of assessment in monitoring pupils' progress is inconsistent. Good systems are used in some, but not all, classes.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The recently-promoted headteacher led the school very well. With the support of all staff she has striven successfully to raise standards and move the school forward.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very effective in their roles. They give a great deal of their own time and strike a good balance between supporting and questioning the school. They are at the heart of the school's improvements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Evaluation is very good. Headteacher, governors and co-ordinators monitor and review the curriculum. Of particular note is the annual planning day when governors and all staff work together to review the previous year's progress and set targets for the forthcoming year. This is an important factor in the successful drive to improve the quality of education provided and the standards pupils achieve.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are very well deployed to meet the perceived needs of the school and its fundamental objectives, such as maintaining four classes. The principles of best value are applied to the majority of spending decisions.

There is an adequate number of teachers. Support assistants are particularly well trained and deployed to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. There are shortcomings in accommodation, notably the hall. This adversely affects pupils' standards. Approximately half the pupils are in mobile classrooms and have to go outside to use the facilities in the main building.

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 school helps their children mature and become responsible. • The school has high expectations of their children. • Their children make good progress at school. • They are comfortable raising questions and problems. • Teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are not well informed about their children's progress. • There are few activities outside of lessons.

Parents overwhelmingly support the school. Inspectors agree with the parents' view that they are not well informed about how their children are doing at school between the very informative annual reports. However, Inspectors feel that the range of activities outside of lessons is satisfactory, given the size of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Overall, standards are good. At the end of Key Stage 2, there has been a steady year-on-year improvement over the last four years, particularly marked in 1999. The proportion of pupils reaching levels above those expected by their age is also good, and this is a significant improvement since the previous inspection report. At the end of Key Stage 1, there has been improvement in reading and writing over the same time period, although year-on-year it is variable. At this age there has been greatest improvement in mathematics to the point where pupils now exceed the average for their age.
2. In the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 1999, approximately three-quarters of pupils reached the level expected in English, a proportion close to the national average, and a quarter of pupils reached a higher level. In mathematics, approximately seven in every ten pupils reached the expected level, a proportion slightly below the national average, but nearly half exceeded it. In science, nine in every ten pupils reached the expected level, a proportion above the national average, and six in every ten exceeded it. The proportion of pupils reaching higher levels was above the national average in English and well above the national average in mathematics and science. When results are compared with pupils from similar schools, they are above average in English and mathematics, and well above average in science. There is no significant trend in the relative performance of boys and girls over the last four years. The school reached the targets set for it in 1999. Targets set for the next two years are challenging but realistic.
3. In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 1999, more than eight in every ten pupils reached the expected level in reading and writing, whilst all pupils reached the expected level in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching a higher level was below the national average in reading and writing, however. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils reaching a higher level was above the national average. As attainment in mathematics was low at the time of the previous inspection, this is particularly impressive. When results are compared with pupils from similar schools, they are well below average in reading, below average in writing, but well above average in mathematics. Results improved in three of the last four years in reading and writing, and in every year in mathematics. In all three subjects, results now are above where they were four years ago.
4. Children under five enter school with a wide range of attainment levels, but overall they are below average. Where they are relatively low includes basic skills particularly important to their future learning, such as reading, listening and mathematics. Their manipulative skills, too, are often low. A well-planned curriculum and good use of assessment to plan activities matched to the needs of all, means that the vast majority make good progress. Where these children have special educational needs, they are identified quickly and good support given. All of these children make good progress, particularly when the class teacher has a support assistant to call upon, and by the time they are five nearly all have reached the standards expected in their physical and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development in the nationally recognised curriculum for children of this age. In their physical development, too, they reach the expected standard, although their attainment is adversely affected by the limitations placed upon them by the inadequate accommodation, inside and out. In the key areas of language and literacy, and mathematics, the majority do not reach the standard expected.
5. Inspection evidence suggests that good recent improvements have been maintained. Throughout the school, pupils are working at the correct level and reaching the standards of which they are capable. Largely because of variations in the attainment levels of one year group to the next, current standards are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2, and above average at the end of Key Stage 1. This represents a slight fall in the former since 1999, and a significant improvement in the latter.

6. Standards in literacy are satisfactory overall. All elements of the Literacy Hour are in place, although the school chooses to teach guided reading separately. These lessons are effective, largely because of good planning and teaching. Standards in the 'tools' of reading and writing are good. However, pupils are not enthusiastic readers with a broad knowledge and understanding of authors and genre. Nor do they reach good standards in writing for a range of purposes, or at length, or in skills of re-drafting. Skills are practised in some, but by no means all, other subjects.
7. Standards in numeracy are satisfactory overall, and a good proportion of pupils are quick and accurate in mental computation. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The three part lesson is well taught and pupils respond positively and with enthusiasm. This is beneficial to their learning. Number skills are used well in other subjects, such as practical science. However, the difficulty many older pupils have when checking answers and estimating their reasonableness, reported in the post inspection monitoring visit, remains.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, and the relatively good standards reported in the previous inspection report have been maintained and built upon successfully. Targets are clear, measurable and well used in planning tasks and activities. These pupils make particularly good progress when supported, either individually or in small groups, by classroom assistants.
9. Pupils with high attainment levels generally make good progress in mathematics and science. In English, most make the progress of which they are capable. In other subjects such as geography and history, they are often given the same task as other pupils and consequently make less progress than they should.
10. Standards in science are good overall, although the current Year 6 are reaching broadly average standards. Standards in practical science, involving experimentation and investigation, are good and significantly improved since the previous inspection. Standards in information technology are satisfactory overall and good amongst younger pupils. This is because older pupils have rarely had the depth of experience necessary. Standards of work in the specialist room are good, generally less so in classrooms. Standards in religious education are satisfactory overall, although older pupils' knowledge of religion is better than their understanding. Some older pupils are confused by a welter of detail that hinders their understanding of the crucial elements. In other subjects standards are satisfactory, except in geography and history at the end of Key Stage 2, when the school chooses to use this time for extra lessons in the core subjects, design and technology at the end of Key Stage 1, where too little progress in skill levels is made in Year 2, and in physical education throughout the school, because of the inadequate accommodation. It was not possible to make a judgement about music throughout the school or history in Key Stage 1.
11. More than nine parents in every ten who responded to the questionnaire agree that their children are making good progress in the school, and none disagree. They feel standards had risen under the previous headteacher, and that standards in mathematics were particularly impressive.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Relationships amongst members of the school community are very good. Pupils' attitudes to school are positive and their behaviour is good. Their personal development is also good.
13. Children who join the youngest class settle in quickly. They behave well and use resources such as games sensibly. They relate well to one another and co-operate in groups, for example, when sharing equipment.
14. Pupils throughout the school have positive attitudes. The vast majority enjoy school and approach their learning with enthusiasm and interest. This is confirmed by nearly all parents who responded to the questionnaire. In lessons most pupils are eager to learn and concentrate

on the task on hand. They are keen to do well and enjoy talking with visitors about their work. However, as at the time of the previous inspection, the level of care in the presentation of their work is often disappointing. Many respond well to challenges, persevering hard for example to write a poem in a particular style and showing pleasure when they succeed. Because of a lack of opportunity, few older pupils are developing good personal study skills.

15. The behaviour of the majority of pupils is good, a view shared by most parents. Most pupils are courteous and friendly to each other, and to adults. For example, visitors are usually greeted with a smile and a pleasant "Good Morning"; doors are held open for them. In lessons and assemblies, pupils generally volunteer to answer questions, and wait patiently if another is chosen. They listen attentively to teachers and other pupils. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner. Behaviour at break times is also mainly good; pupils play harmoniously together. Parents state bullying is rare. There were no exclusions in the year prior to the inspection.
16. Relationships between pupils and staff are constructive and purposeful. Staff respect the pupils as individuals and provide good role models. In turn, pupils trust and respect teachers and other adults at the school; they value their support. When given the opportunity, pupils collaborate well in groups and share ideas, such as during map work in a Year 3 and 4 geography lesson. Pupils show caring attitudes towards one another, for example if another is hurt in the playground. Through considering moral and social values in 'circle time' and assemblies, pupils learn tolerance for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. The pupils' willingness to respect other people's opinions was evident in a religious education lesson when they listened carefully, and with great interest, to information about the views of different religious leaders. Pupils are positive about one another's efforts and achievements. In a Year 3 and 4 music lesson, pupils spontaneously clapped the compositions of others. These very effective relationships positively contribute to the standards and ethos of the school.
17. Pupils respond well to opportunities for their personal development. They willingly take responsibility for such things as returning registers to the office, helping younger pupils with their coats and preparing the hall for assembly, and perform these duties conscientiously. Many examples of initiative were seen during the inspection. Particularly impressive was the quiet and sensible way an older girl intervened to prevent a small boy throwing a piece of dead wood into the nature pond. Pupils look after equipment and take care of the school. The pupils show social awareness and concern for others when fund-raising for charities, entertaining the local elderly and participating in events within the village or with other schools. Parents are almost unanimous in saying the school helps their children become mature and responsible. They also feel pupils' social skills are particularly good, and that this is particularly beneficial when their children move from a comparatively small primary school to a much larger secondary school.
18. Although lower than at the time of the previous inspection, attendance is satisfactory. It is slightly above the national average whilst unauthorised absence is below the national average. Punctuality is satisfactory and most pupils arrive on time. Registers are called promptly and efficiently.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching is generally good, and very good in Key Stage 2. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection, and this is a significant improvement from the previous inspection when 15 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. The school has been successful in meeting this key issue of the previous inspection report. Overall, four lessons in every ten were judged good, and two in every ten very good or excellent. The bulk of this teaching was in Key Stage 2. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire feel that teaching in the school is good.
20. Teaching of children under five is good. Aspects such as planning, the use of resources to make teaching clearer, and the use of assessment all make a good contribution to the success

of teaching and the good rate of progress. Staff work well together and the progress children make is greater at these times than when the teacher works alone.

21. The teaching of literacy is good overall, satisfactory in the younger key stage and very good in the older key stage. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives, and in the most effective lessons these are shared with pupils. Coupled with high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and the pupils' own positive response especially to enthusiastic teaching, enables lessons to move on at good pace. Where teaching is particularly effective, teachers also use questioning well to push pupils' thinking forwards and help them understand new ideas. Pupils' work is used very effectively to explain and expand upon what is expected. In these lessons, classroom assistants and adult volunteers are fully briefed and their strengths recognised and well used.
22. The teaching of numeracy is good and much improved since the previous inspection report. As with literacy, planning is good. This is largely due to the good use of the frameworks for each subject. The structure of the three-part lesson is seen in all classes. Some inventive activities, such as a card game in a Year 5 and 6 lesson, are used to sharpen pupils' mental recall. Teachers' knowledge and understanding, particularly in how to discuss various strategies for mental computation, are good and there is evidence of good quality training being put to good use. In the most effective lessons, teacher and pupils alike shared an enthusiasm for learning, and there was a clear sense of achievement at the end of the lesson.
23. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Activities are well planned and resourced. They are carefully matched to targets in individual education plans and pupils' abilities, whilst still being challenging. Work is clearly modified and suitable for each pupil. Effective use is made of computer programs to give pupils individual support. Classroom assistants are knowledgeable and skilled. They contribute much to the positive attitudes of pupils with whom they have good rapport. Through encouragement and persuasion they do much to encourage and enable pupils to complete activities successfully. The high standards of this provision reported in the previous inspection have been maintained.
24. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is good, consequently their explanations are clear and, when pupils experience difficulties, they are able to resolve them. Good use is made of teachers' subject expertise in Key Stage 2.
25. The weakness in teaching information technology, reported in the previous inspection report, has largely been addressed. The specialist room is used effectively. Although the majority of these lessons are taught by classroom assistants, their knowledge of the hard and software is good. They are able to give pupils the support they need to make good progress. Whilst teaching is therefore good, there are currently few opportunities for the assistants to give teachers the assessment information that would be useful in planning future work.
26. Teachers know their pupils well, and carefully match work in English, mathematics and science particularly to pupils' capabilities. In many foundation subjects, the match is not as close. Pupils with high attainment levels in particular are not sufficiently catered for in geography and history for example. In many writing tasks, too, work does not challenge these pupils sufficiently. In some foundation subjects, some teachers do not adequately plan for the different age groups in their classes. Even so, this is much improved since the previous inspection.
27. Good use is made of resources to illustrate teaching points and enable pupils to experience firsthand learning, in which they show particular interest. Occasionally, displays are used to very good effect. In a very good Year 5 and 6 art lesson, for example, the display featuring an excellent range of woven materials and cloths was taken down and used in the lesson to give the pupils a clearer understanding of the main teaching points.
28. The few weaknesses in teaching largely relate to the use of marking and homework. Marking is often good in English. Pupils are given a clear understanding of what they have done successfully, and where they should concentrate their efforts in their next piece of work. Helpful notes and reminders, sometimes with targets for that piece of work, are occasionally

attached. In much of the marking, however, this is not the case. Praise is over used, bland and pupils are given insufficient guidance. Homework is generally satisfactory. In some lessons, however, it neither practises nor extends classwork effectively. Often, all pupils will be given the same task, which is too difficult for some and lacks challenge for others. Teachers' requirements and expectations vary and are unclear to both pupils and parents. As a result, the quality and quantity of work suffers. Although approximately eight parents in every ten who responded to the questionnaire feel that their children get the right amount of homework, a number feel that they themselves are given little help or guidance in how they might best help their children learn out of school. Inspectors concur with this view, although some helpful advice and information are offered by one teacher and parents find this very useful.

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

29. The curriculum provision is satisfactory. Areas of weakness in this aspect have been improved since the previous inspection. The school offers a broad range of opportunities for all pupils and successfully promotes pupils' personal and social education. It meets the National Curriculum requirements in English, mathematics, science and information technology and follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. In some foundation subjects, the curriculum is too narrow.
30. The curriculum for children under five covers all six areas of learning appropriately. It makes a good contribution to the intellectual development of all pupils, particularly in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Satisfactory opportunities are provided to promote children's aesthetic and creative development and their personal and social development. The inadequacy of the accommodation limits the provision for their physical development.
31. Overall, the allocation of time has been balanced effectively, other than in geography and history in Year 6. In particular, there is good provision for the nationally-introduced strategies for literacy and numeracy in both key stages.
32. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. There are mixed age classes and the school has devised a programme which ensures coverage of all subjects and that work is not repeated unnecessarily. Plans show a close match with the National Curriculum programmes of study. However, in practise there is insufficient coverage of elements of art, music, design and technology, history, geography and physical education.
33. There is good provision for sex education. A good policy on the mis-use of drugs, and close liaison with community police, further improves provision for these important aspects of pupils' education.
34. The school ensures equality of access and opportunities for all pupils. Whenever possible, the organisation of classes and groups offers all pupils of the same age access to the same learning opportunities and facilities. Teachers use their subject specialist skills well to support some subjects in the older classes. The school does not plan sufficiently the withdrawal of individual pupils from classes, for example to learn musical instruments or to read to volunteers. Whilst these are beneficial activities, because they are not catered for in planning, pupils can miss very important teaching points in either literacy or numeracy.
35. The provision for pupils with special needs is very good. The needs of these pupils are quickly and accurately identified. Individual education plans are clear and parents are well informed about their children's targets. Because activities are carefully matched to pupils needs, they have good access to the curriculum. The school generally identifies pupils with high attainment levels, but it is less successful in meeting their needs particularly in writing and the foundation subjects.

36. There is a satisfactory range of extra curricular opportunities for the children to attend, including football, netball, sewing and French. Parents, governors and the wider community support the school in offering this provision. Many other activities enrich and extend the school curriculum. Eight out of every ten parents who responded to the questionnaire are satisfied with the range of activities offered. The remainder tend to feel it is too narrow, predominantly sport. Inspectors judge the range to be satisfactory.
37. Provision for pupils' personal development is good overall. The school makes good provision for the spiritual development of pupils. Knowledge is extended and pupils are given insight into Christian values and beliefs. Pupils are given some time to reflect quietly and to come to understand themselves, the wider world and their place in it. They are given opportunities to feel uplifted by their discoveries and experiences in assemblies and many subjects. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral development. Pupils consider the principles of truth and justice, being fair and caring for others during assemblies and religious education lessons. The school makes good provision for personal, social and health education, which gives pupils of all ages and abilities a clear understanding of acceptable behaviour and the difference between right and wrong. These lessons are also a platform for pupils to air their opinions or share their worries. The school makes good provision for pupils' social development. The staff develop the self-esteem and confidence of all pupils in the community. They act as good role models and consistently reinforce positive attitudes. The pupils are given many tasks which help the school to run smoothly. Pupils are given time to express their feelings and ask questions during 'circle time'. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. There are good opportunities to extend pupils' knowledge of Christian festivals and traditions. History and geography lessons and linked visits give pupils some opportunity to extend their knowledge and to give them experience of other cultural traditions. Since the previous inspection the school has improved provision for pupils to learn about the richness and diversity of other cultures and to equip them for growing up in a multi-ethnic society. However, these opportunities are not yet a regular part of the curriculum.
38. There are strong links with the community and the local church. The parents, members of the community, and the governors give valuable time and expertise to the school, which effectively enhances curriculum provision. Pupils enter art work into various local exhibitions and perform at community events.
39. There are very good links with one of the secondary schools, which allow constructive relationships to develop. There are several days of induction enabling pupils from all primary feeder schools to meet together. As a result pupils attending settle into their new school well. There is, however, no similarly good level of liaison with other secondary schools in the locality in order to ensure that parents can exercise their full range of choice.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. Overall the school's arrangements for the welfare, supervision and guidance of its pupils are satisfactory. Pastoral care is very good and much care is taken to settle new children in when they first start school. Parents feel the school raises self esteem and confidence, and teaches social skills particularly well, and this is very beneficial to their children, particularly at such times as when they move schools. However, systems for assessment do not give the school the information it needs to track pupils' academic progress sufficiently.
41. The good climate for learning reported in the previous inspection has been maintained. This is partly due to the very good pastoral support provided by the staff. They listen to the pupils' concerns and respond constructively to individual and collective needs. They create a warm and trusting environment, where pupils feel confident and secure.
42. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are generally successful. A positive approach and the development of the pupils' self esteem are central to the school's behaviour policy. These principles are mainly well applied. Staff praise good work and behaviour; they apply discipline firmly but fairly. In 'circle time' and assemblies pupils learn about the effects of their actions on others. They understand what is expected of them and are clear about the school's system

of rewards and sanctions. Misbehaviour is monitored closely and is usually handled effectively. If appropriate, parents are involved. Parents feel any incidents of bullying are dealt with speedily and well.

43. Pupils' attendance is well monitored. Parents and school are in contact on the first day of any absence and unexplained absences are always followed up. Registers are regularly checked. When a pupils' attendance or punctuality gives cause for concern the school liaises well with the educational welfare office to seek improvement. The school has begun to address the slight decline in overall attendance since the previous inspection and to look for ways of promoting good attendance. Following consultation with parents, the home-school agreement includes reference to good attendance and punctuality.
44. The pupils' safety and welfare are carefully considered. All incidents resulting in injury, however slight, are recorded. Regular safety checks are made. There is a book in the office for reporting safety hazards at other times. Mid-day supervisors are well briefed. Child protection arrangements are satisfactory. The personal, social and health education programme is used well to alert pupils to the ill effects of drugs and smoking and to promote a healthy life style. This provision contributes constructively to pupils' individual and social development.
45. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from all staff. The progress of these pupils is carefully monitored. When appropriate, specialist help from a variety of external agencies is sought when needed and used effectively.
46. The school meets statutory requirements for assessment and information from tests is used effectively to monitor areas where the school is doing well and areas where the school could do better. This has been of fundamental importance as the school has successfully sought to raise standards over the last few years.
47. Assessment data is used effectively to plan the day to day learning of pupils with special educational needs, but this is not the case for all other pupils. Within different classes, teachers use different systems. Some of these are very effective and give teachers the information they need to check progress and plan future work, but they are not used throughout the school. In consequence, some teachers do not have the information they need about their pupils. Useful targets are set for pupils individually, but the effectiveness is often reduced because neither pupils nor parents fully understand what is expected and cannot, therefore, contribute fully. Assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs are good. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored, regular reviews take place and information from on going assessments is used well to inform future targets.
48. Staff know their pupils well. Their personal development, behaviour and attendance are monitored well, their academic progress less effectively. Even so, the school's support and guidance in raising pupils' achievements is satisfactory.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOLWORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. Overall the school continues to have a satisfactory partnership with its parents. On a social and pastoral level, the vast majority of parents enjoy a very useful and purposeful relationship with the school. Academic links are less successful.
50. There are good levels of communication about school information and forthcoming events between the school and home. The prospectus, governors' annual report and newsletters ensure parents are kept well informed about general matters. Clear details of the overall picture of what is taught are given in the prospectus; parents may view detailed curriculum plans by appointment. Parents appreciate the efforts of the head teacher, governors and all other staff who provide a caring learning environment for their children.
51. The good quality of annual reports commented upon in the previous inspection has been maintained. They fully include the information parents need. All reports are helpful and encouraging. Constructive comments about pupils' achievements in all subjects and their personal and social development are included. How pupils might improve is also clear. Pupils and parents are given the opportunity to comment.
52. The school offers two meetings for parents when it is possible to discuss their children's work and progress. Parents are encouraged to approach teachers at any other time to share concerns about their children's education. Most feel able to do so as they find staff very approachable and conscientious. Many parents are satisfied with these arrangements. Others express reservations. They feel the gaps when they receive no information or contact are too long. They also say inconsistencies in the quality and marking of homework prevent them gaining a clear picture of their child's progress on a week-by-week basis. Inspection evidence supports these views. A notable exception are parents of pupils with special educational needs. These parents are much more regularly informed and more actively involved.
53. The school does not fully exploit parents as active partners in their children's education. Some teachers provide termly curriculum information sheets which parents find very useful. However, this is not done throughout the school. Some parents feel that they have too little guidance about how they can best help their children learn out of school. Parents have mixed views about the information given regarding new national initiatives in literacy and numeracy. Some feel confused or unsure about the school curriculum because they are given too little information about it and, again, this limits their effectiveness in supporting their children's learning. Furthermore, few talks or events about other aspects of the curriculum are held.
54. The school's resolve to develop a realistic homework policy in collaboration with parents, commented upon in the previous inspection report, has been partially successful. More than eight parents in every ten who responded to the questionnaire feel their children get the right amount of homework, and this is a good level of success. However, parents describe some weaknesses which were confirmed by this inspection. Homework that supports work in the classroom is not regularly set by all teachers. There is no homework diary. Parents are unsure what is expected and feel they and their children often receive too little feedback through marking particularly. The quantity of homework does not build as pupils move through the school nor, in the oldest years, prepare pupils sufficiently for their next school.
55. Parents feel welcome at the school and are supportive of it. Several take advantage of opportunities offered to discuss and agree aspects of education such as the behaviour policy and home-school agreement. They enjoy attending events such as special services and musical productions. Many parents help in very practical ways, giving valuable classroom support, helping on visits or with swimming and after school clubs. Others contribute by giving talks about their life and work. A willing band of volunteers prepares the swimming pool for use at the beginning of each season.
56. Parents raise substantial funds for the purchase of learning equipment and materials through their association. They also organise events and activities for pupils such as bookstalls and discos. The headteacher and staff are very appreciative of these efforts.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. Currently the school does not have a permanent headteacher in post. The school has been well led by the previous headteacher, very ably supported by the governing body. The good working partnership, noted in the previous inspection report, has continued successfully. A very clear educational direction exists which has been largely responsible for the consistent and sustained improvement in standards in English, mathematics and science over the recent past. Nearly all parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school is well led and managed, and none disagreed.
58. The improved quality of education under the headteacher reported at the previous inspection has been successfully and effectively built upon. Teamwork is very strong, as is the commitment to improvement. Despite relatively high staff turnover in the recent past, staff work effectively together.
59. The governing body is a strength of the school with a very clear role in shaping the direction the school will follow. Governors have a very good understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are very supportive of the school, whilst still questioning policies and actions. Statutory responsibilities are fulfilled successfully and governors have clear aims and priorities, such as maintaining four classes, which they successfully achieved through very good strategic planning.
60. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance are used very effectively to highlight strengths to build upon and areas to improve. The headteacher has used test results effectively to monitor standards and look for areas of relative weakness. These are then acted upon effectively. She and the governing body have developed a clear system to closely monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning. This has given the school staff and governors very useful information in the drive to raise standards.
61. A particular strength of the leadership and management of the school is the annual planning days. These bring together teaching and support staff with governors to review the previous year's targets and set new ones for the forthcoming year. All are fully involved and able to contribute. All go away with a clear and consistent understanding of the direction the school will follow, and this is very valuable in their work and decision-making during the year. While educational priorities are set, staff and governors are fully aware of the need for careful financial planning and for priorities to be closely costed.
62. Financial planning is good and spending is regularly monitored. Given the small size of the school, and the relatively large year-to-year budget swings, the carry forward is appropriate. Resources are used well. Governors are aware of the principles of best value and apply them to much of their work. Funding, for example for pupils with special educational needs, is used very effectively.
63. Monitoring of the curriculum is good. The headteacher has struck a sensible and practical balance between the need to manage and develop the curriculum and demands placed upon staff. Major subjects and those facing considerable development over the year are each co-ordinated by one teacher, often following good quality training. In the recent past staff have benefited greatly from the opportunities to work alongside one another, particularly for co-ordinators to demonstrate and share expertise.
64. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed. Policies are clear, systems thorough and early identification effective in enabling pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. Parents and all relevant staff are fully involved in this effective partnership.
65. Day-to-day administration is efficient and effective. It does much to enable the headteacher and school teaching staff to concentrate upon more appropriate matters.

66. The school has a satisfactory number of appropriately qualified teachers. In older classes, good use is made of teacher expertise to teach subjects such as physical education throughout the key stage. This is beneficial to pupils' progress in these subjects. An adequate number of support staff are well trained and deployed and their partnership with teachers is very effective. Procedures for the induction of newly qualified staff are good, as is the mentoring system. Good use is made of a range of training to support curriculum developments. Recent training has included appropriate focus on the strategies for literacy and numeracy and has resulted in the successful implementation of both.
67. Accommodation is unsatisfactory overall. Classroom accommodation is adequate and teachers use colourful and sometimes informative displays to create a stimulating and attractive environment. Good use is made of available space, for example to house the computer suite, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection report. However, hall provision is inadequate and the school cannot offer its pupils their full entitlement to the National Curriculum. Their progress in areas such as gymnastics and dance is adversely affected. The lack of a secure outdoor area for children under fives restricts their progress in physical development. Over half of pupils are based in mobile classrooms and have to go outside to the main building whenever they use facilities housed there. In these areas, there has been little improvement since the previous inspection report. Resources are adequate overall and good for literacy, numeracy and children under five.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

68. The school should continue to build upon the good progress made in the recent past to:
- 1) Improve curriculum provision by:
 - increasing the range of pupils' personal reading to ensure they have experience of a greater variety of authors and genre;
 - ensuring pupils regularly read progressively more challenging texts and thereby develop and hone their reading skills;
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to write at length and for a greater range of purposes across curriculum subjects;
(paragraphs 6, 26, 35, 88, 92, 93, 95, 97, 137)
 - 2) Extend the use of existing good assessment systems, including marking, so that all pupils' progress is closely monitored and this information is used to inform planning, and pupils are given the information they need to help them progress;
(paragraphs 25, 28, 40, 47, 99, 109, 114, 137, 143, 145, 152, 153, 159)
 - 3) Enable parents to play a greater role in their children's education by giving parents:
 - more information about how their children are doing in school, between the very informative annual reports;
 - more advice on how they may best help their children learn out of school;
(paragraphs 49, 52, 53, 54)
 - 4) Continue to seek ways to improve the school accommodation, particularly to ensure pupils receive their curriculum entitlement.
(paragraphs 10, 30, 32, 67, 84, 160, 161, 163, 165)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL:

69. The following minor issues should be considered by the school for inclusion in the action plan:
- 1) Raise teachers' expectations of the presentation of pupils' work; (paragraphs 14, 28, 95, 112, 143)
 - 2) Reconsider the use made of computers based in classrooms; (paragraph 154)
 - 3) Provide more regular opportunities for pupils' personal study and development of research skills; (paragraphs 14, 92)

- 4) Plan the use of volunteers better so that pupils are not withdrawn from essential learning. (paragraph 34)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	33
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3.5	17.25	38	41.25	0	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)	98
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	19

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	7	10	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	4	4	6
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	11	11	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (94)	85 (100)	100 (83)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	4	4	4
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (82)	85 (76)	85 (94)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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
	1999	6	6	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	3	6
	Girls	6	5	5
	Total	9	8	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75	67	92
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	4	6
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	9	9	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75	75	92
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. In 1998 there were only 7 pupils in the Key Stage 2 cohort. This is too small a number for their results to be published in this format.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	97
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)	5.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.2
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	51

Financial information

Financial year	1998-99
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	£
Total income	185159
Total expenditure	180086
Expenditure per pupil	1838
Balance brought forward from previous year	162
Balance carried forward to next year	5235

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	97
Number of questionnaires returned	56

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	27	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	46	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	46	7	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	48	7	5	2
The teaching is good.	57	38	5	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	41	14	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	18	4	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	39	0	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	43	48	7	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	64	30	0	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	43	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	50	13	4	2

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

70. At the time of the previous inspection, the provision for children under five was judged to be satisfactory with satisfactory teaching meeting pupils' needs. Since then the quality of teaching, the curriculum and provision for learning for the children under five has been improved in many areas.
71. Children join the school in the year of their fifth birthday, some part-time but gradually becoming full-time attendees when parents and school judge the time right. This contributes to how quickly the children settle in. The wide range of attainment levels, reported in the previous inspection, persists but the majority of children enter school with attainment levels below the national average, particularly in reading, listening, mathematics and manipulative skills. This combination of low literacy levels and the lack of fine motor skills makes progress slow during the first year of learning, although overall, children make good progress by the age of five and attain standards which are broadly in line with the average for children of their age, except in some basic skills. Children with special educational needs are identified quickly and fully integrated into the class where they make progress at the same rate as the other children. Good use is made of ongoing observation and assessment. The information gained when children first join is used effectively to plan activities for them. Continual observations and assessments are made of each child's progress to ensure that work continues to match their needs and build on their previous learning. Early Years' staff collaborate effectively to plan activities and assess children's needs.
72. The teacher has a good understanding of national requirements and the needs of young children which enables her to provide suitable activities adapted to children's age and experience. She makes effective use of the limited assistance available to meet children's priority needs, particularly to extend their language skills, listening well to children and encouraging them to talk. The classroom is spacious and reasonably well-organised with various areas set up for information technology, mathematics, books and role-play, currently a castle in keeping with the half-term's theme. Storage is a little disorganised and untidy and although display celebrates children's achievements and enhances the environment, it is generally insufficiently challenging and much is too high above children's heads to be of use as a learning resource.

Personal and social development

73. By the time they are five, the vast majority of children reach national expectations in their personal and social development.
74. Children quickly become familiar with the routines of the classroom and the school. They behave well and are helpful. They know the difference between right and wrong. During nature walks with their teacher, the children are encouraged to relate to each other and think how they should care for and respect each other and the world in which they live. They are keen to begin their tasks and tidy away after themselves at the end of sessions. Although they are confident in their classroom, working well together or alone, their attention span is short and they often have little pre-school experience to build upon. They take turns fairly and generally share resources well. For example, when working at the sand-tray, they are actively involved in discussing which containers hold more or less sand.
75. Overall teaching is good because of the effective planning, careful observation and recorded assessments. Classroom teaching is satisfactory and has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and the progress they make. Their teacher plans good opportunities for children to learn and to concentrate on a given task. Opportunities are provided for children to learn how to live amongst a large group of children of three different age groups. Staff have satisfactory expectations that children will learn how to give and take, share, and begin to understand what

they may expect of others and others of them. By working well together, the staff give children very good role models.

Language and literacy

76. By the time they are five, most children do not yet reach the national expectations overall, and particularly in reading. They speak confidently and clearly although some rarely speak unless heavily prompted. They handle books appropriately, knowing that they give information and entertainment. Children listen to stories with enjoyment, showing by their comments that they understand the plot, picking out the details in the pictures to help tell the story. They write their own names legibly in print-script. As they begin to write independently, there are many recognisable letters. However, the presentation of their writing lacks structure such as finger spaces and this makes their work difficult for them and others to read. Children have a satisfactory understanding of how books are written. Some read a few familiar words accurately and make sense of the story. They do not have the necessary vocabulary or confidence to talk about the stories. Children learn the sounds the letters make but are not skilled enough to build up words using this skill for themselves. Children use computers confidently to support their learning in language. School staff report that the introduction of the Literacy Hour is having a beneficial effect on their learning.
77. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and has a positive impact on children's learning and the good progress they make. Adults work very well with the children, but there are insufficient opportunities for exploring language in role-play. Teachers use praise well to build up confidence and self-esteem. Work is appropriately challenging, making children think and helping to keep them focused and interested in the activities provided. The writing area in the classroom is insufficiently attractive to encourage pupils to choose to practise their writing.

Mathematics

78. By the time they are five, children do not reach national expectations. They recognise numbers to 10 without hesitation and use materials, for instance, to make 6 or 10, but in discussion are not yet clear how or why this happens. They look for, identify and repeat simple patterns in strung beads and lino prints. Basic shapes like a square, triangle and circle are identified correctly. They are beginning to understand 'one more' or 'one less' up to 10. They sing counting rhymes, matching their actions and subtracting one at a time. They are, however, uncertain about the sequence of days in the week, seasons or times in the day. Children use a computer competently and accurately to move around a number program. They can find 1, 2 and 3 and make these numbers. They can add and take away everyday objects such as teddies and trains to make these numbers both accurately and quickly.
79. The quality of teaching in the classroom is satisfactory and has a positive impact on children's learning and the satisfactory progress they make. Tasks are explained clearly so that children know what is expected of them. Questioning is used to stimulate thought and help children to find the words they need. Work is effectively planned to meet the needs of all the children in this mixed-age class. Daily assessment is used particularly effectively to identify relative weaknesses and re-plan activities.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

80. By the time they are five, the majority of children reach national expectations in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are very interested in the objects and creatures they see on their nature walks, for example, the weather vane on the school roof and a hen's egg. The class teacher makes good use of her knowledge of local conditions to point out a hornbeam and a woodpecker's nest and give appropriate health and safety warning about stinging nettles, left in place to feed caterpillars. Computer skills are at an appropriate level. Children demonstrate good mouse control and use arrow, delete and space keys reasonably quickly and accurately. They program a floor turtle to move forward. Children are encouraged to use their imagination and knowledge and understanding of shape and volume when playing in the sand tray. They look closely and describe what they see, relating events and objects in

the natural world to their own experience. They talk about the world around them and describe living creatures from their immediate environment, for example snails.

81. Teaching to promote children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good overall, and satisfactory in the classroom. The teacher plans activities that develop and increase the children's skills of observation. Plans spell out clear and appropriate learning intentions for lessons. The activities set are well matched to the needs of pupils and they are clearly explained and demonstrated. The teacher's sensitive use of praise and encouragement raises the children's confidence and self-esteem and results in their positive response to learning.

Creative development

82. By the time they are five, most children reach the national expectations in their creative development. Children experiment appropriately and use a range of different drawing and painting techniques, exploring textures and materials. They enjoy and are able to join in a game of passing imaginary 'treasures' to each other. Children are beginning to appreciate the beauties of the natural world in their walks in the school grounds and the local environment. In music lessons, most repeat the teacher's 'follow-my-leader' rhythms accurately, although there are occasional difficulties with tempo because children are not concentrating sufficiently or are not listening well enough. They are learning to distinguish pitch as 'high' or 'low', tempo as 'fast' or 'slow', and dynamics as 'loud' and 'soft'. They sing nursery rhymes from memory competently and tunefully, matching the actions correctly. Children are beginning to choose their own resources for constructing models from recycled materials which they cut and stick appropriately. They successfully produce in clay a snail previously observed. Children explore colour in painting and are beginning to mix colours successfully.
83. The quality of teaching is good. Creative development is successfully fostered through a wide variety of activities. The teacher is well organised and uses stimulating resources which are well prepared. Very good use is made of evaluation of the children's work to reinforce the lesson's learning objectives and appropriately high standards are expected as the children are encouraged to try again. The classroom is organised as a Key Stage 1 learning area and easels are not left in place as a matter of course, which restricts the independent choice of children to paint when they feel like it.

Physical development

84. By the time they are five, most children reach the expected standards in their physical development, although the attainment of children is adversely affected by the lack of space in the hall for gymnastics and dance activities. On entry to school, many children have poor hand and eye co-ordination which makes the acquisition of writing skills a slow and difficult process. Children run, jump, skip and hop competently and confidently. They are developing an awareness of their own space and how to avoid other people, when they steer and manoeuvre wheeled vehicles with care and increasing control. Children sustain physical activity for a reasonable length of time. They manipulate small and large construction equipment, pencils and brushes with increasing dexterity. They handle scissors and tools safely and skillfully. In playground physical education lessons, they acquire and practise the skills of throwing and rolling small balls.
85. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. Teachers have a very sensitive awareness of the children's safety. Lessons are well planned and regular so that skills are honed. Effective opportunities are provided for the children to develop eye and hand control, for example when making lino prints or clay snails. Insufficient opportunities are provided in formal physical education lessons for children to demonstrate their new skills to each other and opportunities to offer opinions and evaluations are missed. When weather permits, effective and daily use is made of the limited outdoor area available to the reception class. At other times, limited provision exists and this has an adverse effect upon children's learning.

ENGLISH

86. The proportion of pupils reaching the level expected of eleven-year-olds in the 1999 national tests was close to the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching a higher level was above the national average. When results are compared with those of pupils from similar schools, attainment is above average. This represents a significant improvement in 1999 following a gradual improvement in attainment over the previous three years.
87. The proportion of pupils reaching the level expected of seven -year-olds in the 1999 national tests was close to the national average for both reading and writing. The proportion of pupils who achieved a higher level for reading was well below the national average and no pupils achieved a higher level in their writing. When results are compared with those of pupils from similar schools, attainment in reading is well below average, and below average in writing. Although there was a slight decline in the 1999 results, a steady level of improvement has been made over the past four years.
88. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection indicate that the majority of both eleven-year old and seven-year-old pupils will reach the level expected of pupils of the same age. The proportion of seven-year-old pupils who reach a higher than average level for their reading is likely to be above the national average. Standards in both key stages have improved since the 1996 inspection although writing remains a comparative weakness.
89. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in speaking and listening is satisfactory. The majority of pupils are confident to speak in class when asked a question. They offer information and express opinions very readily in 'circle time'. Pupils' responses are usually in sentences and they sometimes ask questions to find out more. Pupils have satisfactory experience of talking for a range of different purposes in varied contexts. The majority of pupils enjoy listening to and taking part in shared story-reading. They listen closely to their teachers' explanations and to the contributions of other pupils in their class.
90. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in speaking and listening is satisfactory. Younger pupils are learning to listen to their peers and to contribute relevant points to discussions. They ask and answer questions sensibly, for example during a discussion about harmful substances.
91. Most pupils are making good progress in speaking and listening as they move through the school. By Year 6, pupils talk freely and frankly about everyday issues such as bullying and disagreements, and listen and respond to one another empathetically in the search for solutions. They work collaboratively on poems and use a good range of descriptive vocabulary.
92. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in reading is satisfactory overall. Pupils generally understand that there are different authors and styles but they do not have preferences nor knowledge about many authors, other than those they encounter in literacy lessons. They use a classification system in the library successfully to find non-fiction books and are developing the skills needed to use a library effectively. Although pupils' research skills are broadly satisfactory, most do not have sufficient opportunity to carry out their own research and practise these skills regularly enough.
93. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in reading is satisfactory overall. Pupils learn to read using various graded schemes and by learning to recognise commonly used words. The most able pupils explain the plot and their favourite part of the story, giving sensible reasons. Few pupils are confident in using skills such as blending letter sounds to build up words and work out unknown text.
94. Progress in reading is satisfactory overall, but there are significant weaknesses in organisation and management which impact adversely upon the progress of some pupils. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are given very good support and make relatively good progress. Support assistants give good quality help and guidance, often using computer programs effectively. In the youngest class, the National Literacy Strategy is gradually and successfully introduced. The use of large picture books is successful and gives good opportunities for language development. A small area is set aside to give opportunities for

these pupils to read. However, it is neither spacious nor attractive enough to encourage pupils to choose or browse through books, and so engender a love of reading. Similarly, the listening area is of limited use. The practice of taking home reading books is well established in the infant classes but few pupils in the older classes show much enthusiasm for it. This is partly because of the narrow range of fiction and non-fiction books regularly available to pupils, which does not promote reading effectively nor engender a love of books. Where pupils are more enthusiastic, such as in Years 3 and 4, this is generally because the teacher's good knowledge enables her to make apt suggestions to pupils about books they might delve into. Otherwise, the school has no system in place to ensure that pupils have experience of reading a wide range of different types of books by different authors. Furthermore, apart from their 'group reading book' there is currently no system in place to ensure that the pupils regularly read progressively more challenging text that will increase the development of their reading skills.

95. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in writing is satisfactory. Pupils of all abilities know how to punctuate their work with appropriate accuracy for their age. The large majority use correct letter formation and a cursive style. They show confidence in how to apply their own knowledge of letters and tackle spelling phonetically with some degree of accuracy. Pupils do not check their own spelling in dictionaries regularly, instead they rely on their teachers to identify their mistakes which pupils correct later. As a result presentation in books is frequently untidy, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. The quality of writing is satisfactory, but the range is more limited than when the school was previously inspected.
96. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in writing is satisfactory. Pupils are developing skills in writing which are appropriate for their age and ability. The vast majority know the names and sounds of most letters of the alphabet. They are able to follow a dictation and spell commonly used words with good accuracy. Pupils write several sentences with confidence demonstrating an understanding of how to structure a short sequence of events as in a story.
97. Pupils make satisfactory progress in writing overall. Again, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress when supported, either individually or as a group. Throughout the school, there are good planned opportunities during the literacy hour for pupils to practise writing, spelling and handwriting skills each day, but other writing skills are a relative weakness. There are too few opportunities to incorporate the writing curriculum into other subjects and few pupils improve their skills adequately when using different styles of writing according to the purpose. Few pupils of high ability in either key stage are working at an appropriate level. During the inspection, very little high quality extended writing was seen either in the analysis of pupils' work or observation of lessons. The majority of pupils do not improve the structure of their writing through careful re-drafting.
98. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Most pupils show an interest in their tasks. Older pupils are sometimes inclined to be passive listeners. Most pupils enjoy stories and are attentive when listening to their teachers' explanations. Apart from some inappropriate doodling on the covers of their books, pupils take care of their resources and use them sensibly.
99. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and in Key Stage 2 very good. During the inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. All teachers plan lessons with clear learning objectives. In many lessons the pupils are told what their learning objectives are. This results in some very good and occasionally outstanding focused teaching, particularly in the Year 3 and 4 class, and a high level of interest and motivation from the pupils. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge. They are supportive and know their pupils well. Good use is made of effective, well timed questions to focus pupils' attention and to find out what they know. Class management is good and expectations of pupils to behave well are high. Pupils generally respond well to this and lessons consequently move at good pace. However, teachers are occasionally over generous with their use of praise and marking is inconsistent. It is most effective when pupils are left with a clear understanding of what they have done well and areas to focus on improving next time. At other times, marking is fulsome in its praise but gives pupils little support or guidance otherwise. In writing particularly, better marking could raise pupils' own expectations of the quality of work they produce.

100. The National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact on standards. The framework has been fully and effectively implemented. Teachers are well trained in the teaching styles and methods that are most appropriate for these activities. Test results are analysed and there is a good system to raise attainment through target setting for individual pupils. This is helping to raise attainment particularly for Year 3 pupils. There is currently no co-ordinator for the subject. The planning, teaching and learning of English throughout the school and across the curriculum are insufficiently monitored to ensure good practice is shared or to give teachers a clearer understanding of what the more able pupils are capable of achieving, particularly in reading and writing. Although resources are generally good and there is a very good range of books to support the teaching of literacy, many of the books for pupils to use themselves are out-dated.

MATHEMATICS

101. The proportion of pupils reaching the level expected of eleven-year-olds in the 1999 national tests was below the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching a higher level was well above the national average. When results are compared with all schools and with those with pupils from similar backgrounds, attainment is above average. Over time, there is no significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys. There has been a gradual improvement in overall attainment over the past four years, with a particularly good improvement in 1999. When results are compared with those of pupils from similar schools, attainment is above average.
102. The proportion of pupils reaching the level expected of seven-year-olds in the 1999 national tests was very high in comparison with the national average. The proportion of pupils who achieved a higher level was also above the national average. Girls generally do better than boys. When results are compared with those of pupils from similar schools, attainment is well above average. A very good and consistent improvement has been made over the past four years.
103. The attainment of pupils with special educational needs is good, generally because tasks are well planned and support assistants have the knowledge and skill to explain the work set and extend it when appropriate. The rapport between pupil and assistant is positive and this also contributes to attainment as no time is lost and there is a good climate for learning. Such is the quality of much of this support that these pupils often make better progress when supported than some pupils of higher attainment. More able pupils are recognised and much is done so that these pupils generally also have work well matched to their abilities.
104. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection indicate that the majority of eleven-year old pupils will reach the level expected of pupils of their age and that the majority of seven-year-old pupils will exceed the level expected of pupils of their same age. Standards in both key stages have improved considerably since the 1996 inspection, when raising standards was a key issue. The school has done very well in meeting this requirement.
105. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have good mental recall of number facts and can answer questions involving decimals quickly and accurately. The vast majority choose and use the appropriate operations to answer single-step word problems. A few are beginning to work logically through multi-step word problems, but they generally fail to use the strategies they apply elsewhere to simplify the operations they use. Most calculate the perimeter and area of simple compound shapes accurately and extract and interpret information presented in graphs with good understanding. Many otherwise competent mathematicians are still experiencing difficulty estimating answers and checking their reasonableness, as first described in the visit to monitor the implementation of the action plan. In this respect, their has been little improvement.
106. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils understand place value of digits and recognise, for example, how many groups of ten there are in numbers such as 38. The vast majority count, order, read and write whole number to a 100 and many with numbers beyond this. Aloud, they count on or back from any two-digit number and can extend number sequences, including odd

and even numbers. They comfortably and accurately measure and compare a range of objects using standard units of length, mass and capacity. A good proportion of pupils are working at a higher level. Individuals can answer questions such as eight multiplied by eight mentally.

107. Numeracy is well used in other subjects. In science, pupils frequently measure using a range of units. They are quick in their computation. They comfortably handle data. In practical design and technology lessons, pupils estimate closely and also measure accurately. Pupils generally make good progress through the levels of the national strategy for numeracy, largely because it is well taught and they themselves respond positively. The framework has given the teachers a better balanced and broader curriculum than was found when the school was previously inspected, with obvious benefits to pupils' learning.
108. The quality of teaching is good and has improved since the time of the previous inspection. Teachers plan thoroughly and keep relevant notes of how lessons proceed that they usefully incorporate into planning subsequent lessons. Lesson objectives are carefully explained, regularly reinforced and fully explored during the plenary sessions. This helps give lessons a purposeful climate for learning. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson, the teacher's encouragement enthused the pupils. There was a clear sense that everyone was expected to do their best. Pupils' eagerness to participate helped the pace of the lesson and they were left with a clear sense of achievement. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are good and strategies and skills are well taught. In a Year 6 lesson, the strengths and weaknesses of a number of strategies for solving problems were fully explored and the teacher enabled pupils to understand why some strategies are preferable.
109. Good management ensures teachers have all they need, for example in training and resources, to enable them to succeed. Developments are carefully planned, based carefully upon the needs of school and staff. Tests are analysed and, where appropriate, modifications made to the curriculum. Very good assessment systems are used to monitor the progress of some pupils, but these are not used throughout the school and this limits their effectiveness and value.

SCIENCE

110. The proportion of pupils reaching the level expected for eleven-year-olds in the 1999 national tests was well above the national average both at the expected level and at the higher level. When results are compared with those of pupils from similar schools, attainment is similarly very high.
111. The proportion of pupils reaching the level expected for seven-year-olds in the 1999 assessments by their teaching was below the national average, whilst the proportion exceeding it was above.
112. Inspection evidence confirms that the standards reached by eleven-year-olds are in line with national expectations for pupils of this age with an appropriate number of these pupils working at higher levels. This represents a considerable improvement since the previous inspection report. This is because, despite the differing abilities of this cohort, sufficiently demanding tasks and opportunities to pose their own questions for investigation are offered. Again, this emphasis is beneficial to pupils' learning and represents a good response to the previous inspection findings. Pupils study all strands of the National Curriculum; incorporating, investigation, recording and interpreting results presented in prose, diagrams, tables, charts and a variety of graphs, some of them computer-generated. In a good Years 5 and 6 lesson, pupils understood and described with the correct vocabulary flowers they were studying, for example, a buttercup and chickweed. They all looked closely and accurately described what they saw. Some recognised the features of plants they had previously seen in pictures. By the end of the lesson, pupils including those with special educational needs, knew the features they were looking for, such as flower-shape and number of leaves. Throughout the school, pupils make predictions, devise fair tests and repeat experiments before drawing conclusions.

Many pupils in the current Years 4 and 5 are working above the expected level for their age. There is evidence of the use of personal research, including pictures from the internet, in pupils' written work on display around the school. Standards of recording improve over time from short, simple sentences to extended and detailed reports on experiments carried out in a range of study including physiology, electricity, materials, condensation and the sources and diffusion of light. Presentation and handwriting improve over time but remain variable, often according to teacher expectations. There is very good development of the vocabulary associated with science, and numeracy skills are used very effectively in measure and data handling. Throughout the school, the needs of pupils with special educational needs are met successfully, largely because work is very practical and relevant. These pupils make very good progress.

113. Competence in literacy and numeracy are developed well through a good range of tasks. Older pupils are expected to take notes and use tables to present their results. Pupils throughout the school accurately perform a number of measurements of length, time and quantity.
114. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. Pupils successfully present the results of their investigations in writing, drawing, simple tables and graphs which the most able are beginning to interpret. They remember the names of parts of a flowering plant, for example, roots, stem, leaf. They experiment by dropping an orange from various heights onto the playground and observing and recording the results. However, presentation is barely satisfactory with much work undated. In view of the low attainment on entry, particularly in language skills, pupils make good progress in experimental and investigative science. The scheme of work in use for all year groups gives useful guidance on learning outcomes and suggested activities, but gives insufficient detail on assessment and how to match work to pupils' different attainment levels. Targets are used insufficiently, and the school has recognised this in its plan to revise documentation. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is good. This enables pupils to make good progress in their learning as they move through the key stage and raises their attainment significantly from the end of Year 2. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject, especially in the work on life and living processes. They have good relationships with pupils and generally manage their classes well. However, the marking of pupils' work gives all pupils too little information on what to do to improve.
115. The subject is well managed with good systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and provision. Assessment is used well in some classes, particularly to plan future work, but this is not consistent across the school. The curriculum is successfully enhanced through visits to places of interest and local environmental areas.

ART

116. Little teaching of art was observed during the inspection. Overall judgements about the quality of teaching are not possible. The following judgements are also based on an analysis of pupils' previous work including sketch books, examination of teachers' planning and discussion with staff and pupils.
117. Standards in art are satisfactory throughout the school. By the time pupils leave the school, they have a satisfactory grounding in skills and techniques, know how to use a small range of media and materials to good effect, and possess a satisfactory knowledge of different artists from a number of cultures.
118. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. A particular strength is the successful cross-curricular linkage which enable pupils to learn about art and apply their skills in a variety of subjects such as history, geography and science. For example, in connection with life processes and living things, Year 3 and 4 pupils reinforce their knowledge of plants and show that they use paper and fabric to good effect in collage work. Year 6 pupils demonstrate their understanding of Islamic art with some very good geometrical patterns. Good pupil responses, particularly in sketching from life and clay work, have been maintained.

119. Pupils of all abilities including those with special needs make satisfactory progress in the development of skills and techniques. They use a satisfactory range of media to express themselves, such as paint, clay, fabrics and pencils. Pupils have some appreciation of the work of artists and there are some very good examples of the pupils' own efforts in pointillism following a study of the work of Seurat and Signac. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection report when this element of the curriculum was largely absent.
120. Pupils approach their work with care and enthusiasm. Pupils are motivated to have a second try if the first is not as successful as they would like. Sketchbooks give good evidence of this. Pupils concentrate on their work and demonstrate a good understanding of technique and the work of artists, applying this knowledge to their own work and producing effective and successful results.
121. In the one lesson seen the teaching was very good. Excellent knowledge and use of a wide range of resources enabled pupils to clearly understand how fabrics are woven and chosen for specific purposes. Pupils were enthused and keen to learn. During the practical activity, good opportunities were provided for pupils to reflect and discuss their responses to the task.
122. Management is good although monitoring is largely informal. A new scheme of work is currently being updated and implemented. Some useful assessments, including helpful annotations, are made to track pupils' progress.
123. The quality of display throughout the school is satisfactory. Display is generally neatly mounted or framed and consists of work by many pupils as well as various visual aids and artefacts useful to pupils' current learning. All areas of the curriculum are effectively promoted through display. This has a positive impact on standards throughout the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

124. Due to timetabling, little teaching of design and technology was observed during the inspection. The following judgements are also based on an analysis of pupils' previous work, examination of teachers' planning and discussion with staff and pupils.
125. Standards are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2 but unsatisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1. The former represents an improvement since the previous inspection, whilst the latter remains identical.
126. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils pursue an idea for design in their books. They draw diagrams with some accurate measuring and labelling. They have a clear understanding of 'birds-eye view' and 'side view'. They have good experience of working with a satisfactory range of materials such as: paper, straws, glue and string to fasten or join. Experience and knowledge of tools such as scissors are more limited. Pupils make sensible and realistic evaluations of their work. They make useful discoveries through their mistakes and incorporate recommendations for change in design modifications or during the making process. They have an awareness of constraints, for example cost or time, and include this in their evaluation.
127. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils draw simple pictures of what they intend to make. They willingly experiment with a range of materials including clay. In a good lesson, the youngest pupils produced some attractive two-dimensional star shapes to illustrate the story of 'Laura's Star'. These skills are not effectively developed and as a result Year 2 pupils do not make any significant progress in improving their design and making skills. There is limited evidence to suggest that pupils can fold, cut, stick, sew and manipulate a variety of materials and fabric appropriately in order to achieve a design or structure.
128. Progress is uneven across the school. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use a wider range of tools and few opportunities for the pupils to engage in elements of the subject,

such as food technology. The pupils' attainment levels are not systematically improved over time, although teachers use their special interests effectively and pupils clearly enjoy the tasks they are set to do.

129. In the limited number of lessons observed, the quality of teaching of design and technology in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. Good opportunities are given for pupils to discuss and review their work. Tasks are relevant and interesting, and engage pupils' interests. There is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1.
130. Management is satisfactory. Good use is made of teachers' subject specialisms in Key Stage 2. The school is going through a process of change in the organisation of the curriculum, and plans to use the nationally-recognised scheme to guide the work to be covered each year so that skills are developed and honed more progressively.

GEOGRAPHY

131. Little teaching of geography was observed during the inspection. Overall judgements about the quality of teaching are not possible. The following judgements are also based on an analysis of pupils' previous work, examination of teachers' planning and discussion with staff and pupils.
132. Standards in geography are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2. The latter represents a lowering of standards since the time of the previous inspection.
133. In Year 6, pupils know the basic physical features of the British Isles and use a key to explain the symbols and colours they use. They use two figure, and some use four-figure co-ordinates. Largely because of the narrow curriculum, they have limited knowledge and understanding of places and themes. Furthermore, enquiry skills are insufficiently honed and few pupils look for or recognise geographical patterns. One important reason for this is that the school chose to use curriculum time allocated for this subject to run 'booster' classes for English, mathematics and science. Whilst rightly recognising the fundamental importance of these three subjects to pupils' learning, nonetheless the choice made by the school severely limited the range and quality of geographical work undertaken by Year 6 pupils. In Year 5, pupils follow an identical curriculum but their work is of better quality because they have a more appropriate amount of time. Again, however, work is generally factual.
134. In Year 4, pupils use their geographical skills well to answer questions about why Rye developed where it did. They find places and physical features such as a secondary school, hospital, cliffs and salt marshes on a local map. They use simple co-ordinates and understand the importance of a key when reading a map. Most know how rivers begin and understand and describe accurately features such as 'meander', 'mouth' and 'tributary'. In Year 3, pupils follow an identical curriculum but tasks are altered to match their capabilities.
135. In Year 2, pupils find interesting and relevant methods to contrast town and country, for example by amount of traffic or frequency of high-rise buildings. They do not, however, describe similarities. They give opinions about what they find attractive in the locality in which they live, based upon sensible reasons. They produce plans of the school, most very basic but some with a sense of proportion. However, very few use symbols and none use a key. In Year 1, pupils follow an identical curriculum but each task is simplified to recognise the age difference.
136. In the limited amount of teaching observed, lesson objectives were clearly explained and regularly reinforced, so that pupils were clear about the focus of their learning. High expectations of effort, perseverance and behaviour contributed to a positive and purposeful working atmosphere.
137. An analysis of pupils' work indicates that teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' written work vary. The use of grammar and punctuation, and the accuracy of spelling, can be much

better in literacy work than in writing in geography. Marking in younger classes recognises the differences in pupils' age, especially when setting targets for improvement. Generally there is an over-use of praise, which is not helpful to pupils' progress, and, particularly in the eldest class, marking is not developmental.

138. Although the planned curriculum gives some thought to the progressive development of pupils' skills as they move through the school, in practice tasks are often similar or identical. Both year groups in the eldest class, for example, are generally set the same tasks. Furthermore, some tasks, such as identifying countries on a European map, are identical throughout Key Stage 2 and consequently ask nothing more of a Year 6 pupil than a Year 3 pupil.

HISTORY

139. No teaching of history was observed during the inspection. Overall judgements about the standards of pupils' work in Key Stage 1 and the quality of teaching throughout the school are not possible. The following judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' previous work, examination of teachers' planning and discussion with staff and pupils.
140. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are unsatisfactory and this represents lower standards than at the time of the previous inspection. In Year 6, pupils demonstrate basic understanding of the symbolism in Tudor portraits, but much of their work is of a lower level than expected of pupils of this age. For example, although they know that Henry VIII married six times, they do not explore other potential wives or the reasons for the break with Rome. They begin to contrast the differences between the lives of the rich and poor but, again, this does not reach the expected level. Enquiry skills are not systematically or sufficiently developed. As in geography, curriculum time is used for extra lessons in English, mathematics and science. This limits what pupils know, understand and can do, particularly in the more time-consuming elements such as using a range of sources of evidence. There is, however, evidence of these pupils practising and refining their note-taking skills appropriately. In Year 5, pupils undertake work identical to that of Year 6 except that this age group, because they are not involved in the extra classes in English, mathematics and science, do much more.
141. In Years 3 and 4, pupils ask and answer questions about the Ancient Egyptians. They have good factual knowledge and understand, for example, the importance of the Nile to this civilisation.
142. At Key Stage 1, the school was not able to provide any pupils' work. Furthermore, the only evidence of teachers' planning was sheets taken from a published scheme of work. There is therefore no evidence upon which to base a judgement.
143. The quality of much of the older pupils' work is not helped by the teachers' marking. Marking is generally positive but bland. 'Ticks' are often overused. Consequently, marking does not give pupils the helpful advice and guidance they need to recognise what they are doing well and where they need to improve. Teachers' expectations of presentation are unclear and occasional pieces of poorly presented work are not remarked upon. Unfinished work is relatively common.
144. Although there is a practical and well-organised cycle of work over a two year period, in practise the tasks given and the expectations of pupils' work do not always adequately recognise the differences between the younger and older pupils in each class.
145. Some units of work end with assessment tasks that give teachers useful information, both about individual pupil's understanding and the impact of the unit of work. This system is currently used inconsistently across the school and this reduces its value.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

146. Standards in information technology are satisfactory overall. Pupils are making good progress and work in lessons is of good quality. However, the depth of understanding and general competence of the majority of older pupils demonstrates a lack of previous experience that has been rectified by the development and good use of the computer suite.
147. In Years 5 and 6, pupils can use program tool bars and icons accurately and quickly. They use the internet to search for information and send and receive electronic mail, although they are generally not yet using an address book. They load data and analyse it, interrogating the data to produce useful information. Because of the relatively short time they have been using the good quality equipment in the computer suite, there remain gaps in their current knowledge and understanding. For example, they have little understanding of spreadsheets and very basic knowledge of how to program a screen turtle.
148. In Years 3 and 4, pupils collect data and use it to create bar and pie charts. They know how to send messages by electronic mail. The vast majority can enter data into a database with a predetermined structure, and locate information from it accurately.
149. In Years 1 and 2, pupils use and understand the tool bars and icons in programs. For example, all these pupils use a graphics package to create a picture, the vast majority selecting the most appropriate tools to match their purpose. They know how to load a program and move between its pages, and to use a CD-ROM to search for information. Younger Year 1 pupils understand that a floor turtle responds to their commands, and the importance of clearing its memory before beginning a new sequence. In these sessions, they use directional language such as 'forwards' and 'backwards' accurately. The most able, when programming the floor turtle to cover a particular distance, show good understanding when refining the distance they program. For example, they reduce the number proportionate to the distance the floor turtle went past the objective.
150. Throughout the school, pupils reach good standards when information technology is used to support work in other subjects. Basic skills, such as phonetic blends, are appropriately learnt and practised using information technology. Mathematical tables, too, are improved through use in simulation tasks. In both examples, the program enables pupils to work at the correct level. In Year 3 and 4 science, data from a homework activity is collected, entered and analysed using a database program. Pupils learn the advantages of information technology, for example in the analysis and interpretation of this data. Good use is also made of this technology to support pupils with special educational needs, particularly to improve literacy. These pupils focus carefully on the tasks they are given and this is an important factor in the good progress they make.
151. Pupils' skill levels are generally good, although some pupils type laboriously and sit with poor posture. A few older pupils have yet to learn to use some important keys quickly and accurately.
152. Much of the teaching of information technology is by knowledgeable and confident learning support assistants in the information technology suite. These sessions are well planned and well taught, pupils responding very enthusiastically. The atmosphere is purposeful and conducive to good learning. However, opportunities for feedback to class teachers on progress made and difficulties encountered by pupils are limited and largely informal. Some of these sessions are too short for the planned activity, and this adversely affects the quality of learning. For example, in one Year 5 and 6 lesson, by the time pupils given a worthwhile and relevant research project had connected to the internet and found useful information, their session had ended and they were unable to use what they had found.
153. The curriculum is good and carefully planned. Pupils are building a record of achievement on personal disks and take great pride in explaining and demonstrating their achievements. Some good use is made of assessment, for example to determine pupils' computer competence. However, this is not regularly updated nor closely used when determining tasks and activities for individuals.

154. Management is good and much has been achieved. There is a clear and cohesive approach to the subject's development which is a fundamental factor in much of the recent improvement. Much good quality training has enabled all staff to contribute effectively to pupils' learning. The good provision in the information technology suite is well used. Even so, the school has yet to resolve the question of how to effectively use the class-based computers now that the vast majority of teaching takes place in the suite. Consequently, the majority of these computers lie idle for much of the day. Important aspects of the development plan, particularly the closer involvement of parents and the community at large, have yet to be implemented.

MUSIC

155. Very little teaching of music was observed during the inspection. Overall judgements about standards and the quality of teaching throughout the school are not possible. The following judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' previous work, examination of teachers' planning and discussion with staff and pupils.
156. In a very good Year 3 and 4 lesson, pupils demonstrated a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of composition through the careful lessons planned by their knowledgeable teacher. Pupils were eager and keen to make suggestions for words and pronunciations to evoke the movement of water. Selected pupils successfully maintained simple harmonies in two or three parts. Groups sustained their ostinati equally successfully and explained reasons for their choice of words or actions. They sang a wide range of songs enthusiastically and competently, reflecting the mood of the music according to the context, for example, in assemblies or in their own classrooms. Some pupils know the names of percussion instruments and how to play them. They understand that music creates a mood.
157. Standards in musical elements observed, such as singing, have been broadly maintained since the previous inspection. However, the curriculum does not include a sufficiently broad range of activities, a fact acknowledged by the school. Revision of provision is prioritised in the next development plan. Good extra-curricular provision includes a peripatetic music tutor for violin and guitar, although withdrawal for such tuition is sometimes inappropriate. Pupils participate in local events and schools' music festivals. The curriculum is further enriched by regular productions involving all classes.
158. The quality of teaching in the lesson observed was very good. The teacher created a suitably reflective atmosphere with very good use of the voice and language to engage and sustain pupils' interest. Her very good relationship with the class and very effective management strategies ensured that pupils were very well behaved and concentrated fully. Learning intentions were known and understood by the pupils who consequently knew exactly what was expected. Very good use was made of pupils to model the teacher's expectations and demonstrate how to use members of the group to compose a piece about water. The high expectations sufficiently challenge most pupils and are not beyond those with special educational needs. The activity was linked to previous science work which explored how sound is produced. Pupils listened well to each other during their performances. They worked very well together, negotiating and making decisions amicably. The teacher urged pupils on to greater effort and further practise to improve their performance. The lesson was enjoyed by all.
159. Management is unsatisfactory overall. Although the co-ordinator has a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the role, it is insufficiently developed in terms of monitoring and evaluating teaching and provision. Teachers have a good knowledge of what pupils know, understand and can do, but currently there is little formal assessment of pupils' work either to monitor progress or plan for their individual needs.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

160. A limited number of physical education lessons were observed during the inspection and these, because of the restricted hall space, were lessons in outdoor games and athletics. Other evidence was gathered from teachers' planning, other documentation and discussions with staff and pupils.
161. Standards overall are below the national average for the ages of seven and eleven, because of the limited curriculum offered due to the restrictions placed on the school by the restricted accommodation. In the lessons observed, however, standards were satisfactory. In swimming, where all pupils reach the expected level by the age of eleven and many exceed it, standards are above average. Standards remain unchanged since the previous inspection.
162. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils perform vigorous warm-up routines and practise their athletic skills, such as sprinting, over a given distance. They practise their long jumps, increasing the distance with each repetition and making good improvements.
163. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils run, jump, hop and skip with increasing control, sustaining activity for a reasonable period. They are aware of the effect of exercise on the body, for example, breathing harder and aching legs after cycling uphill. Some pupils lack sufficient awareness of the space available and of avoiding collisions. About half the pupils roll, throw and catch balls with reasonable accuracy. In a lesson which had to continue in the classroom because of rain, the majority of pupils know and understand some food are not as healthy as others, that sugar in sweets lead to tooth decay. They know that low fat foods are generally healthier than their full fat equivalents. Their knowledge of nutrition and a healthy diet is above the average for their age.
164. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall with occasionally good teaching. Younger pupils have a well-established and familiar routine and the class teacher moves around, giving good specific individual instruction on catching, throwing or rolling a ball. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to consolidate and practise skills already acquired. High expectations of behaviour enable lessons to move along briskly and much is achieved. Pupils readily tidy equipment away after the lesson. Older pupils are naturally disappointed when lessons are discontinued because of inclement weather, but teachers show good foresight in having two lessons planned. Good emphasis is placed upon the importance of a healthy diet and exercise for growth. The imaginative pre-prepared lunch-boxes demonstrating healthy and unhealthy food engaged the pupils' attention and motivated them to make the appropriate choices. Teachers make effective use of questioning, directed to pupils of differing abilities, to check and extend knowledge and understanding. All teachers in the school make good use of the field, playground and swimming pool. Teacher expertise is used efficiently in the older classes with clear benefit to pupils' learning.
165. The curriculum cannot meet requirements for gymnastics and dance because of the inadequate size of the hall, despite the school's best efforts to obtain some improvement. Assessment is informal with pupil self-evaluation still developing. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and her role, but there is little opportunity to monitor or evaluate teaching, learning and provision. Good use is made of all available resources.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

166. Throughout the school, standards in religious education are broadly in line with the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus.
167. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils know that both sexes go on the Muslim Hajj and that only Muslims are allowed in Makkah in Saudi Arabia. They know and understand that it is an aim of all Muslims to go on pilgrimage, and that the Mosque in Makkah was built around the Ka'abah and the ritual to be observed. Pupils make good comparison with Christianity in recognising the quality of compassion in both Mohammed and Jesus. They have thoughtful and perceptive reasons for why people are valued, for example, that it is not to do with wealth.

Past recorded work is small in volume and irregular, although it shows some coverage of the new required programme of study in the locally agreed syllabus, which pays due attention to other religions and festivals. It shows some knowledge and understanding of Judaism, its beliefs and customs and of Moses and the Ten Commandments, with a little work on Christianity and some thoughtful prayers on the theme of 'harvest'. The content is satisfactory but pupils' understanding and application of their knowledge to their own experience of belief and unbelief is unsatisfactory.

168. By the end of Key Stage 1, much work is oral or subsumed into personal and social education. The small amount recorded shows some study of festivals and customs in Christianity and Judaism. Consequently, pupils have a knowledge and understanding of some stories from the Torah and the New Testament. The creation story is made more relevant by the link to the science topic on the human body. Some pupils understand and use a good range of specialist vocabulary such as 'celebration', 'faith community' and 'prophetess'. Approximately half know and understand the function of welcoming ceremonies in major religions. Most know and understand water as a religious symbol of life.
169. In discussion with older pupils, a good range of knowledge was revealed but a relatively high level of confusion suggests that the essential elements may be obscured in a welter of detail which is not strictly necessary. These pupils showed a poor understanding of the place and function of celebration in faith communities. The subject's contribution to spiritual development is largely limited to recognition of other religions. However, there is a positive contribution to personal and social education in Years 3 and 4 on the discussion of the ultimate question of bereavement, and a good contribution to reflecting on personal experience and learning in the reflective prayer writing in Years 5 and 6. Literacy skills are used effectively to develop the vocabulary associated with the subject, for example 'Shabbat' and 'crucifixion'.
170. Since the previous inspection, great improvement has been made in standards, progress and the quality of teaching. However, the monitoring of standards and progress has not been sufficiently improved to provide the co-ordinator with specific information about strengths and weaknesses in teaching and standards.
171. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1. Good, assertive and positive behaviour management strategies encourage pupils to listen and watch carefully. Teachers make judicious and effective use of brief video clips to extend pupils knowledge and understanding of Christian religious practices. Teachers value all contributions, giving good examples of respect for other people's experience and views. They move around constantly, giving individual support and guidance, and questioning effectively to allow pupils to display their knowledge, understanding and experience of religion. In Key Stage 2, some teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They make good reference to pupils' previous knowledge, for example, in comparing faiths that believe in many gods, or worship idols, for example the Ancient Egyptians, with their own.
172. The limited evidence available suggests that pupils learn well about religions, but that learning from religion lacks sufficient emphasis. The school acknowledges the need for development and has prioritised the subject in the current school development plan.