

INSPECTION REPORT

**GREAT BILLING CHURCH OF ENGLAND
LOWER SCHOOL**

Station Road Great Billing

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 122017

Headteacher: Mr J Weaver

Reporting inspector: Heather Evans
21374

Dates of inspection: 12-15 February 2001

Inspection number: 209518

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Great Billing Church of England Lower School

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4-9

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Station Road
Great Billing
Northampton

Postcode: NN3 9DS

Telephone number: 01604 406486

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Frank Brett

Date of previous inspection: 11 January 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21374	H Evans	Registered inspector	Mathematics; Information and communication technology; Art and design; Geography; Physical education; The Foundation Stage; Special Educational Needs; English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? School's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
14756	J R Lovell	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23698	R J Schaffer	Team inspector	English; Science; Design technology; History; Music; Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a smaller than average Church of England School in Great Billing Northamptonshire. The school provides for pupils between the ages of four and nine. There is no nursery and children start in the reception class in the September of the school year in which they will be five. At the time of the inspection there were 146 pupils on roll and of these 34 were identified as having special educational need which is about average. Most of these pupils have specific learning difficulties associated with language. Two pupils have statements of special need because of impaired hearing. This number is above average for a school of this size. Whilst 7 per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, all of the pupils speak English as their first language. However, a tiny minority attend a 'Saturday School' where they are learning their parents' first language. The school is situated in a very attractive small village but few children live in the village itself. Most of them live in one or other of two nearby housing estates. A few come from further afield as their parents choose a denominational school offering a Christian education. There is just one child who claims an entitlement to free school meals but, as no hot school meals are available, it is known that others who qualify choose to provide their own sandwiches or go home at lunch time. On entry to the school the attainment of pupils, as shown by a recognised assessment process, is about average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that achieves standards that are above those found in most schools nationally in classes for children at five, seven and nine. Pupils of all ages are keen to learn, take a pride in their school and enjoy their work. Whilst some pupils are sometimes noisy in class and need to be reminded of what is expected of them, there are very few occasions when pupils misbehave. The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory, much is good and a significant proportion is very good. Pupils, in all phases of education and of all abilities, learn well and make good progress in the majority of lessons. The staff have worked hard to increase the challenge for pupils of all ages and abilities and the work is carefully matched to earlier achievements and is regularly challenging. The curriculum provision has been strengthened and now fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils are supported well by teaching and support staff. The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths of the school and knows where there are opportunities for further improvement. There have been many carefully planned improvements since the time of the previous inspection and the above average standard of work has been maintained throughout. The school is managed quietly and effectively and overall it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing and science are well above those found in most schools for pupils of seven and nine.
- Standards in mathematics are above the national average when pupils are seven and nine.
- There is good provision for children under five at the Foundation Stage.
- Teaching and learning are good and reflect the Christian aims of the school.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for school is very good.
- There is good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is good.
- The shared commitment to working for success and improvement is enabling the school to move forward.

What could be improved

- The delegation of more extensive leadership opportunities to subject co-ordinators and increased personal development opportunities for all members of the Senior Management Team.
- The range of resources to support some areas of the curriculum; such as for practical science and art and play facilities for the under-fives.
- Strategies and procedures to improve links with parents as partners in education.
- Facilities for pupils to engage in quiet personal reading activities at Key Stage 1.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was last inspected in January 1999 it was judged to have serious weaknesses. Since then there has been a systematic review of the curriculum and teaching strategies and the processes for leadership and management have been strengthened. The above average results have been maintained since 1997 and a significant group of pupils, who will be nine this year, are already achieving standards in English, mathematics and science that are expected by ten and eleven-year-olds. This is because the quality of teaching has improved, lessons are interesting and are conducted at a brisk pace with a good level of control that encourages and maintains good behaviour. The modification and management of pupils' behaviour has been addressed successfully. The school has managed the implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy well and has enabled staff to review and improve all of their lesson planning to good purpose. The improvement in teachers' knowledge and understanding of the requirements to teach the full range of information and communication technology skills has brought about good improvement in pupils' levels of attainment. All of the issues identified at the time of the last inspection have been tackled effectively although there are still some elements, such as enabling pupils to engage in more independent work, that whilst improved, have not yet been totally completed. Nevertheless, improvements overall have been very good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

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

Statutory test results in 2000 were well above average for reading and in writing in English and above the national average in mathematics for pupils at seven. Assessment in science shows that pupils attained at an overall level that is considered to be very high, graded as A*, with half of the class attaining the level above the expected level 2. This high grade in science places the seven-year-old pupils in the top five per cent of pupils nationally. Pupils in the reception class are on course to meet or exceed the learning goals set for children at the age of five. When pupils leave the school, at the age of nine, overall the above average standards have been maintained and many pupils achieve levels of attainment expected of pupils who are one or even two years older. Standards of attainment are above those in similar schools. The attainment overall for the school has been above that of most schools nationally in every year since 1997 and the overall trend has been maintained at a level that exceeds the national average. Attainment in information technology has improved markedly since 1999 and attainments in other subjects have been maintained and are above average in art and physical education when pupils are nine. Pupils are well set to achieve the good level of learning and progress that has enabled these standards to be maintained in the years from 1997. The school has agreed to work to ambitious targets that aim to increase the percentage of pupils attaining higher than the expected levels. Most pupils work hard and achieve standards that are at or near their capacity, although teachers need to be constantly vigilant to keep some who do well sufficiently motivated to do even better. The progress between admission to this school and moving on to the next is good for pupils of all abilities.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
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Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school; they want to attend and treat the building and the learning resources with care and respect.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good because pupils are managed very well and they have a clear understanding of the system of rewards and sanctions of the behaviour policy. Two children have been excluded for fixed periods during the past year for inappropriate behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good; pupils all demonstrate a clear understanding of the beliefs and values of others. Some pupils are beginning to show good personal initiative and take increasing responsibility for managing their own work.
Attendance	Attendance is good and is above the national average. Unauthorised absence is very low. Pupils arrive on time and lessons start promptly.

Behaviour has been improved because teaching has more structure and increased challenge. The discipline policy is understood very well by parents and pupils and is now applied even-handedly in classes across the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Good	Very good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection and in lessons observed was never less than satisfactory and was good or better in 7 out of every ten lessons. The percentage of very good lessons has increased from 3 per cent to 31 per cent because planning has been made thorough and assessment and evaluation has enabled good practice to be shared and incorporated into every teacher's strategies for helping pupils to learn. As a result, learning is at least satisfactory and is generally good in lessons across the curriculum. The teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics has been improved as a direct result of training to implement the literacy and numeracy strategies and this has also had a positive effect on teaching in other subjects. The planning of teaching and support for those pupils with special educational needs is good and enables them to learn at a similar rate to that of other pupils in their class.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities is good. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. The extra provision through clubs, visits and visitors to the school is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for all pupils with special educational needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Although there are pupils in the school who speak other languages as well as English, the first language for pupils in the school is English. Some children learn other languages at 'Saturday Schools'.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual,	The school provides well for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Provision for pupils' personal development is well

moral, social and cultural development	organised and pupils' personal skills are developed well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares effectively for all its pupils through all its policies as seen in practice. The policy and procedures for Child Protection are satisfactory.

Although the majority of parents are satisfied with the links with the school there are aspects where parental involvement and working together as partners could be strengthened. Policies and schemes of work are reviewed regularly and there are no longer any curricular weaknesses.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and all the key staff are good. Through hard work and dedication they have been successful in creating an effective school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	All of the governors, led by a committed and competent chairman, fulfil their responsibilities very well. Their understanding of the finance and their support for the curriculum has been very effective.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has effective and practical procedures for evaluating its performance. Governors have a very clear understanding of where strengths are found and a realistic view of areas for development and how to tackle them.
The strategic use of resources	The strategic use of personnel and practical resources is very good. Resources for teaching and learning are adequate but not generous. They are used very well throughout the school.

The management of the school is now structured and effective. The time for the school to move on with a shared vision for success and continued improvement is the next natural step forward for the leadership team. There are sufficient suitably experienced and qualified teachers who are supported by a well-organised and suitably trained number of learning support assistants. The accommodation enables the full curriculum to be taught successfully, but provision for extended learning opportunities for children in the reception class is limited and restricts outdoor play. Financial management is good and the governing body has an effective understanding of setting the budget against the plans contained in the school development plan and looks for evidence of the effect of spending on standards. The school has an informed understanding of looking for best value when buying materials or appointing personnel.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Teachers are approachable. • The standards attained in tests. • The range and quality of the work in school. • The fact that children are expected to work hard. • The improved policy for behaviour management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some elements of leadership. • Information from the school about pupils' progress. • Strategies to enhance the links between the home and school. • Extra-curricular activities.

The team agrees with parents that there are many positive aspects to celebrate. Whilst newsletters

meet requirements and contain the required information the team agrees with parents that they could be presented in a more friendly format. The school is willing to explore ways of improving these in an effort to improve links with parents and seek ways of involving them more fully in their children's education. The team considers that the school and the curriculum are now managed quietly and effectively.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There is no nursery and children start school in the reception class in the September of the school year in which they will be five. This is now called the Foundation Stage of education. Many of the children have had some experience in local nurseries or in pre-school play groups before starting at the school although a few come straight from home. Children under five in the reception class work in the six areas of learning recommended by the Department for Education and Employment. Children are now working towards the early learning goals as described by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA). On entry there is a spread of attainment but tests show that the majority of children have an average attainment on entry. Teachers take care to provide a suitable range of experiences in all the areas of learning and almost all children are on course to attain the early learning goals before they are five. Almost all children have good linguistic and numeracy skills and most develop good personal and social skills as they play and work with their peers. There are suitable activities provided for children to develop skills in creativity such as painting and listening to and creating music. Children develop well physically and enjoy making models with construction toys and demonstrate a range of skills on the computers.
2. At the end of Key Stage 1, when pupils are seven, standards in English, as shown in the national tests in 2000, were well above the national averages in reading, and in writing, were high. The number of pupils attaining higher levels was well above the average nationally in reading and in writing. Standards in reading and writing were also well above when compared with similar schools. Inspection evidence supports the good results in English. Attainment levels in reading, writing and in speaking and listening are well above those found in most schools nationally and are very good overall. The pupils are on course to attain above average standards again as shown by their work so far this year. The inspection evidence indicates that the structured work in matched ability groups is proving to be a positive and successful way forward. For the last four years, overall standards have varied slightly between the different groups, depending on the differing numbers of pupils with special educational needs but overall the trend over time is that standards of attainment have remained well above the national average.
3. Pupils in classes at Key Stage 2 extend the skills established in the infant department. The results of the optional non-statutory tests in 2000 indicate that standards overall in English are well above the expected level for pupils nationally. When pupils leave school, when they are nine, many are already working comfortably at level 4, the expected level for eleven-year-olds.
4. In mathematics at Key Stage 1, in the tests in 2000, the numbers of pupils attaining the expected level, Level 2, was above the national average. Standards in mathematics were also above those attained in similar schools. Inspection evidence gleaned by lesson observation, scrutiny of books and examination of the results of school based tests, indicates that work undertaken in class is setting the great majority of pupils on course to attain levels that are above those in most schools nationally. At the time of the inspection a high proportion of the class was working at a level above national expectations. Pupils know about and understand the manipulation of numbers up to and beyond 100 very well. They calculate mentally the change one needs from 50p or £1, when undertaking shopping tasks, using multiplication, addition

and subtraction quickly and accurately and recording their work clearly and neatly. They understand very well which process to select, choosing from several well understood options. They explain their reasons to the class sometimes seeking new ways to amaze their friends and please their teachers. Boys and girls know that rapid recall of the process of repeated addition will help them to check simple multiplication.

5. In the classes at Key Stage 2, the results of non-statutory tests in 2000 indicated that attainments in mathematics were well above those expected for pupils at the age of nine. Indeed, some pupils in Year 3 attained Level 4 in mathematics, a level not expected until the age of eleven. The overall standards achieved in national and voluntary tests, maintained over the past three years, have been maintained at a level above expectations. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils in the Key Stage 2 classes are working at an overall level well above that expected for pupils of the same age nationally. However, the temptation to settle quietly to the task, completing it well, whilst taking care not to attract notice, is sometimes being adopted by a small group of very capable pupils in one of the classes for older pupils. In this class the teacher has to be very vigilant, constantly checking their work rate and steadily increasing the challenge. This is being carried out effectively and the group recognises that they must continue to work hard all the time despite doing well. By the time they are ready to leave the school at the end of Year 4, attainment levels overall are above national expectations and for about one third of the pupils they are well above the expected level.
6. The standards in English and mathematics were already above average before the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. However, these have both been incorporated successfully into the work of the school. Individual pupils are working well towards meeting their own targets and at this stage in the academic year the school is well on course to meet the targets it has set for itself. These are ambitious but the school is ready to accept the challenge in its aim for academic excellence.
7. Levels of attainment in science as indicated by teacher assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 are very high and are well above the National Expectations at Level 2 and at least half are at Level 3. Inspection evidence indicates that teachers are concentrating on work to improve the pupils' experiences and that opportunities for experimentation and investigation in the classroom and in the environment are proving to be beneficial in raising standards and expectations for success still further. This is despite the above average number of pupils in the group with considerable learning difficulties. Pupils know a great deal about living things and life processes and with the support of the teachers they conduct interesting experiments about the environment. Work to investigate the properties of materials has been linked very successfully with work in mathematics and information technology related to data processing. Pupils rigorously question all things presented to them as facts and apply established knowledge to new learning in experiments. They are confident when making predictions and, sometimes, even when wrong, they persist with their ideas until they have discovered the truth for themselves. They are good at setting out questions and answer them in their written work in their books. All practical investigational activities observed during the inspection were thorough and stimulating.
8. Pupils in the classes at Key Stage 2 have good recall of work undertaken previously and are able to explain about solids, gases and liquids and explain how gases and liquids can change shape to fit any containers. They build well on work in electricity begun in younger classes and construct circuits very well, including bells, lights and

buzzers. They explain very clearly what they are doing and know how to solve problems if the circuit is faulty. When they record their work in diagrams or on charts it is always presented well. They are good at interpreting recorded results from graphs and tables but not enough pupils devise their own strategies for recording and usually accept the recording form provided by the teacher.

9. Throughout the school the overall attainment levels in information technology meet national requirements for pupils at seven and nine. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection. However, because some pupils have access to personal computers at home, for these pupils attainment is invariably above the expected level. Pupils use their skills in information technology readily and confidently to support other subjects across the curriculum. Those pupils who are able to use personal computers at home are able to practise work undertaken in school at other times. All pupils confidently access menus and load and retrieve their personal work from stored files very well and some work well using earlier work saved on disks. Pupils love to show how well they access data stored from other enquiries, an increasing number quickly manipulate spreadsheets to access stored information and a few older pupils are beginning to import pictures. The use of remote controlled robots around the classrooms and on the screen enables pupils to develop well and display a satisfactory understanding of control technology. The great majority of pupils, at both key stages, make good progress towards the agreed targets in their personal assessment files in a purposeful way.
10. There is an effective programme of work for personal, social and health education that is linked to science and to work in religious education, which is subject to a section 23 inspection. This part of the curriculum is managed very well and pupils demonstrate very well how it supports other work in their day-to-day activities in subjects such as science, history and design and technology.
11. The amount, quality and range of work in all other subjects are frequently better than that described at the time of the previous report. Attainment levels in geography, physical education, design and technology, art, and music, meet national requirements for pupils by the age of seven and are better than average in history. By nine, attainment in art, history and physical education are above expectations and at least match expectations in all other subjects. Attainments by some pupils in instrumental work in music are above the national average. In all subjects pupils benefit from the shared expertise of the teaching and support staff who maintain a full rounded curriculum alongside the new national initiatives in literacy and numeracy.
12. Pupils of all abilities including those with special educational needs, average and above average attaining pupils learn very effectively. At home all of the pupils speak English as their first language although some pupils are learning their community languages at 'Saturday School'. They are supported well in school and make good progress. During the inspection no difference was observed overall in the learning, attainment or progress of boys and girls.
13. Teachers place great demands on themselves and on all pupils. Since the last inspection all of the programmes of work have been reviewed and learning in all classes is purposeful and relevant to the needs of groups and individuals. The needs of the pupils and the need to maintain the standards of attainment at the above average level have been achieved. Progress over time has been restored to a good level as seen in lessons and in the work in books and other collected evidence. Overall the standards of literacy and numeracy are well above the national average. In

turn these standards are having a positive impact on all the work of other curricular subjects throughout the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Attitudes, behaviour and relationships within the school have all improved since the previous inspection. Overall pupils have good attitudes towards school and work. They are proud of their school and take good care of the resources in their classrooms. They are very enthusiastic about school and the activities available to them. Relationships throughout the school are very good and these, combined with good standards of behaviour, make a positive contribution to pupils' attainment and progress and to their personal and social development.
15. Nearly all parents state that their children like school and pupils talk very positively about school, their teachers and other adults who work in the school. The attitude of pupils to learning is generally good. Pupils' responses to teaching are satisfactory or better in all lessons and are regularly very good. In those classes where the objectives are clear, the pace of the lesson is good and teachers' expectations are high, pupils are well motivated, interested and responsive. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson, which was well structured to use time effectively and stimulate pupils to develop ideas in groups, pupils remained focused on the task of organising a fair test, enabling them to make good gains in their knowledge and understanding. Pupils work well individually, in pairs and in groups, sharing resources with one another and co-operating well, from the youngest to the oldest classes. In the few lessons where the pace and challenge of lessons is less demanding, behaviour and concentration lapse and pupils then need constant encouragement to continue to apply themselves to their work. Pupils ask and answer questions appropriately and join in discussions, but although there is an improvement since the time of the last inspection there are still too few opportunities for them to develop independence in their learning.
16. Behaviour in classrooms is generally good, although a minority of pupils behave inappropriately on occasions. Pupils move around the school in an orderly fashion, with a minimum of supervision. They are courteous and trustworthy and show respect for the school and other pupils' property. There is no evidence of vandalism, graffiti or litter in or around the school. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and all adults working in the school are very good. Pupils have very good respect for each other's feelings, values and beliefs, exemplified by a group of under-fives who were playing outside on the large play equipment. Two boys who were playing on the 'rocking crocodile' were anxious to include a girl but knew that she did not like sitting at either end because "it goes up and down too much." The boys invited her to join them and to sit in the middle, where the motion would not be too great, and were very gentle and sensitive to her feelings in the way in which they rocked. During breaks, pupils play well together and enjoy each others' company, mixing well across the different age groups and genders. They are supportive and considerate towards one another and ensure that nobody is excluded. Pupils do not express any concerns about bullying or oppressive behaviour and are very confident that if they have any worries about bullying or relationship breakdowns, they may take them to staff or the headteacher and they will be resolved. There have been two fixed period exclusions in the current year.
17. Throughout the school pupils warmly welcome visitors and are confident in showing and discussing their work. Even the youngest pupils seek to explain their work to visitors and involve them in games and activities such as sharing a 'newsletter', which contains photographs of members of the class, and explaining who is in the picture

and what they are doing. Pupils respond well to visiting speakers and share in assemblies, which help them to develop a very good awareness of the needs of others. They identify and support a range of charities such as LEPRO and are actively involved with the local churches.

18. Pupils respond well to those opportunities that are provided for them to assume responsibilities and often volunteer to undertake duties. However, as was observed at the time of the previous inspection, the range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and show initiative, or develop independence in selecting resources for their own learning are limited. In classes throughout the school however, pupils are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and for organising books after lessons. Pupils carry out these small duties efficiently and willingly. They respond particularly well in the reception class where very good opportunities are provided for them to display independence and co-operate with each other whilst undertaking activities such as role play in the 'post office' or playing outside and watching out for 'twisters'. They undertake tasks within the classroom, such as assisting in handing out books and resources, and keep their own areas tidy. Older pupils have some opportunities to undertake whole school responsibilities such as putting away the playground games at the end of the lunch break or answering the telephone at lunchtime.
19. Attendance is good and is similar to that reported at the time of the previous inspection. In 1999/2000 the overall attendance was 95.3 per cent, with just 0.1 per cent unauthorised absence. Almost one third of the pupils achieve very good levels of attendance and nine pupils achieved an excellent 100 per cent attendance record, last year. The majority of authorised absences occur as a result of minor illnesses and medical visits with some absence for holidays. Staff and pupils arrive in classrooms punctually and sessions begin on time. These above average levels of attendance have a positive effect on pupils' learning and attainment.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. The overall picture of teaching is of improvement and in the core subjects the improvement has been consistent across all classes. Teaching was observed in 33 lessons or parts of lessons during the inspection. In all of the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory. In the 33 lessons observed, 24 per cent were judged to be satisfactory, 45 per cent were good, 27 per cent were judged to be very good and one lesson, (3 per cent) was judged to be excellent. Lessons at the foundation stage for children under five were never less than good and many were very good. The overall quality of teaching throughout the school has improved since the time of the last inspection. The skills and dedication of all the teaching staff, including those new to the school, have had a positive impact on the overall quality of teaching. All of the teachers taught some good and very good lessons and in one lesson the quality of teaching was judged to be excellent.
21. The school has introduced the strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy successfully and this has had a beneficial impact on the overall quality of teaching because the structure and organisation of work is now consistent in all classes. The training in planning and evaluating work, undertaken in the preparation for the new initiatives, has had a positive impact on the planning and evaluation processes in other subjects. Very few weaknesses in teaching remain, although, in a very small minority of lessons, the expectations for those pupils capable of reaching higher levels were too limited. In these lessons the quality of teaching was then judged to be only satisfactory or was graded as good rather than very good despite the good work

standard achieved by the majority of pupils. Pupils learn well from the teacher's instruction and guidance in all lessons and are keen to explain what they are doing to any adult or pupil willing to listen.

22. Teachers' secure subject knowledge forms the firm foundation for assisting pupils' learning. All teachers have a good understanding of what needs to be taught in literacy and numeracy and as a result they are able to help pupils to develop the required skills effectively. Literacy and numeracy lessons are well structured in accordance with the recommendations of the relevant national strategies. Following the introductory session, pupils are taught in ability groups in most lessons. Teachers almost always select methods well fitted to the purpose for teaching the whole class, using for example, the whiteboard, a 100 or 1000 square or a big book for class work with a shared text. When supporting individual groups specifically selected resources are chosen for groups and individuals to enable matched work. Written tasks are tailored to the pupils needs. Across the school basic skills are taught well. Pupils and the teacher engage in detailed discussion and conversation with questioning on both sides that extends pupils' thinking and promotes their learning. Some pupils tend to accept the first answer that they spot but are systematically being trained to investigate resources and examine results carefully, searching out minute details and all possible relevant information. This was seen to very good effect in an art/history lesson where pupils interrogated pictures to ascertain minute details about dress, food and transport. They enjoy being history detectives or science sleuths.
23. Across the school, teachers' personal enthusiasm and suitably high expectations are encouraging pupils to learn well and develop their skills across a range of subjects especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The drive for higher levels of attainment is an important part of every lesson. Throughout the school teachers are sure of the purpose of all planned activities and explain them carefully to pupils. However, very occasionally, this careful explanation extends the introductory session and limits the time for pupils to get on with the intended structured learning task. This then shortens the time available for pupils to access information for themselves. In the lessons observed, the teachers' knowledge, planning, control, organisation and management of pupils were good. Teachers' expectations are getting higher in response to pupils' success and in most lessons the work is usually challenging for pupils of all abilities. In the very few lessons where pupils were not challenged appropriately, enthusiasm waned and the pace of the lesson slowed. It is because of the consistently interesting and effective teaching that they now enjoy that most pupils are now on course to maintain or improve on the standards of attainment across the curriculum by the end of this academic year.
24. Teachers in classes across the school make clear exactly what they expect pupils to learn. In most lessons the objectives for the lesson are discussed with pupils and prominently displayed. During the lesson most teachers ask pupils to review the objectives and together they read them again and at the end they check whether they have all been accomplished. This focuses the pupils' thinking and attention on what they are doing and why. Pupils of all ages and abilities benefit from reflecting on the purpose of the lesson and this review enables them to be sure of what they have learned and how it fits into the pattern of their work in other lessons.
25. Teachers increasingly work together in preparation for the teaching of new and familiar work and this collaboration is undertaken effectively. Planning is particularly impressive in English, mathematics and science but is also seen in all other subjects, where it is clear and is obviously well structured. Since the last inspection, teachers have developed and have begun to implement good procedures for assessing the

progress that pupils make both on a day-to-day basis and at the end of programmes of study. The information gathered is used on a day-to-day basis to help to organise and develop the next stage of the learning programme. All written work is marked clearly and regularly, almost always to an agreed standard, and this scheme for marking is proving to be a useful way of monitoring work and assessing pupils' progress. Where teachers use the marking process best the dialogue between the teacher and pupil enables the pupil to develop good personal review strategies. Very occasionally when marking is less thorough, the teacher sometimes misses opportunities to move pupils' thinking in the right direction but this is happening in very few books. The marking of work in the classes for younger children is equally thorough although the commentary is frequently oral rather than written because teachers talk to their pupils as they mark work beside them pointing out good features and how to do better next time. Pupils derive great value from this individual interaction with the teacher.

26. Over the past two years the school has embarked on a detailed process for analysing the results from statutory and voluntary tests and from the evaluation of marked and monitored work. This is proving to be very useful in identifying areas requiring additional work and showing where the strengths of the school are. The positive impact has helped teachers to feel more confident that they have found a profitable routine for themselves and their pupils that is having a continued impact on maintaining pupils' above average achievements and on lifting the teachers' morale.
27. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is never less than good in the Foundation Stage and in all classes across the school. Teachers' planning takes account of the specific needs of individual pupils in the way that they are grouped and supported particularly in subjects where understanding of literacy or numeracy strategies are required. Arrangements for preparing and using individual education plans are good in ensuring that teachers meet pupils' individual needs in all lessons. These plans contain clear measurable targets and are implemented well by teachers and support assistants. They provide an appropriate blend of challenge and support. Teachers and support assistants are effective in enabling pupils to achieve good learning in all classes across the school. Those pupils with hearing impairment are high achieving pupils and their needs are met very well.
28. The established pattern for setting homework is working well. Work completed is marked carefully if it is written work or else it is used in lessons at the start of the next week if it is a finding out activity. At the Foundation Stage, and in classes at Key Stage 1, pupils also learn words and number bonds and parents share willingly in these activities that make reading and writing easier for everyone. Pupils regularly take reading and library books home and parents record what they have read and sometimes make other comments in the reading diaries. Pupils in older classes record the intended work and, in many cases, parents use the books well to look for progress and to communicate with the school. Older pupils in classes 3 and 4 sometimes listen to younger pupils read, help them with difficult words and talk to them about their favourite stories.
29. The overall improvement in the quality of teaching since the time of the last inspection and since the review visit in April 2000 has been brought about by a shared commitment to identify and remedy areas of weakness and the commitment to put the needs of the pupils first. This has also been achieved by the teachers' ability to adopt the identified elements of good practice into their own performance. Everyone has worked strenuously to eliminate the identified weaknesses. The entire staff has been very successful in this endeavour as is testified to by the attainment levels achieved by the pupils. As they have understood the growing amount of good practice

in the school, confidence has grown and teachers have been able to offer more to pupils and demand more in return.

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

30. The school plans with care to ensure that the pupils receive a good range of learning opportunities, which meet their interests and aptitudes. All the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, as are religious education and personal, social and health education. The school makes suitable provision for pupils to develop an understanding about drug awareness and sex education. Appropriate time is spent on each subject so that it can be studied to sufficient depth to ensure learning is well established and pupils' enthusiasm and interest sustained. The school is particularly successful in using knowledge from one subject to support learning in another.
31. The curriculum provision for children under five is good. The way that the reception class is organised to promote learning creates an environment that provides effectively for all pupils. There is a wide range of play and other learning activities. These are based on the recommended early learning goals set out by the Department for Education and Employment and the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA). The quality of adult interaction is very good and the organisation and management of this phase of education leading to the National Curriculum prepares children very well for the next phase of education.
32. At the time of the last inspection, in 1999, the curriculum was not planned well and there were serious gaps in provision in some subjects. The subject leaders have addressed all of these weaknesses, in each subject, in a determined and successful way. Governors on the curriculum committee have made a very significant contribution by their knowledgeable support and attention to monitoring at each stage of development. The school has checked, tested and modified curriculum plans in line with the new National Curriculum introduced in September 2000 and has allowed appropriate time for this planning to be reviewed in the current year. Although each subject is planned for separately, the planning dovetails subject areas so that pupils have the benefit of a much richer learning experience. For example, when pupils in Year 4 were studying the life of people in an Indian village in geography, they not only learnt the relevant geographical features, but also about the people's religion, art and music, each subject supporting the other effectively.
33. Lessons in literacy and numeracy are successful in developing pupils' skills in mathematics and English. The National Strategies in Literacy and Numeracy underpin lesson planning and the subject leaders monitor the teaching of basic skills well. Pupils learn to write competently at an early age and are given very good opportunities to write in all subjects. In consequence pupils write much more confidently than they do in many other schools.
34. The school provides good support for those pupils who learn more slowly than others, and those with special needs, both in classrooms and on the occasions when they are withdrawn from lessons. The governing body has made a commitment to supporting such pupils by providing sufficient money to employ extra classroom support staff. There are also a good number of voluntary helpers who generously give their time to the school. The organisation and training of these helpers and classroom assistants is good and their skills make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Where appropriate each pupil with special educational needs has an individual plan of work. These plans are of a high quality with precise targets based

on on-going assessments.

35. On occasions, pupils work in small groups or individually outside the classroom on tasks that whilst linked to the main theme are not exactly the same as those taking place within the class. This strategy is beginning to help pupils to become increasingly mature in managing their own time and work and in developing and extending their personal learning. There is good overall management of this to ensure that pupils do not miss any significant amounts of whole class provision. However, the school has not yet developed sufficiently strong strategies to ensure that any time that is missed is made up, by a short recap of the lesson, when pupils rejoin their class.
36. There is a well structured programme of work for personal and social education. Health education is developed well through science, design and technology and physical education lessons. The pupils in Year 4 benefit from a residential visit, which provides them with good opportunities to develop social skills and to study an environment that is different from the one where they live. Opportunities to study issues that arise from the comparison are used to good effect. Teachers plan visits to museums and many places in the locality to develop pupils' knowledge in science, history and geography. Visitors are welcomed into the school and bring to the pupils their enthusiasms, experiences, knowledge and expertise. The school does not have its own school field and this limits the range of sporting activities that are offered. These are supplemented by the agreed use of the village field on a regular basis, particularly in the summer months. The school runs an art club and a choir after school; whilst not an extensive programme in a small school, such as this, the pattern is similar to what is generally provided.
37. The school's close relationship with all of the local churches helps to promote pupils' understanding of the community in which they live. The school has special links with the local parish church but there are also links with the churches of other denominations represented in the village. Visits are made for study and special occasions and church leaders are welcome regular visitors to assemblies where their contributions add to the rich pattern of celebration and worship. The pupils also visit the nearby home for the elderly at traditional times such as harvest when they take gifts and more importantly talk with the older people and share what interests both the pupils and the residents. Responsibility to the wider world community is well fostered by charitable giving which is chosen with care so that pupils can understand how the money they collect actually influences the lives of others. A good example of this was the Lepira collection from which pupils were able to learn that a relatively small sum of money donated actually affected a total cure for one person. Although the school is in the process of developing a link with British Telecom, there has not yet been any other significant links with business. There are good plans to help rectify this but this area would benefit from development. The school has good links with the local middle school, especially with regard to subject planning to ensure that there is not a repetition of work already undertaken nor any gaps in the planned programmes of study for the junior age range. In the past there have been useful links with nurseries and pre-school groups that send children to the school. The new teacher for the foundation stage has firm plans to strengthen these links by an agreed programme of visits; both by her to the places where children are cared for before they are four and by play-group staff to the school.
38. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is good. The staff clearly support the school's mission statement which makes Christian teaching a central component to the entire work of the school.

39. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The well planned programme of assemblies emphasises Christian teaching but also teaches pupils to understand and value other faiths and religious practices. Collective worship is a strong focal point of the day. When pupils enter the hall each day they are clearly aware that this is a special time and listen quietly to the music that is played as a focus for their time of reflection and quietness. They participate in the opening and closing prayers showing every sign that they understand the meaning and purpose of prayer. They are taught a good number of hymns and sing them with sincerity. Often during the day teachers raise pupils' awareness of beauty and other spiritual aspects in lessons such as art, music, literacy and history. Many lessons provide real moments of reflection and celebration.
40. The very good provision for pupils' moral development starts in the reception class. Good planning and organisation of the school day allow teachers plenty of opportunities to make children aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Children respond quickly to their teachers' expectations. Although teachers are sometimes too tolerant towards the amount of chatter that occurs in lessons, they do not tolerate unacceptable behaviour. At the time of the last inspection it was considered that some teachers did not support the agreed behaviour policy sufficiently. The revised policy is now in place and is well known by all the pupils. It is maintained very well in all classes. All teachers have high expectations that pupils will behave well towards each other. The care and consideration that teachers themselves show to children and other adults underpin these expectations. The message that all are valued is given unequivocally. Resources are chosen which provide opportunities for moral issues to be discussed. Sometimes these encompass issues many adults have not resolved. A very good example of this came in a Year 2 lesson on the life of Mary Seacole. The teacher asked pupils to think about the way history had favoured the memory of Florence Nightingale rather than that of Mary Seacole, whose work was similar, and the reasons for this. Very good social provision stems from the same strengths as those for moral provision in that it is based on the positive, warm and friendly relationships in the school and the expectation of teachers that pupils will value each others' achievements. Throughout the school, starting in the youngest classes, lessons are organised so that pupils learn to evaluate how well they have done, to appreciate the work of others. This is then extended to the valuable social skill of telling others what they have done well or where they could improve. By the time pupils are in Year 4, at the top end of the school, they are able to give and receive the friendly criticism of their peers in a manner that is far more mature than their age would suggest. Teachers promote a pride in the achievements of the class and develop a class identity. A whole school identity is securely established through assemblies, and by means of a calendar of events which include such things as school productions, a multi-cultural week, a summer festival and the Year 4 three-day residential visit. Pupils value their school and often take the initiative to care for their community. A good example being that when younger pupils are admitted or a new pupil joins the school older pupils take it upon themselves to be welcoming and watch out for their well-being. A simple but telling example occurred in a junior assembly when noise from younger pupils enjoying role-play in a shared area disturbed the prayer time. A Year 4 pupil quickly got up to close the rear doors, taking the initiative before the adults needed to offer any prompting.
41. Cultural development is good. Teachers encourage an appreciation of art, literature and music. Poetry and drama are particularly well represented in pupils' studies in English. There are many opportunities for pupils to improvise or take on roles;

learning as they do the part drama has played in shaping our society. The school has significantly improved opportunities since the last inspection for pupils to develop their awareness of the diverse cultures represented in Britain today. A good example of this was in the extensive range of work done in Year 4 on the study of an Indian village. Provision of examples of art, religious artefacts and pictures as well as musical instruments helped pupils appreciate and value the culture of the region. Music played an important part in the multi-cultural week in the spring of 2000 when Africa was the focus. A drummer from Ghana visited the school. His skill delighted all the pupils. The artefacts he showed were used to inspire the making of fabric wall hangings block printed with African designs in which all year groups took part and which now are part of an attractive display of pupils' work including writing about their experiences.

42. The school is aware of the need to prepare pupils for life in a multi-ethnic society. On occasions teachers' knowledge of other cultures is not as secure as it could be. Never the less, the school has made a good start in establishing a programme of work and the school ethos is developed to ensure that pupils have the right attitudes for living with people of different races and cultures to their own.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school provides a secure environment that functions well as part of a supportive community. Teachers and staff know pupils very well, set high standards and, together with other adults working in the school, provide good examples of co-operation to pupils. Staff have a clear understanding of pupils' personal progress and maintain good records. Pupils feel that they are well supported and are confident in approaching staff with any problems. The oversight and support of pupils' personal development is good and contributes very well to their overall progress and attainment.
44. Registers are completed correctly and teachers carefully check the level of attendance and question unexpected absences. The school encourages good attendance by motivating pupils to want to come to school. Although the only rewards given are for perfect attendance, pupils are enthusiastic to attend school and almost all parents share this view. The school does not contact parents on the first day of absence if no explanation has been received because there is virtually no absence other than for good reason. Contact with home is usually made only if the teacher alerts the school secretary. The school requests parents' support in encouraging good attendance and seeks to persuade them not to take holidays during term time. Parents respond well to the request and support the drive for high attendance and in turn higher than average performance. The education welfare officer is readily accessible and provides satisfactory support to the school.
45. The school has good procedures to manage and promote good behaviour and staff are consistent in their expectations and recognition of this. The policy, 'golden rules,' rewards and sanctions are very clearly structured and understood by all pupils. Pupils value the praise of staff and have a very good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Younger pupils are very alert to wrong doing and sometimes even reprimand their parents for minor transgressions of the schools' code of behaviour. The strategies are effective and behaviour in and around the school and during lessons is good. The school's attitude towards combating any incidents of bullying or oppressive behaviour is very positive and is understood by both staff and pupils. Pupils are encouraged to report any concerns to an adult and they are very confident that staff will support them. Any concerns are fully

investigated and appropriate action taken, which may involve parents.

46. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory. The school has adopted the comprehensive guidelines devised by the local area child protection committee. These are now the school's policy. The previous inspection identified the absence of a formal child protection policy and, although there is still no separate child protection policy prepared by the school, the requirements for clear shared understanding of agreed procedures are met. The headteacher is the designated co-ordinator and is identified as such within the health and safety policy. He has undertaken appropriate training and has kept up-to-date with current practice through information provided by the local education authority. All teaching and support staff are aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of any concerns. The school has good relations with a range of outside agencies that provide good support. Staff are vigilant and sensitive in exercising their responsibilities. There is no formal restraint policy about the use of force to control or restrain pupils from causing harm or injury to themselves or others. This has never been considered to be a necessity, as pupils do not display behaviour that might require restraint and are easily controlled by a look or a swift reminder about the schools' expectations.
47. The headteacher is responsible for health and safety and the school has an appropriate policy. Procedures for monitoring and promoting health and safety are good, although there are some weaknesses in recording. Day-to-day management of health and safety matters is good. Teachers promote good practice in lessons, such as in a Year 1 physical education lesson when the teacher made pupils aware of the safety reasons for ensuring that they have a good understanding of space, and of each other, when moving about in the hall. Apparatus and equipment is always carried safely and sensibly. Evacuation practices, checks of equipment and maintenance are carried out regularly and there is good evidence of electrical testing being completed each year. Some equipment is new and was not in use at the time of the last test. Any equipment causing concern or identified as being defective is taken out of use. There is a very good understanding of risk assessments and these are completed thoroughly and reviewed regularly, although in some cases they have not all been dated or signed.
48. Arrangements for first aid are good and the school has three members of staff who are trained in first aid and available at all times throughout the school day. They provide good care for pupils and first aid kits meet requirements and are readily accessible. Parents are advised of any 'head bumps' on a note bearing a picture of 'Mr Bump'. Accident records are very well detailed and reviewed regularly, by the headteacher, to identify any potential risks and to enable action to be taken to avoid a recurrence, where practicable. In addition, an analysis of accidents is regularly presented to the governing body to enable them to be aware of any possible concerns.
49. The school has developed practical strategies for monitoring the academic performance of pupils. The national tests are completed in accord with statutory requirements. Trends are analysed over years and good use is made of the information to help the setting of school targets linked to the national requirement. This process is used to identify areas for improvement. The school is also making good use of past National Curriculum test papers to assess pupils' progress and to inform learning needs. Individual pieces of work are set and levels of attainment are agreed by staff, using a selection of marked work with agreed moderated levels in, for example, English, mathematics and science. In Years 3 and 4 pupils are informed about what they need to achieve in order to attain the expected and higher levels of

attainment. In the reception class a recognised baseline assessment system is in use. This helps teachers to plan individual and group work in order to ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to succeed in reaching or exceeding the early learning goals.

50. The school's assessment policy contains full and appropriate guidance on the monitoring of pupils' performance. Daily assessment after lessons is well used to help in short-term curriculum planning. Pupils are rewarded in a wide range of ways for outstanding effort, good work or progress. The pupils' records of achievement show a clear picture of the progress of each pupil or group of pupils through the school.
51. Effective systems are in place for the assessment of pupils with special educational needs that have a positive effect on pupils' progress. These contain appropriate targets, and are used well to plan work that is carefully matched to pupils' needs. All teachers know their pupils very well and are aware of their specific needs. The school builds effectively on its records and assessment procedures in identifying pupils with special educational needs and deciding what support is needed. The co-ordinator for special educational needs keeps very good records, which track pupils' academic and personal progress. Whenever a need is identified there are well organised, suitable support strategies and personnel who are skilled at helping the identified child.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. The school is popular within the local community and always oversubscribed. Overall parents express a satisfactory view of the school. Although the small group of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting generally expressed very positive views, of the 27 per cent of parents who responded to the questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection, a significant minority expressed concerns in one or more areas. Parents were particularly positive about their children's enthusiasm for school and they feel that pupils are making good progress. Parents generally would feel comfortable in approaching the school with any concerns. However, they particularly express concerns about the information which they receive from the school, the success of the school in working closely with parents, the standard of leadership and management of the school and the range of activities that is provided outside lessons. The inspection team supports the positive views of parents and considered that the information provided by the school is satisfactory overall but agrees that generally communications could be worded in a more friendly manner. The school does seek to involve parents in its life and work, welcoming and appreciating their support and regularly invites parents to school events but finds that there are many families that hardly ever respond. The inspectors found the shared leadership of the school including that of the governors and the subject co-ordinators to be good overall and the range of activities that enhance and enrich the curriculum to be satisfactory. These activities include a choir, art club, a residential visit to the National Youth Resource Centre for pupils in Year 4, visitors to the school bringing a wealth of experiences and interests and links with the Church, the Cathedral and a local old people's home.
53. The school's links with parents and the information provided for parents, particularly about progress, are satisfactory. Annual reports are satisfactory and contain information about what pupils know, understand and can do, together with targets to help them make better progress. However, whilst remaining satisfactory the standard

of these reports is inconsistent between classes. Sometimes targets could be made clearer to help parents to understand how they might best assist their children to progress to the next stage in their learning. Parents are provided with their child's levels at the end of the key stage and with voluntary and statutory test results. Teachers are readily accessible to parents to discuss any concerns about their child's progress. Parents are invited to attend three formal consultation sessions each year to discuss progress with teachers. These sessions are held over the course of a whole week, providing flexibility in appointments and, for those parents who cannot attend, alternative arrangements can be made. The success of these arrangements is shown by the fact that throughout the year, over 95 per cent of parents meet with staff to discuss their child's progress. The school does not provide subject specific workshops to explain areas of the curriculum to parents but, rather, holds open days when parents can come into school and watch lessons. In some year groups, parents are provided with an overview of the topics, which pupils are to study. This helps parents to provide or plan opportunities to support learning as when making family visits. Parents value this and would welcome more such information. However, the quality and extent of this information is not consistent and as yet all classes have not built on the best practice within the school. Satisfactory information about key dates and other matters about the school are sent home in newsletters and, whilst the information is adequate, it is not always presented in a welcoming style. The success of pupils is only rarely celebrated and shared with parents through the newsletters, missing valuable opportunities to involve parents in the joy of celebration about the community of the school.

54. The school actively seeks to welcome parents and involve them in its the life and work. No home visits are made prior to children joining the school although, when they start school they and their parents are welcomed into the classroom for the first few weeks. After the initial settling time, however, parents are encouraged to leave their children at the gate. Some parents have seen this as a failure of the school to work closely with parents and welcome them into school. The inspection team found that all staff members continue to be readily accessible to parents, to discuss any concerns, and the headteacher is very approachable, but the school has sought to develop pupils' independence and to improve security. Most parents are supportive of all that the school does to help their children progress and provide good support for children's learning at home through regular sharing of books and good support for homework. The school has developed a home/school agreement, to strengthen the partnership between school and home, and almost two thirds of parents have signed the agreement and returned it to the school.
55. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) organises activities and events, such as the termly disco, which involves parents and pupils. There is also a Toy Fayre, Beetle Drives and Race Nights all intended to increase parental participation and to raise money to buy additional equipment. Recently the PTA has provided outdoor play equipment for lunchtimes as well as play mats and equipment to support the literacy strategy. About 12 parents regularly help in school by hearing pupils read and supporting their work in practical activities such as cooking, science, art and in design and technology. In addition, parents help in supervising pupils on visits and provide practical support in a variety of ways such as clearing the pond and environmental area and helping to clear rubbish from the school grounds. The help and support of parents is appreciated by pupils and staff and makes a good contribution to the opportunities available to pupils and to their learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The headteacher and the governors, even those newly appointed, know their school very well and are sensitive to its standing in the community. The school benefits from the clear management skills and quiet sensitive leadership of the headteacher. The deputy headteacher's talents complement those of the headteacher and since the appointment of a new team member in the foundation stage, together they have formed an effective leadership team. With the governing body they have successfully addressed the key issues from the previous inspection, especially those concerning the establishment of a management structure, the behaviour of pupils, the curriculum and the quality of teaching. All policies and schemes of work are now in place as are strategies that enable assessment procedures to be used sensitively to guide teachers' planning and improve pupils' learning.
57. The governing body has strengthened the senior management team by the inclusion of a leading teacher from Key Stage 1. Since September 2000 this position has been filled by a newly appointed teacher. She has responsibility for the foundation stage and brings with her a new bank of skills and experiences that strengthen the management base. The identified need for firm subject co-ordination has been undertaken successfully. This is by teachers either accepting new or additional roles or by a sensible sharing of responsibility. The procedures concerning health and safety are satisfactory and are supported by clear documentation that sets out the requirements and procedures for the information of both the teaching and support staff. All members of staff fully understand the procedures for child protection issues and know who is the designated person.
58. All members of the senior management team have complementary roles and use their different skills in a practical way in order to motivate pupils and strive for higher standards. Now that the vast majority of past difficulties have been resolved, they need to consider how a thorough review of roles and responsibilities and a programme of training and development to increase their individual talents might enhance their contributions to the prosperity of the school. The governors work well together and with the senior staff provide clear educational direction for the school. The School Development Plan, drawn up in consultation with staff and governors, clearly defines a programme for sustained improvement. Shrewd financial management supports all of the listed educational priorities such as spending additional funding to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are enabled to reach levels of attainment that matched those of the other pupils in their class and in some cases exceeded national expectations. All financial grants and specifically allocated funds are reviewed regularly and the governors evaluate the benefits in terms of attainment of pupils as to how wisely they have been spent. The headteacher and governing body are aware of the high level of expenditure incurred on the salaries of support staff but consider this to be justified at the present time in relation to the attainment achieved by pupils. Overall the staff and governors are extremely prudent in the effective use of the funding allocated to the school.
59. The school is successful in meeting its aims. There is an extremely positive caring atmosphere for learning that promotes high standards of personal development and behaviour. Pupils of all abilities are happy in school and share its values, especially its spiritual, moral and social and cultural values, and these are aspects that are at the forefront of the school's aims and Mission Statement. These are also the areas with which parents are very pleased and why some pupils travel some distance to the school. The school has a total commitment to all pupils being fully included in all its activities.
60. All teachers and subject leaders now monitor the results of the statutory and non-

statutory tests administered by the school very effectively at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4. The high quality of curriculum planning is an improvement when compared to the findings of the previous inspection. The headteacher and curriculum leaders, have, with the governors, accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and have used their findings to guide curriculum planning with the resultant improvement of already good results. Even more pupils are now approaching the higher than expected levels of attainment. This has been particularly successful in the well above average standard of writing by the time pupils are seven which are maintained in the classes for older pupils. This is reflected in the lessons observed and in the analysis of pupils' work. Where teachers have worked together with knowledgeable subject leaders the process of collaboration has helped to improve planning both on a day-to-day basis and for longer-term changes. Further opportunities to enhance teacher' management skills need to be built into the schools' plans in order to extend their professional development.

61. The governing body provides good support. It is meeting all of its statutory requirements and has an effective committee structure. The Curriculum Committee has played an active part in the revision of policies and schemes of work with the teachers and in supporting the implementation of the numeracy strategy and the introduction of Curriculum 2000. Governors understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and their responsibilities in working to either maintain or remedy these aspects. The governors are committed to school improvement. There are named governors who play active roles in supporting pupils with special educational needs and monitor procedures for literacy and numeracy. All of these governors have attended appropriate training with the staff. Some governors are new and a shared programme of training for co-ordinators and governors is planned.
62. The headteacher and governors have made good initial preparation for the introduction of appraisal and performance management, the headteacher having attended the required amount of additional training for this aspect. Appropriate plans are in place for the introduction of this aspect through the school. Priorities for development are determined through consultation with the headteacher, governors and staff. At present the monitoring and evaluation of work in lesson preparation and of work in the classroom is regular and very thorough. The headteacher undertakes regular monitoring of teaching and completed work and has given guidance where this was found to be necessary. The deputy headteacher, who is the mathematics co-ordinator, together with the literacy co-ordinator and advisory staff from the local authority and the adviser and mentor for the newly qualified teacher, have raised the profile of classroom observation to such a level that it is in danger of becoming counter-productive. Following the last inspection when problems were identified, this was very necessary but the time for a consistent but softer touch is now appropriate. The analysis of test results and the information revealed is used well to identify groups and individual pupils who need additional support for their learning and also those who would respond well to yet more challenge. This aspect has been managed very effectively and the deputy headteacher has a clear view of the benefits of the analysis and evaluation process. Across the school teachers use the assessment information gathered in a purposeful way to set individual and group targets for improving future performance. The targets for pupils' performance in the statutory tests in the current year are ambitious but achievable. The Action Plans for the present academic year, drawn from the school development plan, are highly relevant to curricular and organisational needs, especially in the foundation stage and in literacy and numeracy. New staff are welcomed into school and the support provided by both the mentor for newly appointed teachers and the mentor for newly qualified teachers is good. The mentors are welcoming with good teaching skills and

they provide good examples for new and newly qualified teachers and students.

63. The school's arrangements for financial management and control are good. The secretary and headteacher work well together to ensure that the budget is tightly controlled so that the requirements of the governing body are met and that money is available for the improvements detailed in the school's plan for development. The school manages with great skill the small amount available for planned expenditure and for improvement having paid for the mandatory salaries, services and allowances. The governing body monitors expenditure from the detailed statements provided by the secretary. The grants the school receives for supporting pupils with special educational needs are used well to provide extra help for these pupils and this is well organised. The school has a policy of inclusion for all pupils and the funding allocated for the provision for children with special educational needs is supplemented from the main budget and is effectively used.
64. The finance committee's considerable experience ensures that the school seeks and secures best value. Competitive quotations are sought when expenditure is involved. The chair of finance and members of the finance committee are particularly well-informed and fully understand the financial implications of school management and have detailed understanding of the principles of 'best value'. This understanding is not only applied to quotations from suppliers but also to teaching and standards. During the inspection they discussed the benefits of spending decisions on the above average attainment levels being achieved by all pupils, including those with special educational needs, with a high level of understanding.
65. The school's financial procedures are efficient and effective. There are systems that readily provide accurate financial information to guide the governors in making their expenditure decisions. The most recent Auditor's Report for the school contains some minor recommendations, all of which have been addressed successfully. The administrator manages the day-to-day financial procedures of the school very efficiently and effectively. In addition, well-organised systems ensure that the school runs smoothly and money is handled securely. There are very good procedures for monthly checks on expenditure and for secure cash processing with good internal controls. A separate account is kept for private funds and this is audited annually by an appropriately qualified person. Other day-to-day administrative procedures are very effective and the administrator works in an efficient, calm, professional and supportive manner. This allows classroom teaching and learning to be uninterrupted. New technology is well used for the recording of financial matters.
66. Teachers provide a suitable range of experience to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious knowledge. Throughout the school the teaching staff are supported effectively by the well-informed learning support assistants. Together they form a strong team who are all involved in the planning so that aims and methods are agreed. The school welcomes the support given by parents and experienced voluntary helpers from the community.
67. Overall, the school has sufficient accommodation for its purposes, although there is only very limited provision for secure outdoor play at the foundation stage and the playing facilities for all children are restricted by the small playing surface and the lack of a linked field. However, because of the pupils' good behaviour and the high quality of supervision, there are very few accidents, even minor ones. The library area is small but is clean, bright and attractive and is used well. The classes at Key Stage 1 do not have any quiet comfortable place to read informally and in a school where reading is good and books are valued highly this is a sadness that needs to be

remedied. The accommodation is well maintained by a dedicated work force of cleaners and is enhanced by high quality work, which is displayed very well.

68. Learning resources are satisfactory but are not generous. They are good for literacy and there are no shortages in mathematics. However, specific equipment is lacking in science, although teachers manage to teach the full curriculum; good quality equipment to increase pupils' opportunities for investigation and group experiments is in short supply. In art, whilst there are just enough materials the opportunity for pupils to select individually from a range of materials is limited and as a result work is often obliged to be over directed by the teachers. In most subjects, resources are carefully catalogued and regularly checked. Whilst adequate for the majority of subjects there are some additional resources required to fully meet the needs of the recently introduced Curriculum 2000. The School Development Plan identifies when some of these will be bought, as and when the individual subjects have priority status. Some subject leaders have already identified the resources that will be needed to successfully meet the needs of the planned curriculum. Resources to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs are good.
69. The pupils' average level of attainment on entry is average and overall the levels of attainment have been maintained at a level above or well above the national average over the past four years. As observed during the inspection, there is an increasing amount of good quality teaching. The pupils' learning, progress, behaviour and attitudes are all good; when set against the lower than average level of income per pupil, the judgement of the inspection team is that the school now provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

70. In order to maintain standards of attainment and to continue making improvements the headteacher, governors and staff should:

(1) review the roles and responsibilities of the senior management team to ensure that the personal development of all of the team members is fully supported;

Paragraphs: 52, 56, 58, 60

(2) increase the amount of resources to support areas of the curriculum and the class for children under five in order to:

(a) extend opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own investigations and learning;

(b) increase the choices so that teachers and pupils might explore and develop more of their talents and personal interests;

(c) provide fully for all of the requirements of the newly agreed schemes of work

Paragraphs: 15, 18, 68, 78, 80, 116, 124, 136, 146

(3) work to establish a better understanding and closer working relationship with all parents by:

(a) devising helpful ways of enhancing the presentation of all communication with parents to enable better understanding;

(b) extending the best practice already in the school of informing parents about progress and about each term's work to all classes;

Paragraphs: 52, 53, 54

In addition to the key issues above, the following weakness should be considered, by the governors, for inclusion in the action plan:

(4) explore ways of providing a comfortable reading area for pupils in the younger classes to promote their love of reading and consolidate their developing skills as independent learners;

Paragraphs: 67, 90.

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	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	27	45	24	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	Nursery	YR– Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	146
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	34

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	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	17	14	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	16	17
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	28	30	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (93)	97 (90)	100 (97)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	17	17
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	29	100	100
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (93)	100 (97)	100 (97)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Please note one pupil equates as 3 per cent

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	6
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	108
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	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.3
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	103

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	270,720
Total expenditure	282,896
Expenditure per pupil	1,861
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,360
Balance carried forward to next year	7,184

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	146
Number of questionnaires returned	42

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	43	55	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	38	55	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	43	7	10	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	48	14	2	0
The teaching is good.	45	40	7	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	40	26	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	31	60	10	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	38	50	7	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	17	45	33	5	0
The school is well led and managed.	26	36	19	12	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	24	57	10	0	10
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	5	29	38	24	5

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

71. There is no nursery and children join the Foundation Stage in the reception class in the September of the year in which they will be five. The assessment procedures undertaken in the autumn term, soon after entry to the school, indicate that overall the attainment on entry is about average. The school follows a programme of work that covers the six areas of learning recommended by the Department for Education and Employment and since the start of this school year teachers are working within the new guidelines for early learning goals. At the time of the inspection only 13 pupils had already celebrated their fifth birthday. As children achieve the expected levels for pupils at the age of five, teachers begin to introduce elements of the National Curriculum into the work planned for the class in a gradual way as ability groups are identified.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

72. Attainment in personal, social and emotional development is above average by the age of five with the children mixing and socialising well. On entry, whilst some come straight from home many of the children have already had some experiences in a number of local nurseries or play groups. Most of the children are able to work together, share resources and are beginning to learn and understand the need to take turns and listen to each other. A group of children were observed playing a dice game, taking turns, without adult intervention. They use the 'post office' as a theme for role-play, taking turns to be the person who weighs the parcels or working as the stamp seller. They do this well and delight in adding more stamps to every package. They behave well in all situations, work co-operatively, and concentrate and persevere with their learning during the majority of sessions. A lesson in personal, social and emotional education enabled pupils to learn how a group functions; the idea of waiting for others to finish speaking and listening to their views. The teacher and the learning support assistant create a businesslike atmosphere where each child feels they are special. There are high expectations of behaviour and the children want to please the adults who are teaching them.
73. Teaching in this area of work is very good. The work planned is organised effectively and the teacher and her assistant arrange many opportunities for children to extend their experiences and develop ways of learning through play and building effective relationships with one another.

Communication Language and Literacy

74. The children's attainment in this area is about average on entry and is above average by the age of five. By then they are confident, articulate talkers and respond well to the teacher's and Learning Support assistant's questions. Throughout all lessons they are encouraged to develop their vocabulary and listen carefully. For example, when talking about his work, one child said "Look at my writing, I want to dedicate this page to baby bear.' All children enjoy books, take great pleasure in handling them and in taking care of them. The youngest children are able to talk about the book they are reading and predict what might happen, while other children are beginning to recognise up to 20 initial phonic sounds and about 8 to 10 blends. The focus blends during the inspection were 'sh' and 'ch'. About half recognise about 25 key words, whilst a small minority read fluently at an appropriate level. Most talk in detail about

their books and retell their favourite stories. Most of the children in the class write their own name with little or no help and with a high level of success. Every child is beginning to follow a programme of independent writing that is proving to some of them that they might be considered published authors. All children have work on display with telling translations for grown ups who were not part of the very positive process of composition. Many write confidently and spell some key words correctly, some with consistent accuracy. By the end of the year, some children are confident when writing short sentences. They like to use punctuation and it is almost always included but is not always in the correct places. Pencil control is good and the letter formation of most children is well formed and legible.

75. The quality of the teaching is imaginative, thorough and very good. An appropriate range of activities including speaking and listening, writing and reading are provided. The planning is clear and takes into account what the children know and can do. The enthusiasm of the teacher for writing and for books helps to foster positive attitudes towards literacy and ensures that the children make good progress. The effective use of the skilled classroom assistant ensures that all pupils receive additional support. Both the teacher and the assistant use questioning effectively to help children extend their knowledge and increase their language skills.

Mathematics

76. By the age of five the children's attainment in this area is above average. Children recognise numbers to five and most sequence them correctly. They use and understand 'more' or 'less than' when counting to 10. They confidently name two-dimensional shapes such as circle, square, rectangle and triangle and explain why and how they differ very well. These shapes are used successfully to create interesting pictures. Children are good at making continuing patterns using sticks and by threading beads. Work scrutiny and a review of work undertaken by pupils in Year 1 shows by the time children are five a high proportion count accurately in tens to 100, count in twos and undertake simple addition and subtraction sums up to 10 with a high degree of accuracy. They clearly understand and use appropriate vocabulary such as taller, shorter, lighter, heavier and know which words to use in conversations about their work. The children enjoy the tasks set and eagerly join in the class sessions because they delight in showing adults how good they are. They work well, sharing resources and helping each other. They are interested and make good progress.
77. The teaching is very good and a series of appropriate activities catch the interest of the children and ensure a positive attitude towards mathematics. The impact of the good pace and well-planned activities all add to the children's good rate of progress.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

78. The children's attainment at the age of five in this area is above average. They have begun a topic on spring and making scenes of this time of year. They demonstrate some knowledge of the seeds that will grow into flowers and vegetables and that they will need water and sunshine to make them grow strong. Unfortunately there is almost no space for children to garden or plant bulbs and seeds outside. Scientific knowledge about pouring and building is gained by play in the sand tray. Children also enjoy experimenting with water although they are unable to have sand and water at the same time because of a shortage of space. Children describe very well the joy of making boats that float and of sinking them by piling on heavy objects. The range of activities available for the children gives them a suitable range of opportunities to find

things out for themselves and they are always ready to explain what they are doing. The children learn well from the opportunities on offer and share the resources in a very friendly way. For example, in the sand tray the children do not fight over who has what but take turns to use the containers. Children have an understanding of times past and what school was like when their grandparents were children. They know about how people live in other parts of the world as some have visited places in Europe and America and readily share their photographs. They have made a class newspaper and like to show the pictures scanned in as their contributions and read with great flair and a very good memory the captions that they have written. Children enjoy using the computer in the classroom to paint and to label their work as well as for games involving colours, words, shapes and numbers. During the inspection they demonstrated their skills using the Jolly Postman program at three levels of difficulty. They are confident as they explain that the mouse is easier to control than the arrow keys.

79. The quality of teaching is good and well-planned lessons show a deep understanding of the early learning goals. The range of activities and topics covered ensure the children have wide experiences and develop a good understanding of the world around them.

Physical Development

80. The children's attainment in this area is at least in line with that found in most classes for children at the end of the foundation stage. They use scissors and many can cut carefully and accurately keeping to the lines. Most hold pencils and crayons correctly and have good control, being able to write their names and other words with ease. In outdoor play they run around taking care and finding spaces without bumping into each other. When joining in a dance lesson in the hall children follow the music and work well alone as individuals dancing to their own imaginative thoughts and as a group following the teacher's directions. However, the space for safe play with large apparatus outside is very limited and restricts children's learning. There is no grassed area where children can exercise safely.
81. The quality of teaching is good. The choice of music and the time allowed for activity followed by simple discussion and reflection enables the teacher to watch and offer encouragement and support. The teacher uses good movements and shapes demonstrated by some children to show others how they might extend their own performance.

Creative Development

82. By the end of the foundation stage the children's attainment in this area is average and meets requirements. They use shapes to make pictures and carefully spread the glue on the paper. They know the names of the shapes well and often accompany their work by talking through what they are doing quietly amongst themselves. Children know the names of some of the percussion instruments and play them sensibly, explaining whether they are hit, scraped or shaken. They appreciate the difference between loud and soft sounds and how to play the instruments. The children have experimented with bubbles to make some attractive pictures, and have painted enthusiastically about the story of the Three Bears and Goldilocks. Much of their work is displayed on the wall and they like to show adults and other children what they have done. The children enjoy the creative activities and are excited when it is time for singing with other classes in the hall. They are enthusiastic about music and

join in, knowing a range of nursery rhymes, which they say and sing quite well.

83. Teaching is effective because the teacher's planning and her understanding of the needs of young children and how they learn means that the choice of activities both for art, design and technology and music match their needs and abilities. Throughout the day a range of learning opportunities is made available to the children so that they grow in confidence to use paints and other media and to enjoy music of all types. Pupils with special educational needs, who are all taught alongside their classmates, make equally good progress.
84. At the time of the previous inspection the work with children under five was considered to be good. It is now very good and the new equipment has enabled attainment to be maintained and strengthened. The computer and its suitable range of software are used well. The children use the equipment spontaneously to reinforce their learning in language, art, music and mathematics as they do the listening centre where they listen to recorded stories and match the text in their books to the spoken words.

ENGLISH

85. The school's results in the national tests in 2000 for seven-year-old pupils were well above average when compared to all schools nationally. The school is particularly successful in helping pupils achieve the higher level in writing in these tests. This is very noticeable when the school's results are compared against similar schools. In this comparison the school is still way ahead in the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level for writing. Girls achieve slightly better results than boys but there is less of a margin than nationally.
86. At the time of the previous inspection in January 1999, inspectors felt that pupils' attainment was not as high as in previous years and they predicted a drop in standards. This was not the case. The school has maintained results well above the national average for four years, keeping pace with the national trend for improvement in reading and writing.
87. The current attainment of pupils in Year 2 and Year 4 in speaking and listening, reading and writing is well above average. In Year 4 some pupils are achieving a standard of written work usually seen in Year 6. There is a significant number of pupils who learn more slowly in the current Year 2 but the school is rightly confident that many of these are on track to achieve at least the expected level by the end of the year and so standards will be maintained. When pupils start in Year 1 their skills in speaking, reading and writing are above average. Good teaching in all classes means that all pupils, including those who learn more slowly or those who have special needs make good progress.
88. Throughout the school teachers rightly focus on giving pupils opportunities to talk as a good strategy to develop their thinking. This is done not only in English, but in other subjects as well. Pupils are asked to explain why something has happened rather than asked to supply a one or two word answer. In consequence, even the youngest pupils learn to frame sentences well. Teachers introduce new vocabulary and pupils are confident enough to try out new words or expressions in their responses. The only time progress slowed was on the one or two occasions when teachers failed to completely focus all the class on the need to listen to others rather than speak themselves. These occasions were rare and dealt with by appropriate use of the discipline policy.

89. Teachers are very knowledgeable about good methods to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills and this is responsible for pupils making very good progress and paying keen attention. For example, in Year 2, in a very creative short session, the class teacher plays the part of the burglar, "Big Bad Bill" from the class story. Pupils completely accept their teachers' role-play and take turns to tell "Bill" the errors of his ways. Towards the end of the session, a lower attaining pupil takes the initiative and advises him to get a job. All make good progress in this session in talking confidently and to the point. In Year 3, the pupils work in small groups to present a "weather report" to the rest of the class. The teacher's good strategy of allowing a pupil to use a camcorder to represent the television studio increased each pupils' desire to do well. In Year 4, pupils have become accustomed to take what is termed the "hot seat", sitting in front of the class and responding to questions on a previously determined theme or in the role of a character from a text they are studying. In one lesson two pupils took the "hot seat" one as Grace Darling and the other as one of the survivors from the shipwreck. Their imaginative responses showed that they had achieved a mature understanding of how to empathise with those in dire situations, unlike any that they had experienced themselves. The quality of questions and the use of words and phrases such as "petrified" and "waves crashing on the jagged rocks," used by the two pupils in their responses, matched standards usually achieved in Year 6.
90. Pupils learn to read quickly in Years 1 and 2. This is because teachers use the reading sessions effectively in literacy lessons. Phonics are taught well. As a result, all pupils learn to use letter sounds to work out the words they cannot read in their books successfully. During group reading sessions teachers' assess pupils' reading accurately and focus attention on aspects in need of improvement. Targets are set for all pupils on a half-termly basis and regular checking to see how well pupils meet their targets is part of the assessment process. This is helpful in moving pupils forward and helping teachers plan the objectives for the next session. The school has been very active in providing support staff and an army of voluntary helpers who make a significant difference to pupils' progress by supporting pupils on a one-to-one basis. Class teachers make sure that books are taken home at least twice a week and many parents provide good support by listening to reading, and reading themselves to their child. Teachers use attractive books and texts well-matched to pupils' level of attainment for whole class reading sessions. Teachers are skilful in ensuring that these sessions are enjoyed as well as being productive and, in consequence, the majority pay good attention and learn at a good rate. In Year 1, nearly all pupils joined in reading their class book confidently, having worked on it individually for two days. They were justly proud of their own achievements. Teachers display books well and encourage pupils to learn about authors and illustrators. Most pupils can choose a favourite author or story. However, in Years 1 and 2, there is no quiet comfortable area for pupils to choose a book either on their own or in companionship with friends. This would enhance their appreciation of books and give many the opportunity to have a moment of respite within the busy day.
91. In Years 3 and 4, good teaching is maintained. A strength of the school's provision in English is that, where it is appropriate, methods are similar throughout the school. In consequence those who have not made as much progress as others by the end of Year 2, or who join the class from another school, are supported very well in the older classes. Assessments are used equally effectively as in Years 1 and 2. This ensures that where pupils have not made as much progress as others, for instance with phonic knowledge, this is tackled in the older classes and pupils are not left to struggle. Classroom assistants and voluntary helpers give support to those older

pupils who have not achieved such a confident level in their reading. Good strategies such as allowing a pupil who learns more slowly to read stories to the youngest children maintains pupils' self-esteem and pupils' determination to achieve.

92. Pupils' knowledge and experience of reading is developed very well through well organised lessons, group reading sessions and through the choice of lively or exciting texts. Thought has been given to providing a rich selection of reading material including some that has a particular interest for boys. In Year 4 this resulted in the choice of the story of the "Titanic". One boy said that he had been a bit bored with reading until they studied that book. He has really enjoyed finding out all he could about the disaster, the historical background and how it had been made into a film. He has produced good writing about his work supported by research using the Internet. He is an able reader whose interest has been sustained by the teacher's understanding of his waning interest in some reading materials and doing something about it.
93. Pupils' very good achievements in writing are secured because this is a school where pupils want to write. Good teaching and sometimes very good or excellent teaching provides pupils with the necessary skills and the inspiration to become enthusiastic writers. In Year 1, nearly all pupils write a good number of sentences to tell a story or explain their ideas. They use the words they have already learnt to spell, and others they make a good guess at using the letter sounds they know. The teacher provides good support and is knowledgeable about how to develop writing at this early stage. The one area where some pupils' progress has not been sufficiently monitored is in the way letters are formed. A few of those who learn more slowly still form some letters incorrectly. One left-handed pupil still makes errors in forming the letters in his name. By the end of Year 2, most pupils write simple well-structured stories. Higher attaining pupils capture the mood of their story by good vocabulary choices, as in a description of a seagull carrying off a girl's teddy bear from the beach "struggling to fly over the waves". Many pupils use punctuation well and their awareness of writing conventions is good.
94. Throughout the school teachers capitalise on the fact that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are keen to write and are able to spell securely so they record observations in science, write instructions in design and technology and tell what happened in history. Pupils write using a joined hand by the end of Year 2, but this is generally still clumsy. By the end of Year 3 most pupils have achieved an even flow in their handwriting. In Year 3 they consolidate their knowledge of punctuation, particularly in their detailed and often amusing play scripts frequently based on traditional tales. By the time they are in Year 4, most pupils have developed an understanding of a wide and varied range of writing compositions. They are competent writers of informative report writing, and their descriptive writing, including poetry, is noticeably of a high quality. Their teacher has been very successful in developing in pupils an interest in and enjoyment of descriptive and figurative language. As they write, pupils discuss words with each other, ponder on which word fits best or go to the thesaurus to widen their choice. Their ideas are mature and they work hard to express them as well as they can. A particularly good example was a poem on darkness in which the pupil hinted at fear with lines like: "Soon the silver stars would imprison the moon and it would get darker and darker."
95. In a writing lesson in which pupils wrote their own description of the wild night Grace Darling and her father rescued the stricken sailors, every pupil was absorbed in their own creative process. In the evaluation of their achievements all listened with interest to each other's efforts, gave praise or offered supportive criticism and constructive

advice.

96. Teaching is never less than good. There was very good teaching across the school and one excellent lesson. Good strategies, methods and organisation are uniformly used throughout the school. Teachers endeavour to make English a lesson which pupils enjoy and which stimulates them creatively. Assessment is thorough and is consistently used well to ensure that pupils' skills are systematically improved. Marking is generally used well although in a few instances teachers do not make sufficient suggestions on how to improve. The only aspect that is not developed as well as others is spelling. Pupils make satisfactory and often good progress with spellings but teachers' methods whilst similar are not totally consistent and the co-ordinator has noted this as an area in which there needs to be improvement. Good use is made of work done at home and the organisation of voluntary reading helpers is good. Classroom assistants and those staff helping pupils with special educational needs are well trained and effective. During whole class sessions however, in some cases, classroom assistants are not always used to the best advantage. They are not fully involved in the lesson during the introduction stage and some teachers do not take the opportunity of using their skills to support slower learners or to assess pupils' participation.
97. The co-ordinator has been instrumental in improving the subject so significantly since the time of the last inspection. Thorough monitoring, hard work and a determination to succeed, with the support of the governors has resulted in the standards now seen.

MATHEMATICS

98. The tests and assessment results at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 indicate that overall the standard is above that in schools nationally and is also above that in similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the required standard, level 2, is high at 97 per cent and the percentage of those who attained the higher level, level 3, was above the national average. The attainment of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1 is such that pupils are set to maintain the high standards of previous years. At the end of Key Stage 1, national results have been above the national average for the past four years. These results indicate that the concerns of the previous inspection team in January 1999 were not supported by the results in the summer term.
99. The results of the non-statutory National Curriculum tests for eight and nine-year-olds are above the expected level in mathematics for pupils of their age and some pupils have already attained level 4, the expected level for pupils at the age of eleven. Pupils learn well and make good progress at both key stages. The rate of progress in lessons across the school has been maintained or improved since the indication that it was too slow at the time of the last inspection. For those pupils capable of higher attainment the increased challenge that has raised standards for all pupils has had a very marked impact and for those pupils, learning is very good and their progress is rapid. Since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy the teaching of skills for mental mathematics has improved. Teachers undertake very rapid strategies for developing pupils' skills in mental mathematics, not just in mental arithmetic but in problem solving activities. Pupils enjoy this work and delight in breaking speed records whilst maintaining a high level of accuracy.
100. Across the school, pupils are making rapid gains in number manipulation and in their understanding and instant recall of number bonds and multiplication tables. They are

increasing their knowledge of factors, inverse operations in arithmetic and the properties of both two and three-dimensional shapes. In group work, learning for pupils of all abilities is promoted by work being carefully matched to prior attainment and by pupils' beginning to develop skills of independent learning. The classroom support staff are used sensibly to support groups and to minimise waiting time when tasks are completed as additional more difficult work is always planned and is available for individuals and groups with differing needs and abilities.

101. Pupils' developing skills in numeracy are above average at both key stages. Pupils and teachers are making good use of all possible learning opportunities and as they become more familiar with the new routines in each class rapid gains are being made. Skills in numeracy are developed and used in other lessons across the curriculum such as when calculating distances in geography and when organising and measuring lengths of materials in design and technology or recording results in science. In the lessons observed both boys and girls were seen to be working at levels above national averages. The school's ambition is to raise the standards attained by all mainstream pupils and as many as possible of those with special educational needs, to those of the high achievers. However, there is an above average number of pupils in the present class at Year 2 with identified learning difficulties and whilst the majority are learning well, this group of pupils whilst getting a great deal of support, finds some mathematical concepts very difficult.
102. The provision to support the learning for those pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers involve them fully in the introduction to new work in lessons and make sure that the work that they undertake is matched to their individual targets and to their ability and prior attainment. These pupils take their turn with others in explaining their work and findings to the class in plenary sessions.
103. Pupils' are keen to share in class activities and contribute well to oral sessions. They are industrious and concentrate on the set activity and collaborate effectively in pairs or small groups. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. Very occasionally, when waiting for the teacher one or two will share a joke and need reminding of the code of behaviour but one word or look from the teacher or a timely reminder is all that is ever needed to encourage them to get on with their work.
104. The quality of teaching across the school is never less than satisfactory and is predominantly good. Teachers are confident about teaching mathematics. The scheme of work is sufficiently broad to provide well for all pupils whatever their abilities. Work is planned beyond that expected for nine-year-old pupils so that skills are well honed and opportunities are provided to expand learning not only in a linear fashion but also in a wide range of enriching activities to ensure that all knowledge is secure. All teachers organise their classroom and pupils effectively and make good use of all available time. Resources are used well to support planned learning objectives and the support staff are increasingly involved in the planning stage and are used well. Opportunities for assessment and evaluation are built into all lesson plans and the evaluation at the end of each lesson is used to inform planning for future work. Work in class and in books is almost always marked sensitively with appropriate constructive criticism and justifiable praise, and time is planned to ensure that all corrections are completed. The marking policy is well structured and is working well but it is not yet consistent across all classes. The school recognises this and has a review date planned to consider any changes that are required. The benefits of the good teaching to the standards achieved are that pupils are becoming increasingly confident in the skills required to manage their own learning. The

improvement in this aspect of pupils' work since the last inspection is clear and is beginning to show good results but as yet there needs to be even more opportunities created in order to get increased gains across the school.

105. The curriculum is balanced and relevant and is supported by the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and a sensible manageable scheme that is promoting good continuity and progression. The school has a well organised review programme in place to monitor the effectiveness of all materials before committing too much to any one commercial scheme. Teachers support one another very effectively and for those pupils who are capable of higher attainment there is close liaison with staff at the middle school to which most pupils will transfer at the end of this academic year. The curriculum is well balanced and fully meets all statutory requirements. The school is now looking to increase elements of problem solving from a range of sources to extend the pattern where pupils are expected to think of more than one solution to a task and to evaluate the best method through comparison and discussion with others.
106. Work is assessed regularly at the end of lessons and each half-term. Following the completion of sections of work and the results of statutory and voluntary testing, the analysis of the results of this work form an important part of the next planning stage. The plotting of pupils' progress towards planned targets is having positive results in all classes. Teachers in all classes are increasingly aware of the part that they play in enabling pupils to reach their personal targets at the end of their time in the school. Teachers are working effectively together to promote a continuous path from the start of school to the day that a pupil moves to a new school.
107. The leadership offered by the co-ordinator is good. He is very knowledgeable and keen to promote a shared vision and enthusiasm for mathematics with colleagues throughout the school. He works with colleagues and the headteacher in the planning of work in the long- and medium-term and shares with the headteacher the monitoring of planning files and samples of pupils' work. Opportunities to monitor the work of colleagues have been part of the successful improvement programme. The process is considered to have been very worthwhile and will continue to have a place in the continued review of practice in the school although mathematics will not be a high priority subject in the coming year.
108. Since the last inspection the school has maintained the overall above average results and has increased the numbers of pupils attaining higher levels. Pupils use their skills in information technology in many mathematics lessons for reviewing and displaying data and for extrapolating from results gathered what an expected outcome might be should some part of the data be changed. Mathematics has had a high profile in the school's plans and there is a strong commitment to maintain vigilance to ensure above average results in the future.

SCIENCE

109. In 2000 teachers assessed standards as well above average compared to those of other schools nationally. Over the last three years standards have been similar. No pupil has fallen below the expected level in that time and a good percentage achieve above.
110. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 and in Year 4 is well above average. Pupils make good progress, and sometimes very good progress through each year

group. Pupils who learn more slowly make the same good progress as others, and often achieve at a higher standard than others. This is because teachers provide investigations or practical problems to solve; pupils who learn more easily from doing or touching succeed in these lessons. Standards are much higher than at the time of the last inspection. Attainment then was found to be average, but this was not borne out by the assessments at the end of the year. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' ability to use investigation and enquiry skills was limited. This has completely changed. It is because teachers promote pupils' thinking and questioning during well planned and well structured activities that pupils make such good progress.

111. In Year 1 pupils worked with the teacher to test which materials would keep a small teddy bear dry. The group counted out the number of drops of water in their test together. Higher attaining pupils already understanding that the drops must be the same number to make the test fair. All pupils learnt that some material was waterproof and some was not and consolidated their understanding of how to classify material according to its properties. There was much excitement in Year 2 because the pupils had been thinking about their current investigation before the lesson. They wanted to know which block of ice would melt first? The learning during this lesson was good for all pupils because the teacher had asked them to think for themselves. By the end of Year 2, pupils have begun to understand the scientific methods of collecting evidence, making a prediction as to what an outcome might be and comparing the results at the end of an investigation, appropriately supported by an adult.
112. By the end of Year 4, many pupils are able to set about investigations themselves. Their understanding of a fair test is well established and all are able to take on the challenge of solving the problems set by their teacher. For example, after studying the nature of solids, liquids and gases they were able to solve the problem of how to make a cylindrical candle square. All correctly decided to melt the wax, but their final solutions differed, some using a mould, others deciding to shape the wax while it was malleable.
113. Teachers' expectations of how pupils record their findings, and to what degree of accuracy, increases appropriately through the year groups. In Year 2 the teacher guides their recording and drawings, and measurements are not always accurate. In Year 3, when the class measured a shadow several times during the day to check how it lengthened and changed position, pupils constructed their own diagrams and wrote down the measurements to the nearest millimetre. In Year 4, the teacher developed the learning pupils had done when in Year 2 on electricity. Pupils were given the problem of constructing a circuit in which lights could be on in one part whilst off in another. They recorded their solutions with circuit diagrams using conventional symbols and lines drawn with rulers. Not all achieved the solution to the problem but they tackled it purposefully and all learnt how to propose an answer and test it out.
114. Teaching is always satisfactory and often good or very good. Occasionally teachers over-estimate how much pupils can achieve and on occasions uninspiring worksheets are used. However, both faults are infrequent. Planning effectively makes use of the new national scheme and builds on pupils' previous knowledge through accurate assessments. Marking is always thorough, giving praise appropriately and asking for more effort when necessary. In Year 4, in particular, marking makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning by posing challenging questions.

115. Science is generally the starting point for many topics or is used in conjunction with other subject to develop and extend learning. Skills in reading and writing and mathematics are used and benefit from work in science. Pupils use information technology to find information, to present their work and in sorting and presenting data.
116. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator has monitored lesson plans, the teaching of science and pupils work. The curriculum committee has supported the school by evaluating this work. The school would benefit from more extensive resources to cover all of the work in the programmes of study. These are sufficient and pupils use them well, but the teachers could plan more freely with additional resources.

ART AND DESIGN

117. Very few lessons were observed during the inspection. However, there was sufficient evidence to show that standards at both key stages have been improved since the previous inspection. The reason is because the schemes of work have been improved and all teachers have a wider understanding of the subject than they had at the time of the previous inspection. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment levels are overall in line with those normally expected for pupils of this age. By the end of Year 4 in Key Stage 2 they are above average overall with some very good quality work being produced by some pupils, particularly in Year 4. Throughout school, pupils make good progress in the acquisition of skills and in their understanding of art as an expressive medium. This includes all pupils including those with special educational needs. The work seen across the school shows good coverage of the range of two-dimensional media and techniques. During the inspection there was less evidence of three-dimensional work although this is represented adequately in displays and in the teachers' planning.
118. During Key Stage 1, pupils have a wide variety of experiences in two and three dimensions. Observational drawings are begun in Year 1 and pupils are encouraged to look closely at themselves and the world around them. Pupils have opportunity to experiment with the effects made by pens, pencils and pastels but using a limited range of papers. Pupils show good control of drawing implements. The standard of the finished products is most frequently good. Pupils work is valued and is mounted carefully and displayed with pride. The work of well-known artists is used in all age groups as a starting point. Pupils in the Year 1 and Year 2 classes create their paintings using a painting program on the computer.
119. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their skills and extend their knowledge and understanding. In the class for pupils in Year 4 the class had experimented with painting in the style of George Seurat, Monet and Van Gogh and enjoyed discussing which method or technique they preferred.
120. Good standards of observational drawing were seen in the class for pupils in Year 4 and work using the principles of perspective were so good that the standard was better than that frequently found in classes at Year 6. They used the presented materials well producing very good work that led the eye to distant points or to the most important part of a room with great skill. Pupils were able to reflect on and evaluate their own work, looking for ways to improve. The pupils' observational drawings of various objects showed good attention to detail and the confident use of pencil line and shading to represent accurately what they saw. Art from different countries and times is used to help pupils to understand their own and other cultures. A wide range of pictures encouraged pupils to study detail and technique and to

question the information presented. This was seen to good effect in an art/history lesson at Key Stage 1. Using the Internet, some pupils have begun to research well-known artists and write passages in appreciation of favourite artists and their paintings. Pupils observe lines, colour and detail such as “the light makes a pattern on the floor.” They record their personal responses to artists’ work.

121. The teaching observed in the few lessons seen was at least good and in one lesson was very good. It was all well planned with clear learning objectives and effective use was made of questioning to promote these. Techniques were well taught in both of the practical lessons. In addition, the interest and confidence shown by all teachers encouraged pupils to perform well and they made good progress. Pupils were stretched as additional challenges to improve their drawing techniques were added at each review point and planned additional and more difficult work enabled more talented artists to increase the scope of the set tasks. The knowledge of the teacher at Key Stage 2, the co-ordinator is greater than that normally found in the primary phase and she inspired pupils to attain a level of expertise that many thought impossible at the start of the lesson.
122. In lessons, pupils were always interested and involved in their work, showing good concentration. Pupils of all ages and abilities were keen to experiment and develop their own ideas. Their positive attitudes had a beneficial effect on the progress they made.
123. Art is led and co-ordinated very efficiently and the scheme of work meets National Curriculum requirements and enables teachers to ensure that all pupils’ skills are developed. There are at present no formal assessment procedures but the subject leader monitors provision by evaluating teachers’ half-termly planning and keeps a check on standards by examining pupils’ finished work. Samples of this are maintained in a portfolio where it is graded against national curriculum requirements. Teachers sometimes work together in shared projects so that skills might be shared and the talents of individual pupils observed and supported to the best advantage. Work from all year groups is presented in displays around the school. The school works hard to celebrate pupils’ achievements as well as using work to create an attractive and stimulating environment for learning.
124. Resources are adequate but are far from generous as the budget for art has been small whilst other subjects have been given greater prominence. The co-ordinator checks that there are no obvious gaps in provision but has an extensive list of desirable additional resources that would enable pupils to make informed choices for themselves rather than just complete directed tasks.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

125. At the last inspection no judgement was made on the standards of the pupils’ work. Teachers were not planning sufficiently well and the school was asked to improve planning for this subject. Good improvement has been made and standards are now average by the time pupils are seven and at nine when they leave the school. The school’s thorough monitoring of subjects by co-ordinators, supported ably by governors has been instrumental in improving standards.
126. Teachers in Year 1 and 2 plan effectively so that designing, making and evaluating are taught in conjunction with each other and in consequence all pupils improve their skills and knowledge satisfactorily in both classes. By the time pupils are seven, they have developed a good understanding of the need to plan before making, for example,

a model vehicle. "We all talked about what we wanted to make." explained a pupil who was proud of his well-assembled model of a tank. A higher attaining pupil added, "we had to draw plans and decide what to use". Pupils' skills in cutting, measuring and joining are what are generally expected for this age. For instance, pupils cut out card evenly, and can fix on additional pieces using sticky tape. Teachers display pupils' models and their plans and designs so that pupils know that their efforts have been recognised. They are happy to point out the models others have done well. All agreed that the model tank was best. One average attaining pupil said that she wished she had used different colours when painting her vehicle which was bright blue throughout; she understood evaluation and was mature enough to point out what needed to be improved.

127. In Years 3 and 4 teachers appropriately increase the time spent on the initial research for a project and this has the benefit of providing pupils with a solid basis of knowledge before they start their own designs. For example, in Year 3 pupils learnt about healthy foods in science and gathered information before they designed a sandwich. In Year 4, pupils studied Indian material and traditional Indian patterns in some depth before planning a stencil or printing block for their own fabric design. Teachers help pupils locate information from various sources including library reference material and the Internet. Teaching is enthusiastic and well organised, as in the very good lesson seen in Year 3 when pupils made the sandwiches they had designed the previous week. Very good relationships, together with careful organisation ensured that this much anticipated lesson provided not only good learning but also enjoyment for all. The sandwiches were amazingly different and varied in their appeal, which the children noticed and shared well with each other, no one objecting to any friendly criticism.
128. Pupils make good progress in all classes but the scheme of work is new and in common with most schools, pupils have not had sufficient opportunities in the past to develop skills at the same good rate as at present. Those pupils who learn more slowly than others gain confidence in their skills because teachers' expectations are high for all pupils. On occasions lower attaining pupils make better models or artefacts than others do and teachers are quick to use these opportunities for promoting their self-esteem.
129. The subject is well led. Monitoring of teaching and planning has been effective. There are satisfactory areas for pupils to carry out practical tasks in a safe and appropriate working environment, although more opportunities for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 to select and use some materials independently would be beneficial to their progress, and on occasions provide a resource for those pupils who need to consolidate learning through practical activity.

GEOGRAPHY

130. Only a small amount of geography was seen during the week of the inspection. Additional evidence was obtained from a scrutiny of pupils' work, wall displays, teachers' planning and in discussions with staff and pupils. The quality and range of work in books, in the assessment portfolios and knowledge and understanding explained and described by groups of pupils, indicates that attainments and progress by the end of Year 2 and in Year 4 are overall similar to those expected. This maintains the standards identified at the time of the previous inspection.
131. In Key Stage 1 pupils develop an awareness of the local area by naming places they

passed on their way to school. They can contrast the differences between a quiet road and a busy one. Pupils also know how to use single figure co-ordinates to identify features on a map, and can name the countries of the British Isles. They know the cardinal points of the compass and that there are different transport systems, such as the motorway system. By the time pupils leave the school they progress to a more advanced study of their local area. In Year 4 pupils can plan routes to a particular destination on a large-scale map. They can use a key to help make the choice of route easier to plan. Pupils know that the United Kingdom is part of Europe, and Europe is a continent. Pupils also have an understanding of the different seasons of the year and the weather associated with it.

132. In the one geography lesson observed the teaching seen was judged to be very good. Teachers' files indicate that all lessons are well planned, with work well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers' knowledge helps pupils develop positive attitudes towards the subject. In a small group pupils enjoyed discussing their work and explaining what they know about their village and the wider environment. From the work in books and folders it is clear that the subject makes a significant contribution to the development of literacy and numeracy in the school and is well supported by pupils' use of information technology. Pupils are encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills, along with vocabulary associated with human and physical geography. The use of co-ordinates in Years 2 and 4 also makes a significant contribution to the development of mathematics in the school. For example, in the Year 3 class, pupils were researching weather in different parts of the world very well using information from the Internet. Work comparing their village and locality with villages in India and Africa is frequently undertaken as a whole school project when a multi-disciplinary approach brings in art, design and technology, cultural awareness as well as literacy and numeracy. Teachers assess pupils' work by collecting work and comparing it with marked samples that have agreed attainment levels. The process is manageable and is a useful guide as to how pupils are progressing towards their set goals. Geography makes a positive contribution to the pupils' moral, social and cultural development.
133. The subject is very well led and managed by a very enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who has had some time allocated to support the work of colleagues in their classrooms. This has helped to maintain the profile of geography around school at a time of change when some foundation subjects have been given reduced status in some places. The co-ordinator's skills and ability to enthuse pupils are evident in displays about the school. There is a clear policy and a comprehensive scheme of work for the subject, which have been developed from the QCA guidelines. The resources for the subject, to support teaching and learning are satisfactory and are regularly supplemented by loans from local museums.

HISTORY

134. Standards of work in history have improved markedly since the previous inspection, when they were below average. Attainment of pupils aged seven and those aged nine is now above that generally expected for pupils of their age. Pupils learn well and make good progress throughout the school.
135. Teaching is good. By the age of seven pupils have developed a keen interest in the past because teachers have presented information in a lively and stimulating way, encouraging even the youngest pupils to ask and answer questions. In consequence, during lessons pupils are attentive and enjoy learning. All seven-year-olds have a good grasp of how to order events in a person's life to match the passing of time. For

example, those pupils who learn slowly could sequence four events correctly in the life of Mary Seacole, a Jamaican born nurse working in the Crimea at the time of Florence Nightingale. Higher attaining pupils could write a simple life story of the nurse. Sensitive but thought provoking questions by the teacher helped pupils to think about why Florence Nightingale was much better known than Mary Seacole. It was clear from their responses that some were beginning to understand that there could be differences between real life and recorded facts. Teachers use resources well, often obtaining artefacts that give pupils a real feel of life in the past. This effectively develops the learning of all, including those who learn more slowly. A realistic adaptation of the house play area in Year 1 to a living room, circa 1920, was much enjoyed by a six-year-old pupil energetically beating a carpet with an old cane beater while two others 'cooked a meal' on an 'open range'. All were enjoying the experience and consolidating their knowledge and learning well.

136. In Year 3 and Year 4, pupils' knowledge and learning continues to develop at a good rate. This is because teachers plan well, incorporating historical enquiry and interpretation into the pupils' study of different historical periods. On occasions, teachers use worksheets which are not very exciting and pupils tend to fill them in diligently rather than with enthusiasm. More often, work is based on finding the answer to a question and this gets a much better response from pupils. For example, in Year 3 pupils thought about why the Romans were stronger than the Celts. One pupil whose work was of a high standard described the marching formation of the Roman army and compared it to the disorder of the Celtic advance. By the age of nine pupils refer to numerous periods of history and have begun to use dates to delineate them. Their knowledge of the periods they have studied is good and enables them to think about, and write about differences in the lives of people living at the same time. Pupils in Year 4, asked to choose whether they would prefer to be a child living in Ancient Sparta or Greece, generally chose Greece and gave well argued reasons for this. Teachers assess pupils' work well; using the school's agreed procedures and work is marked to help pupils improve their learning. Information technology is used by pupils competently as a source of information, to present work and to sort data. Pupils are encouraged to use the library. Skills in literacy and numeracy benefit from the work pupils do in history.
137. The subject leader, who is new to the post, is enthusiastic about the subject. She has continued the work of checking and reviewing the planning, which the school has carried out over the last year. She has a good plan of action to develop the resources available to the school by establishing links with local museums.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

138. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are satisfactory and are in line with those expected by pupils at the age of seven and nine. There are a few pupils who have a computer at home who display skills, understanding and knowledge well above the expectations for pupils at the ages of seven and nine. Across the strands of the programmes of study, the pupils make good progress in the acquisition of the skills and knowledge as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in the same way as other pupils in their class.
139. By the age of seven, the pupils are confident in the use of the mouse, clicking on appropriate icons to open programs and to select options. They use simple word processing packages and create printed work of good quality. They enter text, amend it using the return, backspace and cursor keys. They follow instructions to open specific files and most readily save their work to disk. Pupils in Year 1 learn how to

use a graph plot program to create simple pictograms to represent data from a class survey on the class's favourite foods. By the age of seven, the pupils enter data to a simple spreadsheet and present the information as bar charts or pie charts. The majority of the pupils are well prepared to continue and expand their work into the next phase of learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are keen to program the remote control vehicle to move around the room, park and then return to the sender or deliver a message to a friend. Pupils in Year 4 develop their work on control mechanisms using Logo to enter a series of instructions to make geometric shapes and apply the 'build' facility to use the basic shape to create patterns. Throughout the school the pupils can use the computers for a wider range of purposes. Most pupils enjoy using paint programs to recreate designs they have made in art lessons; using the copy and paste tools to create repeated patterns. They can word process simple documents, are becoming familiar with the range of presentational options available such as word art, different fonts, size of print and how colour can be used to give impact.

140. The pupils are enthusiastic when using the computers. They enjoy using the hardware both in the classrooms and in the other computer banks. They concentrate well and persevere. They work well in pairs and threes sharing the equipment well. They give and accept advice and help from each other and by the end Year 4 are developing appropriate levels of independence when using the computer as a tool for other subjects.
141. The teaching of information and communications technology is good and the improved facilities, whilst not totally ideal enable teachers to undertake class teaching allowing pupils to work on set tasks over time. The picture is very much better than at the time of the previous inspection when teachers were considered to lack confidence and when pupils appeared to make only slow progress. All teachers now have sufficiently good levels of skills and understanding to enable them to plan and teach lessons in which the pupils make good progress in their learning. Additional teacher training is booked for the time when the next phase of the programme for improving the provision for the subject is complete. All teachers' approach to planning and teaching is thorough and well organised. Lessons have clear objectives and direction and all staff demonstrate good management and control so that the pupils are clear about what is expected of them in terms of behaviour and tasks. Teachers are well placed to raise the quality of the work further.
142. The last inspection found that standards were unsatisfactory. They are now at least satisfactory and there has been good improvement. The subject co-ordinator has given positive and very effective leadership to the subject in developing the facilities available to teachers and pupils so that they are now good. The subject makes effective contributions to the development of both literacy and numeracy skills and it is used to support other subjects, for example, as a research tool for history, art and literacy and as a way of presenting work in geography, art, English and history. The current scheme of work fulfils statutory requirements as the co-ordinator has developed and implemented a new scheme based on the QCA recommendations. The procedures for regular structured assessment of skills is detailed but is manageable and allows easy access to areas of strengths and places for further development. It is a straightforward process to check how pupils are making progress. Pupils of all ages and abilities have equal access to the subject.

MUSIC

143. The attainment of pupils aged seven is above that generally expected. There was no

music lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, and so no judgement could be made except with regard to their work in singing. Standards in singing for eight-year-olds and nine-year-olds are similar to what is generally expected.

144. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good and as a result pupils apply their musical knowledge well as they perform or listen to others. Lessons are planned well. Teachers provide a good range of activities. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 1 the teacher taught pupils about the musical pattern of a call and response. They listened to examples, rehearsed and tried out patterns for themselves and happily performed. As the lesson proceeded she was able to draw their attention to the texture of sound which pupils began to identify using the terms "thin" or "thick". All pupils learnt more about the texture of music in the lesson and gained in the maturity of their performances even though on occasions some became over-excited. In Year 2 the pupils' learning about the texture of sound was developed further in a good lesson which used chanting as a basis for building up a group composition. In this lesson, pupils had the freedom to improvise and improve their pieces independently. Good management of a lively and necessarily noisy session by the teacher and classroom assistant ensured that pupils worked creatively and productively throughout and so developed their skills at a good rate.
145. Pupils are taught singing in hymn practice. The older pupils sing tunefully and respond to the high expectations of the teacher in achieving, in the main a good melodic interpretation and good diction. However, although the pace of the session was maintained, some opportunities for learning were missed. There was not a sufficient contrast of mood provided by the style of the selected hymns. Some of the phrases were difficult and in consequence some pupils wavered from the melody line. Because the piano was too intrusive this was not recognised and pupils were not given the necessary additional coaching and the chance to improve. The teacher leading the session for the younger pupils confidently sang the melody line and this increased all of the pupils' attention and listening skills. The songs were varied and in the main a good choice, although one was rather too challenging for the reception children and for some of the older pupils who had lesser musical skill. Clearly pupils enjoy singing when they come together as a whole school and they all strive to participate to the best of their ability.
146. The co-ordinator has been newly appointed. Her predecessor established an appropriate scheme and ensured that teachers' planning was securely based on the National Curriculum. Resources are adequate, but the need to develop a greater range including adding more instruments from other cultures is identified in the school development plan. The choir of twenty five pupils from Years 3 and 4 meets once a week and pupils achieve a high level of musical performance in their singing.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

147. Standards achieved by pupils by the age of seven are in line with what is expected in most schools nationally and by the time they are nine pupils' standards are above average and exceed those found in most schools. Standards in the infant department have improved since the previous inspection and the good standards found at that time in the classes in the junior department have been maintained.
148. For pupils in Years 1 and 2 the lessons observed included dance and gymnastics as well as team games. All pupils pay careful attention to safety issues. They know that physical activity promotes good health and they are aware of the need to change into suitable clothing. Pupils develop and practise a range of ways to achieve and hold a

balance and explore ways in which to send and receive a ball. They improve their skills well and develop methods to create balances alone and in pairs. Pupils work confidently and show good control as they balance their weight and hold the position.

149. Pupils at Key Stage 2 were observed only in gymnastics but a full curriculum is incorporated into the scheme of work. Pupils continue to improve and develop their skills and become aware of the importance of warming up and cooling down. They sustain vigorous activity easily for an extended period of time. In Year 4 pupils improve and refine skills of balance, finding spaces and working collaboratively with partners and other team members. Throughout the key stage, as seen in lessons pupils have well-developed skill and accuracy in ball games when they dodge, aim, mark and weave. Pupils in Year 4 demonstrate good body control and have a good awareness of their space as they combine together to sequence rolling, travelling, balancing and landing using both the floor and tall apparatus linked with balance beams. The attainments in one lesson were better than those normally found for nine-year-old pupils but the work was spoiled by a noisy atmosphere that detracted from the skilled performance. Pupil's understanding of good body position and their evaluative skills were in contrast precise and pertinent. They were very observant of even tiny details and offered and accepted supportive criticism so well it was hard to believe that they were so young. Pupils throughout the school have a good sense of fair play and participate well in pairs and groups. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs achieve successfully in physical education.
150. The quality of teaching is good at both Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2. Teachers in all classes manage pupils well and they have a good knowledge and understanding of physical education for the age and ability of the pupils they teach. They plan lessons carefully; making sure there is a good balance in explanation, demonstration and practical activity for trial and improvement. Teachers use demonstrations effectively to promote learning and they encourage pupils to compare quality in movement. Teachers group pupils well and make sure that they compete enthusiastically, display good sporting behaviour and follow safety procedures carefully. Lessons have a good pace and pupils are encouraged to work hard.
151. The leadership and management of physical education are good. The school currently uses an effective and well established scheme of work and is using this for guidance and direction to ensure continuity and progression between classes. Resources are adequate but some are heavy and far from new and whilst still safe will need to be replaced in the coming years. They are used to good effect in all lessons.
152. The staff take care to check that all pupils handle equipment safely and care for resources well. The accommodation is satisfactory, although the hall is small for a full class of junior pupils working at capacity. Teachers monitor pupils' performance and progress, using agreed criteria although there is no formally recognised school approach to assessment and recording.