

INSPECTION REPORT

WELLINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wellington, Hereford

LEA area: Herefordshire

Unique reference number: 116745

Headteacher: Mrs G L McFarlane

Reporting inspector: Hugh Protherough
8339

Dates of inspection: 18th – 21st June 2001

Inspection number: 214564

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Wellington
Hereford
Herefordshire

Postcode: HR4 8 AZ

Telephone number: 01432 830264

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Perridge

Date of previous inspection: 28th June – 2nd July 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8339	Hugh Protherough	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Information and communication technology Religious education Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9510	Christine Murray-Watson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1938 7	Mari Powell	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, English Music Art and design Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
2754 1	John Collins	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Science History Geography	How well does the school care for its pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a small primary school with 184 pupils on roll comprising of 96 boys and 88 girls all of whom are of white ethnicity. There are seven classes with an average size of 26 pupils, but the current Year 4 class is much larger. The school serves an area that is socially mixed, but where the vast majority of families have at least one parent in employment. Thus the number of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average at 3.8 per cent. Almost all of the children entering the school have had some sort of pre-school experience and their attainment on entry covers the full range, but is generally above average. This is further reflected in the proportion of pupils on the school's register for special educational needs, which at 13 per cent is below the national average. There is one pupil with a statement of special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is increasing steadily in its effectiveness. Standards have risen to be above the national average at the end of both key stages in English, mathematics and science. The quality of education provided is good because the teachers make their lessons interesting, challenging and fun. As a result, the children are eager learners who work hard and make the most of their time at school. The headteacher's determined leadership has brought about some significant improvements in the school's performance, but the management responsibilities now need to be shared more widely amongst a willing staff team. The school's income is above average, but the approaches for its strategic management are weak. Therefore it does not yet offer satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved and are now above average at the end of both key stages.
- The headteacher now monitors the quality of education and the standards achieved by the pupils with far greater rigour.
- There is much exciting and demanding teaching that encourages the pupils to work hard and achieve well especially in design and technology.
- The educational experiences offered in the Foundation Stage are of high quality.
- The management and provision for pupils with special educational needs as well as the higher attainers are good.
- The children are polite and friendly and generally behave very well in lessons and around the school.
- The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

What could be improved

- The school's approaches to strategic planning and the use made of its annual delegated budget.
- The subject co-ordinators need more opportunities to exercise their full management responsibilities.
- The teachers' planning for the subjects of the National Curriculum requires greater coherence and consistency.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1999 and was deemed to have serious weaknesses in the quality of education it provided for its pupils. **This is no longer the case because the school has made good improvement in the last two years.** Standards have risen in English, mathematics and science, and are now above average at the end of both key stages. The quality of the teaching is much improved and of far better quality. For example, the teachers know their pupils well, and make better use of test and assessment data to ensure that the tasks they set are closely matched to the children's abilities. They provide more regular opportunities for practical and investigative work in mathematics and science, and the school's new computer suite has increased the teachers' confidence in information and communication technology and consequently to higher standards achieved by the pupils. The headteacher has a much-improved oversight of the work of the school because she checks the quality of the teaching and the standards of the children's work. The children's behaviour is now very good. The next step for the school is to develop a clearer vision for its long-term development and a strategic plan that sets out a manageable and measurable programme for continuing improvement.

STANDARDS

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

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

The table shows that in last year's tests, the pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 achieved results that were above the national average in mathematics and broadly average in English and science. However, when compared with the results of pupils from similar schools, their results in mathematics were below average and well below average in English and science. This occurred because there were more pupils with special educational needs last year, and it was only in mathematics that the proportion of pupils who exceeded the expected levels was greater than the national average.

Although the rate of improvement in the school's results has previously lagged behind the national trend, the inspection findings show that this year the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels has risen significantly and is now clearly above average in English, mathematics and science. This year's realistic targets are likely to be exceeded. Although the analysis of previous test data suggests that on average the boys have performed slightly better than the girls, the inspection evidence indicates that both boys and girls achieve appropriately in relation to their prior levels of attainment.

This year's test results at the end of Key Stage 1 are not as high as the very strong performance of 2000, but nevertheless standards in reading, writing and mathematics continue to be above

the national average. Throughout the school, the quality of the pupils' work in design and technology continues to exceed the expected levels.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The children are enthusiastic about school. They work hard and speak intelligently about their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in the vast majority of lessons is very good. The pupils are polite, considerate and helpful to visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The pupils are eager to accept responsibility and to carry out simple duties around the school.
Attendance	Good. Above average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching at the school has improved considerably in both quality and consistency and is now good overall. During the course of the inspection, 4 per cent of the lessons seen were judged excellent, 36 per cent were very good, 40 per cent good, 18 per cent satisfactory and 2 per cent [one lesson] was unsatisfactory.

The teaching is strongest in the Foundation Stage where an experienced and knowledgeable teacher uses her very good classroom management skills to ensure a wide range of interesting, challenging and practical activities suitable for children of this age. Throughout the school, the teaching of literacy and numeracy is good and reflects the curriculum outlined in the national strategies for these subjects. The teachers' subject knowledge is secure and there is a depth of expertise in the teaching of English in Year 6. As a result, the pupils' poems and stories at the upper end of the school often reflect a style and maturity beyond their age.

The teachers strive to meet the needs of all pupils. They get to know the children well because they make good use of the information they gain from careful questioning in lessons and other assessments of their work. The learning support assistants are effectively deployed and make a significant contribution to the support of both the pupils with special educational needs and the higher-attaining pupils. The investment in a room dedicated to computers has led to a marked improvement in the teaching of information and communication technology across the curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum that is effectively supported by a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The co-ordinator, supported by well-trained assistants, has a diligent and thorough approach that helps the pupils to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Not applicable.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision the pupils' moral and social development is good and that for their cultural and spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good procedures that successfully ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pupils.

The move from Foundation Curriculum to National Curriculum studies is managed very well and includes various interesting, appropriate and relevant experiences. The school is aware that the next step is to improve the quality of the medium-term planning for the National Curriculum so that it sets out more clearly what the children will learn each year as they move through the school. There has been considerable improvement in the way that the school now uses the information gained from test results and other assessment data to keep track of the children's progress. The school has satisfactory links with parents, the majority of whom work closely with the school to support their children's education. This partnership is particularly strong in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher has successfully improved many aspects of the management of the school, but more needs to be done to enable other senior staff and the subject co-ordinators to exercise the wider management responsibilities they are keen to develop.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The annual report to parents that omits details of the school's income, but in all other respects the governors fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The effective systems for monitoring standards and the quality of education are not yet secure in all aspects of school improvement.
The strategic use of	Unsatisfactory. The school is not making full use of its annual

resources	delegated budget and the principles of best value are not yet being applied.
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The lack of a proper strategic plan means that the school is carrying forward a large amount of money each year without a clearly defined and agreed explanation of how it should be spent. The school has a good number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. The accommodation benefits from the range of community facilities attached to the school. The classrooms are attractively displayed. The levels of educational resources are generally satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school. • The teaching has improved considerably and so the children find lessons interesting and make good progress in their work. • The teachers expect the children to work hard and do their best. • Behaviour is good and the children are given lots of opportunities to accept responsibility and develop a mature approach to life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of information provided by the school about the curriculum and pupil progress. • The educational partnership between home and school. • The range of extra-curricular activities.

The many informal conversations with parents during the inspection revealed a strong support for the school and recognition of recent improvement that reflects the positive views above. The inspectors judge that taken overall the school provides an adequate amount of information about its curriculum and the pupils' progress. The range of extra-curricular activities provided is very good for a school of this size. The links between home and school continue to develop and are strongest in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. At the time of the previous inspection standards in English and mathematics were below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2. Despite the weaknesses identified in investigative work in science throughout the school, standards were described as average. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) were unsatisfactory throughout the school. Over the past two years, the picture has improved considerably so that standards in English, mathematics and science are now comfortably above average at the end of both key stages. The work of the seven- and eleven-year-olds in information and communication technology is in line with the expected levels.
2. In last year's tests, the pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 achieved results that were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared with both the national picture and the results of pupils from similar schools. The results they achieved in mathematics were in the top five per cent of all schools nationally. This year's cohort contains fewer higher-attaining pupils, but nevertheless, the proportion of pupils working at the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics remains above average with a good proportion of the pupils working at the higher levels.
3. In the national tests of 2000, the eleven-year-old pupils achieved results that were above the national average in mathematics and broadly average in English and science. However, when compared with the results of pupils from similar schools their results in mathematics were below average and well below average in English and science. This came about because there were a larger number of pupils with special educational needs last year, and it was only in mathematics that the proportion of pupils exceeding the expected levels was greater than the national average.
4. In the three years up to and including the year 2000, the rate of improvement in the school's results at the end of Key Stage 2 lagged behind the national trend. However, the inspection findings show that this year the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels has risen considerably, especially in English and science where the percentage increase is of statistical significance. Standards are now clearly above average in English, mathematics and science and this year's realistic targets are likely to be exceeded.
5. Close analysis of the previous test data suggests that on average by the age of eleven the boys have performed slightly better than the girls. This issue was explored during the inspection process, but the team found no evidence of any gender bias within the teaching of these subjects. On the contrary, the teachers are careful to involve both boys and girls in any discussion and the teaching materials are appropriate for both groups of pupils. This judgement is supported by other findings of the inspection team such as the analysis of the pupils' work which shows that both boys and girls have made good progress this year and are achieving appropriately in relation to their prior levels of attainment.
6. The school is working successfully to tackle a further weakness recorded at the time of the previous inspection by arranging for greater challenge and support for the higher-attaining pupils. All the teachers are far better at making sure that they set work that is more closely matched to individual needs and abilities. However, in Key Stage 2 in particular,

the strategy of special projects such as that arranged for developing the pupils' writing, is paying dividends. This type of demanding work is leading to a steady improvement in the pupils' achievements and an increase in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in the national tests.

7. The level of attainment of those children entering the Reception classes varies from year to year, but taken overall is generally slightly above average. The provision for these children is very good indeed, so that by the time they start Year 1 the vast majority have already met the early learning goals set out within the national guidance and a significant proportion has exceeded them. There is particular strength in the children's personal, social and emotional and creative development as well as in their rapid acquisition of the early skills of literacy and numeracy.
8. The creation of a dedicated suite of computers has led to good improvement in the quality of the pupils' work in information and communication technology. Over the course of the inspection pupils of all ages were observed making steady progress in their lessons across the full range of activities suggested in the National Curriculum programmes of study. This rate of progress would increase still further if even greater use were made of the suite during the course of each school day.
9. Throughout the school, the quality of the pupils' work in design and technology continues to exceed the expected levels. The walls and corridors are attractively displayed with a wide range of the pupils' designs and carefully constructed models and artefacts. By the time they leave the school, most pupils are successfully developing their ideas through a series of annotated designs and then carrying out their intended construction with careful attention to achieving a good finish.
10. The quality of the pupils' work in art, music, geography, history and physical education is in line with the expected levels at the end of both key stages. Their work in religious education meets the standards suggested within the locally agreed syllabus.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The pupils have very positive attitudes to school and are actively involved in the curriculum it offers. Within the many challenging and interesting lessons, they show keen interest and are pleased with what they achieve. For example, during a mathematics lesson many of the pupils initially found it difficult to grasp the concept of division with a 'remainder'. By the end of the lesson, muted cries of 'Yes!' could be heard all round the class as the method of calculation had been grasped and the correct answers achieved. At all levels across the school, the pupils settle quickly to their work and are keen to contribute answers, make predictions and express their own views. The opportunities given to the pupils to discuss different ideas, and the respect that is paid by the teachers to what the pupils have to offer, play a major part in developing high levels of self motivation. The clear learning objectives and opportunities within lessons for the pupils to consider whether these have been grasped are another factor in raising the pupils' confidence and their active involvement in the partnership of learning. A significant number of pupils take advantage of the school's very good extra-curricular provision, much of which takes place after school hours.
12. The levels of attendance are good and above those found in primary school nationally. Instances of unauthorised absence are minimal.
13. The standards of behaviour have improved since the previous report and are now very good. The pupils are polite, prompt to follow instructions and move in an orderly and sensible way around the school. They respond well to the clear and consistently high expectations for good behaviour of both

the teaching and the midday supervisory staff. The firmly established routines for lining up on the playground at the start of the school day and at the end of playtimes enable lessons to start promptly. The very good standards of behaviour and the high levels of self-discipline that the pupils are encouraged to develop contribute to the calm and friendly learning environment within the school.

14. As the pupils move through the school, they are given the opportunity to assume increasing levels of responsibility. By the time they reach Year 6, many undertake some sort of extra role within the school, for which they can volunteer, and some pupils take on several different tasks. For instance, many become class prefects for the younger pupils, sitting with them during assemblies and bringing them in at the start of the school day. They quickly get to know their young charges and show a caring and responsible attitude towards them. This involvement of pupils with children of different ages helps to foster good relationships across the school and a deeper understanding of each other's needs. As well as assuming responsibility for some of the practical needs within the school, the older pupils are encouraged to develop the skills of independent learning. They conduct independent research in a range of subjects and projects, in design technology for example, that sometimes involve extra work being undertaken at home. In these, and in many other ways, the school is helping its pupils to develop into mature and confident individuals.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The vast improvement in the quality of the teaching lies at the heart of the school's recent success in raising standards. At the time of the last inspection, one in four lessons was judged to be unsatisfactory and now there is virtually none at all. During the course of this inspection, 4 per cent of lessons were judged excellent, 36 per cent were very good, 40 per cent good, 18 per cent satisfactory and only one lesson (2 per cent) was unsatisfactory.
16. One of the central weaknesses identified in the last inspection report was the significant amount of the poor behaviour observed in some lessons. It was attributable to unsatisfactory or poor teaching that failed to motivate or inspire the pupils. This is clearly no longer the case. In all classes, the teachers now have harmonious relationships with their pupils and make serious minded attempts to bring alive the process of learning by setting interesting and frequently challenging work. This is a major feature of the good quality of education now provided by the school.
17. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good where the experienced and knowledgeable teacher is ably assisted by a well-trained classroom assistant. Together they provide a wide range of interesting, challenging and practical activities suitable for children of this age. At the time of the inspection, most of the children were already five years old and the teacher is rightly preparing them for the early stages of the National Curriculum. For instance, she has carefully introduced modified versions of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The well-judged openings of the numeracy lessons offer a very good balance of mental mathematics mixed with the sort of hands-on practical activities vital for children of this age. The teacher is particularly skilled at making learning appear deceptively easy through a host of effective approaches that link up different aspects of the children's experiences. For example, the children have learnt the song 'One, two buckle my shoe.' They sing this with great enjoyment before the teacher then asks the children to count round the circle in turn, 'One, two, three...' but with the odd numbers being whispered, the even numbers spoken. By the end of this mental warm-up, it was evident that a significant number of these children were beginning to grasp the principle of counting on in twos.

18. The subsequent work on classifying two- and three-dimensional shapes provides still further evidence of the very good start that these children have received to their full time education. A brief game in which they took turns to describe the properties of two-dimensional shapes by feeling them in a bag was again preceded by the children's spontaneous rendition of another song. Their descriptions of the properties of squares, circles and rectangles were articulate and accurate as the remainder of the class listened intently and showing huge delight when they guessed correctly. The teacher wasted no time in extending further the children's learning by asking them to identify and then classify a number of three-dimensional shapes. A significant number of the higher-attaining pupils were able to name spheres, cones and cuboids; one child recognised the pyramid brought into class by the teacher. However, the real strength of this part of the lesson was the astute way that the teacher encouraged the children to define the properties of these shapes in new ways. One boy said, 'I can roll this sphere.' Quick as a flash the teacher asked the class if there were other shapes that could be rolled. Before long and after further discussion and experiment, the shapes were being successfully grouped into those that roll, slide or both roll and slide. A further, telling example of how this teacher is always looking to extend the children's learning and to lead them gently towards new understanding was observed at the end of this section of the lesson. She quietly showed the children how she might group the three categories of shapes inside two rather than three plastic circles by intersecting two of the circles to embrace those shapes that both slide and roll. Few pupils will have understood fully what the teacher was showing them, but it was clear from the faces of many that the seed of further learning had been sown.
19. Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, the teaching is good with around a quarter of lessons judged as either very good or excellent. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is given appropriate priority and carefully reflects the curriculum outlined in the national strategies for these subjects. In both subjects, the teachers' subject knowledge is secure. There is a particular depth of expertise in the teaching of English in Year 6. In this class, the teacher's own enthusiasm and expertise as a writer leads to plenty of exciting learning. The teacher makes the most of his wide and varied classroom experience because he selects those texts that will work well with his pupils. For instance the choice of Peter Bichsel's poem 'A table is a table,' led to animated discussion about the use of Standard English that pushed forward even further the children's understanding of the use of language in its many forms, including dialect and slang. A courteous and gentle teaching style encourages the pupils to voice their opinions and to commit their thoughts to paper. There is also a thorough approach to helping the students to craft their writing. As a result, the poems and stories of the pupils at the upper end of the school often reflect a style and maturity beyond their age. This teaching expertise is now being shared sensibly with other local schools so that groups of higher-attaining pupils are being supported in their writing as budding poets and authors.
20. At the time of the last inspection, not all the teachers had a secure knowledge of how to teach mathematics and science. There was specific weakness identified in the lack of investigative work in both subjects. This is no longer the case because the headteacher has ensured that an appropriate programme of in-service training raised the teachers' knowledge and skills in these areas. For instance, in an excellent Year 2 mathematics lesson, the teacher successfully encouraged the children to sift, sort and collate a range of information that was then presented in a block graph. In a science lesson in Year 6, the pupils' recent experiments to test the effects of exercise and rest upon their pulse rates show that they have a good understanding of some of the key principles in conducting a 'fair test'. The subsequent questioning of the inspector also revealed that the pupils have a good ability to draw sensible conclusions from the results of their tests.

21. In every class it is evident that the teachers strive to meet the needs of all their pupils by matching the work as closely as possible to their individual abilities. They are increasingly effective in achieving this because the staff is now making much better use of the information it gains from the national tests and other assessments of the pupils' work. The teachers gain further valuable information in many lessons because they have a knack of asking shrewd questions that make the children think hard and answer carefully. For instance, in a Year 1 history lesson the teacher encouraged the pupils to look closely at the differences and similarities between old and new housing by asking such questions as, 'What do you notice about this window?' and 'How do you think it might open?' These types of question encourage the children to look hard, speculate and explain their thinking in extended responses rather than simple 'Yes' or 'No' answers.
22. A further strength of the school's improvement in addressing the needs of different individuals and groups of pupils lies in the team of well-trained and effectively deployed learning support assistants.
23. These additional adults work closely with the teaching staff and make a significant contribution to the support of both the pupils with special educational needs and the higher-attaining pupils. For instance, a small group of Year 4 pupils with special educational needs who have difficulty in extracting information from a body of text were observed working very hard under the direction of a special needs assistant. Her work is effective because she knows the children's targets and in conjunction with the class teacher sets work that challenges them to read more deeply and to record their answers neatly and accurately. As a result, the pupils are making good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans. In the case of the higher-attaining pupils, another classroom assistant helps by supporting these pupils during the group work sections of literacy and numeracy lessons. This means that the teachers are able to plan suitably challenging work in the knowledge that another adult can supervise the pupils and report back what happens. Thus in a successful literacy lesson in Year 3 the higher-attaining pupils advanced their consideration of what constitutes a good book review through a well managed discussion about details such as titles, authors and genres. They also showed good understanding that a positive review of a book should whet the appetite not tell the story. The classroom assistant knew in detail what the teacher wanted to cover and her positive approach and good relationship with the group meant that these objectives were successfully met.
24. At the time of the last inspection there were weaknesses in the teachers' knowledge of information and communication technology. The sensible investment in a room dedicated to computers has led to a marked improvement in the teaching of this subject because the teachers now have greater access to reliable equipment. As a result, every class now has at least one lesson in the computer suite each week. During the course of the inspection, several lessons revealed the teachers' increasing effectiveness in helping the pupils to make appropriate use of the computers across the breadth of the National Curriculum. This was evident, for instance, when they were creating simple spreadsheets in mathematics, classifying data in science and altering text for emphasis and effect within their writing.
25. Throughout the school, the teachers make effective use of homework. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 most parents find the home/school diary provides a good level of information about how their children are getting on and is a useful record of simple tasks such as reading. The teachers in Key Stage 2 were observed setting purposeful

homework that related clearly to the work going on in class, such as that set for Year 6 following their science lesson on the effects of exercise upon pulse rate.

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

26. The school provides all its pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum relevant to their needs. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. However, the school recognises that faster progress now needs to be made to ensure that all the elements of the recently revised syllabus are put in place in a coherent and consistent way across the whole school. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage covers all the areas identified in recent national guidance. It ensures that the children are very well prepared for the start of the National Curriculum because it presents interesting and relevant experiences that prepare the children well for the transition. Many of the shortcomings identified in the last inspection in subjects such as science, geography, history and technology have been eliminated. More coherent planning, for example, in design and technology has resulted in much improved standards in Key Stage 1 and maintained the above average standards in Key Stage 2. Nevertheless, the school is well aware that further work needs to be done to ensure that in many areas the medium-term planning sets out still more clearly what children need to learn in each year as they move through the school. **This is a key issue for action.**
27. The school has successfully introduced the national strategy for teaching literacy. This has had the effect of raising attainment in English. Standards were judged to be below average in some aspects of English in the 1999 inspection, but they are now above average, partly as the result of better planning. Most aspects of the national numeracy strategy are firmly in place, but there is room for greater consistency in the planning for the teaching of mental calculation.
28. The curriculum is considerably enriched by the very good range of educational visits to places such as the Mumbles, where the pupils in Year 3 are able to study a seaside environment and compare it with inland Wellington. The local area provides a rich focus for first hand work in Key Stage 1 where the pupils study the features of their environment that make it distinctive. The older pupils go further afield to Malvern and York. Many visitors make a strong contribution to the wider curriculum. Prominent among these are the children's authors such as Ann Fine and Jan Mark who have enhanced the older pupils' enjoyment of literature. Great care is taken to ensure that the curriculum also provides valuable social experiences. For example, the extra-curricular programme in sport, where the school is very successful, enables the pupils to meet and compete with others. Even the youngest pupils extend their experiences of music and movement through an after school country-dance club. The extra-curricular activities are strong features of the curriculum.
29. The pupils' personal development benefits from a programme of health and sex education and another that deals with the uses and abuses of drugs and medicines. External agencies such as the police, the nurse and local health workers who run the 'Crucial Crew' experience, contribute usefully to what the school itself provides. There are dedicated times during the week when classes engage in 'Circle Time'. This provides opportunities for the pupils to explore a range of issues that are important to them personally. It may range from sharing thoughts and feelings about impending changes of school to issues related to the smooth running of classes or the whole school. The climate set in these sessions is supported by periods of school worship where the local vicar or senior

members of staff grasp opportunities to affirm the positive contribution the pupils make to the life of the school.

30. The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of a wide range of pupils. Those with special educational needs make good progress because appropriate work is planned for them and their needs are set out in their individual education plans. The higher-attaining pupils are catered for through the planning of more extended projects which they sometimes undertake independently and then evaluate with their teacher or learning support assistant.
31. The school enjoys good links with other schools. The liaison between the on-site nursery and the reception class is very good. There is also a full and careful programme of transfer from Year 6 to the secondary schools. It ensures that the pupils' academic and personal profile is clear to the receiving staff. Equally, within Year 6, the mature way of working engendered by the class teacher prepares the pupils very well to become students in a secondary context.
32. The school makes satisfactory provision for the spiritual and cultural development of the pupils. The provision for their moral and social development is good. There are some valuable opportunities in classrooms where the pupils reflect on beauty in language or art. School worship is a well-organised event, but does not provide sufficient opportunity for quiet reflection. The hall is devoid of visual stimulus to enhance the pupils' spiritual awareness. A candle and flowers are provided, but are under exploited as sources for reflection. In the reception class, the provision for spiritual development is strong. The school day begins with a reflective morning verse and there is a consistent effort to encourage the pupils to develop an awareness of the mystery and wonder of the natural world.
33. The provision for the pupils' moral and social development is strong. All the adults have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and make every effort to develop within them a respect for each other and their environment. The school has developed an effective policy for managing behaviour. It is consistently applied with the emphasis on positive affirmation and reward. A 'Golden Book' carries the names of pupils who make significant progress socially and academically. The adults provide very good role models for the pupils. They treat the children with respect and make it clear that they expect respect and courtesy in return. The oldest pupils, as they act as prefects, also provide good role models for the younger ones. They respond very responsibly when they undertake a number of duties that contribute to the smooth running of the school day.
34. Overall, the pupils' cultural development is sound. There are some aspects that are strong, for example, the promotion of literature and the appreciation of the aesthetic qualities of works of art. Work in religious education develops a satisfactory awareness of different world faiths and lifestyles. This will be further enhanced when the recently revised planning for religious education is consistently implemented. The pupils have good opportunities for learning about local life in the past and about the characteristics of different communities such as those of the ancient Greeks. However, their knowledge and understanding of the rich multicultural strand in present day Britain is at a very early stage of development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. This is a caring school that makes good provision for ensuring the pupils' welfare, health and safety. Effective procedures are in place to deal with the few minor accidents that

happen to pupils from time-to-time, because many of the staff, both teaching and non-teaching have had first-aid training. Such events are efficiently recorded and any potential risk reviewed. The governors have due regard to health and safety and ensure that checks are made on a regular basis. The responsibility for child protection rests with the headteacher, and there are good arrangements to ensure that the teaching staff is aware of the procedures set out within the school's policy. The headteacher and her staff take good care of the few vulnerable pupils currently attending the school so they feel valued members of the community.

36. The school has high expectations of good behaviour and there are good procedures in place to monitor and promote this. All classes have their rules and there are school systems to reward appropriate behaviour as well as academic success. The pupils have a high regard for these reward systems and are proud when they receive house points or certificates, and when they are recorded in the 'Golden Book.' These types of public recognition are helping to create a positive ethos throughout the school. During the inspection, there were very few instances of inappropriate behaviour either in classes or during morning break because there is very good supervision of the pupils. No instances of bullying were seen, and discussions with the pupils and parents indicate that this is not considered a problem at the school. However, the school has efficient systems in place to deal with this if it should ever arise.
37. The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory. Parents and carers are contacted quickly to give a reason for the pupils' absence and there are effective links with the local educational welfare services.
38. The procedures for monitoring and supporting the personal development of the pupils are good. The teachers know their pupils well as do all other adults working in the school. The school is developing its personal and social education and citizenship programme effectively, including setting aside time for the pupils to talk about their experiences. These 'Circle Time' sessions successfully help the pupils to talk confidently, share their feelings and learn to listen with sympathy. A healthy lifestyle is promoted well in lessons, and effective use is made of visiting professionals such the police and the school nurse.
39. The procedures for monitoring and supporting the attainment and progress of the pupils are much improved because the headteacher and her staff are making more effective use of the information gained from various test results and the teachers' own assessments. For instance, by tracking the performance of both individuals and groups of pupils as they move through the school, they are able to use this information to target additional support for pupils, particularly in English and mathematics. This happened when, from an analysis of the available data, it became clear that there was a need to develop writing skills across the curriculum. This was included in the school's development plan and the action taken has contributed to the rise in standards in these subjects since the last inspection.
40. The teachers know their children well and now set individual targets for improvement. This is helpful because it gives the children a good idea of what they need to aim for in the long-term. In some lessons, such as the group activities for the pupils with special educational needs, it is clear that the work they are being expected to do relates closely to the targets set out in their individual education plans. The teachers also make good use of the teaching assistants to ensure that the higher-attaining pupils are also challenged and extended in their work. On other occasions, such as Year 2 physical education or Year 6 information and communication technology, the pupils' awareness of their own learning and what they need to do to improve is enhanced by the teachers explaining the criteria against which they are going to assess the work. However, this type of approach is not yet firmly established throughout the school. Indeed, on a more fundamental level,

the school's appropriate marking policy is not implemented with any degree of consistency so that the written feedback to the pupils about how to improve their work from day-to-day varies considerably in quality.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The great majority of parents are supportive of the school and are happy with the education being provided for their children. Of those that returned the pre inspection questionnaire, a significant minority were concerned about a number points. They included the quality of information provided by the school about the curriculum and the pupils' progress, the educational partnership between home and school and the range of extra-curricular activities. The inspection evidence does not support these views to any significant degree.
42. The school provides a satisfactory level of information about the progress that the pupils are making, through formal meetings with parents and the annual written reports. However, additional meetings to give a more detailed picture of specific areas of the curriculum, such as mathematics and English, have not been held this year due to the problems associated with the outbreak of foot and mouth disease. The class teachers are available at the end of the day for informal meetings and many were seen out on the playground at the start of the day talking to parents as the children arrived. Further information about the life of the school is provided through regular, general newsletters and letters sent home by individual class teachers. There is also a homework diary for each child, which provides a further means of communication between home and school.
43. Many parents are directly involved in providing additional help for the school. Some assist during the school day, offering craft and cookery skills or hearing the children read. Others accompany school trips, help with swimming and with the annual Sports Day. There is an active Parent Teacher Association that organises a range of special events and raises valuable funds for the school. Work at home is generally well supported and there is a good take up of after school activities, even when this means that the parents have to make special arrangements to collect their children at a later time than usual. The links between home and school are strongest in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1, where the parents feel most confident in approaching the teaching staff.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The headteacher and her staff team have successfully addressed a significant number of the serious weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report. The quality of the teaching has improved considerably and, as a result, standards are rising at a faster rate. However, there remain aspects of the school's leadership and management that require urgent attention if the current improvements in the quality of education are to be sustained.
45. The headteacher took up post in 1999 with no formal training or preparation for her new role. Shortly afterwards, the school was judged to have serious weaknesses and since that time she has had to manage a significant amount of change in the teaching personnel as well as two further inspections. The school's arrangements for development planning have been almost superfluous because the agenda for school improvement has been largely determined by the action plan created in response to the lengthy list of shortcomings outlined in the first report. As a result of the successful implementation of much of this action plan, there has been significant improvement in the way that the headteacher now collates the information gained from national tests and other assessments. It is now used to ensure that the progress of the pupils is monitored thoroughly as they move through the school, and as a useful guide in curriculum planning. Moreover, the headteacher and governors have a far better oversight of the quality of

education provided at the school because there are regular checks to find out what happens in lessons.

46. The headteacher and her deputy work together successfully to manage the good provision that is made for both the pupils with special educational needs and those who are higher attainers. The special educational needs co-ordinator maintains careful records to ensure that the progress of these pupils is regularly reviewed and their parents fully informed. She supports the class teachers in drawing up individual education plans and helps to ensure that the pupil targets are reasonably precise and manageable. Both groups of pupils benefit from the effective support of their teachers who strive to ensure a suitable level of challenge in the work set in lessons. However, the sensible deployment of the well-trained learning support assistants gives an important additional depth and flexibility to the teaching team.
47. Despite these important improvements that have enabled the headteacher, staff and governors to arrive at a far more accurate evaluation of the school's performance, much remains to be achieved. For instance, the school lacks a clear vision for its future development that truly reflects the aspirations of all teachers, parents, governors and pupils. There are several worthy statements of intent, but these are neither widely shared nor understood by all the partners involved with the school.
48. The school development plan contains a host of appropriate areas for improvement for the next twelve months. However, there are far too many initiatives. It is not clear how these are going to build into a coherent programme of development over the next two to three years. Too many of the current priorities are expressed as general aspirations without enough detail about what needs to be done, what it will cost and how success will be measured and evaluated. Partly as a result of this lack of long-term, forward planning the school has amassed a significant sum of money in its delegated budget that is growing larger year by year. For instance, last year's carry forward figure exceeded £70,000. This is an unsatisfactory state of affairs because the school is not getting best value from its income. There are clearly areas of the school where this money could be usefully spent. For instance, the classroom furniture in Year 6 that is too small for the pupils and needs replacing and the educational resources in subjects such as geography and history need to be improved. **These are key issues for action.**
49. Other aspects of school management are well intentioned, but too often ineffective. The headteacher has begun to develop the role of the subject co-ordinators so that they do a good job in discussing some aspects of the teachers' planning and in checking the standards of work in classes across the school. A few help to support and evaluate the teaching. However, the effectiveness of the subject co-ordinators is limited because their role is not yet central to the day-to-day management of the school. The frantic pace of recent change in response to a heavy agenda for school improvement has led to a situation where hasty decisions are sometimes made without taking on board the views of the entire staff team. In extreme cases, this has sometimes happened without the knowledge of the relevant co-ordinator. Few co-ordinators have any appreciation of the school's financial position because they do not have to run a budget of their own; they simply make requests for purchases to the headteacher. Fortunately, the staff team remains buoyant about their work in this improving school. The next step is for the headteacher to devise ways that ensure her strong leadership extends still further the role of the subject co-ordinators so that they are more fully involved in the strategic planning for the school. **This is a key issue for action.**

50. The governing body has a secure understanding of the ways that the school has improved in recent times based on the good quality information provided by the headteacher and the regular visits of the chairman and a few other governors who live close by. With the exception of their annual report to parents that omits details of the school's income, the governors fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities.
51. The school got off to a brisk start in its introduction of Performance Management. Although the teachers' job descriptions are mostly limited to generic statements related to pay and conditions, the majority of the teachers expressed contentment with their personal targets. There are a good number of appropriately qualified and experienced teachers and support assistants on the staff team. However, it is very unusual in a school of this size to find no teacher receiving payment of an incentive allowance in return for accepting additional responsibilities, especially in a staff team with so many co-ordinators who are eager to extend their role. The governing body should consider this issue as part of its strategic plan.
52. Taken overall, the levels of educational resources are adequate for the delivery of the National Curriculum. However, throughout the inspection there was evidence of subjects where judicious expenditure might enhance further the school's provision in subjects such as English, mathematics and geography. The school's accommodation is good and enhanced by the proximity of social and sporting facilities that are shared with the local community.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The headteacher, staff and governors should now

1. Devise a long-term strategic plan that reflects the views of governors, parents, staff and pupils and includes:
 - a brisk, but sustainable programme for school improvement;
 - precise and measurable targets;
 - details of who is responsible for action and the criteria against which success will be measured;
 - the amount of money available to be spent along with details of how best value will be ensured. (Paragraph 48, 101)
2. Extend further the roles and responsibilities of the subject co-ordinators so that they:
 - understand how the development of their subject fits within the priorities of the school's long-term strategic plan;
 - continue to monitor standards;
 - develop a better oversight of the teachers' planning and the quality of the teaching across the school. (Paragraphs 49, 85)
3. Continue the review of the medium-term curriculum planning so that it sets out still more clearly what the children need to learn each year as they move through the school. (Paragraph 26)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	46
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	31	44	18	2	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	YRec – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	184
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YRec – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	24

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	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	19	9	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	19	19
	Girls	9	8	9
	Total	28	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (83)	96 (63)	100 (75)
	National	83 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	19	19
	Girls	9	9	8
	Total	28	28	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (83)	100 (93)	96 (88)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	16	18	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	12
	Girls	11	14	15
	Total	24	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (71)	76 (74)	79 (74)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	14	12
	Girls	13	16	15
	Total	26	30	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (74)	88 (71)	79 (77)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	184
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YRec– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YRec– Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	84

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
	£
Total income	377,863
Total expenditure	360,256
Expenditure per pupil	1957
Balance brought forward from previous year	53,670
Balance carried forward to next year	71,277

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	184
Number of questionnaires returned	98

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	40	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	42	49	6	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	60	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	54	16	2	1
The teaching is good.	44	51	3	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	21	50	21	5	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	34	12	6	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	38	55	4	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	23	38	30	4	5
The school is well led and managed.	28	42	12	4	14
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	34	58	4	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	47	18	3	6

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

53. The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good. This is a further improvement to the positive picture reported at the time of the previous inspection. There are 26 children in the reception class. The levels of attainment on entry vary from year to year, but are generally above average. The children are making such good progress that many have now exceeded the early learning goals identified for this stage and are working at the early levels of the National Curriculum.

Personal, social, and emotional development

54. This is an important element of the foundation curriculum and the provision is very good. The two adults responsible for the reception class ensure that the children settle quickly and become confident to tackle the exciting new challenges they face. Very good relationships are established so that the children work harmoniously together, for example, during construction and role-play activities or while cooking. They readily take turns and offer up the wheeled vehicles good naturedly to each other during outdoor play. The adults provide a very secure climate within which the children develop well both personally and academically. They are sensitive to each other's feeling and needs because the adults are always vigilant about how each individual child feels. One child tenderly and spontaneously wiped the tears from another's face after she had accidentally knocked a tooth. Some members of the class have recently experienced the arrival of a baby brother or sister. The adults have been sensitive to the potentially mixed feelings of the older siblings and provided opportunities for them to talk with pride about the new arrivals.
55. A strong feature of the provision is the way the children are encouraged to become independent. They understand the basics of good hygiene and can dress and undress themselves for physical education and can be trusted to wash their hands. Behaviour in this class is very good. The children listen attentively to the adults and to each other. They are occasionally exuberant when responding to questions but are sensitively reminded of the agreed classroom codes.
56. By the time they leave the reception class, the majority of the children exceed the early learning goals.

Communication, language and literacy

57. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the language skills of the children are above average. They learn to speak confidently and clearly. The very few who are still somewhat diffident in speaking in front of the class are encouraged and praised for their efforts. There is very good provision for developing talk through role-play. On one occasion in the "Jungle Café", the classroom assistant skilfully moved the dialogue along when she sensed it was becoming repetitive. During a cooking session, a child asked why they had to wash their hands to complete the cooking activity after being out at play. An adult promptly responded 'Because there might be germs on them and germs are invisible. You can't see them'. The members of staff are highly alert to opportunities for extending the children's active vocabulary in this and other ways.

58. Shared reading by the whole class is effective in developing the children's recognition of individual words as well as their understanding of the sounds associated with certain letters. Many children are already using their early phonic knowledge to read words which are more challenging than the basic three letter words they learn, such as 'the, can, bed, sat'. They enjoy listening to stories and often chant the repetitive parts. The stories they read together as a class are often used as a basis for early writing. Many children are now developing confident letter shapes and know that a sentence has a particular structure. They are becoming increasingly less dependant on copy writing when, for example, they caption their own illustrations. All the children now confidently recognise that writing has a purpose, for example, to place orders at the jungle café or record a recipe for a cooking activity.
59. By the time they begin Key Stage 1, the pupils' literacy skills are in advance of what is expected of them at this stage.

Mathematical development

60. The children are likely to exceed the targets of the Foundation Stage in mathematics. The very good teaching of number, and practical experiences such as paying for and receiving change for goods, weighing and identifying shapes are providing a very positive start to the children's mathematical development. They are confident in sorting shapes according to different criteria and can count in a range of contexts. Their mental calculation skills are developing well because they enjoy counting. A good range of counting rhymes reinforces their number skills very successfully. The children have a very secure recall of two-dimensional shapes and know the names applied to them. This is because they have enjoyed an art lesson where they have joined together and painted a variety of shapes to form a geometric figure.
61. The adults make mathematics interesting for the children because they organise a range of interesting activities such as the 'Guess what's in the feely bag' game to develop the children's ability to describe the attributes of shapes before naming them. The teacher has a very good understanding of how to develop early mathematical concepts for very young learners. The lessons are lively and challenging so that the children become engaged and attentive.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. Most of the children are developing an appropriate understanding of the world around them. Through observations of growing seeds and beans and of the habits of class pets, firm foundations are being laid for future work in science. The children have also made a good start to developing "mouse" control on the computer, but their progress has been hampered recently because of equipment failures.
63. The adults ensure that the children make full use of the local environment to develop a sense of place and also to foster an awareness of the past. The very good questioning skills of the teacher and her assistant ensure that the learning is based on first hand observations and then reinforced through discussion.
64. The children are imaginative in their use of construction and other toys. They use their counting skills, for example, when they construct trains from Lego or number the cars on a track. They have many opportunities for using a range of materials, which they cut and stick to make collages of dragons, jungle flowers and animals. Their work is interesting because they are able to create a range of effects through their skilful cutting.

Physical development

65. The physical skills of the children are developed well. They enjoy a good range of activities including swimming. They are well on course to exceeding the early learning goals of the foundation curriculum. During morning breaks, they energetically and skilfully pedal wheeled vehicles around the playground, skip, balance on logs and develop their ball skills. They use the hall for lessons in movement where they have opportunities to develop body control through a range of floor activities. There is still room, however, to develop the outside play area to cater for a more challenging range of activities including climbing and tunnelling. The children co-operate well during physical activities and take turns to use the equipment.
66. They develop finer control skills through learning how to hold pencils and brushes correctly and by engaging in artwork where they can arrange and fix many small decorative elements such as sequins and buttons. Cooking activities provide valuable experiences of handling a range of equipment in pouring, whisking and kneading operations. The teaching in this area is imaginative and enables the children to participate in an exciting range of challenging experiences.

Creative development

67. This is a strong area of the foundation curriculum because the teacher has a very good knowledge of art. The activities selected, such as creating a classroom jungle, producing dragons to celebrate the Chinese New Year, and making three-dimensional animal masks, inspire the children to exercise their imagination and develop a range of skills. The work on display is well above the expected standard at this early stage of learning. Some of the children have studied examples of the work of Monet and reproduced his 'Poppies' painting, having understood how the artist executed his brush strokes to paint the grass.
68. Singing is a regular feature of many of the classroom activities. The children know a good repertoire of rhymes to accompany number work. They are also enthusiastic participants in a weekly singing session, joining in lustily with choruses that they have learned. The role-play area is frequently changed to ensure a good range of imaginative play. The sand and water trays are organised so that they provide a stimulus for a variety of imaginative talk, and can become zoos, landscapes or waterscapes as desired.
69. The classroom accommodation is well organised and used efficiently. However, the opportunities for the free flow of indoor and outdoor activities are insufficient. This would challenge the children to become ever more curious and skilful learners.

ENGLISH

70. In 2000, the eleven-year-old pupils achieved results that were similar to the national average, but were well below average when compared with those of children in similar schools. This was because there were few higher-attaining pupils who exceeded the expected level, even though the proportion that did was similar to the national picture. Although the improvement in results has been slower than the national trend, the inspection evidence shows that the pupils currently in Year 6 are making good progress. This year standards in reading and writing are above average. A significant proportion of both girls and boys are skilled writers who have a considerable flair for language. The upward trend is the result of the commitment of teachers to implementing an effective strategy for the teaching of literacy. Inspired teaching, especially in Year 6, often further

enhances this. Great care is taken to identify appropriate activities for the pupils with special education needs and also for those who display well above average literacy skills. The school has a very inclusive approach and a strong commitment to raising the attainment of every pupil.

71. In last year's tests at the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading and writing were well above both the national average and the results of similar schools. This year's cohort has fewer higher-attaining pupils, but the inspection findings indicate that standards remain above average.
72. The children entering the reception class generally have above average speaking skills. By the time they complete Key Stage 1, their skills are carefully nurtured to ensure that they can explain and support their ideas. They are able to distinguish between the need to report facts clearly and logically and the kind of speech that is appropriate for drama and role-play. The pupils in Year 2 gave clear reasons why they identified certain books as being for information and others as narrative. In Year 1, the pupils were heard providing cogent reasons for either liking or disliking a particular poem. The pupils are good listeners because the work is presented in an interesting way and also because courtesy is strongly promoted. The close attention paid to developing speaking and listening skills continues throughout Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 6, many pupils are unusually articulate and all listen keenly to their teacher and to the points of view of other class members. This has made it possible for the very good teaching in Year 6 to be further enriched by visits by a number of prominent popular authors. The very mature teacher-pupil relationships are reflected in the depth of reflection of the pupils' responses to questions and the genuine interest in shown by their teachers. Very good examples of this were seen when the oldest pupils were discussing standard and non-standard English.
73. Standards in reading are above average by the end of both key stages. This is because opportunities for reading are given a high priority. The good work done within the school to promote reading is regularly supported at home. The pupils' reading development is carefully assessed and tracked so that they are guided through a suitable progression of reading material. This means, for example, that in Year 4 there are some pupils who are steadily acquiring the basics of reading and others that are capable of reading Tolkein and J K Rowling. The pupils in Key Stage 1 have a good knowledge of sounds and letter names. They can confidently apply this phonic knowledge when reading unfamiliar words. They use their reading experiences well when writing settings and describing characters in their own stories. The pupils in Year 2 proudly show how familiar they are with the technical terms associated with books, such as author, title, illustrator, contents page and blurb. In the early stages of Key Stage 2, the pupils continue to acquire a range of strategies for reading a variety of increasingly demanding of texts. The teachers appreciate that pupils now need more frequent use of the Internet and CD-ROM programs to access information to support their work.
74. The oldest pupils are introduced to an inviting range of reading material, including poetry. Opportunities to read aloud while sharing the focused text in a literacy lesson have developed a standard of fluency and accuracy that is clearly above average. The attractive library currently provides a reasonable supply of fiction and non-fiction materials. The potential exists for it to be further developed as an excellent resource for extending the pupils' reading skills and developing a reading culture within the school.
75. The pupils in Key Stage 1 are maintaining the good progress they make in developing skills in writing. This is because of the very structured approach adopted by the teachers

and the good support provided for those who struggle to reach the average standard. The younger pupils gain in confidence as writers because the teachers model different types of writing for them. For instance, they teach them to write instructions for planting seeds as well as exercising their imaginative skills by writing narratives and descriptions. The pupils' handwriting is carefully developed. Many emerge from Key Stage 1 with a well-formed cursive style. Even those who have yet to develop an appropriate level of fluency form their letters well and regularly use finger spaces to separate words. They understand where to place full stops and know that a new sentence must begin with a capital letter. The higher-attaining writers use commas to delineate lists of words and are beginning to insert direct speech, correctly punctuated with speech marks, as a feature of some of their writing. The standards seen among the current eleven-year-olds are encouragingly higher than those of recent years and are nearer to the above average levels reached in 1997. Many of the pupils currently in Year 6 have very highly developed skills, which are particularly evident in their poetry writing.

76. The techniques associated with writing are carefully developed throughout Key Stage 2. From an early stage the pupils' awareness of features such as the use of tenses, the importance of story openings and endings and the use of paragraphing is consistently raised. Drafting and editing are well established. Through their reading, the pupils' attention is drawn to the effective use of simile, metaphor and alliteration to improve the quality of writing. The oldest pupils have a keen awareness of the condensed language of poetry. For example, in a poem about 'The Churchyard' a pupil wrote, 'The ice closes out the gift of flowers, the leaded windows whisper to each other'. The pupils succeed best at their writing when they sense that it has a real purpose and they have sufficient time to polish and complete it. At times, worksheets are used to record work in literacy. Where these are stored somewhat haphazardly in wallets the work tends to be of lower quality than that which is carefully presented and less tightly constrained. Many pupils are now skilled at using information technology to record their writing. They take pride in the content and presentation of such work.
77. The good and often very good teaching ensures that pupils at all stages are making good progress in all aspects of English. By the time they leave the school, many pupils clearly enjoy experimenting with language and have a good understanding, for instance, of the different genres of writing. The teaching of English is particularly strong in Year 6 because the teacher uses his extensive knowledge of literature to devise activities that link the pupils' reading experiences to their own experiences as writers. Throughout both key stages, the teachers plan the reading and writing activities carefully to ensure that they become increasingly challenging, yet take account of the pupils' prior learning. The teachers are skilful in raising the pupils' awareness of books and also of how to become writers because they pose interesting and searching questions that challenge the pupils to think. The teaching of spelling is very consistent. There is a whole school approach of 'Look, cover, write, check' which is consistently applied in every class. The high frequency words identified at each stage of the literacy strategy are thoroughly learned and tested so that attainment in spelling is good. The climate for learning is very positive. It is clear that language is promoted as a lifelong skill and something to be enjoyed.
78. The literacy co-ordinator, together with the senior management team, has given very practical support to the teachers and monitored the work in the classrooms. This has resulted in far greater consistency in the teaching of literacy than was seen at the time of the last inspection. The learning support assistants are skilled in helping different groups of pupils because their communication with the teachers is very good. The resources in classrooms are adequate. The library is potentially an excellent resource, but now needs further, planned expenditure to improve the book provision still further.

MATHEMATICS

79. Most pupils attain above the expected level for their ages at seven and eleven. This is an improvement on the last inspection and the follow up inspection in May 2000. There is now a clear focus in the teaching of problem solving, which has enabled all groups of pupils across the school to make good progress in developing their mathematical thinking. In last year's national tests for eleven-year-olds, standards were above the national average, but below average when compared to the results of similar schools. The tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 showed attainment to be well above the average and in the top five per cent of all school nationally. These results were above average when compared to similar schools.
80. The inspection evidence also shows that standards at the end of both key stages are currently above average. The school is well placed to meet the targets set for mathematics this year. This is due mainly to the improvement in the teaching from the time of the last inspection. During the current inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching of mathematics was seen and eighty-five per cent of the teaching was either good or better. One lesson in Year 2 was excellent. Better assessment procedures are now in place so that the attainment and progress of all groups of pupils is tracked as they move through the school. The teachers make effective use of this information by setting targets for the pupils and this is helping to raise standards, especially in Key Stage 2.
81. Both the pupils with special educational needs and the higher-attaining pupils are well supported and make good progress. Although the data from the national tests suggests that the boys do slightly better than the girls at age eleven, no significant differences in performance between them was evident during the inspection.
82. In Key Stage 1, the teachers plan carefully a range of appropriate activities for pupils of different abilities so that all are able to play a full part in the lesson. The teachers follow the guidance within the National Numeracy Strategy in doing so, but this is not universal practice across the school. For example, lessons seen in the infants all include a mental calculation session, which helps to develop the pupils' skills in manipulating numbers. This is not always the case in other classes so that this element of mathematics is not taught progressively throughout the school. By the end of the infants, the most pupils are confident in using numbers and make good use of their tables knowledge in dealing with number problems. They describe and extend simple number patterns, such as counting forwards and backwards in tens and fives. Scrutiny of their previous work shows that, by the age of seven, the majority of the pupils have a secure understanding of the most common fractions.
83. This good work is continued in Key Stage 2, but in a less coherent way because the teachers' planning is less structured and balanced. Some use is made of the guidelines of the National Numeracy Strategy, but not in all classes. The overall rate of progress of the pupils is not therefore as uniform as that of the infant classes. However, the current inspection evidence and the analysis of previous work indicate that by the end of Key Stage 2 the proportion of pupils achieving and exceeding the expected levels is above average. The teaching has a clear focus on developing the pupils' skills in tackling a range of problems, including those related to 'real-life.' This motivates and helps pupils of all abilities to make good progress. An investigation of reflective symmetry in Year 6 was good evidence of this. The pupils in Year 5 are developing a secure knowledge and understanding of the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. The Year 3 pupils know how to divide numbers with remainders. A noticeable feature of these

lessons is the effective way that the teachers match the tasks to the abilities of the different groups within each class. In all cases, the majority of the pupils are able to make good progress in their learning because the teaching has a clear focus on what each group is going to learn.

84. As noted above, no unsatisfactory teaching of mathematics was seen during this inspection, Overall, the quality of the teaching and learning is good and often very good. This is a significant improvement from the last inspection. The teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and use this well in the way they target their questions to the pupils so that all are able to take part in the lesson. It ensures that the pupils' interest and enthusiasm is built up and that they remain committed to their tasks. All lessons seen were characterised by the way in which all pupils concentrated well and worked hard. The best lessons were those where the teacher had planned in detail exactly what it was they wanted the pupils to learn, had chosen the appropriate resources to assist the pupils' learning and planned the most effective teaching methods. For example, in the best mental 'warm-up' sessions at the start of numeracy lessons, the teachers used quick-fire questions that had all groups of pupils involved, eager to take part and pleased to show what they had learned. A noticeable feature is the great enjoyment that the majority of the pupils get from these stimulating sessions. Most of the pupils listen well to their teachers, and the more able pupils can work independently when interesting tasks are set. The classroom assistants provide good support for the pupils with special educational needs. They are well briefed by the class teachers and this helps them to provide effectively for the pupils' differing needs.
85. The role of the co-ordinator needs to be developed so that she can be more effective in managing the subject. The current job description does not clearly identify the roles and responsibilities that will help her to maintain and improve standards across the school. For example, the co-ordinator has sensible plans to introduce the guidance of the National Numeracy Strategy in order to ensure the progressive development of mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding in all classes, but has not yet been effectively empowered to do so. Such a move would lead to improved planning so that all the requirements of the National Curriculum could be addressed in a more systematic manner. It would also provide guidance for the teachers so that the work in each year group builds more systematically on what has gone before. Some monitoring of the teaching by the headteacher has been carried out and the co-ordinator checks some of the teachers' planning and the standard of the pupils' work. These separate strands need to be pulled together to form a cohesive view of the future development of the subject along with a review of resources which are just satisfactory at present. **These are key issues for action.**

SCIENCE

86. The last inspection report drew attention to many shortcomings in the school's provision for teaching science and the quality of the work produced by the children. The leadership acted in determined fashion by putting in place a comprehensive programme of staff training that has led to considerable improvement in the quality of the teaching and a subsequent rise in standards. This is most notable in the closer attention that is paid to developing the pupils' investigative skills.
87. In last year's national tests for eleven-year-olds, the pupils achieved results that were in line with national average, but below average when compared with similar schools. The inspection evidence indicates that this is no longer the case. Standards are above average because the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level has increased and a

significant number are likely to exceed it. Last year's teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 showed the children's attainment to be well above average. The current inspection evidence indicates that attainment will still be above average for the majority of pupils.

88. By the age of seven, the pupils have investigated a range of materials and can classify them according to a number of criteria such as how they feel and what they are used for. More able pupils can sort materials into those that are natural and those that are man-made, and say why some are particularly suited for different purposes. Scrutiny of their previous work shows that the younger pupils are able to correctly identify and name the main external parts of the body. They know that forces can be described as either a 'push' or a 'pull' and identify them in their everyday life at school. During the inspection, a good lesson was observed in Year 1 in which the pupils' knowledge and understanding of sounds was well developed through observation and discussion. The knowledge of materials and their properties is further developed in Year 2 where the pupils are able to talk knowledgeably about reflective materials. One lesson in Year 2 had a clear focus on developing the pupils' investigative skills through an experiment to discover the conditions necessary for plant growth. Again, skilful questioning and a well-organised learning environment enabled most pupils to make good progress in developing their observation and recording skills.
89. The emphasis given to the skills of investigation was also evident in much of the work seen in Key Stage 2. For example, Year 6 pupils were seen conducting a series of experiments on the effects of exercise on the pulse rate, and Year 3 pupils were planning the testing of friction between trainers and different surfaces. All groups show a good understanding of the need for fair testing and both lessons were characterised by high levels of pupil involvement. By the age of eleven, the pupils have studied the need for a balanced diet as part of their 'Healthy Living' topic and can correctly name and explain what are vitamins, minerals and carbohydrates and the part they play in our daily life. They have tested magnets to find which is the strongest and developed a secure understanding of electricity and its uses. Further work on materials has included testing thermal conductors and insulators. By the age of eleven, the pupils have experienced the full range of the programmes of study of the National Curriculum for science.
90. No unsatisfactory teaching of science was seen during the inspection. The teachers show a generally secure subject knowledge, which is used particularly well in the way they phrase questions that help the pupils to explain and expand their ideas and opinions. The pupils have the objectives explained to them at the start of the lesson so that they are clear about what it is they are going to learn. Coupled with well-organised and well-resourced activities, this enables all groups to settle quickly to their tasks and helps to maintain a good pace to the lesson. The better lessons were characterised by this kind of stimulating learning atmosphere, which interested and enthused the pupils so that they were able to work productively and at a good pace throughout. The group activities were cooperative and the pupils took turns fairly in sharing resources. All these lessons had a feeling of enjoyment and pleasure at discovery. In the less successful lessons, the teachers did not make best use of their own knowledge to help clarify pupils' thinking and discussions tended to go on too long.
91. The co-ordinator has only recently returned to her post, but has maintained close contact with what has been going on. In the past, she has watched her colleagues teach science and scrutinised the pupils' books. A folio of work has been started and it is planned to cross-reference this to the levels of the National Curriculum so that it can be used to assess more accurately the attainment and progress of the pupils. As part of the

programme of staff training, both she and her colleagues have visited other schools to study their practice. The recent use of nationally approved guidelines for planning in science has enabled the teachers to plan the development of skills in a more secure and systematic way across the whole school. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to organise the current resources so that they might have a better impact on attainment and this already forms part of her present plans.

ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

92. Standards in art have been maintained since the previous inspection. In some aspects, such as collage and appliqué work, standards are above average. Standards in design and technology have risen and are now securely above average. No lessons in art were seen during the inspection, but from the quantity of evidence provided by the displays of past work it is clear that the pupils' drawing and painting skills are developing satisfactorily.
93. There are regular opportunities for the pupils to paint and draw. However, because the current medium-term planning does not provide sufficiently precise guidance about how, for example, the pupils' observational skills should be improved year on year, the difference in the level of activity from one class to another is not always easy to discern. The strength of the teaching of art lies in the good variety of experiences provided; they include painting, printing and three-dimensional work. The pupils enjoy the experiences, especially when they are able to engage in large projects, such as the lively tropical flower collage in Year 2.
94. The pupils are encouraged to appreciate the work of painters such as Van Gogh and sculptors such as Henry Moore. This makes a good contribution to their cultural development. Valuable extension work is done through extra-curricular experiences in the Art Club where the older pupils have produced sensitive, well-composed prints. The younger children have benefited from collaborating to produce two well-finished collage panels of landscapes and settlements.
95. The pupils have very good opportunities for designing and making a range of products. In Year 6 when designing 'fantastic hats', they engaged in detailed discussion about their proposed designs and then drew up plans for small prototypes to be made prior to the final product. The dialogue as they worked demonstrated how skilfully the teacher had drawn the pupils' attention to a range of design issues thus providing them with a vocabulary for evaluating their own and others' work. The younger pupils have exercised their design skills, together with their cutting and joining skills to produce a range of imaginative vehicles. In Year 4, the pupils successfully applied their knowledge of electricity, gained in science lessons, when they designed a range of intruder alarms. The teachers display the pupils' work very well. In return, the pupils are proud of what they do and are eager to talk about their work. The main corridors are greatly enlivened by a variety of large-scale monsters, models with mechanical parts reminiscent of Victorian toys and many other examples of the pupils' work.
96. There is a good range of resources to support a variety of activities. At both key stages, the teachers' good subject knowledge ensures clarity about what they want the pupils to achieve, particularly in the area of design and technology. The senior management of the school has a very positive approach to promoting these creative areas of learning.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

97. History and geography are sometimes timetabled in blocks over different terms. Consequently, it was possible to observe only two each subject during the course of the present inspection. However, from the evidence of these lessons, by looking at previous work and talking to the pupils and the co-ordinator, it is clear that the standards in both subjects is in line with those expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. This is a reflection of the findings of the previous report. The timing of the subjects is left to the discretion of individual teachers and a scrutiny of previous work shows that the majority of the pupils are experiencing the full range of the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. The planning of both subjects has been strengthened this year with the trial of schemes of work following the nationally approved guidelines. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
98. The majority of the pupils are making good progress. In both subjects, the topics are well supported by educational visits, the work of theatre groups and visitors to the school. For example, a history lesson observed in Year 5 was following up the visit the previous week of a senior citizen who had been taking about her experiences in Bristol during World War II. A very good geography lesson in Year 2 was extending the pupils' knowledge and understanding of how their own locality contrasts with a seaside locality prior to a visit to Borth later this term. In both lessons, the pupils showed a good understanding of how to use information from secondary sources, such as maps, photographs and books. The older pupils had a clear understanding of the difference between primary, or first-hand, accounts and other reported accounts.
99. The co-ordinator has started a folio of the pupils' work for both subjects. Scrutiny of these provided ample evidence of the pupils' levels of attainment and showed the full range of the work covered. In history, for example, by the age of eleven the pupils have studied the Greeks, Ancient Egypt, the Celts and the Tudors. They have learned about the lives of famous people, such as Florence Nightingale and compared their own school today with how it was in Victorian times. The older pupils have produced their own topic books on ancient Egypt, the Tudors and the Greeks and good use has been made of the Internet for research. The younger pupils in Year 1 took part in a very successful lesson that compared their village today with how it was a hundred years ago. In geography, there is a similar picture of a range of opportunities, with an appropriate emphasis on the development of mapping skills. The Year 2 lesson, for example, made very good use of the current display in the classroom to give all groups purposeful practice in using grid references to locate features on a photograph taken overhead. By the age of seven, the majority of the pupils can identify and name correctly the countries of the British Isles. They have recorded in simple map form their daily journey to school and compared Wellington with the village of Ferriby. Their mapping skills are further developed in Years 3 and 4 through more detailed maps of Wellington and a plan of the school grounds. By the age of eleven, the pupils have studied topics on mountains, rivers and how rocks are formed. Again, many junior pupils make good use of the Internet for their research work, both at school and at home.
100. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was nearly always either good or better. The teachers have a secure knowledge of both subjects, which is used well in the planning of activities that interest and enthuse their pupils. They are careful to give good support to all the different groups in the class so that all the pupils are able to play a full part in the lesson. The response of the pupils is always good. They listen well in discussions to their teachers and each other, and are eager to give their opinions and ideas.

101. The co-ordinator has worked hard to maintain the profile of the subjects and is aware of the implications for the future development of both history and geography in the light of recent national changes to the curriculum. There is no formal assessment of standards at present, but it is planned to reference the work in the folios to the levels of the National Curriculum to give better support to teachers in assessing the progress that the pupils are making. The co-ordinator monitors the work in the pupils' books and gives appropriate feedback to her colleagues. At present, the resources for both subjects are barely adequate and some teachers are supplementing them through personal expenditure. The school will have to consider the future levels of resources in both subjects to address fully the new requirements of Curriculum 2000 and include this as part of its development of a long-term strategic plan. **This is a key issue for action.**

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

102. The school has made good use of the additional funds provided by national government to improve considerably the quality of the pupils' work in this subject. At the time of the last inspection, the use of information and communication technology was a peripheral activity, but now it is being used with increasing confidence in a range of contexts across the breadth of the National Curriculum.
103. This is happening because the school has much improved equipment. The headteacher and governing body have sensibly invested in the creation of a computer suite where it is possible for a whole class to be taught together. The equipment is of good quality and enables the pupils to work swiftly with few interruptions caused by technical faults. The teachers recognise the value of this new resource and are generally determined to make the most of it. Every class visits the suite at least once each week, but it is clear that it is the teachers with the greatest confidence in using the computers who make most use of this resource. At the moment, valuable space and resources are left unused for a significant part of each day. An intensive staff-training programme commences in the near future as a result of further government money offered through the New Opportunities Fund. As this training unfolds, consideration should be given to ways of increasing still further the efficiency with which the school uses its stock of computers.
104. At the moment, the pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is broadly in line with the expected levels. However, their folders and displays of work in information and communication technology show vividly the positive effect of the improved resources and more confident teaching on their rate of learning. For instance, in the last few weeks the pupils in Year 6 have used a simple program to set up their own spreadsheets to calculate the income generated by a pet shop. They have a good understanding of the processes involved because they are very well taught. The teacher has helped them to recognise the power of spreadsheets and they are now working hard to ensure they are accurate, attractive and easy to use. The way that the teacher explains his criteria for assessing the pupils' work is particularly effective. It is clear from the inspector's conversations with the pupils that they respond very positively to this. They feel as if they are students, not children. As a result, they work very hard and achieve good results, producing spreadsheets that calculate accurately both the sub total of each category of animals sold and the total turnover for the week. These conversations also showed that the pupils had a good appreciation of the overall effects they wanted to create and knew how to achieve them; 'We want the grand total to stand out, that's why we've chosen magenta.' Displays on the wall of the computer suite demonstrate that the pupils have also successfully designed their own web pages, and their work in English makes frequent use of well-developed word processing skills.

105. The picture in Key Stage 1 is equally positive. Here the teachers were observed making effective links with the pupils' work in English, mathematics and science. For instance, the Year 2 pupils are creating illustrations for the books about plants and animals that they are devising for the Reception class. They use a simple painting program effectively to create pictures of frogs, sunflowers and snails. They draw outlines skilfully before selecting effects, such as 'spray paint' to produce stippled effects, or 'flood fill' for backgrounds. The pupils' good technical vocabulary is frequently in evidence as they label their drawings using a variety of fonts and text styles for words such as petal, stem and leaves. Throughout the lesson, the pupils took turns and shared ideas in a mature and responsible fashion. The teacher made effective use of the teaching assistant by asking her to support a group of children using a programmable electronic toy. This worked very well because the pupils remembered accurately the different types of instructions that make the toy rotate and move forward. As a result, they soon programmed the toy to manoeuvre through an obstacle course on the floor to find the 'treasure.' A further strength of this work was the way that the pupils wrote down their instructions to the toy so that after they had completed the task another group might check their work by entering the instructions again to see if they worked; they did. Even though the teacher was working elsewhere in the room, she remained extremely alert to the possibility of the boys dominating the control of the toy and made sure that the learning assistant kept rotating the responsibility for entering the instructions.
106. The subject is managed by a young and enthusiastic co-ordinator. The majority of his time and energies have been taken up with the organisation of the computer suite and the training of staff. A review of the curriculum planning has led to a simple framework that sets out what needs to be taught each term as the pupils move through school. However, he has not yet had the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching in the computer suite, and does he check the teachers' short-term plans unless they choose to ask for help. Another important aspect for improvement is the arrangement for demonstrating skills and techniques to the whole class. At the moment, the teachers attempt this by sitting the children on the floor and demonstrating on one of the fourteen-inch monitors. The pupils are patient and concentrate hard, but visibility is poor despite the use of a screen magnifier. The ability of the co-ordinator to influence development in these areas is hampered by the school's ineffective systems for the strategic management of its budget. He has no clear understanding of either how much money the school receives or how spending decisions about ICT are reached. He requires a clearer framework within which to operate so that he can draw up a manageable plan of action for the future development of the subject. Nevertheless, the need for continuing development should not mask the considerable improvements in the provision and the teaching in this subject. Both are clearly benefiting the quality of education provided by the school.

MUSIC

107. Standards in music are broadly in line with the expected levels at the end of both key stages. This is similar to the picture described at the last inspection. Standards in singing are better than in other aspects of the work, such as composition. The pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 benefit from a weekly half hour of singing with a visiting specialist who has a good understanding of how to develop vocal techniques. During these lessons, there are occasional opportunities for the use of percussion instruments, but because of the large size of the two groups, the experience of each individual player is necessarily limited. However, the older pupils are satisfactorily learning about some of the features of a score that affect the dynamics of musical performance.
108. At both key stages, most of the pupils have good listening skills. The younger pupils can identify different rhythms and are able to hear when music is loud or quiet, fast or slow. These skills are further developed satisfactorily during Key Stage 2, and the older pupils are able to appraise the quality of music that they hear. This includes a satisfactory range of music from different periods in history, such as the Elizabethan era, and from other cultures, like Africa. Opportunities to play the recorder, guitar, trumpet and violin extend the performance experiences of the older pupils. School productions, too, often contain musical elements performed by pupils. Although the portfolio containing examples of the pupils' recording of work in music contained records of a variety of activities, there is little evidence of imaginative composition work. However, discussion with some of the older pupils revealed that they have begun to use the computers to support this aspect of their work.
109. The teachers conscientiously plan the work of each class in music, making good use of a published scheme. They are also beginning to trial some of the ideas from recent national guidance. The teachers' knowledge of the subject is adequate, but they appreciate the fact that their teaching is supplemented by external provision.
110. There is an adequate range and quantity of instruments to support work in music. However, the poor visibility of the words projected on a screen for hymns during worship does little to promote clarity of diction in the pupils' singing.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

111. On the basis of the three games lessons observed, it is clear that the quality of the pupils' work in this aspect of physical education is in line with the expected levels at the ages of seven and eleven.
112. The pupils in Years 4 and 6 are currently learning the basic skills of tennis. They are well taught by the subject co-ordinator, who is in turn supported in some lessons by a local L.T.A. coach. The quality of the teaching and learning is enhanced because the school is making very effective use of the local community association's tennis courts that are adjacent to the school field. The lessons are successful because they have a clear focus on improving the pupils' hand to eye co-ordination. At the time of the inspection, the majority of eleven-year-olds are able to control a tennis ball on a racquet, balancing it on the strings and bouncing it on the ground in front of them. When working in pairs the vast majority demonstrates maturity in 'feeding' the ball to their partner in order to practise a forehand groundstroke. The co-ordinator's good subject knowledge is evident in the thoughtful way he identifies weaknesses in technique and helps individuals to improve. He keeps the pupils interested and motivated by using a good variety of simple games,

techniques and challenges that emphasise different aspects of the game. At this stage, the competitive nature of tennis is sensibly confined to the pupils attempting to better their own personal performance within the context of skills practice. However, a final game of 'team tennis' reveals that not only has the rallying potential of many pupils improved, but that they also have a good understanding of some basic tactics in winning points.

113. In Year 2, the pupils worked extremely hard and successfully in devising their own games using various types of ball. They managed this because of the teacher has a secure subject knowledge and plans interesting lessons that build steadily in demand. For instance, she starts the lesson with a thorough warm-up followed by some simple games that help the children to practise throwing and catching. The pupils enjoy this and show increasing co-ordination as they practise. The positive relationships within the class are clearly in evidence because the teacher often joins in to help the children. She can do this because she is appropriately dressed to teach the lesson and can therefore give effective demonstrations at key points.
114. The pupils know that their next challenge is to devise their own rules for a simple ball game because the teacher has carefully shared her objectives for learning at the start of the lesson. In their groups, the pupils' discussions revealed a keen understanding of a successful game: 'We need to mark out a course.' 'There's got to be a challenge...' Levels of co-operation were high as each group practised their game in their own space. Pupils of all abilities were fully involved because the teacher had carefully deployed the classroom assistant to work with the lower-attaining pupils to help them devise a game suitable to their level of skill. The teacher had a good overview of the work of the rest of the class and intervened successfully to question individuals and so help to improve their games. By the end of the lesson, the pupils had made the most of the good opportunities to exercise vigorously, to practise and apply their knowledge and skills in simple ball games and to evaluate the success of their new rules.
115. The school recognises the crucial importance of teaching the pupils to swim so that every pupil receives swimming tuition for a part of each year. Many pupils also swim with their parents and the local swimming club. As a result, standards are high. Virtually every child leaves the school able to swim a minimum of twenty-five metres and many swim much further.
116. The new subject co-ordinator has an appropriate background and interest in physical education. The school's long-term plan covers the full range of the National Curriculum programmes of study. However, the co-ordinator is aware that the next job is to devise more coherent subject guidance that explains to non-specialist teachers how they can ensure that the level of challenge in physical education lessons increases in demand as the pupils move through the school. He has a clear view of how he wants the subject to develop, but progress is limited because there is no long-term strategic plan and no indication of an available budget. Current resources are used effectively, although it is clear that some of these such as the sponge balls used in Key Stage 1 are nearing the end of their life.
117. Several parents commented favourably on the increasing range of extra-curricular sporting opportunities provided by the school. This was borne out by the tennis, athletics and rounders clubs all occurring during the course of the inspection. A further strength is the dance club run for pupils in Key Stage 1 where around thirty pupils aged six or seven are currently delighting in learning a range of traditional country dances.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

118. At the end of both key stages, the quality of the pupils' work meets the expectations of the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus for religious education. However, there is some variation in what is covered, which results in standards not being entirely consistent across all classes. Standards are generally better in the classes where recent revisions to the local syllabus are already being implemented.
119. Most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of a range of stories from the Bible. When the local vicar referred to an extract from the story of Joseph, the pupils in Key Stage 1, together with the very youngest children, showed that they could recall details from an earlier lesson. The very full record of work done by pupils in Year 2 provides evidence of a secure knowledge of the fact that the Bible is a special book and that Jesus is a special person for Christians. They are also beginning to understand that there are faiths other than Christianity with many adherents world-wide. The pupils are gaining an early insight into how faith influences the lives of believers. For example, they know that Jewish families celebrate Shabbat in a special way and that Hindus celebrate Diwali in ways that are similar to Christian festivals.
120. It is difficult to make an accurate assessment of standards since there is little recorded work in Key Stage 2 and it was possible to observe one lesson only during the inspection. However, there was evidence that the pupils have continued their work on places of worship and are aware that the Sikhs worship in a Gurdwara and that Muslims worship in Mosques. They have also developed their awareness of the special books associated with different world faiths.
121. Overall, the quality of the teaching is satisfactory. It is better in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2 where it is only just satisfactory. What is taught is of an acceptable standard but the medium-term planning is not sufficiently detailed to provide appropriate guidance for the teaching to be of consistently good quality. For example, although the descriptive features of world faiths are conscientiously taught, the planning does not currently ensure that the lessons in each year link sufficiently with what has been learned earlier. For instance, work on prayer with older Key Stage 2 pupils somewhat duplicates that already done in lower Key Stage 2. The newly appointed co-ordinator is already addressing these anomalies and has produced a clear action plan to ensure greater continuity in what is learned and to strengthen the strand which comes under the heading of 'Learning from religion'. The teachers are imaginative in the way they use resources such as artefacts and video material to provide the pupils with visual experiences. For example, the pupils in Year 3 are clearly fascinated by the model Puja table set aside for them to examine and discuss.
122. The pupils' writing and pictorial recording of their work, notably in Key Stage 1, provide evidence of their interest in the work and the attentiveness they had shown during lessons. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and eager to see religious education gain greater prominence as a core subject, but is as yet uncertain as to how her subject will develop as part of a long-term strategic plan for the school.