

INSPECTION REPORT

SOMERSHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Somersham, Huntingdon

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110689

Headteacher: Mrs E Flowerdew

Reporting inspector: Mr Malcolm Johnstone
21114

Dates of inspection: 12th to 16th June 2000

Inspection number: 215536

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 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Parkhall Road Somersham Huntingdon Cambridgeshire
Postcode:	PE17 3EU
Telephone number:	01487 840412
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Sally Toye
Date of previous inspection:	18 th November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
M Johnstone	Registered inspector	Mathematics Geography Under fives	What sort of school is it? School's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
G Bindoff	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its' pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
D Riddle	Team inspector	Science Information technology Design and technology Physical education	
D Pink	Team inspector	History Special educational needs	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well the school is led and managed?
M Wright	Team inspector	English Art Music Religious education	

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	24
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the large village of Somersham near Huntingdon in Cambridgeshire. It is a large community primary school for boys and girls aged 4 to 11 years. Most of the pupils come from a mixture of private and rented housing in the village. Children are admitted to the two reception classes in the September of the year in which they are five. Most have had some form of pre-school experience in playgroups or nursery. At the time of the inspection, there were nine children under five. Taken together, pupils' attainment on entry is typical of that found nationally. There are 347 pupils on the school role with almost equal numbers of boys and girls. Five per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is below the national average. Thirty one per cent of the pupils have been identified as having special needs. This is above the national average. There are five pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Need. The percentage of pupils who have English as an additional language (0.8%) is low. The main language, other than English, spoken by these pupils is Thai. Since the previous inspection, the school roll has fallen gradually. There has been significant pupil movement in and out of school and a large number of staff changes over the past two years. The school has recently been accredited as a Health Promoting school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a friendly and caring school where very good relationships and high standards of behaviour feature strongly. Standards in literacy and numeracy are improving as a result of very good leadership, effective team work and targeting of weaknesses. Teaching and the rate of pupils' progress have improved and are good overall. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good and standards are improving.
- The pupils have very good attitudes to learning, are polite and behave very well.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and a clear direction for the school.
- Children are given a very good start to their school life in the two reception classes.
- The school cares well for its pupils.
- There is a clear commitment to improvement. The senior management team and governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have begun to target weaknesses effectively.

What could be improved

- Standards of the higher attaining pupils.
- Standards in information technology for all pupils.
- Assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement in most areas since the previous inspection in November 1996. The curriculum provision in art and design and technology has been improved in most respects, although weaknesses in the provision of food technology remain. The monitoring of pupils' attainment and progress has been successfully established. There has been marked improvement in the development of senior and middle management roles. Effective senior management training has taken place. Pupils who have special educational needs now have access to the full curriculum. There are still some omissions in the information provided in the governors' annual report to parents. With the improved teaching and standards since the previous inspection, the capacity for further improvement is good.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

By the age of five, most pupils attain the nationally expected levels in all their work. At seven years of age, standards (what pupils know, understand and can do) in reading and mathematics are similar to the national average. In writing pupils attain high standards. The table above shows that by the age of 11, standards are similar to the national average in science, but are below this in English and mathematics. When compared to schools with a similar percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, standards are below average in English and mathematics. In all subjects, the school's results are better than they were in 1996, but have not kept pace with the national upward trend in mathematics. Inspection evidence points to improvement and the quality of the work seen in English and mathematics is now high enough to be in line with the national average. There are, however not enough pupils attaining the higher levels. Pupils are making good progress in science and by the end of both key stages overall standards are above average. The school has set appropriately challenging targets in English and mathematics for the next two years and is well on course to meet these.

The standard of pupils' work in information technology is below the national expectation and progress since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory. In religious education, standards meet the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. Most of the work seen in all other subjects was similar to that expected for pupils' age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to work. They enjoy learning and give of their best. These attitudes are developed from the time they enter school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good. They respond very well to the high expectations of the headteacher and staff. Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors and teachers. All lessons are orderly and pupils play very well together at play times. No pupils have been excluded from the school.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and relationships at all levels are very good. Pupils respond very positively to the school's guidance on moral issues and have very responsible attitudes. They understand that their actions have impact on others. Pupils show initiative and take on responsibilities willingly.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance is good and very few pupils arrive late for school in the morning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall and has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. In the lessons observed across the school, 98 per cent of the teaching was at least satisfactory, 46 per cent was good and 13 per cent was very good. One lesson in information technology was judged to be unsatisfactory. Almost all the teaching seen in the Reception classes was good and there was no significant variation in the quality of teaching between the key stages. Pupils who have special educational needs are well taught and make good progress as they move through the school.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy is never less than satisfactory and often good. All teachers implement the literacy hour successfully and are showing similar confidence in implementing the numeracy hour. This is impacting well on the effectiveness of learning in both key stages. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the two subjects. This enables them to develop pupils' vocabulary well and build on key skills from year to year effectively. Science is well taught. Teaching in most other subjects is never less than satisfactory and often good. There are weaknesses in the teaching of information technology. Computers are not used sufficiently in other subjects, there is a shortage of equipment and skills are not developed systematically from year to year. This has a negative effect on pupils' learning and progress in information technology.

At all stages, teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and very good relationships with pupils. As a result, classrooms are orderly and pupils work hard. Planning is good and is better than at the time of the previous inspection. There is a much more shared approach and teachers plan both within and across the key stages. This is improving pupils' progress in the development of key skills across most subjects. In all subjects, the work planned for the higher attaining pupils often lacks sufficient challenge and this slows the pace of their learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum meets statutory requirements and provides equality of access for all pupils. There are good strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy in designated parts of the curriculum and these have raised standards. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. The curriculum for children who are under five is good and prepares them well for work on the National Curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision and sensitive and well targeted help from teachers and support staff.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The very small number of pupils who have English as an additional language speak English competently, achieve well and make similar progress to all other pupils. Additional support is available but rarely needed.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Social and moral provision is very good and spiritual and cultural satisfactory. There are limited opportunities for reflection in assemblies and for pupils to learn about non-western cultures in subjects such as history, geography, music and art.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school's care for pupils is very good. The Headteacher and staff respond promptly and sensitively to children's needs in a safe and secure environment. Assessment in English, mathematics and science is good but is underdeveloped in other subjects.

The school has developed a good partnership with parents. Very good information is provided for them and there are good arrangements for both formal and informal contact with class teachers and for regular meetings with the Headteacher and staff about pupils' progress. The school has worked hard to involve parents in the work their children do at home. A new policy has been agreed following consultation and a meeting with parents about homework.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a very good leader, who motivates people well and provides a clear direction for the work of the school. Key staff work well as a team to move the school forward.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The chair of governors is knowledgeable about the school and has a very clear idea of its strengths and weaknesses. The governors carry out their responsibilities satisfactorily and fulfil almost all their statutory duties. There are some omissions in their annual report. The governors use their expertise to the benefit of the school and are developing their strategic role well. There is no coherent strategic plan for school development beyond the current year.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The monitoring of teaching and learning is good. Target setting is used very well in order to focus on whole school priorities for development. All staff have a clear view of the expectations for improvement and a shared approach to school development.
The strategic use of resources	Levels of staffing, accommodation and learning resources are mostly good. The school applies principles of best value and always seeks to get value for money in making purchases. Most resources are used well. The school provides good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are expected to work hard. • Teaching is good and enables children to make good progress. • Behaviour is good and the school is helping their children become mature. • The literacy and numeracy hours have helped improve standards. • All adults in the school are very welcoming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More physical education and music. • More homework. • More information about how their children are getting on. • A greater range of interesting activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with the positive comments made by parents. The amount of time allocated to physical education and music is similar to that in most schools. The school has reacted to some parents' concerns regarding homework and there is now a clear and appropriate policy. There are two parent/teacher consultation evenings each year and the headteacher and staff are available to discuss pupils' progress at any reasonable time. This is similar to the situation in most schools. The curriculum information provided for parents is very good. The range of activities that are available outside lessons is similar to that in most schools of this type.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

- 1 Children enter the two Reception classes with attainment that is broadly as expected for their age. The full range of attainment is represented. Overall provision for these children is very good and results in all children making good progress. By the age of five, most children attain the desirable learning outcomes in all the areas of learning.
- 2 In the 1999 National Curriculum assessments for seven year olds, standards in reading and mathematics were similar to those in other schools. In reading, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 3 was also close to the national average, although in mathematics it was below. In both subjects, standards were below average when compared with schools that had a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals. In writing, standards were well above the national average for pupils attaining both the average level 2 and above average level 3. Standards were also above those in similar schools. Teacher assessments were similar to these results. There was no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Inspection evidence paints a similar picture of standards for the pupils who are now in Year 2.
- 3 In the 1999 National assessments for eleven year olds, standards in English and mathematics were below the national average. In English, the percentage of pupils attaining the average level 4 was close to the national average, but was below for those attaining level 5. In mathematics the percentage attaining levels 4 and 5 was below the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards were below average. In science, standards were similar to the national average and those in similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining level 4 was above the national average, whilst the percentage attaining the higher level 5 was similar to the national average. The trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for all these subjects was broadly in line with the national trend. Small variations in teacher assessments for 1999 can be attributed to one or two pupils performing a little better than expected. In all three subjects, girls did a little better than boys.
- 4 The school has set appropriately challenging targets in English and mathematics for the next two years. Achieving these targets would result in gradually improving standards. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is on course to achieve these targets. This is a result of better teaching and subject co-ordination, effective targeting of weaknesses and good teamwork and planning. For the pupils who are currently in Year 6, standards for most pupils are improving and are now similar to the national average. The school has successfully targeted underachievement by boys and the gap between the performance of boys and girls is now not as wide as past test results indicated. There are too few pupils who attained the higher levels in the national tests in English and mathematics. Inspection evidence indicates that standards for these pupils are improving but are not yet high enough.
- 4 In Key Stage 1, pupils' progress and achievements over the past three years have been satisfactory in reading and mathematics and good in writing. In Key Stage 2, progress has been satisfactory over the same period in English, mathematics and science. In both key stages, progress has improved over the past year for most pupils in all these subjects. There remains a lack of sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils in most subjects and their progress is not as rapid as it should be.

- 6 In literacy, there is a strong focus on teaching letter sounds and combinations and pupils use this strategy effectively in their reading. Most read with satisfactory confidence and fluency and have a sound understanding of what they read. They speak clearly and listen attentively. Their writing develops well and grammar and punctuation develop satisfactorily. There are not enough consistent opportunities for pupils, particularly the higher attainers to write at length and in different styles in other subjects. Numeracy is improving as a result of good leadership, team planning and effective targeting of weaknesses. Work in pupils' books shows good coverage of most aspects of the subject and well presented work. Most pupils develop satisfactory skills across the range of their work and there is a developing focus on the use and application of mathematics. In some of the work, higher attaining pupils spend too much time on concepts that they have already grasped when they should be doing more challenging work. This slows their progress. Pupils' numeracy skills support work in other subjects satisfactorily.
- 7 In science, the school is particularly successful at teaching pupils how to use an investigative approach and this has led to good achievements and progress across the school. Standards in information technology are below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2, despite recent improvement and focus on the subject. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress and have had insufficient opportunities to develop their skills across the curriculum. The control and modelling aspects of the subject are particularly weak. Shortages in hardware and software have not helped in the development of the subject. Progress has improved over the past year due to good co-ordination of the subject. Parental support has also helped offset some of the shortages in equipment. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the local agreed syllabus and pupils' progress is satisfactory.
- 8 The work seen in all other subjects is similar to that expected for pupils' age with aspects in some that are better. In art, pupils produce satisfactory work using a variety of media and techniques and in design and technology, they have a good understanding of design principles. Little work, however, was evident in food technology. Mapping skills are developed well in geography and in history, pupils have a sound knowledge of key historical events. In a topic on the Second World War, older pupils empathise well with how evacuees must have felt. Pupils develop a satisfactory knowledge of musical terms and sing with enthusiasm and enjoyment. In physical education, pupils develop good balance and running techniques. Most pupils swim the required 25 metres by the age of eleven.
- 9 The school is effective in identifying pupils who have special educational needs. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve well. Individual education plans are well targeted and help pupils make good progress in literacy and numeracy in both key stages. Additionally, the close co-operation between support staff and the class teachers develops pupils' learning successfully. The two pupils who have English as an additional language speak English well and are well integrated into all aspects of the work of the school. They achieve well and make similar progress to all other pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 10 Pupils have very good attitudes to their work. The strong emphasis throughout the school on positive attitudes to learning encourages pupils to work hard. Pupils respond very well to the high expectations of their teachers. In the large majority of lessons pupils are keen to contribute their ideas, sustain their concentration well and persevere when there are difficulties to overcome. Inspectors confirm parents' views that pupils' good attitudes are a strength of the school.
- 11 Pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about the activities provided. They enjoy their lessons and especially the work they do in literacy and numeracy. The sports clubs after school are popular and older pupils look forward to their opportunities for residential visits. Pupils especially value the 'activities week' at the end of the summer term and they are excited by the good choice of activities available.

- 12 By the end of their first year in school, Reception children develop good levels of independence and take responsibility for selecting the activities they want to pursue. They work well independently and sustain concentration. Children who are still under five respond very well to the purposeful atmosphere established in the classroom and develop good working habits. Their social development is also very good and they behave well. They play well together, co-operate on activities and share equipment sensibly. Relationships between the Reception pupils and the adults in the school and between the pupils themselves are also very good.
- 13 Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is very good and they are well aware of the school's high expectations. They are actively involved in contributing to school rules and value the rewards for good behaviour and hard work. Pupils play very well together at lunchtimes and share the new playground games fairly and in a friendly manner. Inspectors observed no incidents of bullying or other oppressive behaviour. School property is respected and equipment and resources are well cared for. Displays around the school are valued and pupils are proud of their own, and others' 'quality work'. Visitors are welcomed warmly and pupils are polite and friendly, asking inspectors, "*How are you today?*" and "*Is there anything I can help you with?*"
- 14 Relationships between the pupils and adults in the school are very good. Relationships between pupils with special educational needs and learning support assistants are particularly good and enable pupils to make good progress. The two pupils who have English as an additional language are well integrated into all aspects of school life. Pupils work well together in pairs and groups, for example, in investigations in mathematics and science. They help each other in art and physical education. There are also very good, caring, relationships between older and younger pupils. Pupils in Year 6 have developed mature attitudes and enjoy working with reception pupils when opportunities allow. Year 6 boys have also established very good partnerships with Year 3 pupils on the shared reading scheme. This is helping to develop boys' literacy skills.
- 15 Pupils respond very positively to the school's guidance on moral issues and have very responsible attitudes. They understand that their actions have impact on others and they frequently discuss the needs of other people. Charities are well supported by pupils and they raise funds by their own efforts. Respect is shown to people of other faiths. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 were quiet and respectful when they visited a Hindu shrine set up in the school library as part of a religious education lesson. They showed interest in an unfamiliar form of worship and an understanding of people's differences. Pupils in Year 1 held an interesting discussion about the experiences of a grandmother from Jamaica who moved to Britain as a child.
- 16 Pupils of all ages undertake classroom monitoring duties and are conscientious in carrying them out. They are enthusiastic about the School Council and see it as an opportunity to make decisions about their school. Class representatives elected to the School Council have been closely involved in discussions linked to the Health Promoting Schools initiative. They have discussed good and bad features of their village and aspects of road safety. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are able to develop their own initiatives well. A small group of boys have taken over responsibility for the care and maintenance of courtyard areas within the school and are making an excellent job of planting new plants and caring for the gardens. When opportunities allow, pupils are able to take responsibility for their own learning and this is extended through the work pupils are expected to do at home.
- 17 Pupils' attendance is good and very few pupils arrive late for school in the morning. The school's policies place an emphasis on the inclusion of pupils and no pupils have been excluded from school during the last year.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 18 Teaching is good overall and has a beneficial effect on the attainment and progress of the pupils. Four new staff, including three newly qualified teachers have been appointed since September 1999. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. In the lessons observed across the school, 98 per cent of the teaching was at least satisfactory, 46 per cent was good and 13 per cent was very good. Almost all the teaching seen in the Reception classes was good. In Key Stage 1, teaching was at least satisfactory in all the lessons seen and 69 per cent was good, including 19 per cent that was very good. In Key Stage 2, 97 per cent of the teaching was at least satisfactory and 48 per cent was good of which 10 per cent were very good. One information technology lesson was judged to be unsatisfactory.
- 19 Children who are under five are well taught along with older Reception children. The teachers have a good knowledge of how young children learn and they link the curriculum for the under-fives effectively with the relevant parts of the National Curriculum. The youngest children are fully involved in the literacy and numeracy hours at an appropriate level. This ensures that they make good progress in the development of early speaking and listening, reading, writing and number skills. Literacy and numeracy are well taught with a strong emphasis on teaching letter sounds as an aid to reading and effective development of mathematical vocabulary. A key feature of the teaching is the good use made of classroom support and other helpers. They are fully involved in all activities and know how to develop the work of their focus groups. In a science activity, for example, the adult helper encouraged the children to predict what might happen and then to test this. During the session, the correct scientific vocabulary was encouraged. All the activities are well planned and stimulating and ensure that the children maintain enthusiasm and enjoyment in learning.
- 20 The teaching of literacy and numeracy are never less than satisfactory and often good. There is no significant difference in the quality between the two key stages. All teachers implement the literacy hour successfully and are showing similar confidence in implementing the numeracy hour. This is impacting well on the effectiveness of learning in both key stages. All teachers have a secure knowledge of the two subjects that enables them to develop pupils' vocabulary well and build on key skills from year to year effectively. Most resources are used well in literacy and numeracy lessons. For example, overhead projectors are used effectively in both literacy and numeracy lessons. Big books, charts and pictures stimulate work and help pupils' understanding in literacy and number lines, tables, number grids and cards are similarly effective in numeracy lessons. In both literacy and numeracy, teachers match work well to the needs of pupils who have special educational needs, lower and average attaining pupils and this helps them make good progress in most lessons. This is not so good for the higher attaining pupils and their progress is satisfactory. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations for this group of pupils and the work set often lacks sufficient challenge. In literacy, teaching in the opening whole class sessions is good. In numeracy, the opening mental session often lacks sufficient pace, for example, questions do not have the necessary 'fizz' to inspire 'quick fire' responses. In both subjects, closing discussion sessions are mostly good. They draw out key points successfully, however, there is insufficient emphasis on critical appraisal in order to show pupils how their work might be improved.
- 21 The teaching of science is good as a result of good teacher knowledge and an effective and appropriate emphasis on experimental and investigative science. This helps pupils develop a good understanding of how evidence is gained and used in the subject. Teaching in all other subjects is at least satisfactory and often good, although there are weaknesses in the teaching of information technology. Computers are not used sufficiently to support work in other subjects and there are shortages in software and hardware. Key skills have not been developed systematically from year to year and, as a result, progress is unsatisfactory. This is recognised and over the past year, things have begun to move at a more rapid pace.

- 22 Throughout the school, teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and very good relationships with pupils. As a result, classrooms are orderly and pupils waste no time in getting down to work. Pupils know what is expected of them and understand what they need to do. For example, in almost all lessons, when asked by inspectors, pupils could discuss their work. Planning is good and is better than at the time of the previous inspection. There is a much more shared approach and teachers plan both within and across the key stages. This is improving pupils' progress in the development of key skills across most subjects.
- 23 Teachers assess pupils' work well in English, mathematics and science and use the information well to plan. For example, target setting is far more rigorous than at the time of the previous inspection, questioning of pupils is much more focused and there is better sharing of learning objectives. This gives the pupils a clearer understanding of what they are doing and enables teachers to build on what pupils already know more successfully. In other subjects there are no assessment systems that are consistently used to track pupils' progress through the school. This is a weakness in the teaching since teachers cannot be sure what pupils already know, understand and can do. In all subjects, marking has improved and is now consistently well used to provide pupils with information to improve their work. At all stages, literacy and numeracy are now supported effectively by homework. This is having a positive effect on pupils' progress and interest in their work.
- 24 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and enables them to learn well and make good progress. Teachers, well supported by learning support assistants, prepare effective individual education plans for these pupils, who are carefully monitored. Teachers give a high priority to including all pupils in their lessons. Pupils' learning difficulties are identified early in their school lives and are then closely and effectively monitored. There is consistent and effective intervention by teachers to support pupils with behavioural difficulties. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils develop pupils' self-esteem well and have a strong impact on their learning.

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

- 25 Overall, the curricular opportunities for learning are satisfactory. The curriculum provides adequate coverage of all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. There is a weakness in information technology where the control and modelling elements receive insufficient emphasis. The curriculum for children who are under-five is good and they are provided with good opportunities for developing speaking, listening and writing skills. The school has maintained its emphasis on raising standards of literacy and numeracy since the last inspection and there has been improvement in the provision of most other subjects.
- 26 There are good strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy in designated parts of the curriculum and these have raised standards. However, arrangements for supporting language development, extended writing and number work across the curriculum are uncoordinated and do not drive standards effectively, especially those for the higher attaining pupils. The provision for physical education, design technology and art has improved since the last inspection.
- 27 The organisation of the curriculum is complex. Some years are set for certain subjects; others are divided into two mixed ability halves. There are joint year classes for non-core subjects. These over-complex arrangements result in planned activities not always meeting the needs of higher attaining pupils effectively, especially in the foundation subjects. This means that work is not always set according to age in mixed age classes, or ability in wide ability groups.

- 28 The provision for extra-curricular activities is sound. There is a satisfactory range of after school clubs in football, netball and musical activities. The headteacher encourages groups of pupils to join together in a good poetry club and offers facilities for pupils to arrange their own performances at the end of each week. Pupils are encouraged to use their own initiative in supporting charities. The headteacher also arranges an impressive annual school production. Despite the relatively isolated location of the school, good use is made of visits to enhance the curriculum. Pupils in Key Stage 1 study buildings and events in the village. Recent trips had been made to the Natural History Museum and the Greenwich Dome. Visitors are welcomed into the school to discuss their experience with the pupils. This adds interest to the curriculum. The under-five pupils experience "History in a Suitcase", artefacts brought in for display. In Key Stage 2, visitors tell of their experience of evacuation in the Second World War. There is an annual residential trip for pupils in Year 6. Extra provision is also provided through the school's successful "Mathematics Week and Book Week"
- 29 Access for all pupils to all aspects of the curriculum is good. There are good procedures for identifying pupils for the special needs register at an early age and resources are targeted to meet the needs of individual pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and learning assistants and play a full part in the life of the school. Good use is made of support from outside the school to assist teachers in providing for pupils with special educational needs. Recent initiatives by the deputy headteacher have addressed weaknesses in the standards achieved by boys in the school.
- 30 The provision of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good overall. The provision for the social and moral development of the pupils has improved since the previous inspection. Spiritual development is satisfactory. There are limited opportunities for reflection in the daily acts of collective worship. However, religious education lessons contribute well in this aspect. Opportunities are provided for pupils to study a variety of religions. At these times the pupils show respect and understanding. Opportunities to inspire feelings of awe and wonder do occur in music, art and science, for example, but teachers do not fully exploit these.
- 31 The provision for moral and social education is very good. Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon their behaviour and that of others and class records are kept of these achievements. The provision for social education is also very good. Through the school council, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their community; boys in Year 6 are involved in paired reading with younger pupils; a group of pupils manage the school's quiet garden. Paired reading was introduced and has helped to raise the self-esteem of the boys. Pupils are also given regular awards for examples of "good citizenship".
- 32 The provision for cultural education is satisfactory. Good use is made of the direct village locality to involve pupils in their own culture. There is satisfactory recognition of western culture through art and music and recognition that pupils are living in a multi-cultural society through the use of appropriate texts in English. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to study non-western cultures in subjects such as history, geography, art and music.
- 33 The school has very close links with the community and this enhances both social and academic learning of the pupils. The local bakery helps pupils to understand how things are made; the two local rectors take part in assemblies; and pupils practise singing for the village carnival service. The school has good links with local industries. Achievements made by pupils in community events are celebrated in assemblies. Each year a pupil is selected to switch on the Christmas lights in the village. Links with agencies supporting pupils with special educational needs are good.
- 34 The school maintains good links with its partner institutions and these have a good effect on pupils' learning. These include the on site playgroup and the after school club. The school is a member of a cluster of local schools and has, through this group, begun to review opportunities for the higher attaining pupils. The school maintains good relationship with the local secondary schools and pupils from the school are selected to take part in a mathematics day for the more able. Good links are maintained with local teacher training institutions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 35 The school's care for pupils and procedures for monitoring and supporting their personal development are very good. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. It was regarded as a strength of the school in the previous report and remains so. The Headteacher responds promptly and sensitively to pupils' needs and leads a school community where pupils' care has a high priority. Pupils are given very good opportunities to discuss their problems and come to terms with personal difficulties. The very good relationships with the adults in the school facilitate this. The environment for learning is safe and secure and the school knows pupils and their families very well.
- 36 Very good provision is made for the care of children who are under 5 years old. Good links with the local pre-school groups and good arrangements for the transfer to school ensure that pupils settle in well and make a very good start to their education.
- 37 Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Learning support assistants work well with these pupils and enable them to make good progress. The partnership with supporting agencies is good and the links with the team that have responsibility for 'children who are in care are very effective. The help and support given to individual pupils is invaluable and enables them to remain in school and to learn. For example, a Games Club has been established at lunchtimes to support pupils with social difficulties and to enable them to build relationships through play. Good links with the partner secondary school ensure that there is continuity of care for pupils when they transfer into Year 7.
- 38 The school has a good policy for health and safety that is well monitored by governors. Good progress has been made on assessing risks linked to the premises and good procedures are in place to deal with day-to-day problems. The school caretaker is very effective in his role and supports the work of the school well.
- 39 Accidental injuries are dealt with very effectively and there are good procedures for contacting parents in an emergency. Members of staff trained in first-aid gives excellent support to pupils and provision for first aid treatment is very good.
- 40 The school's work in achieving accreditation as a 'Health Promoting School' has resulted in a strong commitment among staff to a programme for personal, social and health education. The programme is successful in raising pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence and enables them to understand some of the issues that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Pupils have very good opportunities to discuss aspects of their personal safety and these are reinforced by activities such as a special safety day for Year 5 pupils and a cycling proficiency course for Year 6.
- 41 Arrangements for child protection conform to locally agreed procedures. Training for the Headteacher and the co-ordinator for special educational needs is up to date and teaching and support staff are aware of child protection issues. Good provision is made within the curriculum for pupils to develop strategies to protect themselves. Work linked to sex education and awareness of drugs is very well supported by the school nurse.
- 42 There are excellent procedures to promote good behaviour and this establishes an orderly environment where pupils can learn. There is a consistent approach throughout the school and expectations are well understood by pupils and parents. Self-discipline is actively encouraged and this is very successfully supported by the rewards system of certificates and 'citizen of the week' awards. There are clear and effective guidelines for dealing with any incidents of bullying or racism. The systems for recording incidents and for monitoring pupils who have difficulty managing their own behaviour are very good.

- 43 Procedures for promoting attendance are sound. Parents are well aware of their responsibilities to inform the school when their children are absent. Weaknesses within the provision are a lack of systematic monitoring of pupils who have patterns of absence and confusion between authorised and unauthorised absences.
- 44 The school has a good assessment policy. Working closely with the headteacher, the senior management team has developed assessment procedures by feeding through ideas to improve assessment and data handling. The assessment co-ordinator is attending on-going training to enable the school to develop an information technology based assessment package. Assessment across the school is well developed in English, mathematics and science. The assessment of pupils who have special educational needs is good and is used well in the planning of their work. There is effective assessment within seven weeks of entry to the Reception classes. The teachers use this well to identify possible areas of weakness in children's learning and to make initial groupings of the children for literacy and numeracy work. There are no formal records passed on from the local playgroups and nursery to enable the teachers to have a clearer view of what has already been achieved. There are plans to develop this aspect.
- 45 At both key stages, there are good procedures to enable teachers to accurately assess the National Curriculum level that the pupils achieve. This guides teachers in their assessment of pupils' levels at the beginning of each new school year. Optional National Curriculum tests are used effectively in Years 3, 4 and 5. The results of these and statutory tests have helped staff to understand levels of attainment in different cohorts and to target areas of weakness. For example, an analysis of the 1999 Key Stage 2 results in mathematics revealed weaknesses in pupils' understanding of data handling. Boys were seen not to be doing as well as girls in most tests. These issues are being successfully addressed in subsequent planning. Much work has gone into individual and group target setting and this is having a marked improvement in raising standards in English, mathematics and science. Regular assessments undertaken at the end of units of work in these subjects and individual reading diaries involving pupils, parents and teachers add further strength to the procedures. Assessment in the other subjects is less well developed and procedures are inconsistent across the school. This makes it difficult for teachers to make secure judgements concerning individual pupils and the development of their learning in these subjects.
- 46 The use of assessment to guide curricular planning is satisfactory overall. It is mostly good in English, mathematics and science, but is underdeveloped in other subjects. In all subjects, the assessment of what higher attaining pupils know, understand and can do is not detailed enough to guarantee that sufficiently challenging work is planned for them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 47 The school has established a good partnership with parents and this impacts well on pupils' attainment and learning. This was identified as a strength of the school in the previous report and the school has worked hard to maintain this.

- 48 The large majority of parents are supportive of the school. They value the strong emphasis placed on positive attitudes to learning promoted by the Headteacher and think that pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are pleased that their children like school and that they are enthusiastic about their work. They believe teaching and standards of literacy and numeracy are good. They are happy with the very good information they receive about the curriculum and about the life of the school. Some parents who contributed their views to the inspection also have concerns. They would like further information about their children's progress and are not satisfied with the arrangements for homework. They think there are some shortcomings in the provision for information technology and for physical education and music and would like to see an improved range of activities outside the curriculum. Inspection evidence would support their views about information technology. The provision for physical education and music and the range of activities outside the curriculum are similar to those found in most schools. The school has reacted to some parents' concerns regarding homework and there is now a clear and appropriate policy. There are two parent/teacher consultation evenings each year and the headteacher and staff are available to discuss pupils' progress at any reasonable time. This is similar to the situation in most schools.
- 49 The school provides very good information for parents. The prospectus and governors' annual report contain useful and interesting information and are well presented. There were, however, minor omissions in the governors' report to parents. Very good information is provided for parents of pupils entering the Reception year. They are well prepared for their children's early experiences at school and are well advised about how to involve themselves in their children's learning at home. Good information is provided for all parents about the curriculum and meetings are arranged to focus on aspects of the curriculum. A recent meeting about the teaching of numeracy was very successful. Parents said that they valued the opportunity to find out about the national strategy for numeracy and found information about teaching methods very useful. Good opportunities are provided for both formal and informal contact with class teachers and for regular meetings with the Headteacher about pupils' progress. At these meetings, targets for future attainment and personal development are also discussed and agreed. Annual reports are well presented and provide good information on pupils' progress. Most of these have clear and specific targets for improvement.
- 50 The school has worked hard to involve parents in the work their children do at home. A new policy has been agreed following consultation and a meeting with parents about homework. As a result, all pupils now use homework diaries in Key Stages 1 and 2. Most parents are supportive of the school's arrangements and have agreed to be active partners in their children's homework. Home/school agreements are also in place and are well supported by parents. Parents make a strong contribution to the life of the school and enrich pupils' experiences. The Parents and Friends Association is well supported and organises popular social functions as well as raising useful funds for the school. Several parents help as volunteers in the school. They are very well directed and supported and work with pupils in the classroom as well as helping with a variety of other activities. Their work is valued by class teachers and by the pupils.
- 51 The school works closely with parents of pupils with special educational needs. The parents of pupils who have individual education plans are invited to regular review meetings.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 52 Overall the school is well led and managed. The headteacher is a very good leader, who motivates people well and provides a clear direction for the work of the school. The headteacher's care and commitment to the pupils is excellent and she makes a very good impact on the work of the school.

- 53 Since the last inspection the headteacher has revised the management structure within the school to make sure that it is more self-evaluating and more focused on raising standards. The deputy headteacher has a clear role in arranging in-service training, which is a key feature of the development of the school, and is effective in managing this provision. He has also had a key role in the raising of the standards of attainment for boys in the school. More clearly defined management roles for senior and middle managers so that they can be effective in driving standards have been established since the previous inspection.
- 54 Target setting is used very well in order to focus on whole school priorities for development. These are first agreed by the senior management team and governors and then taken up by team leaders. These then have targets for their teams. This ensures that all staff have a clear view of the expectations for improvement and a shared approach to school development.
- 55 The team leaders for under-fives, Key Stage 1, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 work together effectively as a team. They also lead their respective teams of teachers in providing consistent and appropriate challenges for most pupils. The curriculum co-ordinators for English, mathematics science are largely effective and contribute to the improving standards of attainment achieved by most pupils. There are good standards in science and improving standards in English and maths. In information technology, good leadership and management is bringing about improvements in provision and development of the subject. Much of this is recent and is not yet impacting on standards. The co-ordination of other subjects is satisfactory. Co-ordinators are clear about their roles and responsibilities but these are not sufficiently linked to raising expectations of pupils' achievement. There has been good improvement in developing the role of the co-ordinators since the previous inspection.
- 56 The governors carry out their responsibilities satisfactorily and fulfil almost all their statutory duties. Details of arrangements for the provision of pupils with special educational needs were omitted from the annual report to parents. The chair of governors is knowledgeable about the school and has a very clear idea of its strengths and weaknesses. The governors use their expertise to the benefit of the school and are developing their strategic role well. Although the chair and the headteacher have clear ideas about the future development of the school, including necessary building works, there is no single coherent plan, which can enable all governors to monitor and evaluate effectively the work and future direction of the school.
- 57 The monitoring of teaching in literacy and numeracy is good. This monitoring has resulted in improving standards of pupils' attainment. In English, mathematics and science, teaching is monitored regularly and this has resulted in improvements in quality and standards. In other subjects co-ordination focuses on the monitoring of planning. This is done effectively to ensure coverage of a subject. However, it is insufficiently developed to focus on the raising of pupils' attainment.
- 58 The monitoring of pupils with special educational needs is very thorough and the procedures for identifying pupils for the register are very good. Pupils with learning difficulties are identified early in their school life and are moved from the register only after careful consideration. However, the systems for monitoring are too complex for normal efficient working. The system currently works because of the involvement of the headteacher. The newly appointed special educational needs co-ordinator is reviewing these systems and the newly introduced individual education plans are very good. These new plans allow pupils, parents and staff to track the progress made by pupils with special educational needs more clearly. They also specify more clearly the provision and strategies appropriate to meet the needs of these pupils.

- 59 Financial administration and planning is good. The school's educational priorities are well supported by careful financial planning. Priorities, in the past, were closely matched to financial planning in the school development plan. With the current development plan not yet finalised, financial planning for the future is less clear. The headteacher and chair of governors are, however aware of the major issues to be addressed in the development of the school. The administration of the financial systems is very efficient and the governors provide good support for monitoring. All specific funds are used for the appropriate purposes. The school uses the principles of best value and always seeks to get value for money in making purchases.
- 60 Staffing provision is good. The school has a sufficient number of teachers, who are suitably qualified. Recent appointments have made sure that staff are well qualified in English, mathematics and science. There is a good balance of new and more experienced teachers. Good use is made of well-trained support staff. All staff have good access to training. Professional development linked to training has a high priority and is an important feature of the school. Training is well targeted to developments in the curriculum and is designed to enable teachers and other staff to develop in their careers as well as to improve the learning of pupils. The deputy headteacher and team leaders are all studying for advanced qualifications. The arrangements for the induction of new staff are good and for newly qualified staff, they are very good. The headteacher works closely with teacher training institutions and the school is an effective place in which to train teachers.
- 61 The accommodation is good overall and will improve with the imminent building programme. Classrooms are spacious and well organised. The outside areas are sufficient and well kept and include a useful nature area and the quiet garden. These are well used to enhance the pupils' learning. There is a large, fenced area for children who are under five and the other reception children. This is not particularly stimulating, although the school is aware of this and has run a competition for pupils to come up with a more attractive design.
- 62 Teaching and learning resources are good and most are used well. They are well stored and accessible to both teachers and pupils. There is a school library in a central location, which is well classified. It is used well for research and the development of pupils' library skills. There is, however a limited range of non-fiction resource texts, especially for the higher attaining pupils. Whilst good use is made of information technology in the administration, there are insufficient computers in the school to effectively teach the curriculum for information technology. There are sufficient resources for teaching religious education. The resources for children who are under five are mostly good, although there is a lack of large toys for outdoor play. Other resources are mostly good. The improvement in resources since the previous inspection has been good.
- 63 Taking into account the average attainment on entry to the nursery; the good overall quality of teaching and learning; the improving standards; the very good leadership by the headteacher, and the generally good use made of all resources, the school continues to provide good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64 In order to improve standards and the quality of learning, the headteacher, staff and governors should: (It is recognised that the school is already taken some relevant initiatives).

- 1 Improve the standards and pace of learning of the higher attaining pupils by ensuring that:
 - a) work in all subjects provides sufficient challenge;
 - b) teaching builds more effectively upon what pupils already know, understand and can do;
 - c) Improve the provision of non-fiction resource texts.

(This issue is discussed in paragraphs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 20, 27, 46, 62, 78, 80 and 110)

- 2 Improve standards and pupils' progress in information technology by:
 - a) ensuring that skills are developed systematically from year to year;
 - b) establishing consistent assessments of pupils' progress;
 - c) building up appropriate hardware and software;
 - d) using computers more in work in other subjects;
 - e) providing more experiences for pupils to develop control and modelling.

This issue is discussed in paragraphs 7, 21, 25, 75, 84, 90, 104, 108, 110, 111, 112 and 113)

- 3 Extend the good practice in the assessment of English, mathematics and science into all other subjects.

(This issue is discussed in paragraphs 23, 44, 45, 95, 100, 105, 116, 121, 125 and 130)

In addition to the above key issues, the following less significant weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- The implementation of a whole school approach to the development of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.
(Paragraphs 26 and 73)
- Ensure that all statutory information is included in the annual report to parents.
(Paragraph 49 and 56)
- Develop a clear written strategic development plan beyond the current academic year
(Paragraphs 56 and 59)
- Review and evaluate the complex arrangements for pupil grouping
(Paragraph 27)

**Provide more opportunities for reflection in assemblies and for pupils to study non-western cultures in subjects such as history, geography, art and music.
(Paragraphs 30 and 32)**

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	67
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13	46	39	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	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	347
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	108

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	6.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	20	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	18	18
	Girls	30	32	31
	Total	44	50	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85	96	94
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	18	19
	Girls	32	32	31
	Total	49	50	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94	96	96
	National	82	86	87

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	24	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	14	19
	Girls	20	18	23
	Total	34	32	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71	67	88
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	16	16
	Girls	20	21	21
	Total	30	37	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63	77	77
	National	68	69	75

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	289
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	31.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	190

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	544,640
Total expenditure	545,777
Expenditure per pupil	1,555
Balance brought forward from previous year	44,483
Balance carried forward to next year	43,346

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	347
Number of questionnaires returned	141

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	43	50	5	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	42	49	6	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	58	6	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	15	62	20	3	1
The teaching is good.	34	58	5	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	48	23	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	46	40	9	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	40	4	2	1
The school works closely with parents.	35	48	10	4	3
The school is well led and managed.	37	48	6	3	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	52	5	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	45	23	6	8

NB: Percentages of responses are rounded to nearest integer, sum may not = 100%

Other issues raised by parents

At the meeting for parents a significant minority expressed some concern that pupils were not getting enough music and physical education

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

65 The children are given a very good start to their school life in the reception unit. The strengths outlined in the previous report have been maintained and the quality of teaching has improved. Children are admitted in the September of the year in which they are five. Most have had some form of pre-school experience in playgroups or nursery. At the time of the inspection there were nine children under five. The attainment of children on entry is broadly average although the full range of attainment is represented. By the age of five, most children have attained the desirable outcomes in all areas of learning with a significant minority working beyond. Progress for all pupils is good.

Personal and social development

66 Teaching is consistently good and enables all children to make good progress in this aspect of their learning. All adults have very good relationships with the children and their parents. Clear routines and expectations of behaviour are established from the outset. This ensures that all children learn right from wrong, develop good attitudes to work and the confidence to try things for themselves without fear of failure. All adults encourage children to tidy away their own equipment and to respect what others have to say. This has a good effect on the development of self-discipline and responsibility. Children develop very well as co-operative learners, playing well together with construction apparatus and in role-play activities. Five children organised themselves well when playing in the home corner and allocated roles to each other. They work for increasing periods of time independently. Children were seen happily working on the computer or doing a jigsaw on their own for up to ten minutes without losing concentration. Teachers involve all children under five in shared literacy and numeracy lessons and this develops their speaking and listening skills effectively.

Language and literacy

67 Language and literacy are taught well and children make good progress. By the age of five, most children follow instructions well and express themselves clearly. Their involvement in the class literacy hour has a positive effect upon their learning. Children listen attentively to the teacher in story sessions and are encouraged to talk about pictures and stories read to them. All pupils enjoy looking at books and handle them carefully. Two children were seen turning the pages of a story book together and talking about the pictures and characters in the story. Two higher attaining children were seen listening to a story tape and following the story in a book. Most pupils produce recognisable drawings and make good attempts at writing. Most higher attaining children copy write in recognisable script under a teacher model. Early reading is taught well with a strong emphasis on letter sounds. Most children recognise all initial letter sounds. Average and higher attaining children read simple texts and use the pictures to help their understanding. Teachers make good use of resources to stimulate and develop children's learning. Big books, pictures and charts are all used well. Visitors extend children's learning further, for example, a grandmother talked to the children about a suitcase of old toys she had kept. This resulted in excited discussion and stimulus for writing an extended piece spread over two lessons.

Mathematics

- 68 Mathematics is taught well and children make good progress. Teachers plan frequent opportunities for children to count and most children count to ten and beyond accurately. There are a wide variety of number lines clearly visible for the children and these are referred to by the teachers at every opportunity. Most children match numbers to objects correctly. Average and higher attaining pupils add and subtract from numbers up to ten. They count numbers in a set and record a simple number statement on a white board. They are encouraged to check their answers by recounting to avoid mistakes. Role-play activities are set up to help children see practical applications of their work, for example, a café is used to encourage them to add up simple bills using coins. All children are benefiting from the numeracy hour lessons, where teachers introduce and consolidate key vocabulary and concepts. Good questioning is used to develop skills of mental mathematics, for example, 'shut eyes mathematics' where teacher sets a simple problem that children have to work out in their head. Most children recognise and group simple two-dimensional shapes according to various attributes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development

- 69 The children show a natural interest in their environment that is built on effectively by the teachers. The quality of teaching is good in all these areas of learning and children make good progress. They are given good opportunities to work with computers, tape recorders and other technology. There is a focus on safety so that children realise the need to care for the equipment and handle it with care. Stimulating visits into the local community and visitors to the school to talk to the children are well linked in with carefully planned topics. This enables the children to see the relevance of what they are doing and adds an exciting edge to the work. In a current topic on toys, children gained a good insight into how things change over time and how the lives of children in the past differed from their own. Children are given frequent opportunities to work on computers. Most children use a mouse to control a cursor effectively and access a variety of software correctly to extend their literacy and numeracy skills. Early scientific skills are developed well in activities with sand and water. For example, in floating and sinking investigations, children are encouraged to predict and observe closely.
- 70 Children make good progress in their creative and physical development. Appropriate opportunities are provided for them to work in a large hall, where they demonstrate a good awareness of space and movement to different music. They handle tools carefully and with increasing control in design and technology activities. For example, they make a cup and ball game using a variety of materials and simple tools effectively. In outdoor play, opportunities are provided for children to develop physical skills on large toys and apparatus. Children play imaginatively in the role play areas and make up simple stories about their play. Teachers provide good opportunities in the afternoon activity session for children to explore colour, shape and texture through painting, collage, drawing and manipulating a variety of materials. Children use musical instruments well and sing a good number of songs from memory.

ENGLISH

- 71 The previous inspection report indicated that standards in both key stages were broadly in line with the national average. In 1999, the National Curriculum assessments for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that overall standards were in line with the national average and writing was well above. At the end of Key Stage 2, the 1999 results showed that overall standards were below the national average due to a low percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 5. In relation to similar schools, they were also below average. In the years 1996 to 1999 since the last inspection, results at Key Stage 1 have been broadly maintained. The Key Stage 2 results between 1996 and 1999 have followed a similar trend over this period. The school's assessment of current Year 6 pupils shows further improvement. This indicates that standards in English are at least keeping pace with a rising national trend. Inspection evidence supports this picture of attainment and progress at both key stages. However, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels is not yet high enough.
- 72 By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading are similar to the national average and in writing they are better than this. Letter sound strategies (phonics) for reading are consistently applied and a thorough knowledge of books and how to use them is being firmly established. Pupils speak confidently about their reading and the features of the books they are reading. A broad range of activities gives pupils opportunities to write with increasing fluency and understanding. Recently there has been a partnership with parents to target the improvement of spelling and this is helping raise standards. Parents have valued their involvement in this initiative that begins with work in school and follows through with appropriate homework. Speaking and listening skills are similar to those found in most schools. Most children speak clearly and confidently about their work and listen attentively in lessons. Some of them get the opportunity to read from their work to the school assembly and this boosts their confidence.
- 73 In Key Stage 2 most pupils make good progress in reading, speaking, listening and writing. The rate of progress of higher attaining pupils is mostly satisfactory due to insufficient challenge in a significant minority of lessons. The quality of extended writing is showing improvement over time. Pupils write for a wide variety of purposes. Their writing is displayed in classes and around the school and is integrated with other subjects like art and music where prose or poetry is used well to write interpretations of a theme. However, there is no school-wide approach to the development of literacy across the curriculum and some opportunities are missed. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This is because they are well supported in their work by teachers and learning support assistants. All pupils benefit from varied lesson content that invariably captures their interest and encourages their involvement. Recently boys have been seen to achieve lower standards than girls but this gap has narrowed. The school has taken appropriate action to address this issue and full staff training on strategies to raise boys' standards has been prepared and given by the English co-ordinator.
- 74 A good selection of reading books is available in classes and many children make use of the local town library. The library at school is used for research purposes and a small but good variety of books is stored there. The county library service is used effectively to provide a variety of resources each term. Satisfactory reading records are used. Parents and teachers write comments in these books and pupils show a good level of self-assessment by being able to discuss their weaknesses in reading. All the children spoken to had a good grasp of how to choose a good book to read and all of them referred to the "blurb". This showed continuity of approach across the school.

- 75 Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is often good. Teachers are careful to encourage a quiet, purposeful environment for learning. They provide additional material to explain texts and in one lesson the children were challenged to think carefully about the cultural implications for a Jamaican person who came to live in Britain. The teacher also showed a mango and an orange to further illustrate the text. This lesson was sensitively used to raise cross-cultural awareness in a school where there are relatively few people representing ethnic minorities. Planning for English is good throughout the school. The national model for planning and teaching the literacy hour is closely followed. Vocabulary-building opportunities are well used in all lessons and many teachers were seen to use these parts of the literacy hour lesson to explore types of words and the role they play in different contexts. Closing sessions were sometimes rushed in a number of lessons. They provided positive feedback but in a significant number of lessons they did not give sufficient focus for pupil improvement. Although some examples were seen, computers are not used sufficiently to support work in English.
- 76 Statutory test results are used well to inform planning and non-statutory testing contributes well to assessment data. A variety of other forms of assessment is used. Informal assessment in every lesson is supported by formal procedures that are outlined in the school's assessment policy. The co-ordinator monitors lessons and planning throughout the school and gives all staff good support and guidance. This is having a good impact on standards and pupils' progress. Staff work well together to identify areas requiring development, like the progress made by boys, and apply their agreed aims consistently.
- 77 In all classes, pupils respond well to the teaching. Behaviour in all English lessons seen was very good making it possible for all pupils to learn. They also help each other and work co-operatively in group sections of lessons.
- 78 The overall management of English throughout the school is largely effective with good time given to meetings, in-service training and planning. There are effective procedures to manage change successfully in order to raise standards. Within the context of continuing to raise standards there are too few pupils who attain the higher level 5 in national tests. This is confirmed by inspection evidence of a significant minority of lessons where there is insufficient challenge for the higher attaining pupils. The school is addressing this issue.

MATHEMATICS

- 79 In the 1999 National Curriculum assessments for pupils aged seven, over 90 per cent of pupils attained the expected level 2 in mathematics, but the percentage attaining the higher level 3 was below the national average. This is indicative of a lack of sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils borne out by inspection evidence. Other pupils achieve well and inspection evidence indicates good progress over the past year. Standards are not quite as high as at the time of the previous inspection, but there is an increasing percentage of pupils who have special educational needs.
- 80 There is evidence of improvement in standards in mathematics for the pupils who are now in Year 6, despite the below average results in 1999, both nationally and when compared with similar schools. Work in pupils' books shows good coverage of most aspects of the subject and well presented work. Staff are planning much more closely together and very good management and co-ordination of the subject are raising the profile of the subject. Effective targeting of weaknesses shown up in testing has been effective, for example, in closing the gap between the performance of girls and boys and paying more attention to data handling. These good initiatives have not yet led to improvements in the standards and progress of the higher attaining pupils. They spend too much time on concepts that they have already grasped when they should be doing more challenging work. Evidence from the provisional results of the 2000 National tests indicates improvement with this issue.

- 81 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' numeracy skills are developed satisfactorily. Most pupils have a sound sense of the size of a number and where it fits into the number system. They read, write, order and add and subtract numbers to a hundred. They add and subtract money correctly to one pound. Most pupils follow number patterns in a sequence, for example, they complete a pattern $42 - 34 - 26 - 18$ ----. They recognise odd and even numbers. Higher and average attaining pupils know that an odd number added to another odd number would equal an even number. Most pupils recognise line symmetry, right angles and tell the time to the quarter hour. They measure in centimetres with satisfactory accuracy. Pupils are beginning to use symbols and simple diagrams and discuss their work using an appropriate mathematical vocabulary.
- 82 By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have a sound understanding of place value to a thousand. They use a variety of written and mental computations involving addition, subtraction and multiplication and add and subtract decimals to two places. In work on data handling higher and average attaining pupils recognise the mean, median and range of a set of data and use the correct vocabulary to describe their work. Most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of fractions and percentages and know how to find the perimeter and area of a shape. Work is presented well and shows that pupils' take a pride in their work and want to do well. At both key stages, mental sessions at the start of the numeracy hour are developing pupils' mental mathematics satisfactorily. Numeracy skills support work in other subjects satisfactorily, for example, tables, charts and graphs are used in information technology and science. Co-ordinates support work in geography and pupils' knowledge of symmetry lends support to work in art.
- 83 Teaching is satisfactory overall with almost a half of the lessons seen being good and none unsatisfactory. There is no significant difference in the quality of teaching in the key stages. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and this builds on skills effectively and develops the correct vocabulary. Expectations of behaviour are high and this manifests itself in the very good behaviour evident in the large majority of lessons.
- 84 The numeracy hour is well planned and generally well taught, although in most lessons, the opening mental activity does not have the necessary pace and 'fizz'. This leads to sound rather than good progress in this session and some loss of enthusiasm on the part of the pupils. Group activities are well structured and prepared so that no time is lost in beginning work. In a significant number of group activities there is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils and this slows their progress. In the most effective lessons, groups are given strict time targets. A teacher will say, "*You have 15 minutes to finish this.*" Good questioning is used and in the most effective lessons, pupils are encouraged to share their strategies with the class. For example, a teacher will ask, "*that's interesting, tell us how you worked that out?*" This helps pupils make good progress in understanding how problems can be overcome by looking at them in different ways. There is good sharing of objectives with the class, for example, teachers will often begin an activity by saying, "*today we are going to ----.*" In all sessions, resources support learning well with all teachers using overhead projectors, white boards, number lines and tables to develop understanding effectively. Computers are being used more in mathematics lessons, but this is not yet consistent enough to have a strong impact on pupils' learning.
- 85 The closing discussions in the numeracy hour reinforce key learning points and vocabulary well in the majority of lessons. There is, however, insufficient focus on critical appraisal of work at this time and so opportunities to cement expectations are missed. Better team planning both within and across key stages is improving the continuity of learning experiences and impacting well on pupils' progress. Assessment procedures are good and the use of assessment to inform planning is mostly good. Teachers miss some opportunities to focus on groups as they work in order to gauge their understanding and record any problems encountered. Marking is good and where it is most effective, indicates how work might be improved. Homework is supporting learning satisfactorily in both key stages. Leadership in the subject is good and is bringing about improvements in standards and the quality of learning. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to increase the percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels and is planning relevant strategies to bring about improvements.

SCIENCE

- 86 National Curriculum teacher assessments in 1999 for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that standards were above the national average with a significant percentage achieving at a higher level. This is confirmed by inspection evidence. Pupils are clear about the concept of predicting outcomes and are able to record their results, for example, when sorting materials according to their magnetic properties. When studying worms in wormeries pupils learn that creatures are suited to their particular environments. They have a good understanding of primary and secondary sources of light and are beginning to understand the principles of reflection. Appropriate use is made of information technology when studying simple electrical circuits.
- 87 In the 1999 National Curriculum assessments for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, standards were in line with the national average and those in similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected level 4 was above the national average and the number of pupils achieving the higher level 5 was similar to the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that overall standards are now above the national average. This is due to good teaching and greater emphasis on experimental and investigative science. With the exception of a decline in 1996 national test results have shown an upward trend since the previous inspection. Pupils are able to devise different methods of recording results. There are good links with mathematics, for example, using graphs to support work when studying pulse rates and breathing. Pupils have a good understanding of the human skeleton and the life cycle of human beings. They acquire a good knowledge of terminology when investigating the solubility of materials. When studying sound, pupils also learn the detail of the human ear.
- 88 Pupils make good progress with learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. The school is particularly successful at teaching pupils how to use an investigative approach to science. Pupils develop a very firm understanding of the principles of a fair test, which they apply successfully to their work. When recording results pupils progress well from using systems suggested by the teacher to devising their own methods in Key stage 2. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of good support from teachers and their assistants.
- 89 In both key stages, pupils' learning is aided by their very good levels of application to tasks. They collaborate and co-operate well when carrying out investigations. Very good levels of behaviour and good relationships between pupils and with adults also have a positive effect on their learning.
- 90 At both key stages, teaching is mostly good and never less than satisfactory. This is the key factor in the good standards and progress of the pupils. Elements contributing to successful teaching include:
- a) teachers' good subject knowledge that is evident when questions are used well to reinforce and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding;
 - b) good response to pupils when they do not understand a point;
 - c) good stress on subject specific vocabulary;
 - d) good use of comments in marking to help pupils with their future work.

Joint planning used as a basis for lesson plans ensures that pupils in different classes within the same year group have similar experiences. This is less effective when lesson plans are not modified to take account of what pupils already know. Discussion sessions are well used to reinforce lesson content. Teachers encourage pupils to think about how they might set up investigations but do not often encourage pupils to take more responsibility for selecting apparatus for themselves. There were some examples of computers being used in lessons but this is not consistent enough, particularly in Key Stage 2, for example, when collecting data in investigations involving different temperatures.

- 91 The two subject co-ordinators are well qualified. The scheme of work is well organised and fully covers all elements of the programmes of study. Pupils' attainment is regularly assessed and guides planning well. Monitoring of teaching, pupils' work and planning leads to modifications of the teaching programme. There was a discrepancy between teacher assessments and national test results in Key Stage 2 in 1999, but systems are now in place to ensure more uniformity of teacher assessments. Resources are organised and accessible, some being of a quality that prepares pupils well for the transition to secondary education. Visits to such places as the Natural History Museum provide a useful supplement to the curriculum.

ART

- 92 The previous inspection judged art to be satisfactory in some areas but limited in range and quality of the experiences offered to pupils. The co-ordinator has worked hard to develop the teaching of art and has, together with staff, identified some important areas for development in planning and resources that have brought about improvements.
- 93 The work seen in Key Stage 1 was similar to that expected for pupils' age. Two lessons were seen during the inspection. Other evidence included scrutiny of a variety of wall displays and a portfolio of work. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met but planning is arranged in separate units of unconnected work and this hampers the development of key skills from year to year. Skills learnt are seldom revised frequently enough and much has to be re-learnt before further learning can occur. This slows down pupils' progress. Staff have recently taken the decision to move away from this system of planning to a more regular approach to skill development. There are clear signs that this is bringing a more consistent development of the teaching of the basic skills.
- 94 In Key Stage 2, the standards of work are broadly in line with expectations for pupils' age. The lessons seen at this level concerned printing techniques and the teaching was never less than satisfactory. Pupils were enthusiastic to do the work and many achieved satisfactory results. Some of them worked at a good pace and achieved a good layered effect with different colours. Displays around the school show satisfactory work produced during the study of different artists.
- 95 In both key stages suitable experiences are provided in order to give pupils opportunities to work with a good variety of media and techniques. This includes some three-dimensional work. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about this work. Teachers are confident and well prepared. Their lessons are well planned and satisfactory use is made of the available time. There are no consistent assessment systems to enable teachers to plan effectively from what pupils already know.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 96 At both key stages, the work seen in the subject was similar to that expected for pupils' age. Standards have improved in most aspects of the subject since the previous inspection when the work seen in Key Stage 2 was unsatisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils select materials from a limited range according to their appearance and texture. They have a satisfactory understanding for their age of how to conduct research and put appropriate labels on samples of materials they are likely to use.

- 97 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of design principles. They know about taking the user into account when designing. They produce satisfactory diagrams of what they are about to make and give reasons for their design decisions. These sometimes lack sufficient detail. Pupils analyse items and use this information as the basis of their own designs. They know that some simple structures require corners to be reinforced in order to give stability. Pupils use their knowledge of structures and simple skills with cutting and joining materials to produce a working model of a shaduf in connection with a study of Ancient Egypt. There is lack of continuity with work on food technology. This leads to pupils having insufficient opportunities to develop related practical skills over time.
- 98 Pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages with their increasing understanding and application of elements of designing. The two-year planning cycle includes too few opportunities for pupils to develop skills in food technology and pupils' progress in this aspect is unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make progress similar to other pupils in the class, benefiting from support from the class teacher and ancillary staff. Relationships between pupils and adults help pupils to develop their skills confidently. Pupils readily share equipment and materials.
- 99 In the lessons observed teaching was at least satisfactory and occasionally good. Elements contributing to successful teaching include:
- a) satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the elements of design;
 - b) time being given for pupils to practise skills;
 - c) appropriate use of information technology for investigating lettering styles;
 - d) teachers' good use of questions to extend pupils' understanding.

Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. Lessons are generally well organised with a mix of activities. Lesson planning is satisfactory but does not indicate how higher attaining pupils might work at appropriate levels. This results in some lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils. Some lesson objectives could be clearer to indicate what pupils are expected to learn.

- 100 The two co-ordinators are well qualified. The long-term plans show coverage of all elements of the programmes of study, but there is insufficient reference to National Curriculum levels, which would help with planning and assessment for pupils with different levels of attainment. Provision for food technology is unsatisfactory and is not included in planning for Years 5 and 6. The school is aware of this and the planned building alterations are due to provide suitable accommodation for this to happen. Resources are well organised and accessible. A recent project has made good links with engineering and a commercial link has enabled some work in food technology to be carried out in Years 1 and 2.

GEOGRAPHY

- 101 In both key stages, much of the work seen is similar to that expected for pupils' age and all pupils, including those who have special educational needs make generally satisfactory progress in both key stages. Mapping skills are well taught and the effective development of skills from year to year results in good progress in this aspect of the subject. This is similar to the position at the time of the previous inspection.

- 102 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make relevant observations about places and use resources effectively to respond to questions about them. They use appropriate vocabulary when describing key features. This was exemplified in a Year 2 lesson on houses and homes where pupils also used their numeracy skills to record the type of house they lived in on a class bar chart. They were interested and excited by this work and this had a good impact on their progress. Pupils have a sound knowledge of wider issues such as pollution and design posters to show the dangers of dropping litter in the environment. Early mapping skills are good, for example, pupils draw picture maps of their route to school and plot the position of fire extinguishers on a map of the school. Pupils design their own weather symbols and simple mapping symbols on picture maps.
- 103 By the end of Key Stage 2, mapping skills have developed well and pupils work with maps of different scales. They enjoy working on this aspect and talk enthusiastically about how they trace the journey of their local river from its source to the sea. They are familiar with atlases and identify key features on maps of Britain and the world. They know about lines of latitude and longitude and how to locate the position of a feature by using co-ordinates. Literacy skills are used well in research work on similarities and differences between the local area and an Indian village. Writing skills support work on environmental issues well when pupils write letters to the council protesting to plans for building on land near the school.
- 104 The quality of teaching in both key stages is mostly satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding enabling them to develop the correct geographical vocabulary and build on skills from year to year. This is particularly good in the development of mapping skills. Expectations of behaviour are consistently high, although higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged through extended research and investigations. This slows their progress. Planning is based on a topic cycle that ensures experiences of the subject are sufficiently substantial and well defined. Effective use is made of maps, pictures, charts, visits and visitors. For example, a recent visit to local gravel pits and a talk by a quarry worker enriched and extended pupils' learning about local industry. In general teachers do not use computers sufficiently to support work in the subject.
- 105 Whilst medium term plans indicate assessment tasks, there is no consistent approach to assessment in the subject. This makes it difficult for teachers to plan from what is already known by the pupils. This has a negative effect on the pupils' progress. There are good examples of homework being used to support learning. In Key Stage 1, pupils were encouraged to check and write their own addresses to be used to locate houses on a map of the village in a future lesson.

HISTORY

- 106 The work seen in both key stages was similar to that expected for pupils' age. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Progress in pupils' learning is satisfactory in both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils broaden their knowledge of historical events. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 know about the Great Fire of London in 1665 and the fire in Somersham in 1815. They study these as part of topic on "Fire" and also compare fire-fighting equipment used in 1815 with a modern fire engine. They begin to compare events from different periods in history. Many are beginning to understand some of the ways in which the past is represented.
- 107 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils continue to broaden their knowledge. They begin to describe some of the main events of a period and gain in their use of evidence and interpretation of the past. They produce well-structured written work using the appropriate terms. In Years 3 and 4 pupils understand why children were evacuated from cities in 1940 and can, from personal accounts, understand some of the feelings of people involved at the time. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have a sound knowledge of the Roman, Viking and Norman invasions of Britain. They make simple comparisons between these invaders and identify some of their legacies. They write short factual accounts using appropriate terms. The work in pupils' exercise books is neat and well presented.

- 108 Due to the planning of history within a topic cycle there were no lessons on the timetable during the inspection. However, from the analysis of pupils' work and scrutiny of teachers' planning, teaching is at least satisfactory. Long, medium and short term planning ensures that coverage of the subject is enough to enable the pupils to make satisfactory progress in their learning. The planning allows teachers to broaden the knowledge of their pupils and to help them gain an understanding of the periods of time separating events. However, there is insufficient focus on the use of planning to raise standards, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. The work of pupils is marked effectively for encouragement and this helps pupils in their learning. Teachers are beginning to develop literacy skills through the subject and use word lists and different forms of writing to reinforce pupils' use of language. However, these are insufficiently developed to ensure that pupils are always attaining at the higher levels. Whilst some use is made of information technology, for example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 access the Internet to gather information on evacuation in World War 2, access to work on CD-ROMs and the Internet is limited.
- 109 The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors the planning of the teams and ensures coverage of the National Curriculum. Insufficient emphasis is placed upon different expectations for pupils in mixed age classes and upon standards expected of the higher attaining pupils. Good use is made of the locality for studying buildings and events. Speakers are also invited into school to speak about their experiences and these enhance the learning opportunities for pupils.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- 110 Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is now broadly in line with the national expectation. However, there is no evidence of higher attaining pupils being able to produce work above this level. The lack of progress to these levels is allied to lack of access to sufficient computers. Most pupils are able to use a word processing program in connection with English. They know how to save and retrieve their work from disk. Pupils know how to enter information into a simple database about modes of travel to school. They understand how simple electronic devices can be controlled and can enter individual commands to operate a programmable toy. Pupils can use a simulation program to model simple electrical circuits to support work in science.
- 111 Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below national expectations. Pupils are able to download pictorial images and merge this with text from the Internet to support a topic on Ancient Egypt. In this connection they are able to plan work for a particular audience, but have too little experience of developing this work to desktop publishing. The control and modelling aspects are particularly poor in Key Stage 2. These issues have not been addressed since the last inspection. For example, pupils are unaware of applications for spreadsheets and do not have experience of using information technology for data logging and representing this information in graphical form. The school is aware of these shortcomings and is beginning to take action.
- 112 There is some satisfactory usage of computers to support work in English, with pupils carrying out word-processing of text in a variety of forms. There is some use in mathematics, for example, when entering commands to control an on-screen image. It is clear from conversations with pupils that these types of experience are much too intermittent. The use of computers to support other subjects is generally undeveloped and therefore unsatisfactory.
- 113 Pupils make unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. For example, the work controlling an on-screen image is not developed so that they can put together a series of commands into a simple program. Progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory but does not enable higher attaining pupils to work at higher levels. Work on databases is not sufficiently developed through Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make progress similar to other pupils in the class, with support from the class teacher and ancillary staff.

- 114 Pupils show good levels of interest when working on computers. Relationships between pupils are very good enabling them to work very well in groups, although 4 pupils at a computer at a time does not give each pupil sufficient time to develop keyboard skills. Pupils use their initiative to help resolve problems themselves.
- 115 Teaching was satisfactory in two out of the three lessons observed. In the other lesson it was unsatisfactory. It is however clear that overall teaching is unsatisfactory. In the lessons where the teaching is satisfactory the teachers have secure subject knowledge. This is evident through clear expositions of what pupils have to do. There is good stress on appropriate vocabulary. Teachers arrange satisfactory resources, including well-presented help sheets, to allow pupils to work independently. Joint planning for similar classes is beneficial when it works well. However, this is less successful when it includes introductions that go on for too long. In class sessions, teachers do not always take the opportunity to allow pupils to demonstrate applications on the computer. The small standard size screen is too small for all pupils to see. In the one unsatisfactory lesson expectations were too low, with instructions repeated rather than giving pupils opportunities to use an application and develop keyboard skills themselves.
- 116 Good recent progress has been made with organising the computers so that pupils in all classrooms have access to the Internet. However, there are fewer computers per pupil than is usual for this kind of school and there is a lack of some hardware necessary in order to teach the whole curriculum. There is an appropriate scheme of work, but it does not contain details of how pupils might make progress according to their previous levels of attainment. No system is yet in place to enable assessment of pupils' work to be used to inform planning. No formal monitoring of teaching has taken place recently. There has been a programme of training to prepare teaching and ancillary staff to teach the subject. This has not yet had full impact on pupils' attainment. The school benefits from having some technician time. Developments have not kept pace with the national trend. Progress since the last inspection has been uneven and is generally unsatisfactory.

MUSIC

- 117 In both key stages, the work seen is as expected for pupils' age and progress is satisfactory. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the previous inspection. Examples of performing, composing, listening and appraising were seen during the inspection. The school is raising the profile of music through effective planning, monitoring and the energy of the new co-ordinator.
- 118 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good knowledge of basic skills and vocabulary. They are able to discern changes in tempo, rhythm and volume. In a very good Key Stage 1 lesson, the class effectively explored the well known story of the Three Billy Goats Gruff and engaged in general discussion of the musical possibilities of the story. They then used instruments and their voices to vary volume, tone, pitch and timing to convey their interpretation of the story. Timing, movement, pitch and group singing were satisfactory and in all lessons seen children were keen to participate and were well managed.
- 119 By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have achieved a sound understanding of musical terms and are able to recognise key features of the music they hear. In one lesson pupils were working well with changes in tempo, rhythm and key to identify the composer's intentions. Another class worked with a variety of instruments to produce realistic mouse and elephant sounds. The preliminary whole class teaching focussed effectively on a variety of instruments and the effects created by changes in tempo and pitch. During the group work the pupils were kept firmly on task and were very well controlled by a visual stop/go signal from the teacher. This contributed to very good group music making techniques where the conductor must be watched.

- 120 During the past year the school has begun to raise the profile of music. In the lessons seen the teaching was never less than satisfactory and sometimes very good. All teachers are involved in lesson planning and are fully supported by the co-ordinator. An unnamed teacher who chooses music to be played before the whole school assemblies creates further interest in music each week. Pupils try to match the music with a teacher and there is an enthusiastic response on Fridays when children venture their choice. During the inspection some unusual instruments were shown in assembly so that children could get an idea of the source of the music they had been listening to.
- 121 Group singing is enjoyed and the basic techniques of controlled and tuneful singing are satisfactorily developed. Some children receive specialist violin instruction from a visiting teacher. The lesson seen showed good teaching and progress by a group of beginners. The school supports community activities and group singing was being practised for a carnival service. On this occasion a visitor came to the school with a guitar and gave strong leadership in continuing the teaching of a new song. Variety, depth and balance are being provided in the teaching of music and a growing enthusiasm for the subject is evident. There are no consistent assessment systems to build on skills already learnt or to address pupils' strengths and weaknesses.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 122 Only games and athletics lessons were observed during the inspection, but planning indicates that pupils do study dance and gymnastics in both key stages plus swimming and outdoor pursuits in Key Stage 2. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 due to poor weather conditions. Only gymnastics were seen in the previous inspection and this was judged to be satisfactory.
- 123 The standard of work seen in both key stages was similar to that expected for pupils' age. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils understand the rudiments of team games and know that co-operation is required as a team member. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils pass a ball by hand with appropriate accuracy but catching skills are less well developed. Pupils make good progress in lessons. They develop good balancing skills, evident in a warm-up for an athletics lesson. They also make good progress with the development of techniques for sprinting. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress, for example, in a lesson on ball game skills where resources are matched to their different levels of attainment. Pupils develop good levels of co-ordination. They are very well behaved and co-operate well in pairs and groups. They are attentive during demonstrations, which aids their learning.
- 124 In the small sample of lessons observed teaching was good. Teachers give pupils a good example by changing into sports clothing. They have good subject knowledge. This is evident when they demonstrate the correct techniques to the pupils. Good lesson organisation and structure leads to the achievement of the learning objectives. Pupils are given good opportunities to practise skills. However, sometimes demonstrations are too long, restricting pupils' time for skill development, a point raised in the previous inspection report.
- 125 The two co-ordinators have good levels of expertise. There is a satisfactory scheme of work in place that indicates coverage of all of the areas of the programmes of study. The curriculum in both key stages is well supplemented by additional activities, one of which is linked to a health education programme. Planning is monitored effectively and has led to modifications to the teaching programme. There is a satisfactory assessment system for swimming and some use of photography to record results of pupils' practical activities, but no other assessment system. This makes it difficult for teachers to build effectively on skills from year to year. Resources are plentiful and easily accessible. They are enhanced by the use of sports equipment available from a national scheme. The good indoor and outdoor teaching spaces are well used.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 126 The school has adopted the Cambridgeshire local agreed syllabus. The policy was written a few years ago after consultation with staff and with advice and input from the County Advisor. She gives regular support to the school. The programme of study follows a two-year cycle that ensures full coverage of the curriculum.
- 127 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain standards that are in line with those suggested by the local agreed syllabus. Standards were judged to be satisfactory in the previous inspection. The school encourages strongly the values of caring for others and these aims support the work done in the lessons. The response of the children in Key Stage 1 to the story of Moses showed a very good grasp of what life was like in those times. Role-play later in the lesson was thoughtfully presented with most children showing an understanding of how unhappy mothers were who had lost their sons, the unfairness of harsh leadership and how different that life was to their own.
- 128 By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' levels of attainment also match the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. Pupils study a variety of religions and the lesson seen on Hinduism was sensitively taught. The pupils showed respect and understanding and were able to explain the features of Hindu worship and the significance of the items used.
- 129 Written work is of a satisfactory standard but is mostly factual with little evidence of reflective writing. During lessons, good opportunities for reflection were seen but pupils were not encouraged to convey more of what they felt or thought on paper as well as orally. An opportunity to use their literacy skills was missed. Teachers take opportunities to develop in pupils a sense of wonder at creation but again there is little evidence of this being used as a basis for literacy development. Many children show a sensitive response to their community and the wider world. This is a whole-school philosophy that extends to many lessons.
- 130 Overall the pupils' learning is satisfactory. Lessons are well planned and the co-ordinator regularly monitors lesson plans and keeps written records of her monitoring. There are no consistent whole school assessment systems to track strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. All of the teaching is at least satisfactory and regular team meetings provide opportunities for teachers to discuss problems. Some key areas for development have been identified and include additional cross-curricular links and the provision for investigation, questioning and reflection in Key Stage 2.
- 131 Resources for teaching religious education are adequate, are checked annually and have been built up over time. The purchase of more artefacts has been planned and a collection of commercially produced videotapes to support learning is being built up.