

INSPECTION REPORT

STOW ON THE WOLD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stow on the Wold, Cheltenham

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115540

Headteacher: Miss C Thomson

Reporting inspector: Mr D Byrne
28076

Dates of inspection: 17th-20th January 2000

Inspection number: 215571

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Edward's Drive Stow-on-the-Wold Cheltenham
Postcode:	GL54 1AW
Telephone number:	01451 830784
Fax number:	
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. R. Glazier
Date of previous inspection: 1	4th October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
David Byrne, Rgl	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it?
		Science	How well are pupils taught?
		Information technology	What should the school do to improve further?
		Physical Education	How high are the standards?
Saleem Hussain	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
Peter Isherwood	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Geography	How well is the school led and managed?
		History	Special Educational Needs
		Religious Education	
Cicely Deloughry	Team inspector	Art	Under-fives
		Design technology and	Equal Opportunities
		Music	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This school is a small primary school for boys and girls aged from 4 to 11 years old. It has 126 full-time pupils, 67 boys and 59 girls. The attainment of children when they begin school is below that found nationally. Fourteen pupils have special educational needs; which is lower than the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides pupils with a satisfactory standard of education in which pupils develop good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour and, in most subjects make satisfactory progress. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- It promotes good attitudes, achieves high standards of behaviour and creates good relationships and levels of personal development amongst pupils.
- The school is popular with pupils which contributes to good levels of attendance and low levels of absence.
- There are good levels of moral and social development.
- Pupils are cared for very well and both personal and academic achievement is effectively monitored.
- Good links and levels of communication exist with parents and the community which benefits pupils' progress.
- The headteacher gives good leadership and effective management and offers a clear educational direction for the school.
- The staff, headteacher and Governing Body accurately identify the school's strengths and weaknesses and use a good school development planning process to improve the quality of education provided to pupils.
- The management of the school's finances, its accommodation and its resources is good.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing and handwriting across the school are not as good as they should be.
- The ability of pupils to apply their numeracy skills to real life situations should be better.
- Standards in information technology at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are below the expected levels of the National Curriculum.
- The planning of activities for children under-five lacks clarity and procedures for assessing and recording children's progress towards their learning goals are weak.
- Not enough time is made available for curriculum co-ordinators to monitor the standards of teaching and learning in the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in October 1996, it has made satisfactory improvement. Almost all of the key issues have been successfully dealt with and for those that have not, effective steps have been taken which are beginning to have a positive impact. The quality of teaching is much better than it was in 1996 with no lessons seen being less than satisfactory and a third of them being good. Curriculum management and monitoring are now much better and the Governing Body has developed a clear and effective management structure which is improving standards. Standards in science have improved and by the end of Key Stage 2 they are now good. Standards in information technology have improved, and are continuing to do so, despite the fact that the standards are still below those expected by the National Curriculum. Since the last inspection, standards have improved in design and technology across the school and in physical education by the end of Key Stage 2. The overall use of resources and accommodation is now good and effectively directed to benefit pupils' education.

The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved from being satisfactory to good with a particular strength being the provision for pupils to develop good moral values and social skills. The quality of information to parents has improved and parents feel they are fully involved in their children's education. The school is efficiently run and the value for money has risen from being unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection to being satisfactory.

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
	1996	1997	1998	1999
English	B	A	C	D
mathematics	B	B	D	E
science	C	A	C	C

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

It is difficult to draw accurate conclusions from the end of key stage National Curriculum test results because class sizes are very small which makes trends unreliable. There have been variations in the end of key stage National Curriculum tests results since 1996, but overall they have improved in line with schools nationally. In the years between 1996 and 1999, results by the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that the overall levels attained in reading and science have been consistently close to the national average but below the national average in writing and mathematics. Standards are also below average in mathematics and writing when compared to those of similar schools

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' performance since 1996 has been above national average in science, close to the national average in English, but below national average in mathematics. The results for 1999 indicate that in both science and English, results were close to the national average but below national average in mathematics. When compared to schools in a similar context, performance was well below average in mathematics, below

average in English and average in science. The Year 6 class taking the 1999 National Curriculum tests, included a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs including two pupils with statements, and this is the reason for the lower levels of performance.

Considering the fact that most children begin school with attainment which is below average, most pupils make satisfactory progress by the age of 11 except in writing and the use of information technology. Standards in mathematics are below national average, but inspection findings are that pupils are doing as well as they can and are making sound progress. Pupils attain particularly well in science, and by the end of Key Stage 2 standards are above national average. In all other subjects, pupils are doing as well as is expected by the age of 11, including religious education where pupils meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

When children are admitted to school at the age of four, the level of attainment for the majority is below average, especially in language and literacy and mathematics. Pupils make good progress in these areas and by the end of Key Stage 1, most reach standards expected for their age in English and mathematics. In all other subjects pupils aged seven are doing as well as is normally found except in information technology where standards are below what is expected.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. High levels of enthusiasm
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good both during lessons and at playtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils use their initiative and are capable of personal research.
Attendance	Good, with low levels of absenteeism.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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.

No lessons observed during the inspection were judged to be unsatisfactory and teaching in a third of lessons was good. Overall, teaching is satisfactory across the school in each subject with the exception of the teaching of information technology, which is unsatisfactory. In English, care and attention is given to teaching reading and the skills of writing but not enough planned opportunities are provided for pupils to develop skills of writing both fiction and non-fiction composition. In mathematics, good attention is given to developing pupils' understanding of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division but not enough emphasis is placed on developing pupils' investigative skills in mathematics.

The needs of all pupils are met, including those with learning difficulties and the more able. Most lessons are well planned and organised and the content is presented in an interesting way which motivates pupils to make satisfactory progress in learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a satisfactory curriculum. Each subject of the National Curriculum plus religious education is taught regularly although there is a weakness in information technology. An appropriate amount of time is devoted to literacy and numeracy. The provision of planned extra-curricular activities is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs are given good levels of support which is helping lower achievers to improve their standards.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. There are particular strengths in the way the school promotes both moral and social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are very well cared for. Good procedures are in place to support pupils' personal development, to ensure that the school is a safe environment and that pupils behave well and are tolerant and sensitive to others. Pupils' academic performance is carefully monitored.
How well the school works with parents and carers.	The school has a good partnership with parents and carers. Parents are encouraged to support their children at home and this benefits the progress made by many pupils in school. An active Parents' Association provides very good support to the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives a clear direction to the school and gives good leadership and effective management. All staff work together as a team to fulfil their commitments. Good procedures are being introduced to make sure that both academic and personal standards are as high as possible.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The Governing Body is committed to supporting the school and fulfils all of its responsibilities. Governors take an interest in what goes on in the school and regularly visit it to learn about the needs of both staff and pupils. The Governing Body carefully monitors all spending and checks on the impact of spending upon pupils' standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Procedures for monitoring its own performance are satisfactory.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well to meet the needs of pupils. Support staff are well deployed and contribute to raising

	standards in literacy and numeracy.
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PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
Parents feel that the school promotes good standards of work. Staff have high levels of care and commitment Attitudes and behaviour are considered to be very good. The school is seen to be well led and staff are approachable. Links with parents and the community are thought to be good	A significant minority believe that activities out of school could be better

The inspectors agree with the positive comments made by parents but feel that the provision of out of school activities is adequate for a small school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The overall attainment when children begin school at the age of four is below average, especially in language and literacy and numeracy. Inspection findings are that pupils make satisfactory progress and, by the age of 11 when they leave school, achieve standards which are as good as they are capable of. The exceptions to this are in writing in English and in information technology, where standards could be higher. Standards in mathematics are below national average, but inspection findings are that pupils are doing as well as they can and make satisfactory progress. Pupils do particularly well in science. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards are above national average. In all other subjects, pupils are doing as well as is expected by the age of 11.
2. It is difficult to accurately compare the end of Key Stage test results because class sizes are small and trends can be unreliable. Between 1996 and 2000, results for the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that the levels attained in reading and science have been consistently close to the national average but in writing and mathematics standards have been below national average. This is also the case when results are compared to schools of a similar context, where, over the same period of time, pupils' performance has been consistently below average in mathematics and in writing.
3. By the end of Key Stage 2, results between 1996 and 1999 have been consistently above national average in science, close to the national average in English, but below national average in mathematics. The results for 1999 indicate that in both science and English, results were close to the national average but below national average in mathematics. When compared to schools in a similar context, performance in 1999 was well below average in mathematics, below average in English and close to average in science. The Year 6 class taking the 1999 National Curriculum assessment tests, included a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs including two pupils with statements and in a class of less than twenty, this explains the dip in performance.
4. Boys do better than girls and have done so consistently since 1996. This is the reverse of the national trend. There is no obvious explanation as the school offers each pupil equal access to all elements of the curriculum. The headteacher and staff are aware of this anomaly and are carefully analysing possible reasons. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual educational plan targets. The pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to their work. They concentrate well on their work, for example in the group work in the literacy and numeracy sessions.
5. The school has targets for attainment which are below the national and county average. Careful analysis of data indicating the standards reached in the relevant classes, shows that the targets are accurate and match comparatively low levels of attainment. The school is making satisfactory progress towards reaching its targets.
6. Pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1, learn well and from a below average level of attainment on entry to the school, improve their standards of literacy and numeracy so that, with exception of speaking, the targets of the desirable learning outcomes for literacy and mathematics are reached by the age of five.

7. In Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in English and reach levels which match the national average, with a weakness in some aspects of writing. In writing, pupils use grammar and vocabulary with reasonable accuracy and spell most words correctly. The quality of handwriting, however, varies considerably and there is no consistently applied standard across the school. Writing often lacks flair and creativity and pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. There is evidence that the introduction of the literacy hour is improving standards. In mathematics, although standards are below national average pupils make satisfactory progress in basic numeracy but most pupils are not very good at applying their knowledge to problem solving situations. The numeracy hour is improving the standards of pupils' mental recall.
8. Standards in information technology at the end of both key stages are below those expected as outlined in the National Curriculum. This is mainly due to weak subject knowledge amongst staff and, until very recently, poor resources. In religious education, pupils at the end of both key stages attain standards which meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. In other subjects, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and do as well as is normally found by the age of 11.
9. Since the last inspection, standards have improved in design and technology and physical education. Standards in science have improved and are now above the national average. Although standards in information technology are below those expected by the National Curriculum, the inspection finds that standards are better than they were in 1996 and are now steadily improving.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils have good attitudes to school life. From the time that children begin school in Reception, they enjoy learning. The vast majority of parents state that they do not have difficulties in encouraging their child to go to school. The popularity of school contributes to above average levels of attendance and low levels of authorised or unauthorised absence. A significant reason for the school's popularity is the good relationships which exist between pupils and both teaching and non-teaching staff. Pupils enjoy their lessons and almost always enter enthusiastically into activities provided for them. The good attitudes that prevail, result in very good behaviour amongst pupils both during lessons and also during lunch and play-times. The good attitudes and very good behaviour allow pupils to work in an unhindered way so that the majority of them achieve the standards of which they are capable in most subjects.
11. Pupils are polite and considerate of others. Older and more knowledgeable pupils willingly help younger or less experienced pupils in many aspects of daily life in the school. No incidents of bullying or aggressive behaviour were noted during the inspection, and parents expressed complete confidence in the school's way of dealing with any unruly behaviour if it should occur. All pupils tolerate the views and religious persuasion of others. There is no evidence of any intolerance or prejudice against any particular group of pupils. Those with special educational needs are totally accepted by everyone and fully integrated into the life of the school. No pupil has needed to be excluded in the last twelve months.
12. Personal development is good. Pupils are very willing and keen to take responsibility. The school offers many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. For example, at lunch-times Year 6 pupils act as information technology helpers for Reception pupils.

Older pupils are caring towards new pupils and look after them at lunch and playtimes. This fosters good relationships, which are a feature of the school which has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils collaborate very well, for example, in the literacy hour, Year 4 and 5 pupils worked well in pairs to plan imaginative stories. Pupils in Key Stage 2 classes are very confident in speaking and listening to others. For example, they are happy to speak to their class to explain how they have approached set tasks. Pupils respect one another's contributions to class discussions and have a high regard for teachers and other adults. Pupils use their initiative well in their learning and at an early age develop independence skills, for example, they use dictionaries and thesauruses frequently.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. During the time of the inspection, no teaching was less than satisfactory and in a third of lessons it was good. Teachers cope with mixed age classes very well. Good teaching is typified by good planning, careful lesson preparation and the effective use of support staff. Planning is thorough, especially in literacy and mathematics, and the range of levels of attainment in classes is planned for effectively. Good use is made of assessment in mathematics to create sets of pupils of similar standards. Teachers work very effectively with classroom assistants and other support staff to match work to the needs of each set. Additional staffing is also well targeted to 'boost' the mathematics standards of low achieving pupils in Year 6 in preparation for the National Curriculum test. In literacy, the support staff funded to increase overall standards work very effectively with small groups of lower achieving pupils so that their standards are improved.
14. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the requirements of both the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and have successfully implemented them across the school. However, too little attention is given to developing pupils' skills of writing which results in many pupils not achieving as well as they might in English. A sound knowledge of science, religious education, design and technology, geography, history and physical education makes sure that these subjects are taught satisfactorily and pupils make satisfactory progress. Although the teaching of art is satisfactory there are some weaknesses which result in lower levels achieved by pupils. There is no music specialist on the school staff, but careful planning and the use of outside specialists is successfully bridging the gap in expertise so that pupils are given a basic music curriculum. This ensures that pupils make satisfactory progress overall. There is a weakness in teaching of the use and application of information technology. This contributes to standards which are lower than those expected by the National Curriculum.
15. Teaching of pupils under-five is satisfactory. Planning, however, is rather vague and the systems for tracking the progress of pupils towards the targets of the desirable learning outcomes are weak. In Key Stage 1 and 2, planning is usually detailed and thorough and includes clear aims and objectives for each topic and lesson. The medium term plans are particularly detailed but the short term plans tend to repeat unnecessarily work already planned. The needs of pupils of differing levels of attainment are planned for in literacy and numeracy, but in other subjects, there is rarely planned recognition of the range of pupils' needs. Although literacy and numeracy are taught across the curriculum, the school rarely identifies the way in which other subjects can contribute to the application of such basic skills. This is also the case with information technology.

16. The organisation of lessons in both Key Stage 1 and 2 successfully allows pupils to use independent learning skills. Teachers work well with support staff to make sure that pupils keep working and receive support in the event of need. Work for pupils with special educational needs is carefully planned which helps such pupils to reach the targets in their individual education plans. Homework is used well to extend opportunities for pupils' learning as well as involving parents in their child's learning. Although work is promptly marked, the quality of marking varies across the school. The expectations for pupils to correct work and to be involved in setting their own targets for improvement are not consistently applied which reduces the opportunity for pupils to learn to evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses and take responsibility for improving their work.
17. Overall, the satisfactory standard of teaching makes sure that pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning in each subject. The exception is in information technology and writing but recent strategies are improving progress in each area considerably.

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

18. The school offers all pupils a satisfactory curriculum but there are some weaknesses. Although there is an awareness of the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children aged under five, planning is not targeted closely enough to individual needs. The pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 receive a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes each subject of the National Curriculum and religious education. It fully meets statutory requirements. The school respects the religious beliefs of all pupils some of whom do not believe in taking part in information technology or religious education.
19. Since the last inspection, the quality of curriculum planning has improved. Each subject, except for art, has detailed plans for what pupils should learn and the skills they should acquire. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented. They are both having a positive effect on pupils' learning by improving their basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The planning for literacy and numeracy lessons is thorough and detailed but there are no planned opportunities to teach literacy or numeracy skills in the lessons of other subjects. The status of information technology in the curriculum is improving but planned opportunities for using information technology across the curriculum are currently weak.
20. A number of parents expressed concern about the number of extra-curricular activities. The inspectors found that the provision of planned activities was satisfactory. These include a number of sporting activities, computers, board games and craft activities. The curriculum is enhanced by visits out from school. The older pupils have the opportunity to go on a residential session, which includes information technology, physical activities and problem solving exercises. Good use is made of the local area, particularly in geography and history.
21. Pupils' personal and social and health education is satisfactorily promoted. Sex education and drugs awareness are taught mainly as part of the science curriculum. This is reinforced by a visit by the police to discuss drug awareness and special lessons on sex education for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Assemblies are used to discuss responsibility. If pupils raise questions, the staff answer them sensitively. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Each pupil on the school's special educational needs register has full entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum which has a positive effect on their learning. The special needs Code of

Practice is fully implemented and good quality individual education plans guide teachers so that pupils successfully reach their targets.

22. There are good links with the community which make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The good partnership with St Edward's Church contributes significantly to religious education. School trips enhance pupils' project and topic work. For example, in work about 'the Romans' pupils recently visited a Roman well. Other trips in the community have included visiting a mosque and synagogue. Good partnerships exist with the emergency services and the police frequently visit the school to talk to pupils about personal safety and drugs education. Sporting links have been maintained since the last inspection and continue to contribute well to standards in physical education.
23. The school has an effective partnership with local comprehensive schools. For example, Year 5 pupils take part in a 'design technology day' each year at Cotswold high school. Year 6 pupils are able to spend a whole day at the high school to meet staff and sample the new routines of work. Pupils make a good contribution to the community through environmental work at the local fountain. Pupils raise high sums of money for charities and good causes. Clearly, they care for the community and those less fortunate than themselves.
24. Since the last inspection, the overall provision for cultivating pupils' personal development has improved from being satisfactory to being good. The school is particularly strong in promoting pupils' moral and social development. The pupils are given opportunities to develop their own class rules, for example, in Year 5/6 there is a good 'Pupil/Teacher Learning Contract'. In assembly teachers discuss moral issues, such as 'Friendly/Unfriendly People and Their Responses to Others' which was a theme for a Key Stage 1 assembly. Opportunities to develop pupils' moral understanding are provided in lessons, for example, in a Year 3/4 lesson the teacher talked about good triumphing over evil in the story of 'Red Riding Hood'. Spiritual development is satisfactory. There are opportunities to think and reflect in assemblies. In religious education the pupils are taught that there are special times and things, for example in work on celebrations in Year 1/2. Study of world religions gives pupils an understanding that many people believe in a greater being.
25. The pupils are given many opportunities to develop their social skills and the school makes good provision in this aspect of personal development. Pupils work well together in all lessons. There are opportunities to develop independent learning skills and pupils regularly carry out classroom tasks without being asked. The teachers set tasks, which develop independent learning, for example pupils in Key Stage 2 classes select books from the library and access the Internet without direct teacher supervision. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The school provides opportunities in the curriculum to study both the local culture and other cultures, for example in geography older pupils study African cultures. In history the cultures of the past, including Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece and the Romans are studied. Visits to a synagogue and mosque give the pupils insights in to the multi-ethnic nature of our country

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

26. The school has fully addressed weaknesses in provision identified at the last inspection.
27. A strong feature of the school is the time and attention devoted to health and safety matters. Since the last inspection the school has improved its health and safety policy

and it is now of good quality and its implementation ensures that pupils are safe and secure at all times. Arrangements for child protection are good. The designated officer is appropriately trained and all staff recently received training in procedures for child protection.

28. Personal and social education makes a good contribution to raising pupils' awareness of health, safety and hygiene matters. The school works very closely with external agencies in raising pupils' awareness of personal health. As part of a 'healthy living' topic across the school strong contributions from agencies such as 'The British Heart Foundation' contributed to pupils' education. Citizenship is promoted through providing pupils with opportunities to participate in an annual Junior Citizenship Programme. Through role-play and training, Year 6 pupils learn about dealing with simple emergencies.
29. Teachers know their pupils well. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' academic achievement in English, mathematics and science is closely monitored and recorded through effective record keeping systems. Pupils' progress is tracked and pupils with special educational needs are identified and given suitable individual education plans. Simple but effective systems are in place to assess, record and monitor pupils' progress in other subjects except information technology and religious education. This restricts the opportunity for teachers to establish individual programmes of learning if necessary. Although children are assessed when they are admitted to school at the age of four, procedures for tracking their progress towards the desirable learning outcomes are weak.
30. Both teaching and non-teaching staff carefully maintain detailed records of pupils' personal and social development. Pupils' with personal difficulties complete a self assessment procedure which they then discuss with their teacher. The results of this process are proving very positive. The school has also adopted effective systems to acknowledge the pupils' achievements and to encourage improvement, which include special congratulation assemblies, letters to parents and discussing reading test progress with the pupils. These have a good, positive impact on achievement and behaviour. Attendance is satisfactorily monitored so that effective and focused support is given to families where attendance is a problem.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

31. The school has a good partnership with parents and carers. There is strong parental satisfaction with the school, based on secure understanding and regular involvement in much of its work. They receive good quality information about the school, its policies and procedures. Newsletters and curriculum information sheets are easy to read and keep parents informed about any issues, dates to remember and forthcoming work in each class. Pupils' annual reports are generally of good quality and they clearly inform parents about what their children know, can do and understand. The quality of information to parents has improved since the last inspection and is effective in promoting their involvement in school life.
32. Parents are effectively involved in their children's learning at home which contributes to the progress of pupils in lessons in school. Home/School records show that many parents listen to their children reading and help with homework tasks. Information evenings and workshops held by the school make a good contribution to improving the quality of parental involvement. For example, sessions have been held on the teaching of mathematics, literacy and science. The Headteacher informs parents at an early

stage if there are problems with a child's learning. Parents, however, are not involved in reviewing individual education plans but they are informed about any changes made, usually at parents' interview meetings.

33. Parents are generally well involved in the life of the school. For example, the Parents' Association and '100 Club' are very hardworking and successful in fund-raising through social and community events. Pupils benefit from the considerable sums of money raised each year which is used to buy learning resources such as computers and audio-visual equipment. Parents are invited to half termly 'celebration' assemblies and this helps to build positive relations with staff. However, only a few parents regularly help in school with activities such as listening to readers.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

34. The school is effectively managed by the Governing Body and headteacher. The headteacher gives good leadership by setting clear educational objectives for the school's development and ensuring that the focus of the school's activities is upon creating a warm, friendly and secure environment, whilst setting realistic targets for academic achievement. A strong team spirit has been developed amongst staff which has reduced the impact of recent staff changes. The Governing Body has recently created a good framework for ensuring that it performs its duties efficiently. A number of suitable committees have recently been established which provides an effective way of responding to the demands made upon the Governing Body. Under the strong and knowledgeable leadership of the chair of governors, governors are identifying ways of monitoring the standards reached within the school and checking upon the effectiveness of all decisions upon standards reached by pupils, although these processes are in the early stages of development.
35. The Headteacher acts as special needs co-ordinator. She performs the role effectively meeting fully the recommendations of the Code of Practice for special educational needs.
36. The headteacher's monitoring is of a good quality but not enough opportunities are given to co-ordinators of subjects to carry out their responsibilities. The headteacher is very aware of the strengths and weaknesses of her staff. The monitoring of teaching has led to teachers improving their practice and as a result the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. The school fully complies with the regulations regarding newly qualified teachers and this has a positive impact on the quality of teaching. There is a good school development planning system in place which identifies appropriate priorities and targets in the school development plan. The headteacher, staff and governors are clear about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Targets are set for National Curriculum results, which are realistic and are based on careful analysis of previous assessments and tests and the teachers' good knowledge of their pupils. The youngest pupils are assessed using Baseline Assessment and the results are used to forecast future levels and target additional support if necessary. The school considers performance over time and has recently started to analyse results by gender. The school, however, needs to review its performance against other schools.
37. Resources are used well. The school budget is linked directly to the educational priorities of the school. The governors make strategic decisions, for example to increase the number of support staff to work with pupils with special educational needs and improve their standards. The money for specific purposes, for example additional literacy support, is well used and has a positive effect on learning. Careful analysis of

tests and assessments means that additional money for 'Booster Classes' is improving achievement in literacy and numeracy in Year 6. The day-to-day financial administration is good. It allows the headteacher to concentrate on educational matters. The most recent audit found only a small number of minor issues all of which have been addressed by the school.

38. The school is at an early stage of applying best value principles. Although the governors know how the money is being used, at present they have not formalised their systems to monitor the effectiveness of their financial decisions. The Governing Body has undergone major changes recently. The governors are interested in the performance of the school and how it can develop its image in the local area. The school makes good use of analysis of assessments and tests to target areas for development. The school consults parents on some issues, for example they were recently consulted on the issue of school uniform. They are not yet consulted formally on curriculum matters.
39. There is a good number of teaching staff who are suitably qualified and experienced to teach the curriculum for children under five, the National Curriculum and religious education. There is a good system of induction for newly qualified teachers who are well supported by a school mentor. Co-ordinators exist for all curriculum areas except music, where there is shortage of expertise. The teachers have all received training for the literacy and numeracy strategies and have attended a range of other courses. Resources in the school satisfactorily meet the needs of most areas of the National Curriculum. They are good for physical education. There are, however shortages in software for information technology and there are gaps in the provision of non-fiction books in some sections in the library. Where appropriate the school makes good use of the local environment and visits to places of interest.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

40. In order to further improve the quality of education the school offers to its pupils, and to build upon the satisfactory improvements since the last inspection, the headteacher and staff together with the Governing Body should:

1) Raise standards in English by:

- developing, implementing and monitoring the impact upon standards of a policy for writing across the school which includes ways of giving more opportunities for extended writing as well as promoting a whole school policy for handwriting;
- providing the co-ordinator with more time to monitor teaching and learning so that strategies can be devised to raise standards.

2) Raise standards in mathematics by:

- providing more regular opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills to investigations.

3) Raise standards in information technology by:

- ensuring that the current policy and scheme of work is implemented in each class;
- developing an efficient way of assessing and recording pupils' achievements in the subject so that individual strengths and weaknesses can be accurately identified and help and guidance given to individuals;
- training staff to use computers to support learning across the curriculum.

4) Improve the quality of education for under-fives by:

- making curriculum planning more targeted to individual needs and devising a manageable way of recording and tracking pupils' progress towards the learning goals for under-fives.

5) In accordance with the school development plan, provide curriculum co-ordinators with time to administer their duties especially the monitoring of the quality of teaching and the standards reached by pupils across the school

6) In addition to the key issues above, the following less important issues should be considered for inclusion in the action plan

- Devise and implement a consistent approach to marking across the school so that pupils are set clear expectations for improvement
- Improve short term planning so that, where possible, learning opportunities for literacy, numeracy and information technology are identified across the curriculum.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	39
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	28	67	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		126
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		14

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	15	4	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	13
	Girls	4	4	3
	Total	18	18	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (96)	95 (91)	84 (91)
	National	82 (74)	82 (81)	87 (83)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	14
	Girls	4	3	4
	Total	18	16	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (96)	84 (86)	95 (96)
	National	82 (80)	86 (83)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	10	9	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	6	8
	Girls	6	4	7
	Total	12	10	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (82)	53 (73)	79 (91)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	7	7
	Girls	3	5	5
	Total	6	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (64)	63 (82)	63 (82)
	National	68 (65)	69 (66)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	126
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.45
Average class size	25.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	216,494
Total expenditure	231,557
Expenditure per pupil	1,837
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,659
Balance carried forward to next year	18,892

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

126

Number of questionnaires returned

89

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	42	51	5	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	35	62	5	2	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	56	5	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	53	11	4	6
The teaching is good.	42	49	3	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	40	11	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	34	14	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	39	39	12	2	8
The school works closely with parents.	46	44	6	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	51	40	4	3	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	34	11	5	14
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	46	14	7	10

Other issues raised by parents

At the pre-inspection meeting parents expressed concern about the quality of communication from the school especially about how to support their children at home through homework. Concerns were expressed about a narrow range of activities outside lessons.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

41. At the time of the inspection there were ten children under five who are taught in a mixed class of Reception and Year 1 pupils. The standard of attainment on entry is below what is expected for 4 year olds, especially in their development of language and literacy. Most of the children have not attended any pre-school play-groups or nursery classes.
42. The children's work is planned, mainly with that of the Reception pupils, but some with the Year 1 pupils. Although regard is paid to the recommended desirable learning outcomes for children under-five, insufficient records are maintained of the children's progress and achievement. This means that it is not possible to accurately check the progress of individual children towards the targets of the desirable learning outcomes.
43. Children make satisfactory progress in their **personal and social development** and by the time they are five they have reached the targets of the desirable outcomes. They are secure and happy and this is making a positive contribution to their social development. They join in confidently with all the activities in the classroom and approach their activities with interest and enjoyment. They form good relationships with the other children and adults. They work together well in small groups and collaborate well and learn to share and help each other. They show satisfactory levels of independence when working alone and in dressing and personal hygiene. The teacher successfully promotes the children's personal and social development by providing plenty of encouragement but the lessons are sometimes over directed by the teacher. This is demonstrated by the fact that many lessons do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to develop skills of independent learning.
44. In **language and literacy** children make good progress from a below average level when they begin school at the age of four. By the age of five most are achieving the desirable learning outcomes. They listen carefully to instructions and follow them confidently. Most join in question and answer sessions enthusiastically, and they express themselves clearly. They are however, not being sufficiently encouraged to speak in extended sentences, because too little attention is given to promoting structured discussion techniques by the teacher. Most children have begun to write letters accurately and their knowledge of phonic sounds is good. By the age of five, the children copy writing successfully and some are beginning to write some words and short sentences unaided. The children listen to rhymes and stories. They handle books confidently and know that print conveys meaning and is read from left to right. By the age of five all recognise some words in a familiar text and a majority achieve beyond this. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory but at times, lessons are long and not enough variation is provided for each pupil.
45. In **mathematics** the children make good progress from a below average level at the time of admission to the school. By the age of five, almost all children reach the targets of the desirable learning outcomes. They count, write their numbers and add numbers to twelve. They recognise colours and most create repeating patterns, using common two dimensional shapes. The teacher places an emphasis on using correct mathematical vocabulary and they are beginning to respond positively to this by using the vocabulary themselves. Teaching is satisfactory, but some activities are over-directed and the children are not always provided with enough opportunities to experiment and investigate for themselves. There are, however, good resources and

- facilities available, such as sand and water play, all of which are used effectively to help children learn.
46. Children make satisfactory progress in their **knowledge and understanding of the world and develop** a sound knowledge of the world around them, their understanding of the past and the properties of materials. As part of history based work about lighting in the past, they enjoyed activities which enabled them to handle artefacts and talk about ways of making light in the home. They are frequently taken to various locations in Stow to look at the geographical, historical and commercial features. The children display a keen interest in watching their hyacinth bulbs grow, and their daily observation and recording of the weather is not only increasing their awareness of differences but is also helping them develop a concept of time and the calendar. The teaching is satisfactory and the classroom resources include a good range of construction toys to help the children develop their knowledge and understanding of the way things move, structured and mechanisms.
 47. The children reach the targets of the desirable learning outcomes for **physical development** before they are five. In class they use paint-brushes, pencils and scissors with good control and skill in their writing and creative work. The children use a range of small equipment and large balancing and climbing apparatus in the school hall for their physical education lessons. Children move confidently around the classroom with good body control and move sensibly in their own space. The atrium provides excellent opportunities for the children to use a range of large toys and equipment which contributes to their physical development. These are, however, underused because of the need to organise suitable supervision.
 48. Children make satisfactory progress in their **creative development** and, by the time they are five, they reach the expectations of the desirable learning outcomes. They listen to music and join in with the singing of songs, and playing percussion instruments. They draw and paint and one group demonstrated a good ability to imitate the swirling patterns in the style of Van Gogh, to good effect. They also use paint to print patterns using a variety of blocks and card. Most children respond well to opportunities for role play and use the very good resources in the atrium, where they play purposefully and imaginatively. The teacher works closely with her classroom assistant, a situation which is having a positive impact on the children's progress. The assistant works effectively in support of the teacher and children. The teacher very much appreciates the help of the parents who spend time each week assisting with small groups. This too is benefiting the children.

ENGLISH

49. Inspection findings show that by the end of Key Stage 2, the standard reached in English is just below the national average. There is a weakness in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 and many pupils lack the confidence to speak clearly and concisely. Standards in English appear to have declined from the judgements made in the last inspection when standards were mostly in line with national expectations but direct comparisons are unreliable in a school with such small class sizes. By the end of Key Stage 1, the current class of Year 2 pupils are reaching the levels expected by the National Curriculum and pupils achieve well considering the low levels of language and literacy that the majority of pupils began school with.
50. The standards of speaking are slightly below what is normally found by the end of both Key Stage 1 and 2. Many pupils lack the confidence to speak in front of others and at times they struggle to express their opinions in an articulate way. They do make

progress as they move through the school but by the age of 11, standards of speaking are below what is normally found. Listening skills are however quite good. The majority listen attentively during literacy lessons and at other times when teachers are talking or other pupils.

51. Standards of reading are close to the national average. In Key Stage 1, much time is devoted to the development of reading skills and support staff and parents work closely with teachers to ensure that learning occurs at a good rate. In Key Stage 2, pupils make progress by successfully building upon the skills developed earlier in the school. They read a good range of books and regularly use the school library to perform simple research tasks.
52. In writing, standards are below the national average by the end of Key Stage 2 but are currently close to national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. Although many pupils have poor language skills when they begin school, standards by the end of Key Stage 2 could still be better. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils form letters correctly but they are not beginning to write in a satisfactory cursive style. Many pupils in Year 1 are beginning to write independently and by the end of Year 2, they use complete sentences, demonstrate satisfactory levels of spelling and know the importance of using full stops and capital letters. Writing by the end of Key Stage 1 is well organised but it lacks flair and imagination.
53. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their handwriting skills or to write extended pieces of work. This reduces standards of writing to being slightly below the expectations of the National Curriculum by the age of 11. The majority of pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling. By analysing a range of pupils' books, it is apparent that writing is rarely creative and pupils struggle to use vocabulary to liven up their writing. Although poetry features in pupils' work, discussion with pupils shows that their knowledge and understanding of poetry are weak. Pupils are learning the skills of editing and drafting written work, although they do not yet take full advantage of the word-processing facilities of the new computers.
54. Teaching is satisfactory. Care and attention is given to teaching pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 the basic skills of reading and writing. The National Literacy Strategy is successfully improving pupils' skills of using and applying grammar and spelling and good attention is given to reading. Not enough time, however is given to teaching skills of writing or speaking which results in pupils not doing as well as they could by the age of 11. Well planned and organised lessons in both Key Stage 1 and 2 have successfully created good work patterns within lessons. In literacy lessons, expectations are clearly explained which helps pupils to work with good levels of independence in both groups and independent work. Staff funded by the grant for the 'Additional Literacy Scheme' work very closely with teachers and are successfully raising the standards of English amongst lower achievers. Most teachers are skilful at using questions to provoke a response and to challenge pupils' thinking. Lessons proceed with good pace and are lively and interesting which results in pupils displaying good levels of concentration and levels of motivation. A good use of resources including large books, contributes to the good levels of interest observed during most lessons. Most pupils want to do well and take pride in the work they produce.
55. Teachers know pupils strengths and weaknesses and they use this knowledge to give pupils work which is appropriate. In Key Stage 1, pupils are taught how to recognise basic sounds of the alphabet, ways of blending sounds to create a range of new and challenging words. Good attention is given to raising pupils' awareness of spelling and

writing with correctly formed letters. Teachers and support staff effectively support pupils with special educational needs so that they make good progress towards targets in individual education plans. Homework is used effectively to support and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding, especially in reading. Although work is marked regularly, corrections are rarely expected or demanded and comments are frequently rather brief and do not set expectations for future improvement.

56. The English co-ordinator has successfully analysed all available statistical information to identify ways of raising standards in English. Policies have been written but the policy for writing is not systematically implemented across the school. Evaluations of the impact of the new literacy strategy, recognise that opportunities need to be extended for pupils to develop their writing skills. Standards are successfully checked but there is not enough time for the co-ordinator to successfully perform her responsibilities with regard to the monitoring of what goes on during lessons.

MATHEMATICS

57. Inspection evidence shows that standards in mathematics are satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1 with most pupils doing as well as is expected. A small minority, however are working just below this level. Pupils achieve as well as can be expected given their below average attainment on entry to the school. By the end of the key stage the average attaining pupils add and subtract two digit numbers, they understand place value, for example that 14 is made up of one ten and four units. The lower attaining pupils use aids to help them when working. The higher attaining pupils complete extended addition, for example $15+25=30+10=40$. The pupils double numbers. They develop their mathematical vocabulary when using terms like addition, total of and plus. The pupils recognise common two and three dimensional shapes including square, rectangle, triangle, circle and cylinder. The higher attaining pupils list characteristics including number of sides and corners. The pupils produce block graphs, for example to record how many pupils walk and travel to school by car. This work is satisfactorily linked to information technology with the computer being used to produce a graph.
58. By the end of Key Stage 2 inspection evidence found that attainment is below average. The pupils achieve as well as can be expected, based on analyses of their abilities using past assessments and verbal reasoning tests. The pupils attainment is just below average in number, but average in aspects of area, shape and space and data handling. The area of investigative mathematics is underdeveloped and pupils are given insufficient opportunities to use their mathematical skills to solve problems. In number the majority of pupils add and subtract using three or four digit numbers. They carry out multiplication and division; the lower attainers use short multiplication. When using decimals pupils add to two decimal places. The higher attaining pupils divide by 10, 100 and 1000. The average attaining pupils understand equivalent fractions. There is little evidence to show that pupils understand fully the concept of negative numbers. In the area of shape and space, pupils measure accurately. They identify the characteristics of two and three dimensional shapes, measure perimeters and the higher attaining pupils use formulae to calculate volume. In data handling the pupils explain how they gather information to produce a range of graphs including line graphs. They analyse the information and use graphs to answer questions. In work on averages pupils are familiar with the terms median and mode, but they are not sure how to calculate them.
59. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection although attainment has varied over the last four years. The small class sizes mean that comparisons between different years are not reliable. The National Numeracy Strategy

has been effectively introduced and is having a positive effect on developing pupils' numeracy skills especially in the area of mental mathematics. The school has analysed the results of statutory and other tests and assessments and has set realistic targets. Additional funds provided to raise standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 are very effectively used to give good quality support to pupils identified as being capable of reaching a higher standard through extra tuition.

60. Mathematics is well used in other areas of the curriculum. In information technology pupils are given some opportunities to use computers to record data and produce charts and graphs. In science pupils use graphs to compare the favourite foods of pupils. In design and technology the pupils measure and weigh whilst in history pupils develop their sequencing skills when they locate the main events in Tudor times on a time line.
61. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. At times it is good and occasionally very good. The lessons are planned with clear learning objectives. Work is set at different levels which allows all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to achieve as well as they are capable. A good use of questioning ensures pupils' understanding and develops learning. In a Year 1/2 lesson the teacher asked pupils to explain how they reached their answer when doubling numbers. Relationships with pupils and class management are good and this has a positive effect on pupils' learning. The pupils know that their answers are valued and this develops their self-esteem. However, the teachers do not always use marking effectively to develop pupils' future learning. The work set in all classes challenges the pupils, as it builds on previous knowledge and develops new learning satisfactorily. The pupils take advantage of the opportunities offered. They listen carefully to the teacher and answer questions appropriately. Pupils have positive attitudes and display good levels of behaviour. This has a positive effect on learning. It allows the teacher to concentrate on imparting knowledge and reinforcing learning.
62. The subject is effectively managed. The co-ordinator is committed to raising standards. She has carried out an audit of the subject and is addressing the areas of weakness. The school has analysed results of tests by gender. They are considering the issues raised, for example by ensuring girls are fully involved in answering questions in introductory sessions.

SCIENCE

63. Inspection findings show that standards in science have improved since the last inspection and are now above national average by the end of Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 1, inspection findings are that pupils' performance is close to the national average with a high percentage reaching the expected National Curriculum standard of level 2 by the age of seven. No pupils, however, are expected to reach above that standard.
64. Key Stage 1, pupils' make satisfactory progress and by the age of 7 pupils' knowledge and understanding of science is close to the national average. Pupils know and understand the difference between plants and animals and know that living things are adapted to live in different places such as the school field and the pond. The needs of living things including humans are understood and pupils know the parts of the body. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of materials and their properties and of the way sound and light is made. Although pupils have satisfactory practical skills of science,

opportunities for pupils to develop and apply investigational skills are limited and this area is a comparative weakness within the attainment of pupils in Key Stage 1.

65. Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress by successfully building upon the start they make in Key Stage 1. Pupils do as well as possible. They develop good skills of investigation and become familiar with the processes of planning, performing and recording simple investigations. The range of recording however is narrow and rarely includes the use of information technology. Pupils' knowledge of forces and the Earth and the Solar System is secure at the level expected for 11 year olds by the National Curriculum. A number of pupils think at levels which are above the expected levels and are beginning to explain what happens in scientific activities by using scientific theory.
66. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are taught satisfactorily whilst in Key Stage 2 teaching is good. Planning is detailed and ensures that pupils make steady progress as they move through Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. Pupils are motivated by a mostly lively and interesting approach to science. Good use is made of resources to bring lessons alive. During a lesson in which pupils explored healthy eating and diet, pupils used a range of leaflets about healthy eating and created a simple data-base of pupils' food preferences and analysed it to identify the most popular foods. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to be involved in lessons due to effective support and guidance when required. Skills of language and literacy are encouraged as part of the science curriculum. Pupils in Year 6 have produced some very detailed non-fiction samples of writing about the solar system, but planning does not include specific references to targets for literacy. Numeracy is developed alongside science especially in Key Stage 2, where pupils regularly perform investigations which include the application of mathematical skills such as measurement and representing data in the form of graphs and charts. Teachers make some use of information technology but not enough use is yet made.

ART

67. The standard of art work seen during the inspection is satisfactory in both key stages. However, art is not a strong feature of the school. The range of experiences for the pupils is comparatively narrow because of a weakness in the current outdated scheme of work. This restricts opportunities for teachers to plan their work in sequenced steps, building on what has been taught before.
68. All Key Stage 1 pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. They learn to paint effectively by using different brushes, printing materials and techniques, for example in the style of Van Gogh. In Year 2 a "rainbow" snake, using paint and pastels has taught the pupils about mixing colours to fine shades. This class has also produced some good observational pencil drawings of coins in connection with their mathematical and design and technology work. In Key Stage 2 the pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. They learn to paint effectively but there is insufficient development of the skills needed to create different textures and tones. There are some good examples of portrait painting and symmetrical masks, making bold use of paint and colour. Class 5 pupils show competence and imagination in creating covers for the books they have made in connection with their topic work. They are in possession of sketch books but these are very underused and are not being utilised to help pupils experiment and try out their own creative ideas.
69. Pupils are taught satisfactorily but not all the teachers have the necessary expertise to fully develop the skills of more talented pupils. Planning is weak because of a lack of a

suitable scheme of work to guide teaching and learning. This restricts the learning made by pupils. The teachers manage the pupils well in lessons and make good use of the time and resources, which results in positive and enthusiastic responses from the pupils who concentrate well and take pride in their work. There are some examples in school of paintings and collages which demonstrate the pupils' ability to collaborate successfully and work as a group. Limited use is made of information technology to support art when pupils use computer programmes, which allow the creation of coloured designs.

70. There has been some improvement in the subject since the previous inspection, particularly in the three dimensional work. Some weaknesses, however, have not been rectified, such as the lack of a suitable scheme to aid the development of skills and the need pupils to be given more opportunities to use their imagination and experiment with a range of materials and their own ideas.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

71. The standards of work seen during the inspection are satisfactory and in line with the national expectation with some good examples of work, especially in Key Stage 2. The work shows a good improvement on the previous inspection when the attainment was judged to be below the national expectation. The improvement is due to the development of a clearer scheme of work and to a greater emphasis being placed upon the designing aspects of the subject, in Key Stage 2.
72. By the age of seven the pupils cut, shape and stick competently in order to construct models and useful structures, such as pencil pot holders. They have created a display of millennium bugs for their classroom which demanded the ability to assemble and join a range of materials, such as card, cotton wool and pipe cleaners. Although the design of these representations is teacher directed the patterns painted on the finished models are individual and attractive. Their models of homes for pets display a greater degree of creativity and individual design.
73. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils produce good clear designs before they make their models including drawings and ideas for suitable materials. They have, for example, in connection with their studies of Benin, designed and built model huts, using a good range of different materials, such as balsa wood, lolly sticks, straw and clay. A scrutiny of their previous work shows examples of their ability to evaluate the finished product and make suggestions to improve various aspects of the design. Some pupils do this very well.
74. The quality of teaching is generally satisfactory. In some classes the work is over directed but in other classes the teachers are more confident in their own knowledge and understanding and provide good opportunities for the pupils to develop their own ideas well. The pupils respond very positively to the challenge and enjoy the processes of designing and making. Good teaching was observed in a lesson where the pupils were investigating and comparing the ingredients and packaging of snack bars, The teacher had high expectations, explained the task and objectives clearly, placed good emphasis on the correct vocabulary and provided opportunities for independent research, as a means of increasing the pupils' literacy skills. The pupils collaborated well in pairs, were interested and enthusiastic and displayed good levels of concentration. They were learning a great deal from the activity and were very aware of the increase in their own knowledge and understanding.

75. Many of the planned activities make use of the skills taught in other subjects, especially mathematics and science. In one class, for example pupils made graphs comparing the heights of the towers they built using different paper structures, and another group incorporated their knowledge of electrical circuits into their designs for ghost fun houses.

GEOGRAPHY

76. The standards by the end of both Key Stage 1 and 2 are broadly in line with those expected for pupils of their ages. The school has maintained satisfactory standards since the last inspection.
77. By the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils understand that there are places beyond their own locality. In work on the rainforest the pupils compare what they wear with what is worn by people in the forest. When talking about the weather, pupils use words including sunny, rainy and cloudy. Simple routes are planned using maps and pupils identify features such as schools and churches. In Key Stage 2 the pupils show good understanding of river development; they explain the processes of erosion, using terms including ox-bow lake and meanders. Comparisons are made between the pupils' life in England and life in African villages. The pupils show good understanding of life in Africa.
78. Pupils are taught satisfactorily. Explanations are clear leaving no doubt amongst pupils of what is expected. The use of appropriate geographical language develops the pupils' vocabulary, for example when a teacher talks about permeable and impermeable rock in a lesson on river development. Lessons are made interesting by using maps that are familiar to the pupils. Demonstrations are used well to develop learning, for example using two different types of rock to demonstrate how rivers start. The teachers use questioning well to develop learning. They establish what pupils already know understand and can do and build on this to satisfactorily develop new learning. The pupils are keen to learn. They work well without direct teacher supervision, for example when using books from the library to research sources of rivers. When asked to answer questions they do so willingly. The good attitudes and standards of behaviour have a positive effect on pupils' learning.
79. There are good links with other areas of the curriculum. The pupils develop their reading and writing skills when they learn about other countries. Reading is also developed when pupils research topics. In one lesson there was a very good link between geography and literacy. The teacher talked about roots of words and prefixes when working with permeable and impermeable rocks. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The geography curriculum is enhanced by the use of the local area.

HISTORY

80. Standards attained at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2 are broadly in line with those expected for the pupils' ages. The satisfactory standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
81. In Key Stage 1 the pupils are developing a sense of history. They recognise the difference between past and present. In work on houses, they explain that houses have not always had electricity. When talking about people from the past they identify Florence Nightingale and know that she was a nurse. A higher attaining pupil explained that Florence's parents had objected to her being a nurse. The pupils also talk about Guy Fawkes and Queen Victoria. In Key Stage 2 the pupils develop their knowledge and

understanding of different periods of history. By the end of the Key Stage they can explain the main features of Ancient Egypt, Roman times and Victorian times. The pupils discuss the social implications of history, for example the plight of poor children in Victorian times. They explain the main sources of historical information, including first hand evidence, books, newspapers and the Internet.

82. Pupils are taught satisfactorily. A secure knowledge of the subject enables pupils to be effectively questioned at the start of lessons to check what they know, understand and can do. This information is then used to develop learning. For example in a Year 3/4 lesson the teacher carries out an effective recap of the previous lesson to establish what the pupils have remembered about how the Tudors came about. She then developed the lesson by talking about the wives of Henry VIII. Pupils were given opportunities to develop independent learning by researching using books and computers, including one with Internet access. Teachers always mark pupils' work, but at a superficial level so that marking does not direct pupils to improve. Well organised and interesting lessons result in pupils having good attitudes to learning. They enjoy the subject and develop their own knowledge and understanding through research topics, often as part of homework tasks.
83. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy development. The pupils write for a purpose when they write "Dear Diary" accounts about Tudor times and write as though they were a sailor fighting against Spain in the sea battles. They develop their reading skills when they research topics. Mathematical skills are developed when the pupils sequence events on time lines. The use of information technology is not yet fully developed. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The history curriculum is enhanced by visits in the local area.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

84. Standards in information technology have improved since the last inspection but remain below the expectations of the National Curriculum by the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Until very recently poor quality computers coupled with a lack of staff expertise has adversely impacted upon the standards.
85. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have only a rudimentary knowledge of how to use the computer and their knowledge is often dependent upon the experiences they have at home. Most pupils are aware of how to use a mouse and of typing simple, short pieces of text on the screen, but the majority of pupils in Key Stage 1 have not made satisfactory progress and do not have the skills and knowledge expected by the National Curriculum. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards have improved and most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of how to word process pieces of writing and how to use essential tools to check spelling and alter format. Although some pupils are able to create their own data base and represent it on tables and charts, the majority lack the knowledge to use the computer at the levels expected of the National Curriculum in each area of information technology.
86. Despite the low standards of achievement, and unsatisfactory teaching in the past, some teaching is now good and standards are steadily improving. In Key Stage 2 and upper Key Stage 1, pupils are given a variety of activities. Pupils are excited by opportunities to control programmable toys and use the computer for research purposes. The recent arrival of an Internet facility has broadened the opportunities for pupils to find information. Independent research about Henry VIII using the Internet successfully helped two Key Stage 2 pupils as part of their project. Limited opportunities

are provided for the development of skills of publishing. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 produce a school newspaper on termly basis which involves incorporating topical school news with a limited range of graphics. At times more capable pupils work alongside less experienced pupils, and this is an effective way of sharing expertise. A digital camera has been received but is not yet fully in use. Information technology is not consistently taught in each class and is a subject which is currently under-developed.

87. Information technology is managed by a keen and committed member of staff who has established a programme to raise standards. The school development plan includes suitable targets for doing so including plans to improve teachers' knowledge and understanding and devising an effective way of assessing, recording and tracking pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills.

MUSIC

88. The range of available evidence for music in Key Stage 1 was insufficient to make a judgement of how well pupils are doing by the end of Key Stage 1 but by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils do as well as is normally found and standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
89. The pupils in Key Stage 1 join in with the singing in assemblies and this is tuneful and robust. The pupils in Year R/1 have been making shakers in their design and technology lessons and these are to be used to create their own sounds and rhythms. In Key Stage 2 the pupils are gaining some understanding of musical notation and vocabulary. They are able to maintain a steady rhythm, by clapping or using percussion instruments. Their singing is enthusiastic and in tune. Their diction is good.
90. Pupils are satisfactorily taught. Pupils respond well to enthusiastic teaching which make the lessons fun. A suitable emphasis is placed on teaching the correct vocabulary. The teachers manage the pupils well and there is a high expectation of behaviour, for example of only playing the instruments at the desired times. The pupils respond and benefit from this control and the opportunities for learning are enhanced.
91. Some of the shortcomings reported after the previous inspection remain, particularly the lack of a music specialist. The voluntary helper is no longer able to support the school and there is currently no co-ordinator for music. As most of the teachers lack confidence in the subject the lack of expertise and leadership is impacting on range and standards. Most teachers take advantage of a commercial scheme to help overcome the shortcomings but these are not used in a systematic way so the benefits are not fully exploited. There is a significant improvement in the resources for percussion instruments but these do not include any examples of tuned instruments, which is very restricting.
92. The school provides some good experiences for the pupils which enhance the music curriculum and widen their knowledge and interest. Groups of musicians playing wind or stringed instruments visit school, and the pupils participate in performances which include singing and percussion. Pupils are also given the opportunity to receive peripatetic guitar lessons.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

93. By the end of Key stage 2 pupils are doing as well as is expected for their age and standards have improved since the last inspection. There was not enough information to make judgements about how well pupils are doing by the end of Key Stage 1.
94. Curriculum planning is satisfactory and includes a broad and balanced programme which includes gymnastics, dance and games. All the pupils receive swimming lessons for a period of seven weeks each year, but Year 3 are especially targeted and are taken to the pool each week for a term. the majority of pupils who left the school last year, were able to swim at least the recommended 25 metres unaided.
95. The pupils in Key Stage 1 use the good quality apparatus in the hall for climbing, balancing and swinging. The pupils in Key Stage 2 can roll, twist, jump, bend and stretch as they move around the apparatus in a variety of ways. Most of the pupils in Class 3 are beginning to be able to form their own choice of movements into a sequence. They display satisfactory levels of balance and control and make good use of the space. The Year 6 pupils in the games lessons, through practice, evaluation and teacher support successfully learn the skills of tackling passing and travelling with a ball.
96. Pupils are taught satisfactorily. Care is taken over safety issues and the pupils are shown how to warm up before they exercise. The teachers maintain good control and have high expectations of behaviour. As a result the pupils are mindful of each other and the Year 3 pupils cope well with putting the apparatus out and away. The teacher in this class paces lessons well, allowing plenty of time for practice and her effective interventions remind the pupils of the key objectives, which ensures progress and sound learning. The pupils are frequently asked to demonstrate their movements, but not enough emphasis is placed on detailed analysis and evaluation of these movements by the rest of the class, in order to increase the motivation and challenge towards improvement and perfection. The Year 6 teacher has good knowledge of the subject and plans her lessons well. The sound assessments she makes of the pupils abilities enables her to provide good personal feedback and challenge, which stimulates them to improve. Most pupils show good levels of interest and enjoyment.
97. The resources are very good, for both large and small apparatus and participation in the "Top Sport" programme provides equipment in rotation with other schools. The hall and outside facilities are very good. Pupils have access to a good range of extra curricular sport, which includes, football, netball, unihoc, rounders, Kwik cricket and athletics. The annual school journey provides opportunities for outdoor adventure and orienteering activities. These activities not only enrich the curriculum but also make a good contribution to the development of the pupils' social skills.
98. Provision for physical education has improved since the previous inspection, with a more balanced curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Some teachers however still need to develop the pupils' abilities to evaluate there own performance and that of others.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

99. Standards of attainment in religious education have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding are broadly in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Only a small number of lessons were observed in the inspection period. No lessons were seen in Key Stage 1.

100. In Key Stage 1 the pupils talk about their feelings and the feelings of others. They explain how they can help someone who is feeling sad. In work on celebrations, pupils understand that certain times are special, for example birthdays, weddings and Baptisms. The pupils know that Christmas is a special time for Christians. They explain that they are celebrating the birth of Jesus. When talking about Easter the pupils know it is a special time and higher attaining pupils are starting to understand that it is a celebration of Jesus rising from the dead.
101. In Key Stage 2 the pupils have knowledge and understanding of three of the world's major religions. They explain the main beliefs of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. When discussing the various faiths, the pupils understand that although they have many differences, there are similarities. For example, all the religions studied have sacred writings - the Bible, the Torah and the Qu'ran. The pupils are developing an understanding of symbolism.
102. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and at times good. The teachers develop learning satisfactorily by building on pupils' previous knowledge. For example, in work on symbolism teachers use signs and symbols that are familiar to pupils. Questioning is used effectively to establish what pupils already know, understand and can do. Knowledge of the subject is secure. There are clear explanations and learning is well reinforced, for example in a lesson on the Passover the teacher not only explained the significance of each part of the meal, she also brought in food so that the pupils could experience the meal. The quality of teaching has a positive effect on developing learning satisfactorily for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The pupils respond well in lessons, they listen carefully to the teacher and to each other. Standards of behaviour are good and this enables the teacher to teach and pupils to concentrate on their work.
103. Religious education makes a positive contribution to literacy development. The pupils developed their reading skills when they study different religions and writing skills are developed when pupils write the information they have gathered. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
104. The religious education curriculum is enhanced and learning developed by visits to various Christian churches, a synagogue and a mosque. Local Christian clergy also visit the school.