

# INSPECTION REPORT

**HAYES MEADOW COUNTY PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Handsacre, Rugeley

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124151

Acting Headteacher: Mr. A. Cooke

Reporting inspector: Mr. M. Thompson  
25372

Dates of inspection: 08/05/00 – 12/05/00

Inspection number: 218713

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Spode Avenue  
Handsacre  
Rugeley  
Staffordshire

Postcode: WS15 4EU

Telephone number: 01543 490616

Fax number: 01543 492629

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. A. Westwood

Date of previous inspection: 29/09/97 – 02/10/97

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mike Thompson	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school
		Art	Results and achievements
		Design and technology	Leadership and management
		Physical education	
Ken Rowland	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			Care for pupils
			Partnership with parents
Jozepha O'Hare	Team inspector	English	
		Geography	
		History	
		Religious education	
Mary Farman	Team inspector	Under fives	The curriculum and other opportunities
		Science	
		Music	
Susan Betts	Team member	Special educational needs	Teaching
		Mathematics	
		Information technology	

The inspection contractor was:

HeadStart & Associates

Higherland Bridge  
49, West Street  
Gargrave  
Skipton  
North Yorkshire  
BD23 3RJ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Hayes Meadow County Primary School is situated in the village of Handsacre, on the outskirts of Rugeley. The school was built in the 1960's to serve the local estate, and a purpose built nursery was added in 1976. Its pupils are from a broad range of backgrounds and live in local authority, housing association and owner occupied accommodation within the locality.

The school is larger than average with 238 pupils on roll and a further 52 children attending the nursery unit on a part time basis. Sixteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is about average. Seventeen per cent are identified as having special educational needs. This is in line with the national average although two thirds of these pupils have specific difficulties, which entitle them to additional professional support. Nine pupils have statements of special need. This is more than twice the national average. All pupils are of white ethnicity and there are no pupils from homes in which English is an additional language. At the time of inspection, the headteacher had been absent for some time and his deputy had taken on the role of acting headteacher. Children enter the nursery when they are three years and four months old. Children transfer from the nursery to the reception class twice a year, in September and January. On admission to reception, attainment is below average.

At the time of its previous inspection the school was judged to have serious weaknesses.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an effective school, which no longer has serious weaknesses. From a starting point below the national average, pupils make good progress and, by the time they are 11, they exceed national expectations in science and are achieving nationally expected levels in mathematics. However, in English and information technology, pupils are not yet achieving nationally expected standards. Performance in national tests has steadily improved over the past four years. These rising standards are due to the improvements made in the quality of teaching, which was judged to be a serious weakness of the school at the time of the previous inspection, and to the good curriculum that the school has developed. These in turn are the result of the very good quality of leadership. The improvements have been made with funding which is below average and therefore the school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- In science, more pupils achieve the national standards for seven and eleven year olds than in most schools.
- Attainment in art is well above average at the end of Key Stage 2 and attainment in design and technology at Key Stage 2 and geography and music at both key stages is above average.
- Teaching is good or better in over three quarters of lessons.
- Pupils behave very well, they are attentive in lessons and work hard; relationships in the school are very good.
- Children under five receive a very good curriculum and are well taught.
- The school cares for its pupils very well and has a very good partnership with its parents.
- The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The acting headteacher and governors provide very good leadership.

#### **What could be improved**

- Attainment in English; particularly the way in which letter sounds are taught in some Key Stage 1 classes and standards in handwriting and spelling throughout the school.
- Attainment in information technology at Key Stage 2.
- Independent learning for more able pupils.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Overall, the school has made very good progress since its last inspection in 1997 and no longer has serious weaknesses. Good progress has been made in addressing the key issues from its previous inspection report, particularly those relating to improvements in the school development plan and in

the quality of teaching. In addition, there have been improvements in attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1, in science at the end of both key stages and in art, design and technology, geography and music. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are now better than when the school was previously inspected because of improvements in the school's provision for their personal development and in the way in which their work and progress is monitored and assessed. Significant improvements have been made in the quality of leadership, which was judged to be a serious weakness at the time of the last inspection and is now very good.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	D	E	D	D	Well above average A above average B
Mathematics	A	C	C	C	Average C Below average D
Science	A	D	B	B	Well below average E

The information shows, for example, that standards in mathematics in 1999 were average when compared to all schools nationally and also when compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Over time, when the average points scored in English, mathematics and science are taken together, the trend in the school's overall performance is broadly in line with the national trend of test results. In the 1999 tests the school came close to its published performance targets in English and mathematics and is likely to exceed its published targets this year.

Inspection findings confirm the 1999 test results. Attainment in English, in terms of the proportion of pupils likely to achieve the national target of Level 4, is below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. While pupils' standards of speaking are average and they have well developed listening skills, standards in reading, spelling and handwriting are below average. Attainment in mathematics is broadly average and in science it is above what is expected of 11 year olds nationally. In information technology, pupils' attainment is below average because the school has little useful equipment for teaching control technology at Key Stage 2. Attainment in religious education is broadly in line with what is required by the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in art at the end of Key Stage 2 are a significant strength of the school and are well above what is normally expected. In design and technology, geography and music standards are above average, while in history and physical education they are average.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are able to sustain good levels of concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good, both in and around the school. The school is a happy and orderly community.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils relate very well to one another and to adults.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

As they progress through the school, pupils develop mature and responsible attitudes to their work. Older pupils look after younger ones very well and set a good example.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good or better in 78 per cent of lessons and is very good in 29 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the course of the inspection. The teaching of music is very good overall. Good quality teaching is a feature in under fives, English, science, art and geography at both key stages and mathematics at Key Stage 2. Not enough teaching was observed to make a judgement in information technology or in design and technology at Key Stage 1 and no lessons were observed history at Key Stage 2. However, lessons in design and technology at Key Stage 2 and history at Key Stage 1 were of good quality. Overall, skills in numeracy are well taught at both key stages. Skills in literacy are taught satisfactorily overall, with the best teaching being at Key Stage 2.

Teachers plan their lessons well, give clear explanations of the tasks that they have set and match work well to the differing abilities of pupils in their classes; they provide achievable challenges for pupils because they carefully assess what pupils are capable of. As a result, pupils are interested, work very hard and make good progress. Particularly good features of teaching are the very effective deployment of classroom assistants and the very good control and management of pupils.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides pupils with a good quality curriculum that helps them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special needs are well taught and make good progress. Classroom assistants give effective help to these pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Spiritual development is good. Moral, social and cultural development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	All staff take very great care to ensure that pupils' health, safety and welfare are given high priority.

The school's partnership with its parents is very good. Teachers carefully monitor their pupils' progress and provide them with very good personal support and guidance. The strong commitment of teachers is evident in their willingness to provide a very good range of extra curricular activities for their pupils. These activities are appreciated and very well supported.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The acting headteacher provides very good leadership and is very well supported by all the staff. Teachers with responsibility for subjects carefully monitor what is done and provide clear direction to colleagues. The leadership for the under fives is very good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are well informed, very supportive and work very well in partnership with the staff of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Staff are good at critically evaluating what they do and seeking ways to improve. The governors and acting headteacher ensure that the school's performance is closely monitored and regularly evaluated.

The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its premises, its equipment and the skills of its staff.
--------------------------------	---

The school is very well staffed, its premises are adequate, well maintained and cleaned to a good standard. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall, although some of the equipment for information technology is rather old and there is little useful equipment for teaching monitoring and control technology at Key Stage 2. Finances are well managed and closely monitored and the principles of 'best value' are carefully applied when spending decisions are made.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of teaching.</li> <li>• The school's high expectations of their children.</li> <li>• The behaviour of children in the school.</li> <li>• Their children enjoy coming to school.</li> <li>• Teachers are approachable.</li> <li>• The school keeps them well informed.</li> <li>• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No significant negative views were expressed.</li> </ul>

Inspectors' judgements fully support all of the parents' positive comments.

Thirty one per cent of parents returned the pre-inspection questionnaires and 18 parents attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

- 1 The school's results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds showed that the proportion of pupils achieving the national target of Level 4 in English was below the national average. Pupils performed better in mathematics, where the proportion reaching Level 4 was about average. The best results were in science, where the proportion was above average at Level 4. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was about average in all three subjects. The picture is the same when the school's results are compared against those of similar schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. When results over the past four years are scrutinised the pattern is of considerable year on year swings in performance, but with an overall upward trend in all three subjects.
- 2 Test results at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 were not as good as those for Key Stage 2. They show that, in reading, the proportion of pupils achieving either the national target of Level 2 or the higher Level 3 was below average. In writing, the proportion reaching Level 2 was average, but no pupils achieved Level 3. In mathematics the proportion at Levels 2 and 3 was well below average. In science, results based on teachers' assessments of their pupils shows that the proportion of pupils reaching level 2 was well below average, but was well above average at Level 3. When the average points scored are considered, the school's performance was below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. When compared with the results of similar schools, the same picture emerges. When results over the past four years are examined, the trend is of a steep improvement in mathematics from a very low starting point in 1996. There has been a steady improvement in reading and a slight improvement in writing.
- 3 In 1999 the school achieved its published performance target for English at Key Stage 2 and came very close to its target for mathematics. Inspection findings indicate that this year the school is likely to exceed its targets in both subjects even though they are set at a higher level than in 1999.
- 4 Inspection findings match the school's performance in the national tests last year and show that, at the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is below average in English, average in mathematics and above average in science. Attainment in information technology is below average because of a shortage of suitable equipment for teaching the elements of monitoring and control technology. Attainment in religious education is in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards achieved in art at Key Stage 2 are a significant strength of the school and are well above what is normally expected of pupils of a similar age, while in design and technology, geography and music standards are above average. In history and physical education standards are average.
- 5 At the end of Key Stage 1, inspection findings indicate a similar pattern of attainment as at Key Stage 2. Attainment is below average in English, average in mathematics and above average in science. In information technology most pupils attain nationally expected standards. In all other subjects attainment is average, except in geography and music, where pupils achieve standards above those normally expected. Attainment in religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
- 6 Children under five in the nursery and reception class make good progress. By the time they are of statutory school age, most children are likely to achieve the nationally recommended 'Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning' in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Most are on course to exceed the learning outcomes in their personal and social, creative and physical development.
- 7 During the course of their education as under fives, children transfer from the nursery to the reception class. At this point a 'baseline assessment' is carried out, using one of the many accredited assessment packages. The results of these assessments show that, at this point, attainment overall is below a 'national' average and below the local average in both English and mathematics. This suggests that attainment on entry to the nursery is lower than this and bears

out the school's view and the views of inspectors.

- 8 At Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress overall in building on the firm foundations of their experience as under fives. In general, pupils make the best progress in Year 1 as a direct consequence of consistently good quality teaching. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in English. Skills in speaking develop steadily and pupils generally speak clearly. Listening skills are better developed; pupils are able to listen in a focused way and consequently carry out instructions very well. Reading skills develop satisfactorily, but in some classes letter sounds are not consistently and systematically taught. Skills in writing develop well in terms of the range and purpose of pupils' writing. Many pupils are beginning to use punctuation correctly, but standards of spelling are below average and handwriting is not well developed.
- 9 The National Numeracy Strategy is providing a secure framework within which pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding develop satisfactorily at Key Stage 1. Good use is made of equipment to aid pupils' early attempts at counting and to enhance their understanding of concepts such as place value. Number skills develop steadily between Year 1 and 2, from simple addition and subtraction of numbers up to ten to work with two digit numbers. However, there is little evidence of pupils regularly using and applying their developing mathematical skills in a variety of practical situations. Progress in science is good. Teachers try to ensure that the work they plan is interesting and builds on pupils' natural curiosity about their environment. Scientific habits are encouraged from an early age. Skills in information technology develop satisfactorily as pupils learn basic word processing techniques, experience using graphics software and learn how to control the movements of programmable floor robots.
- 10 At Key Stage 2 the overall rate of progress accelerates and becomes most rapid in Year 6 chiefly as a result of high quality teaching but also because of pupils' developing maturity and responsibility. Skills in speaking continue to develop at a satisfactory rate. Pupils make increasing use of their growing vocabulary and generally speak clearly and, in the majority of cases, with reasonable use of correct grammar. Good use is made of activities such as drama to develop pupils' confidence and fluency. Listening skills are good and most pupils concentrate on what is said to them. Good progress is made in reading as pupils use an increasing range of strategies to decode unfamiliar words. By the end of the key stage they comment confidently on differences in style and talk about their reasons for preferences for certain authors. They are able to scan text to gain information quickly and have sound research skills. Progress in writing is satisfactory. Pupils are beginning to use paragraphs correctly and increasingly use correctly punctuated sentences. However, handwriting and spelling skills are below average, particularly in Years 4 and 5 but in Year 6 a significant number of pupils are developing well formed fluent writing in ink.
- 11 Pupils make good progress in mathematics at Key Stage 2. This is due to good quality teaching and to the effectiveness of the system of grouping pupils for mathematics lessons by ability within combined age groups. Pupils develop an increasing facility in manipulating numbers and, by the end of the key stage, confidently use their skills in other subjects when solving problems involving mathematical calculations. Scientific skills develop at a very good rate. Pupils gain a very good understanding of scientific concepts and show an increasing ability to carry out experimental work. Good progress is made in the understanding and use of scientific vocabulary. Skills in information technology develop well in word processing and satisfactorily in the use of graphics software. However, progress overall is unsatisfactory because shortages of hardware mean that pupils do not have opportunities to develop skills in control or monitoring technology.
- 12 Throughout the school, teachers skilfully use work in other subjects to promote literacy skills. Similarly, numeracy skills feature prominently in the work in a number of subjects. On some occasions, in some subjects, higher attaining pupils do not make the progress they are capable of because lessons are over directed by the teachers. Few challenges are presented to these pupils to plan their own approaches to a problem or to devise their own methods of recording their answers.
- 13 Pupils identified as having special educational needs make good progress. This is largely due to the skilful way in which teachers provide them with achievable challenges and to the very good use of classroom assistants, who are often involved when work is planned and who have a very good understanding of the needs of these pupils.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

- 14 Children in the nursery and reception classes quickly develop positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy their work and concentrate for suitable lengths of time. They relate well to each other and to adults. As they move from the nursery to the reception classes children become more enthusiastic and eager learners. They are sensitive to the feelings of others, respect each other's work and behave well.
- 15 Most pupils demonstrate very good attitudes to their learning, listen carefully and attentively to instructions, settle down quickly to their tasks and are able to sustain very good levels of concentration throughout lessons. They ask pertinent questions and seek advice and support when necessary. Pupils enjoy coming to the school and are happy and relaxed in the presence of the staff and the adult helpers. When lessons are delivered with pace and clear targets, their work is of very good quality and they respond very well to the enthusiasm generated by the teaching and support staff. A good range of extra curricular activities support and extend the learning opportunities for the pupils, and these are very well attended. Some very good examples of individual, paired and group working were seen during the inspection and pupils demonstrated an enthusiastic and willing response to teachers' questions during the lessons.
- 16 A particularly good feature of the school is the way in which pupils with special needs are happily integrated into all classes. As a result of the very good support that they receive, they grow in confidence and are keen to learn.
- 17 The standard of behaviour in the school is very good, both in the classrooms and in the recreation areas. Movement about the school is orderly and well controlled and no indication of boisterous behaviour was seen during the inspection. The school provides an orderly, peaceful and harmonious environment where pupils are able to work effectively to the best of their ability. In classrooms, pupils behave very well and are able to concentrate on their tasks. In the very few isolated cases seen where a restless pupil did cause minor disruption, staff reacted very quickly and effectively to restore the calm atmosphere which is a feature of the school. Classroom and school rules and the Code of Conduct are clearly displayed around the school and keenly observed by the pupils. Very effective procedures are in place for dealing with disharmony or oppressive behaviour and incidents are very rare. Bullying in the school is not a problem and pupils expressed satisfaction in the very prompt action staff take when a suspected incident is reported. Pupils are very happy in the school and clearly understand the role they have to play in both their learning and their attitudes. There have been no exclusions from the school.
- 18 The personal development of the pupils is very good and is based on the school ethos of care and consideration for themselves, others and their property and which is effectively promoted through the school's personal, social and health education programme. A common feature of the school is the presence of pupils from Key Stage 2 working with, playing with and generally supporting the younger children in the school. They undertake these tasks with enthusiasm and considerable commitment and help the younger children to understand the qualities of care and consideration, which they in turn will need to demonstrate as they move through the school. Particularly noticeable was the way in which the pupils with special needs are included in these activities. Staff know and understand the needs of their pupils and are very good role models in encouraging the pupils to show care and consideration for their peers. The older pupils are allocated areas of responsibility with specific tasks, which they carry out confidently and reliably. They earn the trust and respect of the staff and help the staff and other adults in the school in a variety of ways, all of which enhance their personal development and understanding.
- 19 Relationships in the school are very good, with obvious mutual respect between staff and pupils. Pupils have confidence in the staff and in class helpers, including parents, governors and pupils from other schools and colleges. The pupils are able to learn and develop from the very positive examples and standards set by the school staff and gain confidence in dealing with visitors to the school. The pupils show respect for their own and other people's property and for their environment. The school is a clean, tidy and secure area and there is no evidence of graffiti or vandalism. Pupils talk openly and freely about themselves and their school and are

polite and courteous in their dealings with adults.

- 20 Attendance at the school is satisfactory and is in line with national averages. It has remained at this level for several years. Most absences are explained and the level of unauthorised absence compares very favourably with national averages. Procedures for recording attendance are in line with statutory requirements and parents and pupils are well aware of the importance and value of regular attendance. Pupils arrive at school on time and lessons start promptly; there are few incidents of late arrival.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

- 21 The quality of teaching is good overall. Of the 77 lessons seen, almost eight out of ten were good or better and three out of ten very good or better. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection in 1997 where 15 per cent of the lessons were unsatisfactory and the quality of teaching was judged to have serious weaknesses.
- 22 Teaching was judged to be very good in music at Key Stage 2 and good in English, science, art, geography and religious education, and in history and music at Key Stage 1 and mathematics and design and technology at Key Stage 2. Numeracy skills are well taught at both key stages. Skills in literacy are taught satisfactorily at Key Stage 1 and well at Key Stage 2.
- 23 Teaching that is good or better is seen throughout the school. Very good or better teaching is observed in reception, the early part of Key Stage 1 and in most classes at Key Stage 2. Two lessons were judged as excellent, a handwriting lesson at Key Stage 1 and a music lesson at Key Stage 2. In the handwriting lesson the teacher's relationships with her pupils were of the highest quality, a crisp pace was maintained throughout and an excellent plenary session at the end of the lesson provided very good opportunities for pupils to think about how they might improve even further. During the music lesson on the theme of 'Africa', the teacher had very high expectations of what the pupils could achieve. Pupils responded by working very hard to perfect their performances, and the teacher's meticulous preparation ensured that all pupils were given this opportunity. In addition, in 11 other lessons excellent features were observed, the most frequently occurring being outstanding organisation and class management. In the best lessons seen, teachers plan, organise, and manage classes well. Lessons here proceed at a brisk pace. Teachers are confident and knowledgeable. Lessons are carefully prepared with detailed planning which carefully matches tasks to pupils' abilities.
- 24 Lessons for all subjects are organised for whole class, group or individual teaching as required. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has helped to provide a common overall structure for planning throughout the school.
- 25 The quality of teaching of children under 5 is good overall, with eight out of ten lessons good or better and four out of ten very good. Almost all of the very good teaching occurs in reception. In very good lessons, the teacher shows a thorough knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children, provided challenge for them and has good class management. For example, in a lesson about observing 'mini beasts' in their environment, the teacher's skilful questioning and careful organisation of the lesson enabled children to make very good progress in deepening their knowledge of habitat and of care of the environment.
- 26 At Key Stage 1, seven out of ten lessons were good or better and one in ten were very good or better. Throughout the key stage, teachers plan carefully for their mixed age classes to ensure that pupils are properly challenged. Resources are well prepared and imaginatively used.
- 27 At Key Stage 2 a greater proportion of high quality teaching was observed than at Key Stage 1. Of the lessons observed eight out of ten were good or better, with more than three out of ten very good or better. A very good literacy lesson observed contained work that was very well matched to pupils' needs and abilities and proceeded at a rapid pace. Similarly, in a very good mathematics lesson designed to improve pupils' mental agility, they rose to the challenge of quickly recognising prime numbers and multiples.
- 28 There has been an improvement in the quality and use of teachers' day to day assessments of their pupils since the last inspection, where this was judged to be a weakness. The use of

assessment was satisfactory with many good features at Key Stage 1, and good at Key Stage 2. For example, in a literacy lesson at Key Stage 2, the teacher's very skilful questioning and discussion with pupils provided a very clear picture of their preferences. This enabled the teacher to guide pupils to choose books suitable for their levels, so that later, pupils felt confident and comfortable to contribute to a class discussion on different genres.

- 29 Overall, homework makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning in a range of subjects. Where it is used well it helps pupils to make even better progress. For example, Year 3 pupils' observational drawings produced at home were used as the basis for their art lessons about tone.
- 30 There is good teaching provision for pupils with special educational needs. Work for these pupils is carefully thought out and takes account of the targets in their individual education plans. Classroom assistants are well informed about the content of lessons, often being involved in either planning or assessment. Their skilful support for special needs pupils helps these pupils to play a full part in lessons and to make good progress.
- 31 Teachers carefully plan opportunities for pupils to take part in experimental and investigative activities. For example, in science pupils were challenged to find out whether different substances are soluble in water and in mathematics pupils worked out the best way to spend money. However, these activities are very often over directed by teachers and opportunities for pupils, particularly higher attainers, to devise their own tests or methods of recording are more limited.

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

- 32 The school provides its pupils with a well balanced and broadly based curriculum. It makes effective and relevant provision for the pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. The curriculum gives pupils a suitable foundation for the next stage of education. The planned curriculum fulfils all statutory requirements. The science curriculum includes a health education programme that encompasses sex education and drugs awareness. The school is successfully implementing the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Project. These steps are having a positive impact on the pupils' learning. The school teaches all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and the time allocated for teaching different subjects is adequate. The school correctly emphasises the investigative element of work in subjects such as science, although in some lessons there are not enough opportunities for higher attaining pupils to plan their own work. There are policies and schemes of work in place for all subjects. The school makes very effective use of extra curricular activities to broaden pupils' experiences. The nationally agreed Desirable Outcomes for Learning form the basis of the curriculum for children under five, and the school also takes into account the recommendations of the new 'Early Learning Goals'. The curriculum for children who are under five is very good. It prepares them very well for work at Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum. The quality of the curriculum was an area of concern at the time of the previous inspection and good progress has been made in addressing the issues raised in the report.
- 33 The school makes good provision for pupils on the register of special educational needs. These pupils enjoy good access to the whole curriculum. Appropriate systems are in place for the identification of their special needs and for the formulation of their individual education plans.
- 34 The school is successfully implementing an arrangement where pupils of similar age and ability work together in mathematics lessons at Key Stage 2. This is working well and is assisting pupils' learning and progress. The school is ensuring the step by step development of learning in English, mathematics and science through the improvement in its systems for curriculum planning. This includes long, medium and short term planning. The provision for children who are under five and the curriculum for art are very good. The curriculum for mathematics, science and music is good. It is satisfactory for all other National Curriculum subjects. It is not possible for the school to fully implement the planned curriculum for information technology at Key Stage 2 because of the lack of suitable hardware. The school bases the curriculum for religious education on the locally agreed syllabus. The religious education curriculum is of good

quality. It is stimulating and relevant to pupils' needs. Homework is set on a regular basis. This gives a good level of support to work in lessons.

- 35 A very good number and range of extra curricular opportunities effectively enrich and enhance the curriculum. These include various sports, French, ornithology, music, information technology and environmental studies. About one hundred pupils in total support the activities, which take place on three evenings per week. Pupils make visits to local centres of interest and, towards the end of Key Stage 2, have the opportunity to participate in residential visits. These are effective in developing pupils' social skills and their awareness of the wider community.
- 36 The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is very good overall and has improved since the previous inspection. It correctly places much importance on these elements of pupils' development and makes very effective use of this area of education to develop, broaden and deepen pupils' understanding, values and experiences.
- 37 The provision for the spiritual development of pupils is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The youngest children in the school have a suitably wide range of activities that give them opportunities to reflect and wonder. An example of this was seen when children marvelled at the range of life in the school's wild area. The school provides many opportunities for reflection in the daily act of collective worship, for example by enabling pupils to reflect on the meaning of special gifts and talents as they consider the day ahead. Requirements for collective worship are fully met. The school incorporates spiritual opportunities naturally into many aspects of its work through effective use of plenary sessions when learning is reviewed and reflected on at the end of lessons. In personal and social education lessons pupils reflect on feelings and emotions. This gives them valuable opportunities to explore their own feelings, needs and emotions and those of others. Subjects, such as religious education, science, music and art help to promote pupils' spiritual development. For example, pupils listened with rapt attention to a recording of their compositions during a music lesson. There is a clear spiritual ethos in assemblies and many lessons. This provides a good and effective base for the work of the school.
- 38 The provision for the moral development of pupils is very good. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The school is very effective in teaching pupils the principles that distinguish right from wrong. This begins on entry to the nursery and develops well as the pupils progress through the school. There is a strong code of conduct implicit in all actions. All members of the teaching and non teaching staff provide very good role models. They ensure that their dealings with issues are firm and fair. Teachers talk through any transgression of the code of conduct with pupils and, when necessary, with parents. The pupils are honest and trustworthy. They are well aware of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Pupils have many opportunities to explore and develop moral issues within the curriculum, for instance when examining environmental issues in geography lessons. Teachers make very good use of lessons to reinforce messages of care and concern for each other and animals. Pupils tidy away equipment and learn to look after it carefully. This enables them to appreciate moral issues concerning other people's property. They take good care of the work and artefacts on display around the school. Pupils quickly develop an understanding that they are responsible for their own actions and that there are consequences resulting from them.
- 39 The provision for the social development of pupils is very good. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Children in the nursery and reception class have many opportunities to develop independent attitudes to learning. Teachers build on and increase these opportunities, as pupils become older and more mature. Pupils have many opportunities to work cooperatively and collaboratively in lessons. For example, in science lessons pupils work well together when carrying out investigations. This helps in the development of their social skills. The school prepares pupils carefully for their transfer to secondary school. The annual residential visit for Year 6 pupils helps to enhance a sense of group identity and develops pupils' understanding of acceptable group behaviour. Pupils listen with respect to each other when discussing work and teachers value these contributions. All members of staff foster good relationships between pupils and between pupils and themselves. The school develops pupils' concepts of citizenship through their participation in the work of the school community and their involvement in a variety of tasks around the school. For example, pupils serve meals and look after younger children at lunch times. These are pleasant social occasions where pupils of all ages mix, eat and talk together quietly and calmly. Pupils have a very effective involvement in the wider community.



They raise money for a range of local and national charities, sing in local churches and give concerts for families and friends.

- 40 The school makes very good provision for the cultural development of pupils. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The school provides pupils with many opportunities to develop awareness of their own culture. They visit local places of interest as part of their work in history and geography. For instance, the school makes effective use of the village and of the local canal system. Pupils visit museums and art galleries and are well aware of their cultural heritage. They learn about life in non western cultures such as Africa and India in history and geography lessons. The school teaches pupils to respect and value other people and cultures well. Pupils learn about other religions and beliefs. This mainly happens during religious education lessons where pupils learn about Judaism, Islam and Sikhism. Representatives of different faiths and cultures visit the school to talk with pupils. The school teaches pupils to value and respect all faiths and beliefs and prepares its pupils well for life in a multicultural society.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

- 41 The school provides a secure and caring environment for all its pupils and has made very good progress in improving the quality of this provision since the last inspection.
- 42 Procedures for child protection and for the health, safety, security and welfare of the pupils are in place and are of very good quality. Staff are fully aware of the action to take in the event of a suspected case of child abuse and they are able to recognise the signs which could indicate any incidents. The acting headteacher is the person nominated as being responsible for child protection in the absence of the headteacher. The safety and security of the pupils during lessons is of paramount concern to all the staff at the school and all reasonable precautions are taken. There is complete trust between pupils and staff. Staff understand and respect the problems of their pupils and adopt a very sympathetic and considerate approach when dealing with them. This consideration consolidates the trust which pupils have in the staff and promotes their self esteem. Staff demonstrate a very high standard of concern for the safety and welfare of their pupils and maintain very close links with parents to ensure that the needs of the pupils are best served. Links with external agencies such as the police and medical services are very well established and are of considerable benefit to the pupils and to the school. All members of the school staff are qualified to administer emergency aid in the event of an injury occurring and parents are informed if and when any action is taken. Supervision during recreation periods and lunch time is of good quality and all the non teaching staff are a great asset to the school.
- 43 Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development are good. In classrooms, the non teaching assistants work very closely with the teaching staff and maintain ongoing records of the responses made by the pupils during the lessons. This assessment is evaluative and regular, especially in key areas and helps teachers to monitoring pupils' progress well. Detailed and extensive assessment, supported by formal and informal testing, allows staff to plot individual and class progress continuously through the school. In all classes teachers skilfully match tasks to pupils' differing abilities and, as a result, pupils make good progress in their lessons. The procedures adopted allow staff instant access to information regarding the way in which individual pupils are performing against their personal targets and this information is then used for future planning.
- 44 Good assessments of the progress of pupils with special needs help teachers when they conduct regular reviews of the pupils' individual education plans. Good individual help is provided for pupils with physical disabilities. For example, a pupil experiencing speech problems was given the confidence to practise letter sounds because of the patience, sensitivity and humour with which the teacher approached the task. Consequently the pupil concentrated hard and made good progress.
- 45 The personal development of the older pupils is promoted through the trust staff place upon them and the way in which they are encouraged to support, help and guide the younger members of the school community. Pupils are allocated specific tasks to perform and, while opportunities to use their own initiative are limited, pupils do become involved and work with enthusiasm and determination. Very good examples of the care and consideration of older

pupils for those younger than themselves were observed during the lunchtime break. Not only do the older pupils serve the meals at the dining tables, using a 'family service' system, but they also keep the younger pupils occupied during periods when the weather restricts outside play or whilst the younger pupils are waiting for their turn to take their lunch.

- 46 Pupils support school functions and play a good role in the links which the school has developed with the community. Both musical and choral groups from the school have performed at the local church for the benefit and pleasure of the local community. Many villagers attended a recent church service at which the school choir gave a very competent performance.
- 47 The educational and personal support and guidance provided by the school is very good. About twelve parents provide very regular and valuable in class support for the staff in all areas of the curriculum. Governors also visit the school on a regular basis and work in the classrooms with the teachers. Everyone providing help in the classroom works carefully with the teacher and is given clear and detailed advice of the work that is required and the targets which have been set. The home/school partnership is very strong and parents are aware of, and support the school, in all its activities. Parents are well informed about the changes to the school curriculum and the literacy and numeracy strategies were the subject of special information meetings to explain to parents what would be involved and how they could help their children at home. Induction into the nursery is well planned and well managed; children are well prepared to start school. Parents are informed of what is being taught and are able to discuss any issues with the nursery and school staff when they collect their children at the end of each session. Transfer to the secondary sector is well organised. Pupils have the opportunity to visit the secondary school of their choice and experience the conditions and facilities available, and transfer takes place with the minimum of disruption. Good relationships exist between the school and the secondary sector. The number of out of school visits available to the pupils and the number of visitors to the school to cover various learning activities richly enhance the education programme for the pupils. A good system of rewards encourages good performance and effort and the pupils keenly contest recognition for these awards at the weekly school assembly.
- 48 Good procedures are in place for monitoring and promoting good attendance and the school has consistently been in line with national averages for some years. Almost all absences are explained and the school performs in line with or better than the national average for unauthorised attendance. Registers are regularly monitored and the school secretary plays a very important role in checking absences and following them up. The education welfare officer provides additional support when requested. The procedures in place and the diligence of the staff and secretary in monitoring the registers ensure that the school maintains a satisfactory attendance level.
- 49 Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are highly effective. Any pupil who has cause for concern about issues such as bullying can report to a member of staff and action takes place immediately to reassure that pupil. The very good procedures in place are very effective and as a result pupils are able to learn and play in a relaxed, caring, harmonious and safe environment.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

- 50 A good number of parents provide regular support in most areas of the curriculum. Governors of the school also provide in class support for the staff. This help and support extends the learning programme of the pupils and further enriches their education. Parents are willing to support the school and are appreciative of the help and guidance their children are receiving. All parents are kept well informed of changes to school procedures and to the curriculum and special meetings are convened to inform them about special issues such as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Parents helping in the classroom work carefully under the direction of the class teacher and are given specific instructions and targets for the work to which they are allocated. The relationship between teachers and helpers is very good across all aspects of the curriculum. Information provided about the school is extensive and parents are very well informed about all aspects of the school activities and achievements, academic and sporting, through newsletters or messages sent home. Information regarding the school curriculum is provided by letter at the start of each term. In all respects, the school serves parents very well in the quality and quantity of information provided and parents expressed

complete satisfaction with this. All of the positive views of the school expressed by parents at the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector and in the inspection questionnaires are fully supported by the inspection findings. Parents strongly support the school and, like their children, are very proud of it.

- 51 Parental help in the school helps pupils to adjust well to the presence of adults and offers them excellent opportunities to develop social skills, politeness, helpfulness and consideration for others.
- 52 The school holds three parents' evenings each year, during which parents have opportunities to discuss their children's progress. In addition they receive a written report at the end of each year. The parents' evenings are very well attended and parents are appreciative of the quality of information that they are given about their children. The year end reports are detailed and provide useful guidance on how pupils are to improve. Again, parents appreciate the time devoted by teachers to providing this information in a clear and concise way. Staff are readily accessible to parents and parents can discuss any concerns they might have about any aspect of their children whenever they wish. Since parents are kept very well informed about how the school is functioning, they are able to provide considerable support for their children at home, especially with their reading. It is apparent from the pupils' homework and reading diaries that many parents do provide this support, although this does not appear to have had a widespread effect on reading standards, particularly at Key Stage 1.
- 53 Parents of pupils identified as having special educational needs are kept well informed by the school and are fully involved in regular reviews of their children's progress.
- 54 Overall, the views of the parents are that this is a very good school, where their children are valued and cared for by an efficient, dedicated and diligent staff and where they are able to receive a sound base on which to build their education. Staff are highly regarded and the home/school partnership is solid and well founded. Pupils are happy and relaxed in the school, the atmosphere is calm and welcoming and pupils are encouraged to work to the best of their ability at all times.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

- 55 The quality of leadership and management is very good. The acting headteacher, who has been in post for most of the academic year, manages the school effectively. He has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has built on the good improvements introduced under the leadership of the headteacher. He is very well supported by a hardworking and committed staff. There are very good relationships within the school and a clear commitment to raising standards.
- 56 At the time of the last inspection in 1997, the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in strategic management and planning, there were fundamental weaknesses in curriculum planning and assessment and over a quarter of the teaching at Key Stage 1 was judged to be unsatisfactory. Following the inspection an action plan was prepared to address the key issues identified for future improvement. Good progress has been made in addressing the key issues, particularly those relating to improvements in the school development plan and in the quality of teaching. The key issues from the last inspection are as follows:
- 57 Key issue 1: *'Establish a manageable long term school development plan to provide clear direction for the future. Governors, headteacher and staff should ensure that it identifies appropriate priorities, includes monitoring and success criteria, is accurately costed and links the school's resources and reserves closely to the school's educational priorities.'*
- 58 With support from the local education authority, good progress has been made in addressing this issue. The school development plan is the result of discussions by staff, to determine their priorities, and then by the governors. It is well structured and contains good detail of the school's targets for improvement. It is closely linked to a four year programme of curriculum review and provides a clear view of the future direction of the school. Within the plan, secure links are made between the budget and the agreed priorities.

- 59 Key Issue 2: *'Raise the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 to satisfactory levels in all classes.'*
- 60 Very good progress has been made. Since the last inspection there have been changes in staffing and a clear commitment to develop teachers' expertise through a programme of in service training and greater sharing of skills. The quality of teaching is monitored through direct observations in the classrooms and planning is rigorously checked. As a consequence of these actions, no unsatisfactory lessons were observed during this inspection. However, the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is not as good as at Key Stage 2 or in the Under Fives.
- 61 Key Issue 3: *'Improve significantly the quantity and quality of books to provide adequate support for the development of reading and literacy skills.'*
- 62 Satisfactory progress has been made in addressing this issue. Following the inspection an audit of reading materials was carried out and the governors decided that the spending limit for the purchase of books should be increased. A new library was planned, so that the existing stock of books could be more easily used, and this is now almost ready for occupation. Reading skills are developing steadily at Key Stage 1 and more rapidly at Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence shows that pupils now read a wide range of books.
- 63 Key Issue 4: *'Improve the quality of curriculum planning through the further development and implementation of schemes of work, in order to promote continuity of learning and high standards and to ensure that the programmes of study of all subjects of the National Curriculum are covered at the right level and in appropriate depth.'*
- 64 Good progress has been made. The curriculum for children under five meets all the requirements of the nationally recommended 'Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning' and there are policies and schemes of work in place for all subjects at Key Stages 1 and 2. Materials devised by the national Qualifications and Curriculum Authority have been adopted in subjects such as design and technology, where formerly there had been no detailed curriculum guidance. These now need to be adapted to suit the needs of the school. In other subjects, schemes devised by staff are in place. Of particular note is the high quality curriculum plan in art, which has been devised by the subject coordinator.
- 65 Key Issue 5: *'Ensure that curriculum development is appropriately supported in terms of the professional development of teachers in order to achieve subject expertise across the full range of the National Curriculum subjects and religious education.'*
- 66 Good progress has been made. The quality of teaching has been regularly monitored and evaluated and, as a consequence, the acting headteacher has a very clear understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses of individual teachers. Regular professional development interviews help to clarify specific individual needs, which are then supported, either through help from colleagues or through in service training. The effectiveness of the school's action is in the evidence from the inspection, which shows that no teacher was judged to have an inadequate grasp of what was taught.
- 67 Key Issue 6: *'Develop a more rigorous and consistent approach to assessment and recording to successfully inform learning plans and provide for the systematic monitoring of progress and development for all pupils.'*
- 68 Good progress has been made. Effective assessment systems are in place, and information gained from assessments is well used to guide future planning.
- 69 Teachers responsible for coordinating the school's provision in different subjects or aspects of its work have a clear understanding of the issues to be dealt with and contribute strongly to the overall quality of leadership and management of the school. Leadership of the under fives and in information technology and art is very good. Leadership in mathematics, science, design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education is good, and is sound in English, music and special educational needs.
- 70 The governors are very effective in fulfilling their responsibilities. The governing body is well

led and organised. Governors meet regularly and are frequent visitors to the school. A particular strength of the governing body is that all governors live locally and, therefore, have close contact with the local community. Governors carefully monitor the work of the school through visits to classes and close scrutiny of documents and formal reports presented by the headteacher. Some governors work in the school and therefore have very good knowledge about the day to day issues affecting the lives of pupils and staff. Governors are involved in the production of the school development plan and regularly monitor progress in meeting the targets set in it. Careful thought is given before spending decisions are agreed and issues of 'best value' are always considered. The governors have been particularly active in responding to the issues raised in the previous inspection report, and they have ensured that statutory requirements are fully met.

- 71 The school makes good use of its resources. Staff are effectively deployed and all available space is well used. Of particular note is the high quality of support provided by classroom assistants. Their help makes a significant difference to the quality of education for pupils identified as having special needs, particularly those experiencing difficulties with the control of their movements. Resources for special needs pupils are generally good. These include a small number of computer programs specifically intended for their use. Good use is made of the resources of the local community, including the skills and talents of its governors and parents. The premises are well maintained and are cleaned to a good standard. Finances are carefully managed and the effects of spending decisions are closely monitored. The hard working and efficient school secretary effectively manages the day to day administration of the school, enabling teachers to concentrate on their work with pupils. Additional grants, such as funds specifically targeted for 'booster classes' for Year 6 pupils, are well spent.
- 72 A wide range of indicators, including the quality of teaching, the quality of leadership and the improvements made in the standards in a number of subjects, show that the school is effective. Its income is below average and therefore the school provides good value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

- 73 The school should now:
- (1) Raise attainment in English by:
    - a) ensuring that phonics are systematically and consistently taught in all Key Stage 1 classes and that subsequent work at Key Stage 2 is approached with the same rigour;
    - b) improving the quality of spelling throughout the school;
    - c) improving the quality and fluency of pupils' handwriting, giving regular opportunities for practice of letter formation and making sure that high standards of handwriting are sustained in other subjects.

*(Paragraphs 8, 10, 91, 93, 95)*
  - (2) Raise attainment in information technology at Key Stage 2 by:
    - a) providing suitable equipment for monitoring and control technology;
    - b) ensuring that teachers become skilled in using it.

*(Paragraphs 4, 11, 34, 147, 150)*
  - (3) Ensure that higher attaining pupils have better opportunities to work independently, particularly when using and applying the skills that they have learned.

*(Paragraphs 12, 31, 32, 88, 104, 111, 119, 152)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	77
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	26	49	22	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)	26	238
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	Not applicable	38

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	40

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.7

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	18	23	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	14
	Girls	20	21	18
	Total	33	35	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (80)	85 (81)	78 (84)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	16	18
	Girls	19	17	15
	Total	33	33	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (69)	80 (72)	80 (85)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	18	15	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	17
	Girls	11	10	12
	Total	22	24	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (65)	73 (59)	88 (69)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	17
	Girls	10	10	12
	Total	21	23	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (46)	70 (69)	88 (72)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	198
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.8
Average class size	29.75

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	72.5

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	Not applicable

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
--------------------------------	----

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1998-9
	£
Total income	385,990
Total expenditure	384,755
Expenditure per pupil	1,480
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,680
Balance carried forward to next year	20,915



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	290
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.	67	28	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	31	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	44	1	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	38	7	0	13
The teaching is good.	62	37	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	35	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	19	1	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	24	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	61	31	7	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	62	27	2	1	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	38	1	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	49	3	1	8

*\* These figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number*

Thirty one per cent of parents returned the pre-inspection questionnaires. Eighteen parents attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector.

## **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**

- 74 The school admits children to the nursery when they are three years and four months old. Children transfer to the reception class at the beginning of the September or January after their fourth birthday. Most children in the reception class attend the school's nursery before they enter full time school. The nursery makes good provision for the children's all round development and education and work in reception builds very well on this. The curriculum for children under five fully reflects the nationally recommended 'Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning'. There is a supervisory nursery nurse in charge of the nursery who works closely with a supporting nursery nurse. Both nursery nurses and the reception class teacher plan together closely to ensure there is no unnecessary repetition of work. They provide the children with a good foundation for learning and smooth transition to work at Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum. All members of staff who teach children under five have a clear commitment to raising standards and liaise closely with parents. They work closely with Key Stage 1 teachers to ensure that their work provides a firm basis for what is taught later. The record keeping system is informative and gives all members of staff a well informed base for the planning of work. There are no formal assessment procedures for children entering the nursery, but parents complete a record of what their children can do. This gives the members of the nursery staff a clear knowledge of what children know and can do at home, and the information is used to plan future work. The reception teacher continues to use the records from the nursery and adds to these the results of a 'baseline assessment' administered shortly after children enter the reception class.
- 75 The nursery and reception classes provide a very effective level of support for children with special educational needs. All members of staff ensure that children have full and equal access to the areas of learning.
- 76 The children respond well to the provision in the nursery and make good progress, particularly in the development of their social skills. In spite of this good progress, children's levels of attainment in English and mathematics on entry to the reception class are still below the expectation for most children of this age. They make rapid progress in developing their language and number skills in the reception class and most are likely to attain the skills they require to achieve the nationally recommended areas of learning in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they are five. All children make very good progress in their personal and social development and most make good progress in the development of their creative skills. They make good progress in their physical development. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of provision for children under five since the previous inspection.

#### **Personal and social development**

- 77 Children settle quickly into the security of the nursery and make very good progress in developing their personal and social skills. Most children are self possessed and confident when moving around the nursery. They share and take turns amicably, for example when using the 'role-play' area. The children concentrate well on their tasks and clearly enjoy their work. They cooperate happily with each other, and adults, take care of classroom equipment and quickly learn to tidy up after themselves. They continue this level of progress in their personal development as they move into the reception class. Here, children work well independently and together. All children persevere to finish their tasks and take pride in their work. The reception teacher encourages children to solve problems in all aspects of their work. For example, children have to decide how to fix a clay shell and body together to make a snail. Children quickly understand the routines of school life and move quietly and confidently around the school. They change their clothes for physical education lessons independently and fold them neatly. By the time they are five most children, including those with special educational needs, are likely to exceed the expected levels in the development of their social skills.

## **Language and literacy**

- 78 The provision for the development of language and literacy is good. Many children enter the nursery with below average language skills. They make good progress in their ability to enjoy looking at books, and quickly understand that pictures and print convey meaning as they listen to well known stories and rhymes. Many children have limited vocabulary and immature speech patterns, and they receive good individual help to improve their speaking skills. All children learn to use pencils correctly. They increase their early writing skills in a range of activities that encourage their hand and eye control. This good rate of learning and progress increases as children move into the reception class. Children with special educational needs continue to receive effective support. The reception class teacher uses the National Literacy Strategy very effectively to develop further children's listening, speaking and reading skills, using a very careful selection of books and stories to increase children's interest. All adults in the reception class use precise and clear diction to assist children's speech. They encourage the children to speak clearly in sentences. Children enjoy this work and make rapid progress in learning letter sounds. They develop their speaking skills well through 'role play' activities. For example, the imaginary vet's surgery gives children opportunities to develop their speaking, listening and writing skills as well as their awareness of the need to care for animals. All children listen carefully to stories in the reception class. They retell them, enjoy talking about the pictures and join in with familiar sentences. Children are eager to choose books to take home and develop positive attitudes to reading. All the children consolidate and develop their early writing skills well. They hold and use pencils correctly. Most children are on target to achieve the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five.

## **Mathematics**

- 79 The provision for children's mathematical development is good. Most children make good progress in consolidating and developing their number skills. The nursery staff develop these skills effectively through a carefully planned range of activities, which include the use of construction activities to develop awareness of space and children's control skills. There is a good level of support for children with special educational needs. They make good progress in developing their knowledge of numbers. The more able children count accurately up to ten and beyond and all children learn and sing simple number rhymes. Children enter the reception class with a rapidly developing range of mathematical skills. The reception teacher continues to build on and develop these early skills well during daily sessions of structured number work. Most children count and order objects to 20 and know and recognise the place of numbers on a number line. The more able children recognise and know how to add on one more to a given number. They are beginning to understand the concept of subtraction. They use suitable mathematical language to describe processes, such as 'more than' and 'less than'. Children develop their mathematical learning further through the use of the computer. This gives them an increasing awareness of how to sequence shape and control movement. They know and correctly use the names for common shapes such as circle, triangle and square. The children consolidate, build on and develop their early mathematical experiences well. Most children are likely to attain the desirable learning outcomes for mathematics by the time they are five. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.

## **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

- 80 The school makes good provision for developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world and, as a result, children make very good progress in this area of learning. They have many opportunities in the nursery and the reception class to explore the natural and man-made world. For example, children in both classes regularly visit the school's 'wild area' to look at the plant life and small creatures. Children continue to consolidate and develop their learning well as they progress through the reception class. They develop a good understanding of their immediate community. Children use computers as a matter of routine and work carefully and accurately at activities such as sequencing parts to complete pictures. This enables them to develop a good understanding of how to use the keyboard and mouse for accurate control. Children draw and colour mini beasts on the screen to support other work. Most children are on target to reach the expectations of the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five.

## **Physical development**

- 81 The school makes good provision for children's physical development and children make good progress. They have access to a suitably wide range of tools such as pencils, crayons, scissors and glue from the beginning of their time in the nursery. Many experience difficulty in controlling these when they start in the nursery. They increase their fine control skills well, but many are still below the expected standard when they enter the reception class. Children in the nursery develop their climbing and balancing skills effectively. They have opportunities to run, jump, balance and use wheeled toys with an increasing awareness of space. There is a secure area for outdoor activities for nursery children. Children in the reception class continue to develop their physical skills well. The school has a suitable selection of large apparatus for children to use in the school hall. Most children likely to exceed the expectations of the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five.

## **Creative development**

- 82 The school's provision for children's creative development is very good. Children learn basic techniques in the nursery and make good progress. This enables them to use and control materials effectively. They hold brushes correctly, apply paint to paper with much confidence and mix paint to achieve different colours. In the reception class children's skills of observation are carefully developed. For example, the children looked at Matisse's picture of a snail and worked hard to produce pictures in similar style. Most children show a good awareness of shape, pattern and colour. They sing a variety of songs from memory and use percussion instruments correctly and confidently to maintain rhythm. Most children are likely to exceed the level of skill necessary to achieve the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five.
- 83 The quality of teaching for the children under five is good overall. Two thirds of teaching in the nursery is good. Over three quarters of the teaching in the reception class is very good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching for children who are under five. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. This consistently high quality of teaching reflects the level of progress children make in their early years at school. The teacher, nursery nurses and members of the support staff work very effectively together to promote learning. They have a clear understanding of the educational and social needs of young children. All members of staff have realistically high expectations of achievement and behaviour. There is a significant increase in the level of challenging and interesting tasks in the reception class. This very effectively consolidates and develops children's knowledge and understanding. All members of staff use language well and to good effect and speak precisely and clearly. This ensures that children make good progress in developing their speaking skills. Children with special educational needs make good progress. All members of staff place a suitable emphasis on the teaching of specific skills such as how to use pencils, paint and musical instruments. They encourage pupils to work independently and to make choices.

## **ENGLISH**

- 84 The results of the national tests in 1999 show that the performance of the pupils at age seven is below the national average in reading but close to the average in writing. The proportion of pupils attaining higher levels is below average in reading and in writing. Trends over time indicate that there has been a steady improvement in reading but writing remains consistently below average. By age 11, national tests indicate that the performance of the pupils is below average. Boys outperformed girls in English by the equivalent of more than a term and a half. Trends over time, for this age group show that there was a significant fall in results in 1998, but in all other years, performance was below the national average. In comparison with the performance of pupils in similar schools, results indicate that standards were below average for both seven and eleven year olds.
- 85 Inspection evidence supports the view that the pupils' attainment in English is generally below average at the ages of seven and eleven. However, there is evidence that overall, pupils are

making satisfactory progress because teachers carefully assess pupils' work and then subsequently set appropriate targets for each pupil. The school is well placed to bring about further improvements in standards of attainment for all pupils throughout the school.

- 86 At the time of the last inspection, while standards were judged to be in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages, several weaknesses in English were identified. These included a limited range of reading and writing, too few pupils reaching higher levels in reading, and literacy was not being used effectively in other subjects. Evidence from this inspection shows that pupils now read a wide range of books and write for different purposes in both key stages. The school has successfully addressed these issues since the last inspection.
- 87 A strength of the school's efforts to raise standards is the way in which teachers use other subjects to promote good literacy skills. For example, in science at Key Stage 1 pupils write labels, check spellings and are involved in independent research into how beans grow. At Key Stage 2, Year 6 pupils use precise scientific language to record their findings. Throughout the school, pupils read for information as well as for pleasure. From the reception class to Year 6, they learn to apply their reading and writing well across all subjects of the curriculum and religious education.
- 88 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them through direct and appropriate teaching of specific skills to meet their specific needs. There are no significant variations in the rates of progress of boys and girls. Higher attaining pupils generally make sound progress but, as yet, they are not generally involved in independent learning. However, on some occasions this does happen. For example, in Year 4, the pupils researched life during Second World War and, in Year 6, following their visit to Standon Bowers Centre, they extended their investigations on rivers, using their mathematics and information technology skills successfully.
- 89 At Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing skills of speaking and listening. By the end of the key stage standards of speaking are average, but in listening they are good. Pupils in all classes listen quietly and attentively to their teachers and respond appropriately. The teachers seize opportunities to extend the pupils' skills. For example, in Year 1, the teacher discussed '*least and most*' when taking registration and talked about differences in holidays '*then and now*' in history. When studying a literacy hour text about a monster, older pupils gave good reasons for its behaviour. Pupils learn to extend their vocabulary and offer words such as '*extinct*' for dying out.
- 90 By the end of Key Stage 2, standards of speaking are average and listening skills are good. The younger pupils use an increasing range of vocabulary to express ideas and opinions in detail. A very good example of this was observed in geography and religious education, when Year 3 pupils talked about '*hexagonal shapes*' and '*symmetrical*' figures when cutting out linking figures to represent friendship and co-operation. Teachers and classroom assistants improve the pupils' learning through giving good explanations to clarify meanings. Drama is well used to encourage confidence and fluency. Another factor in raising standards is the encouraging environment in which pupils learn: adults working with them value their contributions and there is mutual respect for each other's opinions and ideas.
- 91 Progress in reading at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall, although by the end of the key stage standards are below average, with only about a third of the pupils reaching the appropriate standards for their age group. Those pupils make good progress. At the time of the inspection, they were observed reading complex texts such as '*Hiawatha*' by Longfellow and R.L. Stevenson's '*The Vagabond*', which they chose because they particularly enjoyed these texts. However, because of a lack of systematic teaching of phonic skills to some groups of pupils, not enough pupils are able to use their knowledge of sounds to read words that are unfamiliar and consequently they struggle to read. There are good assessment procedures, information from which is well used to plan step by step learning for individuals and for groups of pupils. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy satisfactorily and is adapting it for its own use. When fully adapted, it will give guidance to teachers as to the skills pupils are expected to learn as they move from class to class.
- 92 At Key Stage 2, the pupils make good progress in reading even though standards are below average at the end of the key stage. A significant number of pupils in Year 6 reach at least

average standards. In this group, the pupils read with enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment difficult texts such as 'The Hobbit' and 'The Iron Man'. Younger pupils understand how to scan text to gain information, as observed in literacy lessons. Older pupils comment easily on the differences of style between books and can group stories they have read accordingly. They are able to use skills of deduction and inference in their reading. The pupils use reference books and their library skills are being developed well. Throughout the school, pupils use dictionaries and thesauruses to aid their learning. Pupils' attainment in all groups is well supported by regular reading at home. The school also uses a mobile library service. There is a good literacy environment, where carefully and well chosen books are invitingly displayed in classrooms and corridors. Through these attractive displays, the pupils learn to value books.

- 93 Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in writing at Key Stage 1. Writing standards are below average by the end of Key Stage 1. However, the pupils are developing as writers, particularly since September, due to the strong focus that teachers are placing on writing skills. Spelling standards are generally below average, and too few pupils show sufficient accuracy in their spelling. Handwriting is not well developed. The pupils practise letters in handwriting books, but these skills are not transferred across pupils' other writing. While it is recognised that the teachers are rightly concerned to balance standards in content with those of handwriting, nevertheless, handwriting is unsatisfactory.
- 94 At Key Stage 1, the pupils are able to write for different purposes, including stories, poems, letters and factual reporting. Pupils are beginning to use punctuation correctly and they are beginning to be increasingly imaginative. There are good examples of these skills being used in other subjects. In geography, the pupils wrote letters to the class from their 'travelling bear', which travels widely in the company of children, parents and governors. At the time of the inspection, it was evident that the teachers used many opportunities to encourage pupils' skills of writing.
- 95 In Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in writing. Their attainment is just below average. There are some good examples of extended writing in English and in other subjects. The pupils are beginning to arrange their writing in paragraphs, with well extended and correctly punctuated sentences. They use words to good effect, as observed in Year 6 class where they modelled their writing on Roald Dahl. For example, they wrote '*Her wrinkled faced looked like a crumpled bag of crisps*', or '*Grandma cackled*', or '*She clamped her false teeth onto his ear*'. Standards of spelling and handwriting are below average, particularly in years 4 and 5. However, there is a significant proportion of pupils who have developed well formed, fluent and neat writing, mostly written in ink, in Year 6.
- 96 At Key Stage 2, the pupils are provided with many opportunities to use their writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum and in religious education. In Year 6, the pupils wrote expressive poems, following their stream study, which they modelled on Walter de la Mare's poem 'Silver'. In this class, the pupils wrote good accounts of different aspects of religious studies, sustaining and developing their ideas well. They are extending the scope and quality of their vocabulary effectively.
- 97 The overall quality of teaching is good with nearly half of the lessons being very good. The best teaching was observed in Years 1, 3, 4 and 6. In these classes, lessons are characterised by thorough planning, brisk pace, infectious enthusiasm and imaginative tasks which extend the pupils' learning. In most classes, work is well matched to pupils' abilities. Homework is well used to extend and support pupils' learning. The teachers' management of their pupils is very good. This results in exemplary behaviour and an effective learning environment in which the pupils can achieve to the best of their abilities. Teachers usually base their planning firmly on information gathered from good assessment procedures. An outstanding feature of these arrangements is the way in which classroom assistants record the pupils' speaking and listening skills in English and in other subjects. These are shared with the teachers and used to plan step by step programmes of work. Throughout the school, there is an encouraging atmosphere in which pupils are valued and therefore feel confident to contribute to discussions, to share ideas and to explore language to good effect. A very good example was observed in one class where a pupil with special educational needs read out his work and was spontaneously applauded by others in the room.
- 98 English contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers

use the plenary sessions at the end of lessons effectively to encourage pupils to reflect on the work achieved, to share ideas and to enjoy the beauty of English language. The pupils in Year 6 were visibly excited when they explored words and phrases to good effect. At both key stages, the teachers encouraged their pupils to enjoy what is best in English literature. For example, in Year 4, C.S. Lewis' 'Narnia' formed a good basis for extending pupils' understanding of life during the second war and, in another lesson, 'The Ancient Mariner' was used as a stimulus for dance. The teachers take every opportunity to encourage a love of reading and books. They hold 'Book Fairs' frequently and, to make language live for their pupils, they use the characters from books for drama effectively. Additionally, there are two after school clubs which help the pupils to extend their interest and to mix socially. At the time of the inspection there was a well attended Writers' Club for Key Stage 1 pupils, during which they used the 'wild area' as a stimulus for writing poetry. Key Stage 2 pupils participate in a Publishing Club, where their contributions are shared with the school and its community. All these factors impact positively upon the progress that the pupils make.

- 99 The coordination of English is satisfactory and has supported the improvements in standards. The careful analysis of the pupils' performance has enabled the school to focus effectively on areas of weakness and address these through appropriately targeted teaching. The pupils' progress is monitored well. The coordinator has a good overview of provision and standards throughout the school. 'Booster classes' help the pupils to make progress through programmes of work to reflect their specific needs. Classroom assistants provide very good support for pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 100 Results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show that the proportion of pupils achieving the national target of Level 4, or above, was close to the national average. Results are also average when compared with those of similar schools, with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Since 1996, attainment has been broadly in line with national trends, apart from a peak in 1997. There is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls.
- 101 The school's published target for pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was achieved in 1999. Inspection evidence indicates that the target for this year will be exceeded.
- 102 Results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that the proportion of pupils achieving the national target of Level 2 or the higher Level 3 was well below average. Results are also well below average when compared with those of similar schools. However there has been good year on year improvement in attainment since 1996, when results were very low.
- 103 At Key Stage 1 inspection evidence indicates that pupils are now achieving at a higher level than the national tests suggest and that attainment is broadly in line with national expectations, with most Year 2 pupils working within Level 2. Most pupils are confident in their knowledge of numbers, recall of addition and subtraction facts and the value of tens and units. For example, pupils in Year 2, in a mixed Year 1 and 2 class could correctly use money to solve simple subtraction problems involving finding the change from given amounts, varying between 10 pence for the least able and £5 for the most able pupil. In another mixed Year 1 and 2 class, Year 2 pupils could subtract single digit from two digit numbers mentally, with one pupil able to add 78 to 24 in her head. This is above the level expected at this age. Pupils' books indicate that they make satisfactory progress between Years 1 and 2. For example, pupils in Year 1 accurately add and subtract numbers to ten and set these out in a horizontal format. They can also guess at the size of masses in terms of '*more than*' or '*less than*' 100grams. The highest attaining pupils can add three digits, or two single digits and 10. By Year 2 pupils are able to add and subtract two digit numbers and, in the best cases, divide a two digit number by a single digit. In both years there are some examples of work with charts and shapes, and there are a few problems posing questions such as: '*How many ways can you...?*' However, generally, there is little evidence in this key stage of pupils using and applying mathematics in a range of practical situations.
- 104 Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly in line with national expectations and reflects

the results of the 1999 tests. Over the key stage, pupils make good progress. This is due to the good teaching that they receive within teaching groups based on ability. About four out of five of pupils in Year 6, in a Year 5 and 6 group of higher attainers, were able to mentally identify division facts in numbers up to 100 and to identify prime numbers well into two figures. Both Year 5 and Year 6 pupils improved their mental agility; those in Year 5 could find fractions of  $\frac{1}{1000}$  of a whole, write these as decimals and identify them on large sheets of squared paper. In a lower ability set in Years 4 and 5, pupils could mentally subtract two digit numbers up to a hundred using money and then write their calculations. The good step by step development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding which takes place throughout the key stage results in a wide range of good quality work produced in Year 6. For example, pupils in Year 6 confidently use the four operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to solve problems, and find fractions of shapes and of numbers. They can draw angles to 180 degrees with reasonable accuracy, identify a range of regular shapes and find perimeters and areas. Work on charts and graphs is less frequent than number work. There is some evidence of pupils using and applying mathematics to solve problems, notably in Year 6, although teachers sometimes over direct pupils as to which strategies to use.

- 105 The quality of teaching is good overall and no unsatisfactory lessons were observed. More than half of the lessons observed were good or better, and most of these were very good. Teaching is generally better at Key Stage 2, with almost all of the higher quality lessons observed being within this key stage. At Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Within this key stage, teaching was very good for the youngest pupils while teaching for older pupils was satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, two thirds of lessons were good or very good. Features of the best lessons were very good class management, tasks that were well matched to pupils' abilities, brisk pace, high levels of challenge and high expectations of what pupils could achieve. Within these lessons the oral sessions stretched and interested most pupils. For example, an oral session on tables might include a brisk session on tables up to ten, followed by quick addition and subtraction of two digit numbers to keep the class alert. In some lessons, classroom assistants provided very good support for teachers during oral sessions by noting pupils' responses. During lessons, teachers skilfully assessed pupils' understanding, adjusting further work as a result of their observations. This good practice is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection, where day to day assessment was regarded as a weakness. Plenary sessions to review learning at the end of lessons gave opportunities for pupils to reflect and to consolidate what they had learned, but were sometimes not long enough and as a result pupils sometimes ended the lesson without having fully understood important concepts.
- 106 Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the classroom. They are encouraged to take part in the oral part of the lesson and are provided with achievable challenges at their level. Success in these activities can considerably raise self esteem and further motivate pupils. For example, in one lesson at Key Stage 2 a pupil with communication difficulties came happily to the board where he demonstrated doubling a number, then subsequently was successful in subtracting single numbers on his own.
- 107 Pupils are, for the most part, keen and eager to answer questions, and concentrate well in lessons. Behaviour is good. They are tolerant towards each other when taking turns. Pupils work together particularly well during activities such as mathematical games, where sharing a dice or 'buying' is involved. Written work is generally neatly presented.
- 108 Pupils are continuously assessed during mathematics lessons and, at Key Stage 2, are set half termly or six weekly tests. If, as a result of these assessments, it is decided that a pupil is to move to a different ability group, parents are consulted. A useful recording system helps the class teacher to know how pupils are progressing if another member of staff teaches them mathematics. Good resources, including some use of information technology for the practice of tables, are widely deployed.
- 109 The mathematics coordinator is committed to raising standards and has given a good lead in the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, which is used to provide a coherent scheme of work. He has been released from lessons on three occasions since January to consider teachers' planning for numeracy and has held three in service training sessions for teachers. When time has permitted, he has begun to monitor the quality of teaching. This has led to the strategy being implemented effectively.



- 110 Good use of numeracy skills helps pupils to make progress in other subjects. For example, in science pupils in Years 1 and 2 explored symmetry in nature, while pupils in Year 4 had to measure carefully amounts of liquid to add to solids during dissolving experiments. In Year 5 pupils used rulers to make accurate measurements to draw grids, bar charts and graphs to record their findings and used electronic scales carefully to measure volumes of water.
- 111 Overall, very good improvements have been made since the last inspection. Staff are working hard to raise standards in mathematics. There is now a coherent scheme of work throughout school, there are high expectations of pupils, and standards of attainment are rising. However, not enough emphasis is placed on developing skills of independent learning, particularly among higher attaining pupils.

## SCIENCE

- 112 Attainment in science is above average at the end of both key stages. This is a direct result of the consistently good quality of teaching, which encourages pupils to work hard, learn well and develop very positive attitudes to their work. National Curriculum tests and task results reflect the inspection findings and also show that standards are above average in comparison with those of similar schools. Since 1996 results in the science tests have fluctuated considerably, although the overall trend is one of steady improvement. The inspection findings indicate that the high standards from 1999 have continued. The school analyses results and looks closely at trends in attainment. It also places appropriate emphasis on the investigative element of science throughout both key stages. This has contributed to the significant improvement in standards at both key stages since the previous inspection.
- 113 By the age of seven pupils understand the need for a fair test and know how to construct one. All pupils write down and test their predictions, carefully record their results and draw conclusions from them. They apply their literacy skills well in their writing and use accurate scientific vocabulary. Pupils know the difference between living and non living things and understand how to use simple classification systems. They know that plants need light and water to grow successfully. In some aspects of the subject just under two thirds of pupils are working at a level above the national average. For example, most pupils confidently predicted how different combinations of conditions are likely to affect growth. They gave logical reasons for their predictions and used suitable scientific language such as 'root' and 'shoot'. The analysis of pupils' work shows that they successfully apply their knowledge of classification to their work on the properties of materials. Pupils of average and above average abilities understand that a bulb will not light if the circuit is open. All pupils make effective links with other subjects in their work. For instance, they use block graphs to record findings and discuss ways in which they can accurately measure bean roots.
- 114 By the age of eleven pupils understand and use an accurate scientific vocabulary, such as 'mass', and know its specific application to science. At the beginning of the key stage, pupils correctly identify conditions necessary for growth and, by Year 5, all know the correct names for the parts of a flowering plant. They draw and label them correctly and understand their functions in the reproductive cycle of plants. By Year 6, just under a half of the pupils are working at above average levels in their understanding of the properties of materials. They understand the need to repeat observations in order to arrive at reliable conclusions. All pupils look for patterns in their findings and draw scientifically correct conclusions. For instance, pupils discussed different ways of testing a range of materials for their waterproof and windproof properties and measured water very carefully in millilitres. The analysis of pupils' work, shows above average understanding of the properties of solids, liquids and gases. Pupils know how to classify them and explain their functions accurately. By the end of the key stage pupils have a clear understanding of the solar system and the effects of earth's gravity. They take great care to ensure their experiments are as accurate as possible. Pupils recall previous work, such as work on 'classification keys', well and have a good understanding of scientific skills and concepts. Their ability to record their findings accurately in writing and by a range of graphs and charts is above the expectation for pupils of this age.
- 115 Progress throughout the school is good. It is very good at Key Stage 2. Pupils build very effectively on this as they move through the school. Pupils' attainment reflects this rapid

progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning and understanding of science. All pupils gain a very good understanding of scientific skills and concepts as they move through the school. They show significant gains in their ability to consolidate and build on previous learning. This is particularly noticeable in pupils' increasing ability to plan, organise and carry out scientific investigations. Pupils apply their knowledge from other areas of the curriculum, for example when using grids to tally their findings. They also make good progress in their understanding and use of appropriate scientific vocabulary.

- 116 Pupils at both key stages use computers effectively to support work in science. They enter findings into a database and look for patterns and trends in the results.
- 117 The quality of learning in science is good. All the teachers encourage pupils to learn and make progress through their enthusiastic and interesting teaching. Pupils are eager and enthusiastic learners and quickly assimilate new information. An example of this is the work done by some Year 3 pupils with tally charts. They apply previous learning to new concepts effectively.
- 118 Pupils in all classes show a high level of interest and enthusiasm for science. Attitudes to work are consistently good. Most pupils at Key Stage 2 have very good attitudes to their work. These contribute to their above average attainment. All pupils have a high level of motivation to work, concentrate very well and take much pride in their work. They work very well together, discuss ideas and use a suitably mature level of reasoning to work out ideas. Pupils at both key stages work collaboratively when necessary. They show excitement for the investigative work they do and listen carefully, follow instructions and behave in a responsible and sensible manner. Pupils pay due attention to safety issues and share tasks fairly.
- 119 Overall, the quality of teaching in science is good throughout the school. There is some very good teaching at the beginning and end of Key Stage 2. In all lessons, teachers' planning has relevant and suitable learning objectives and clearly identifies extension activities. Hallmarks of the very good teaching are the quality of teachers' intervention, questioning, discussion and challenge of pupils' thinking. All pupils have opportunities to discuss their findings. The pace of lessons is good. The good relationships between teachers and pupils ensure a high level of commitment by pupils. Teachers give pupils opportunities to engage in their own research and to plan and carry out their own investigations but, in a minority of lessons, investigations are over-directed and not enough use is made of challenging questions. This restricts learning and progress. The structure of lessons at both key stages is good. Teachers are using the structure of the literacy and numeracy strategies well in planning science lessons. They use the plenary session well to make pupils aware of their learning and to reflect on their achievements. All the teachers have suitably high expectations of behaviour and achievement. This ensures pupils work hard and make progress. Teachers expect pupils to complete their work within lessons and make the criteria for work clear. The firm and subtle management of class routines, control and discipline promote a sense of purpose to all work. Individual lesson planning is good in quality and content. There is a good match of work to the needs and abilities of pupils. The quality and provision of work for higher attaining pupils is variable. All teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding and are enthusiastic about their teaching. Teachers make effective links to other subjects; for example, producing computer generated graphs and charts and when exploring environmental issues in geography.
- 120 The school has a good policy and scheme of work for science. The scheme of work details areas of work for different classes and age ranges. It gives a good level of support and guidance for teachers and ensures that they build sequences of work on pupils' previous knowledge. The planning and organisation of the subject ensures coverage of the National Curriculum. The coordinator monitors all planning, checks pupils' work on a regular basis and monitors the teaching of science. Assessment of pupils' work in science is thorough. All members of staff use the results of assessment well to plan future work. The curriculum meets the National Curriculum requirements for science. There is equality of access to the science curriculum for all pupils. Pupils and teachers make effective use of the good resources. The accommodation is adequate for the needs of the pupils. Staff use it well to maximise learning opportunities and make very effective use of the school grounds and local area.

**ART**

- 121 Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and, by the time they are seven, achieve standards normally expected of pupils of a similar age. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress, which becomes even more rapid in Year 6 and, by the time they are eleven, they achieve standards well above those normally expected. This represents an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection in 1997.
- 122 Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils steadily develop their skills in working with a range of media. Teachers place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' ability to observe objects carefully and to reproduce what they see in pencil, crayon, pastel and charcoal, paying attention to proportion and to detail. As a consequence, pupils produce drawings showing increasing control and tonal effects and, in Year 2, produce some very detailed observational studies of fruits such as oranges and sweet peppers. Skills in using paint develop steadily, and techniques of colour mixing to produce different tones are well taught. Working with clay, pupils of reception age use coiling and rolling techniques well to produce carefully detailed snails as part of their science work about 'mini beasts', while coil pots of a satisfactory standard are produced by older pupils.
- 123 At Key Stage 2, pupils use a greater range of media to good effect to produce good quality work. The individual talents of a number of pupils are recognised and successfully developed, with one or two items of the highest quality being produced in most year groups. Observational work is developed to a higher standard. Pupils in Year 4, produced some finely detailed drawings, making good use of the qualities of pencils for fine line work and for shading, while in Year 6 pupils made particularly good use of charcoal with chalk highlights to create very good portraits. Painting techniques are well taught, so that pupils in Year 3 make very rapid progress and create good effects of light and shade in still life compositions by using blocks of toning colours. By the time pupils are in Year 6 they produce beautifully detailed and well composed landscapes, making particularly good use of toning colours. Three dimensional work is also very well represented, mostly in Year 6, with work as varied as sculptures carefully carved from lightweight building blocks, colourful abstracts using painted sections of trees and woven willow models produced during a residential visit to Standon Bowers Outdoor Centre. Skills in using clay develop well, and in Year 6 pupils produce high quality, glazed pottery figures of 'Cadellin the Wizard', inspired by the story of 'The Weirdstone of Brinsingamen'.
- 124 Art is an important element in pupils' appreciation of other cultures. For example, pupils in Year 2 create colourful Mehndi patterns when studying Hindu festivals, while pupils in Year 5 produce finely detailed printing blocks using a Paisley design as part of their geography work about India. In Year 6, African art provides the stimulus for some high quality work in art and design and technology. The subject is also very well integrated into other areas of the curriculum, with good examples of mathematical patterns in many classes, as well as work supporting studies in science, geography, history and information technology.
- 125 Skills in art appreciation are well developed, particularly at Key Stage 2, through the use of the work of a wide variety of artists as a stimulus for pupils' work. For example, very good work in the style of John Piper made a high quality display on the theme of 'Britain at War' in Year 4, while pupils in Year 5 produced work inspired by Mondrian's mathematical abstracts as part of their study of modern history.
- 126 Pupils in all classes display very positive attitudes to their work in art. They listen attentively to their teachers and sustain good levels of concentration when working on their assignments. Equipment and materials are treated carefully and shared without fuss.
- 127 The quality of teaching is good. In the single lesson observed at Key Stage 1 and the three lessons at Key Stage 2, teaching was never less than good and in two lessons at Key Stage 2 it was very good. Particular features of teaching overall are very good subject knowledge, clear and direct teaching of skills, high expectations of pupils' work, very good management of pupils and very good use of classroom assistants. Particularly noteworthy is the consistently high standard of teaching which is evident in Year 6, as seen from the quality and variety of work produced. In this class, excellent planning and subject knowledge leads to very clear explanations of technique and lessons in which pupils are engrossed in their work.
- 128 All pupils, including those with special needs, enjoy equal access to the curriculum. Pupils with physical and motor control difficulties are particularly well supported in art lessons by skilled

classroom assistants.

- 129 To a large extent, the good standards achieved in art are due to the very good leadership of the subject. The subject coordinator, in consultation with staff, has produced a very good curriculum plan for art. This clearly sets out the way in which pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are to be developed year by year. Teachers' planning is regularly checked against the curriculum plan, and the quality of teaching is monitored. The coordinator's excellent subject knowledge enables him to provide very good quality support and guidance to teachers.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 130 Owing to the way in which the timetable was arranged, it was not possible to observe any teaching in design and technology at Key Stage 1. Judgements about the quality of work produced at this key stage are based on a close scrutiny of work displayed both in classrooms and in pupils' books.
- 131 Standards in design and technology are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1 and, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils produce work of a standard better than is normally expected of pupils of a similar age. All pupils, including those with special needs, make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. Standards at Key Stage 2 have improved since the last inspection in 1997.
- 132 The reason for the differences in attainment between the two key stages appears to centre on differences in teachers' subject expertise and knowledge. A close scrutiny of pupils' work showed a much better range and quality of work produced at Key Stage 2, and lesson observations confirmed that the good quality teaching in most classes is based on good subject knowledge. In some of the classes in Key Stage 1, the work produced indicated that, in previous terms, teachers were not always clear about the levels at which they were to teach skills. This situation has now been resolved with the adoption of curriculum materials devised by the (national) Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, but in previous years precisely what was to be taught and at what level depended on the professional judgement of teachers since there were no clear school guidelines. In all classes, work in design and technology is often closely linked to science projects.
- 133 In Key Stage 1 classes, pupils learn simple and appropriate ways of joining materials through activities such as modelling from recycled materials. They learn about simple mechanisms and produce satisfactory sliding mechanisms from card to show the stages of growth of a plant. While design work is taking place, a much greater emphasis is placed on making objects; therefore evidence of designs was generally limited.
- 134 At Key Stage 2, pupils receive a wider curriculum and, because of good teaching, make good progress. Pupils in Year 3 experiment with pneumatics to successfully power 'monsters' made from recycled materials, while in Year 4, pupils closely examine books with moving parts to see how simple mechanisms such as pivots work. In Year 5, pupils use their design skills to plan the appearance of biscuits, which they later make and evaluate. However, pupils make the best progress in Year 6, where a very wide range of designing and making activities result in high quality finished articles. Very good emphasis is placed on the functional element of the subject as pupils first design, make and then fill boxes for individual mince pies, which were given to local senior citizens at Christmas. The boxes produced were well constructed, precisely measured and well finished and successfully met the standards of the design brief given to pupils. 'Growth cells', designed before the inspection and under construction at the time of inspection show that good use is made of pupils' skills in mathematics as they precisely measure and then cut sections of the framework before fastening them together into complex three dimensional shapes. Close links with art are evident; kites carefully constructed from thin strips of wood and plastic sheet are colourfully decorated, as were the mince pie containers.
- 135 A visit by Year 6 pupils to look at a bridge under construction and projects such as raft making, which took place during a residential visit to Standon Bowers Outdoor Centre, give pupils a real sense of the relevance of the subject.

- 136 Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their work. They listen carefully to their teachers and concentrate hard on their tasks. They share materials sensibly and help one another when needed, for example when glued items need to be held together for a short period.
- 137 The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. Particularly noteworthy features of teaching are teachers' subject knowledge overall, the careful preparation of resources and the very good standards of class control. Skills are generally very well taught, with particularly high expectations and good use made of subject specific vocabulary in Years 4 and 6. The quality of teachers' lesson planning varies considerably from fairly brief in one of the Year 3 classes to outstanding in Year 4. Planning of high quality helps to ensure that lesson time is well managed and therefore work is generally conducted at a crisp pace.
- 138 Good progress has been made since the last inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2. The coordinator for the subject has a clear view of future developments and provides good leadership.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

- 139 It was only possible to see four lessons, one in history and three in geography. The subjects are organised on a topic basis, which gives sufficient opportunities to study the subjects at some depth. It is clear from the scrutiny of work and discussions with staff and the pupils that in history, the pupils make satisfactory progress and in geography they make good progress. They therefore achieve standards expected for their age group in history, and in geography they exceed them. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in these subjects through suitably modified activities to meet their specific needs.
- 140 At Key Stage 1, the pupils are beginning to develop knowledge and understanding about aspects of the past. In the single history lesson observed, in Year 1, the pupils learned to distinguish differences between ways of life at different times. Through very good reminiscences by a local visitor, the pupils discovered how holidays were spent in his childhood in the fifties. They gained further knowledge through preparing questions for him to answer. This also formed a good basis for discussions and for extending literacy skills. In Year 2, displays about holidays include those taken by their 'travelling bear', which has so far visited three continents. Through this stimulus pupils have developed mapping skills, starting with plans of their classroom on which they identified places where their bear had been hidden. These skills were then extended to the immediate locality and then further afield. In this way pupils learn to locate countries such as Wales on a map and become familiar with the map of the world. They begin to find out about climate and weather in contrasting locations such as the Hebrides and Dubai.
- 141 At Key Stage 2, younger pupils are able to appreciate what life was like during the Second World War. They write detailed accounts. Older pupils remember their studies of history of Britain since 1945. They are able to explain how the Second World War started. In discussion with the pupils, it is clear that they have a good sense of chronology, which they are able to apply to the people, changes and events studied.
- 142 In geography, Year 3 pupils learn about a range of different scales of maps. Through their studies, they know how to locate Handsacre, in relation to Staffordshire, the Midlands, the United Kingdom and to the map of the world. In their work on the immediate environment, the pupils learn to use and interpret maps. Through this first hand experience, the pupils were able to update the original map of the school grounds and therefore noticed changes that had been made to their environment. Older pupils in this key stage learn to acquire, collect and record evidence regarding the climate and weather of India, using a variety of resources. In a thorough 'Rivers' investigation, Year 6 pupils increased their geographical knowledge and understanding through careful analysis of evidence following their field studies.
- 143 The small amount of teaching observed was good. The teachers have good subject knowledge and are enthusiastic in the delivery of the lessons. Good use is made of visits, artefacts and visitors to extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding. These visits include Shugborough Hall for Victorian studies, the Birmingham Museum and the water treatment works. Very good

use is made of theatre groups through which the pupils learn about different historical periods. Year 6 pupils participate in a residential outdoor centre. These visits give the pupils good opportunities to acquire their knowledge of both history and geography. The teachers use other subjects to link learning. Literacy skills are practised through recording of findings and observations. In Year 4, the pupils wrote letters to fictional friends about the production of Romeo and Juliet in the Globe Theatre. Mathematical skills are practised when the pupils in Year 2 record in column graphs, seaside towns and cities visited by their 'travelling bear'. Year 6 pupils use their data handling skills for surveys. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained the standards in history and standards have risen in geography.

- 144 The subjects are effectively managed by the coordinator who keeps an overview of progress throughout the school. She monitors planning to ensure continuity and progression in the subjects, by checking coverage, key elements and skills taught: where necessary, she gives guidance as to how the subjects should be developed. She has listed resources, which are well labelled and accommodated.
- 145 Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and enjoy their work in both subjects. They share ideas and resources and work well in groups where required. They are interested in their own area and in other peoples and places. Their behaviour is very good. Their very good attitudes contribute well to the overall progress they make.
- 146 The subjects of history and geography make very good contributions to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Younger pupils in the school learn to wonder at the travels that are possible now and through their studies they have their horizons effectively widened beyond their immediate environment. Older pupils learn to appreciate art through being given opportunities to model paintings on John Piper's portrayal of war scenes. Through attractive displays of Indian and African artefacts, the pupils learn to celebrate the diversities and richness of their culture and of the wider world.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 147 Attainment in information technology is broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, but below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Although the planned curriculum is satisfactory, at Key Stage 2, it cannot be fully taught because there is little useful equipment in school for monitoring and control technology. This represents a decline in standards since the previous inspection in 1997, when attainment was judged to be in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The requirements on schools have increased significantly since the last inspection, but the school has not kept up with these.
- 148 In some classes information technology skills are regularly taught in whole class lessons, while in other classes they are not. During the period of the inspection, the direct, whole class teaching of skills was only observed in one class at each key stage while in other classes pupils were observed using computers as part of their work in other subjects. Since only two lessons were observed, both at different key stages, no overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching. The skills being taught were in editing text at Key Stage 1, and making and searching a database and producing a 'scatter graph' at Key Stage 2. A very good feature of one lesson was the teacher's use of ongoing assessment to determine the next steps in learning.
- 149 The use of information technology through other subjects was seen in many classes throughout the inspection. The software used was appropriate for the subjects concerned and the use of information technology was directly helpful to pupils' learning. At Key Stage 2, pupils used computers in mathematics lessons to practise multiplication tables and to develop their understanding of place value, and calculators were used by pupils in Year 6 as an aid to complex calculations. In English the use of computers enabled pupils to practise their grammar, such as possessive pronouns, and for word processing. Skills in using clip art packages enabled pupils to illustrate their work in science. There is a very good 'Publishing Club' in Year 6, which produces regular issues of a popular school magazine. Pupils in the publishing club use a variety of skills including those of editing text, making frames and borders and cutting and pasting graphics.

- 150 Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 as they develop basic skills in word processing, using graphics and controlling the movements of programmable floor robots. At Key Stage 2, skills develop well in many elements of the subject and some good work is produced; for example very good use was made of a graphics program when pupils in Year 6 produced colourful work in the style of Matisse. However, progress overall is unsatisfactory because shortages of hardware mean that pupils do not have opportunities to develop skills in control or monitoring technology. The school has a large number of CD-ROMs, but equipment with a CD-ROM drive with which to use them is limited and no simulation or modelling programs were seen in use at the time of the inspection.
- 151 There is a good, structured assessment system directly linked to teachers' planning which records pupils' achievements and progress at both key stages. Assessment consists of two strands: firstly, the skills that pupils have demonstrated, for example, whether or not they can save and retrieve work; secondly the outcomes of their work, such as whether or not they have designed a poster using a border. Teachers then use these assessments to help them in future planning.
- 152 Pupils respond very well to using information technology, recognising it as a useful tool for learning. They are careful and well behaved when they use the computers. However, opportunities for them to use computers for more independent learning are generally limited, since most information technology activities are closely directed by teachers.
- 153 Currently the school has insufficient resources for teaching information technology. Although all classrooms have a computer, a number of them are old and not suitable for teaching the current curriculum. There is a computer in school with an internet connection, but it is also used for administrative purposes, which severely limits its use for teaching. The school's recent success in obtaining a large grant for the development of information technology will enable it to begin to address these shortcomings.
- 154 Within a short period of time the coordinator for information technology has worked hard and has made very good progress in developing the subject within the limited resources available throughout the school. Currently, planning and the way in which pupils' skills are developed are monitored by the coordinator through a scrutiny of the teachers' planning each half term. On the first of a planned series of visits she has monitored the teaching of information technology. She works well with other staff, including the previous coordinator, and has a clear view of the future development of the subject.

## **MUSIC**

- 155 Standards in music are above those expected for pupils of eleven years of age. Music is an essential part of the school's life. Pupils demonstrate above average skill and maturity in their singing and in their ability to create atmospheric music. This is a good level of improvement since the previous inspection. The music curriculum gives a suitable balance for the development of pupils' performing and composing skills and their skills of listening and appraising. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' progress in music.
- 156 At Key Stage 1 pupils achieve standards above those expected for pupils of similar age. They show good control of their voices, for example when singing in unison and in two part harmony. Pupils have a good understanding of the meaning of beat and rhythm. They maintain accurate rhythm to piano and vocal accompaniment. Pupils maintain accurate pitch when they sing unaccompanied. They sing tunefully and enthusiastically in lessons and assemblies. The pupils listen carefully and attentively to music and successfully compare different styles. For instance, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils explored the feelings and ideas evoked by Mendelssohn's 'Hebrides Overture' and contrasted these with Debussy's 'La Mer'. Pupils create very effective and evocative atmospheric music. An example of this is another Year 2 lesson where the pupils selected and used a range of percussion instruments to create a sound picture of changing seaside weather: this work links well with their studies in geography.
- 157 At Key Stage 2, pupils achieve standards above those expected for pupils of similar age. Throughout the key stage their singing skills are of a high standard. They maintain correct pitch

when they sing in harmony and in rounds. The pupils pay suitable attention to posture, breathing, diction, dynamics and phrasing. They have good control of their voices. Pupils' composing skills are good. They select and use a wide range of instruments to create music and perform to each other with confidence. For example, at the end of the key stage pupils listened to the Ladysmith Black Mambazo group singing 'Wimmoweh'. They compared this with 'Wimmoweh' from the 'Lion King' and then worked together to compose a very effective piece of music in African style. Pupils have regular opportunities to play a range of stringed instruments and recorders. They enjoy performing in front of others. They maintain tune, beat and rhythm and play confidently alone or as a group. For instance, a Year 4 pupil played the piano at the beginning and end of an assembly.

- 158 Throughout the school pupils make good progress in their learning. They consolidate and develop their musical knowledge and skills well. This begins at Key Stage 1 and, as pupils move through Key Stage 2, they make very good progress. They build on their skills of performing and polish them to a high level. An example of this is the effort pupils put into perfecting their two part singing of 'Alleluia'. Pupils work hard to improve their skills of composition and make good progress in producing graphic scores. The school makes very effective use of tape recorders to let pupils reflect and assess their performances. This also demonstrates the progress pupils make as they move through the school.
- 159 Pupils throughout the school respond very well to music. They enjoy listening to and performing music. All pupils show much respect for the efforts of others. They respond very well to their teachers. Pupils have very good levels of determination to succeed. They persevere to produce work of a high quality. The pupils cooperate very well together in lessons and work collaboratively when the need arises. Pupils of all abilities, including pupils with special educational needs, listen very carefully and critically to music.
- 160 Pupils at both key stages make some limited use of information technology to support their work in music by using the computer to carry out independent research into musical instruments and the lives of composers.
- 161 The quality of teaching in music is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching is consistently good at Key Stage 1 and is very good at Key Stage 2. This consistently high quality of teaching has a positive impact on pupils' standards and progress in music. Teachers' planning shows a suitably high level of subject knowledge and understanding. In the most effective lessons the lively and enthusiastic teaching motivates and enthuses pupils to achieve well. All the teachers have suitably high expectations of what the pupils can do. They constantly challenge their skills and ensure that there is clear progress.
- 162 The school provides equality of opportunity and access to the whole music curriculum. This includes pupils with special educational needs. Music makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Resources for music are good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. They are suitable for the needs and age range of pupils. The resources for music are readily accessible and staff and pupils make effective use of them. The curriculum is further enhanced through pupils' participation in brass and stringed instrument tuition provided by peripatetic tutors and by a recorder group organised by a visiting music specialist.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 163 Standards in physical education are those normally expected at both key stages and pupils, including those with special needs, make satisfactory progress. Inspection findings are broadly similar to those of the previous inspection at Key Stage 1, but standards are now lower than those previously reported at Key Stage 2.
- 164 At Key Stage 1, pupils enjoy a good range of physical activity. Skills of movement progress satisfactorily from Year 1 to Year 2. In Year 1, pupils show levels of agility and control of balance appropriate to their age when moving around the hall using their imaginations to imitate the actions of different 'mini beasts'. In Year 2, pupils generally have greater speed of movement and a better awareness of others around them, although some are not able to land



correctly when jumping from low level apparatus. Ball skills are steadily developed and pupils show satisfactory hand to eye coordination when keeping a ball under control as they move around the playground or hall.

- 165 At Key Stage 2, ball skills and hand to eye coordination continue to develop steadily during games sessions. Pupils improve their accuracy and distance of throwing as they move through the key stage and show satisfactory coordination and balance when running and jumping. Good features of work at Key Stage 2 are in dance and swimming. During dance sessions, pupils listen attentively to what their teachers have to say, and in the best lessons watch carefully as techniques of movement are demonstrated. As a result, they make good progress in developing sequences of linking movements with older pupils showing particularly good muscle control in slower sequences. Swimming is restricted to pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pupils in Year 6 swim weekly during each term, while pupils in Year 5 visit the pool for two terms. Records provided by the school show that 50 per cent of pupils in Year 5 and 96 per cent of Year 6 have achieved the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum requirements for swimming.
- 166 Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons. They are generally responsive and attentive, the only exceptions being occasional moments in some lessons at Key Stage 1 where pupils became over excited by their activities and did not always pay full attention to their teachers' instructions. Most pupils work hard, are well behaved and show enthusiasm for the subject.
- 167 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. At Key Stage 1 teaching was satisfactory in most lessons. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is better, because teachers have greater expertise and teach skills with greater precision. Most lessons at this key stage were good and all others were satisfactory. Where teaching is best, warm up sessions are brisk and develop progressively, so pupils are not at risk of injuring themselves. Teaching then continues at a good pace, with clear, precise explanations of technique followed by good opportunities for pupils to practise and develop what they have learned. Teachers make good use of pupils to critically appraise the performance of others; to do this pupils learn to apply the criteria for performance laid down by the teacher at the start of the session. At the end of lessons, time is set aside for pupils to cool down and for the teacher's assessment of pupils' performance to be discussed. Occasional shortcomings of teaching are that not enough time is given for pupils to warm up or cool down at the beginning and end of lessons and sometimes teachers' explanations are too long, resulting in pupils sitting and listening, inactive for lengthy periods.
- 168 The curriculum is enhanced by the school's good provision for extra curricular sporting activities, which are very well supported by pupils. Outdoor and adventurous pursuits are well catered for during the annual Year 6 residential visit. Visitors to the school, such as an African dance troupe, which worked at Key Stage 1, enrich pupils' experiences and enhance pupils' cultural development.
- 169 The coordinator for physical education provides good subject leadership. He monitors provision well, including some observations of the quality of teaching. A good system for assessment is in place, with pupils' performances carefully recorded at the end of each six week block of work. Resources for the subject are generally good; they are well stored, easily accessible and in good condition overall.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

- 170 By the end of both key stages pupils are attaining levels which are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained.
- 171 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have learned to consider feelings and emotions as evidenced in Year 2, when they reflected upon the beauty of the world. They have thought about things that are special and learned about church artefacts. Through these opportunities, the pupils gain knowledge about some Christian practices. At the time of the inspection, the pupils decided upon rules of behaviour for assemblies. These were:

*'Listen,*

*Sit still,  
Join in.'*

- 172 They understand that their assemblies are special occasions and demonstrate this in the manner in which they enter and leave the hall. The pupils learn to respond sensitively to other people's feelings through discussions and in their plenary sessions of work undertaken in class. They know that there are other religions in the world and can name Judaism and Islam.
- 173 By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils have increased their knowledge and understanding of religions, to include Hinduism. They have increased their knowledge about sacred artefacts, places, writings and occasions. The pupils' knowledge of Bible stories has increased and they have good understanding of parables and the teachings of Jesus. In comparing the Bible with other religious books, the pupils learn about other religions without confusing the elements of each one. They learn that religion can guide people's lives. For example, one pupil wrote that *'The Koran gives followers laws on how to live their lives.'* In discussion, Year 6 pupils explained that non believers also have a code by which they live.
- 174 The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout both key stages. There is a steady and significant development of pupils' understanding and knowledge about religions and how these affect people's lives. The pupils learn about Old and New Testament and remember well the rule that Jesus taught, *'Love thy neighbour as thyself'*. Through these studies, the pupils learn to make links between values and their own attitudes and behaviour. They show considerable respect for beliefs and religious commitments of others.
- 175 The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory with good and occasionally very good teaching observed. The teachers successfully use a range of strategies, including well managed discussions of pupils' own experiences and understanding. In one lesson in Year 5, which concerned worship in the home, the pupils were given ample opportunities to think, to reflect and to voice their ideas. The teacher created an atmosphere of openness by asking her pupils to consider how people worship in different religions. Their understanding was increased through carefully chosen artefacts such as the Bible, a Crucifix, and an Aarti lamp. The pupils handled these with care and respect. They posed relevant questions such as *'Would people use an Aarti lamp in Judaism?'* or *'Why are some people called Roman Catholic?'* when they were discussing different forms of worship. In another lesson in Year 4, the pupils explored religious stories and teachings concerning the relationships between humans and their environment, including other living things. There was a very good development of pupils' thinking and understanding through the story of St. Francis and the discussion which followed it, where they made thoughtful contributions about their own experiences. They made links between their own school rules and examples from Christianity. Pupils showed that they understood how being a Christian led St. Francis to treat animals such as a wolf with kindness. This lesson resulted in an atmosphere which encouraged the pupils to become engaged in the their learning and to consider questions which are difficult to answer.
- 176 Teachers give their pupils good opportunities to extend and practise literacy skills. Following the story of St. Francis, the pupils wrote verses to express their views of him. One pupil wrote:

*'Francis thought it was cruel  
To hurt a living thing  
So I think I would call him  
The wonderful Christian King'.*

- 177 The teachers endeavour to assist their pupils' understanding of difficult ideas through practical activities. For example, in Year 3 the teacher and pupils explored feelings of happiness, loneliness and jealousy, using the story of Joseph and his brothers as an illustration of the way in which emotions affected people's actions. Following this, the pupils cut out linking figures to represent friendships and belonging. Discussions are well used to follow up these activities, to deepen understanding, to clarify thinking and to help pupils to talk about what they have noticed.
- 178 Religious education contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils learn to reflect on deeper issues of life and to consider questions that

are often difficult to answer. Through their studies and the learning opportunities that are provided for them, the pupils know the difference between right and wrong, as is evident in the way that they treat one another and the respect that they show for different ideas and beliefs. Cultural development takes place when the pupils learn about Christian and other religions. They learn to appreciate the richness and the diversity of this country and of the wider world.

- 179 The curriculum for religious education follows the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus. It also features on the school development plan for September, when the schemes of work will be revised and assessment procedures formulated. The present curricular provision is good; it is wide ranging and appropriately balanced, between learning about religions and learning from religions. The coordinator for religious education is enthusiastic and well informed. She monitors the teachers' planning and has a clear overview of the subject.