

INSPECTION REPORT

TRINITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

HEREFORD

LEA area: Herefordshire

Unique reference number: 116686

Headteacher: Mr D Lowe

Reporting inspector: Alan Blank

Dates of inspection: 2nd - 5th October 2000

Inspection number: 224098

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Barricombe Drive Moor Farm Hereford HR4 0NU
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Carter
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Kevern Oliver 01329	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Jenny Clayphan 20230	Team inspector	History Music Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Arthur Evans 19897	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography	
William Lowe 21245	Team inspector	Design and technology Religious education	
Patricia Potheary 21765	Team inspector	Special educational needs The physically disabled unit.	
Pat Richards 25433	Team inspector	English Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Art and design	
David Vincent 10204	Team inspector	Physical education Science	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Trinity Primary School is much larger than the average school with 572 pupils aged between 4 and 11. The number of pupils currently eligible for free school meals is 12.6% (below average). The school is situated in the Three Elms ward of Hereford, but also draws its pupils from other surrounding wards. The number of pupils from backgrounds other than white British is very low and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. 23% of pupils are on the register for special educational needs (about average). There are 18 pupils currently in a special unit for physically disabled pupils (the PDU). Children's attainment on entry is below the average for Herefordshire.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Trinity is a very effective school. Pupils achieve above average standards in English, mathematics, science, geography, art and physical education. In other subjects standards are average with the exception of ICT where there are weaknesses. The quality of teaching is good overall, and there is a lot of very good and excellent teaching. The leadership and management of the school is very strong. The school has made good progress overall since the last inspection. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school achieves above average standards in many subjects.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and often very good or excellent.
- The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good.
- The education and inclusion of pupils with special educational needs is very effective.
- The leadership and management of the school is very good.
- Behaviour is very good. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good.
- Systems for financial management and control are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in some aspects of information and communication technology (ICT) and its use across the curriculum. Systems for recording pupils' attainment and progress in this area.
- Good practice in teachers' marking needs to be adopted more widely throughout the school.

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 good progress since the last inspection in January 1997. The key issues raised at the time of the last report have been addressed effectively. Standards have been maintained or improved with the exception of design and technology where standards were good and are now satisfactory. Reports to parents are now very good. Planning and assessment procedures are thorough and consistent throughout the school. The monitoring of standards and teaching throughout the school is much improved. The curriculum for the under-fives provides the youngest pupils with an appropriate start to their school life and is based on national guidelines. There is still a need to improve play facilities for children under five; the school has this planned. Some weaknesses identified in ICT are still present.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	E	B	B
Mathematics	B	C	B	B
Science	B	D	C	C

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

Pupils make very good progress from their entry to school when attainment is below average. In Key Stage 1 results in tests have been average in English and below average in mathematics over the last few years. Current standards in all subjects are average in Key Stage 1 with the exception of physical education where standards are above. In most years the school achieves above average results in national tests carried out in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. When the results are compared to similar schools, they are above the average for these also. There was an anticipated dip in the results in 1998 because the year-group included more low-attaining pupils than usual. Current standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. In geography, physical education and art standards are also above average. In all other subjects standards are average with the exception of some aspects of ICT where standards are unsatisfactory. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good, as are standards of literacy and numeracy. The school sets targets for itself and its pupils and these provide challenge and ensure that high standards are achieved. A particular strength of the school is the achievement of pupils with special educational needs.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They enjoy school and work hard, and this impacts well on their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is consistently very good. They are reliable, rarely distracted and can be trusted to work with limited supervision. They play well together in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils are sensitive to each other's needs and collaborate well on tasks.
Attendance	Attendance is above average for primary schools nationally.

The pupils demonstrate a caring awareness of each other's needs, so that all, including those with physical disabilities, are included in games and play activities. The inclusion of pupils from the physically disabled unit (PDU) provides a rich and special experience for all pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching throughout the school is good and is a major factor in helping pupils to learn well and achieve good standards. Throughout the period of inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. In the reception classes most of the teaching observed was good (80%). In Key Stages 1 and 2 most of the teaching seen was at least good (72%), with a significant amount judged to be very good (34%) in Key Stage 1. In the physically disabled unit the teaching was very good overall with much judged excellent (40%).

Teachers choose activities carefully and make lessons interesting. Good use is made of time and resources so that pupils are enthusiastic learners and make good progress in lessons. When pupils work in small groups the work is matched to the ability of the groups and this means that pupils are challenged, work hard and don't get bored. There is some variation in the quality of marking. In the best examples pupils are given good guidance on how to improve. Teachers need to make better use of ICT in some lessons.

The teaching of basic skills in mathematics and English is very good. This good teaching results in above average standards being achieved by the pupils. Where pupils have special educational needs, whether in the main school or in the PDU, they are taught well. Skilled classroom assistants support pupils so that they learn well. Teachers throughout the school are adept at catering for pupils who may only be in their classes for part of the day.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a good range of learning opportunities. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. The curriculum is broad and balanced.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in the main school and very good in the unit. These pupils are very well cared for and supported in their learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social, cultural development	There is good provision for personal and health education. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very well for all its pupils. Systems for assessing pupils and recording their attainment, progress and personal development are good.

The school works very well in partnership with parents. The reports to parents are very good providing detailed information on pupils' progress and achievement. Regular parents' evenings are arranged. Parents' contribution to learning at home and at school is satisfactory, but systems for recording and evaluating reading at home need to be reviewed.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher is very good. He is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and senior management team. They are an effective team, planning and monitoring school improvement well. The management of the PDU is very good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is well informed and involved in the everyday work and strategic development of the school. They are very aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This has improved significantly since the last inspection. Systems for monitoring school performance are good.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Generally resources are used well. However, more use could be made of the resources for ICT.

The leadership and management is a strength of the school. Senior staff have clear objectives for moving the school forward. There is sense of teamwork throughout the school spreading down from the top and an associated sense of shared aims and ethos. At all levels management is effective. Trinity is a very effective school in achieving its aims, in particular high standards and the inclusion of all its pupils in the life of the school. The governing body is very aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and this enables them to play a significant part in the development of the school. The financial planning and control of the school budget is very good. The school is very well staffed and the contribution of learning support assistants throughout the school is outstanding. The school applies the principles of best value well. The accommodation has weaknesses but overall is good. Resources for learning are satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Their children make good progress. • The school expects children to work hard. • The school helps children to become mature. • Pupils in the PDU are cared for and supported well. • Behaviour is good around the school. • Parents think that teaching is good. • The way the school is led. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents feel that there is too much homework and that the amount given varies between classes in the same year. • Some parents feel that the range of activities outside lessons is unsatisfactory. • Records of pupils with special educational needs are not always used by teachers when they receive pupils from other classes.

The inspection team agrees with the parents in their positive views of the school: provision in these areas is at least good and often better. The amount of homework given may vary from class to class, but the school has good systems in place to ensure some consistency. There may well be localised differences, but this is not a general feature of the school. The provision of extra-curricular activities and residential trips is very good. Records of pupils with educational needs are very good and teachers are very aware of individual needs. This does not preclude the possibility of some lack of communication between some teachers and year groups, but it is not a general feature.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

Foundation Stage

1 Children enter the reception classes with a variety of pre-school experiences. Assessments carried out as children enter the school indicate that their overall ability is below the average for Herefordshire. Good progress in the reception classes results in pupils entering Key Stage 1 having reached average standards in all areas of the foundation stage curriculum. During the inspection it was judged that children were making sufficient progress to achieve the goals set for this age group nationally.

Key Stage 1

2 National test results for Key Stage 1 in 1999 show that standards in reading were in line with national averages and in line with the average for similar schools. In writing the results provide a similar picture of standards in line with averages nationally and those of similar schools. In mathematics the results indicate standards lower than the national average and well below the average for similar schools. When the results over the last three years are considered a similar picture appears with reading and writing in line with national averages or slightly above as in 1997. In mathematics over the same period standards were below or well below national averages. Mathematics in Key Stage 1 has been a major area of concern and the school has given the improvement in standards high priority. Inspection findings indicate that this emphasis is leading to improved standards.

3 There are some annual variations in the performance of girls and boys, for instance girls performed better than boys in reading in 1999, but no significant trends over time. Inspection findings indicate that pupils achieve average standards in other subjects by the end of Key Stage 1, with the exception of physical education where standards are above average. This would suggest that there has been an improvement in standards in mathematics. The results in tests in 2000 support this, though there is no comparative data available at the time of reporting.

Key Stage 2

4 In Key Stage 2 tests carried out in 1999 the performance of pupils in mathematics and English was above the national average and above the average for similar schools. In science the results were in line with averages nationally and those of similar schools. When the results are looked at over a three year period since the last inspection in 1997 there is some fluctuation in all subjects. The overriding feature is the drop in results in all subjects in 1998. The school investigated this phenomenon and records show that the ability of pupils in this year group was below that normally found in the school. The records trace the attainment of this group of pupils back to their entry to the school and their performance in tests aged seven years. The low performance in tests in 1998 was predicted by the school but did not represent underachievement.

5 Girls achieve higher standards than boys in English, in line with the national trend. In 1999 girls also performed better than boys in mathematics. This has not been the case in other years. In science there is no difference in the performance of boys and girls.

6 Findings during the inspection indicate that pupils perform above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Inspectors took account of the results in tests

taken in the summer term 2000, but they have no averages to compare these results with at the time of reporting. Standards in geography, physical education and art are judged to be above national expectations, as there are no averages for comparison in these subjects. In all other subjects attainment is in line with national expectations with the exception of information and communication technology (ICT) where standards in two aspects of the subject are below expectations and unsatisfactory. In religious education standards are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus.

Overall standards

7 Speaking and listening skills are promoted well throughout the school. Pupils entering the reception classes have slightly below average attainment which improves to above average by the time they reach Year 6. Pupils are encouraged to listen carefully and speak with growing precision across the range of subjects.

8 The pupils make good progress in learning to read in Key Stage 1 and by the end of the key stage nearly all pupils are in line to achieve the expected standards for seven-year-olds. Pupils in Year 2 are enthusiastic readers. Those with above average attainment are fluent readers and show high levels of interest and understanding. They volunteer opinions about the characters and plot, make predictions and refer to the text when explaining the story. They understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction, express preferences and find information easily. In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make good progress. Higher than average numbers are in line to reach both the expected level 4 and higher level 5 in national assessments. Pupils can read aloud expressively, observing punctuation and are able to offer opinions about plot and character. Pupils are aware of different styles of writing and are generally enthusiastic about reading. Regular practice of group and individual reading at school supported by frequent reading at home supports the pupils' progress.

9 Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in writing so that by Year 2 pupils are beginning to understand the use of full stops and write in sentences. Overall standards are in line with those expected nationally though more able pupils exceed this. In Key Stage 2 the number of pupils reaching the expected level 4 and the higher level 5 exceeds the national average. Pupils understand how to use paragraphs and produce well-formed writing that is punctuated properly. Writing is developed well in literacy lessons. In other areas of the curriculum, too, pupils are encouraged to employ and develop their writing skills, as in geography when they write about London and the River Thames following a field trip to the city.

10 In mathematics, standards in Key Stage 1 were below average according to test results in 1999, but current standards are in line with national averages. Pupils use mental recall to add and subtract numbers to ten and more able pupils can solve problems involving money. Pupils recognise common shapes and can tell the time in analogue and digital form. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards are above the national average. Pupils use mental recall to solve problems involving decimal fractions. Pupils can measure angles and use compasses to construct triangles, and they represent data in a range of graphs and charts. These skills are used across a number of subject areas, as in science when pupils construct graphs using information about the human skeleton.

11 Assessments in science in recent years have reflected national standards in both key stages. Current standards are still in line in Key Stage 1 where pupils can make simple electrical circuits and they know the basic needs of living things. In Key Stage 2 current standards are above average both in what pupils know and understand and what they can do. Pupils can plan tests and record results when working on topics such as magnetism and forces.

12 The use of ICT across the curriculum needs to be developed. There are some good examples of ICT being used effectively in history and science in Key Stage 2, but this practice needs to be more widely developed, for instance to support data-handling in mathematics.

13 Targets for individual pupils and whole year groups are set using a wide range of assessment instruments. These give an accurate picture of what can be expected and aimed for. This information is used to form booster classes in English and mathematics aimed at getting pupils up to and beyond the thresholds of national levels. However, the target set for attainment in mathematics was not reached in national tests in 2000. Very able and gifted children are identified and through an arrangement with other local schools, these pupils attend special sessions to challenge and extend their abilities.

14 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in classes in the main school. Individual plans, very good identification systems used by teachers and skilled intervention by learning support assistants help pupils to learn well and achieve well according to their ability. Pupils with a wide range of difficulties show improvement including development of communication skills, improved behaviour and literacy. Pupils in the PDU achieve very well, showing the benefit of precise teaching of small groups and individuals. The integration of pupils to main school classes is carefully planned on the basis of pupils' ability to cope academically and socially. The inclusion of these pupils in every aspect of school life is a major strength of the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15 Pupils' attitudes to work and their personal development were judged as good at the time of the last inspection. Observations during this inspection confirm that the overwhelming majority of Trinity's pupils have a positive attitude to their school. They are pleased to be there, work hard and are keen to learn. They enjoy a wide range of games and extra-curricular activities such as the gym, football clubs, a ceillidh band and riding for the disabled. Pupils of all ages accept and enjoy responsibility. Many are classroom monitors and Year 6 pupils assist in the distribution of milk and 'staff' the school's reception area for part of lunchtimes. House captains and their deputies are elected by pupils and are impressively aware of the privileges, honour and responsibilities that go with the job.

16 Pupils get on well with their teachers and the other adults around the school. They respect each other and are genuinely delighted with the achievement of others. One of their outstanding characteristics is the kindness and concern which they show for each other. A unique feature of the school is the relationship between able-bodied pupils and their disabled peers. Care and concern, coupled with a responsible determination to ensure that the minority are integrated into all aspects of school life, are the norm. Hence for example, they happily play tag and table tennis together during break times and successfully tackle paired work in mathematics.

17 Standards of behaviour in class and around the premises, including the playground, are generally very good. Pupils know, understand and support the school's codes of conduct and occasional incidents of boisterous and bad behaviour are dealt with promptly and supportively. Bullying is rare but when problems do arise a well-established system deals with it.

18 Attendance rates are consistently better than the national average. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19 Teaching throughout the school is good and is a major factor in helping pupils to learn well and make good progress. Throughout the period of inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. In the reception classes most of the teaching observed was good. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the teaching was good overall with a significant amount of very good teaching in Key Stage 1 (34%). In the unit for physically disabled pupils (the PDU) the teaching was judged as very good, with much excellent teaching.

20 In the reception classes teachers have a good understanding of how young children learn best. Activities are well matched to children's abilities, and time is used well to ensure that pupils are allowed to investigate activities, but not get bored. Teachers and classroom assistants work very closely together. This team work ensures that there is a common approach, pupils feel secure and they learn effectively. Classroom assistants have clear briefs, they know what to do with individual children and small groups to promote their learning. Activities are well resourced and they are chosen to engage the attention of the pupils. For example children consider how ice cubes are formed and how water changes back from ice to water. To make the activity even more interesting teachers use coloured dyes and look for colour changes as well as changes of state.

21 In Key Stage 1 the very good teaching is characterised by very good management of pupils, careful preparation and thoughtful deployment of very highly skilled support assistants. Teachers have clear objectives and use resources well. For instance in a history lesson a video was used to stimulate pupils' interest. Later, teachers probed pupils' understanding and their ability to recall information and distinguish between now and Victorian times. In Key Stage 2 teachers have a thorough knowledge of their subjects and the professional expertise to present topics in meaningful ways. For instance, in a Year 6 science lesson pupils were allowed to work independently testing electrical circuits to see if they allowed electricity to flow. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can understand and achieve.

22 Though no unsatisfactory teaching was observed, where it is less strong teachers need to adopt a more lively teaching style to ensure that pupils are challenged throughout the lesson, remain interested and make progress. There are examples of good practice in the marking of pupils' work, but sometimes pupils need more guidance on how to improve their work and the good strategies need to be more widely applied. The use of ICT needs to be developed in several subject areas, and teachers do not always make best use of the computers in their classrooms.

23 The teaching of literacy and numeracy and the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well established. The standards reached in reading and writing show that basic skills in these areas are taught well. Teachers know how to make the best of whole class introductions and conclusions to lessons to probe and share pupils' existing knowledge. For example in a Year 6 literacy session pupils discussed the themes of several of Shakespeare's plays and read passages from the witches in *Macbeth* in screechy, eerie voices. Group work in literacy and numeracy sessions relates well to the different ability levels in classes. Work is planned at a range of levels that reflect the differing needs of pupils. In numeracy sessions, topics are made interesting and challenging. Good use of individual white boards ensures that all pupils are involved and have a chance to answer questions. In an excellent session in the PDU, the teacher used games to get over the idea of subtraction, making learning fun and displaying infectious enthusiasm. In most subjects there is a range of satisfactory to very good teaching and this is an important factor in the good standards achieved.

24 Eight new teachers have joined the staff since the last inspection. During this inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was observed, which is a slight improvement since the last report in 1997. The overall judgement of teaching is higher during this inspection and the deployment of skilled support staff and the teaching of pupils with special educational needs have been identified as real strengths.

25 Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Pupils in the main school have detailed plans which address their individual needs. Teachers know their pupils well. Even in the reception classes, where children have been in school for a matter of weeks, individual needs and requirements have been identified and acted upon. In the PDU the quality of teaching is exceptional. In all lessons observed during the inspection teaching was either very good or excellent. Lesson planning is very good and is detailed for individual pupils, based upon careful assessment, which is used to plan the next learning steps for every pupil. This means that each pupil learns according to his or her ability and is helped to make maximum progress. The work of learning support staff is very well planned and highly skilled, enabling pupils not only to grasp the point being taught, but also to focus and pay attention where this is difficult. The pupils respond well to the sharp pace of the lessons, retaining an enthusiasm to learn and answer questions. The quality of relationships between all staff and the pupils creates a trust, which underpins the hard work pupils have to do to make such good progress. Teachers provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to show their understanding so that each of them takes a pride in the contribution that they are able to make. Where pupils are supported in the mainstream classes, learning support staff usually take care to allow them to mix with their peers and feel part of the group. Their skill and knowledge contributes significantly to the very good quality of learning taking place in the mainstream. Occasionally however, the proximity of a learning support assistant appears to segregate the unit pupil and limit their independence. This inconsistency of approach limits full equal opportunities for a few pupils.

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

26 The previous report stated that the curriculum was broad and balanced at Key Stages 1 and 2, but was not satisfactory for the youngest children. There was also a need to ensure that planning was followed consistently.

27 The school has worked hard to improve these areas. The youngest children now have a suitable curriculum that meets their needs. The curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 remains broad and balanced. It meets statutory requirements and includes a good quality and range of learning opportunities particularly for mathematics, physical education, religious education and geography. However, there are some features of ICT which are not wholly developed at present. Co-ordinators have adopted many of the nationally produced schemes of work, and have incorporated them into the school's schemes. They understand the implications of the new Curriculum 2000 orders and are beginning to implement them.

28 The school uses the guidelines of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to plan those lessons, and teachers make good use of opportunities to incorporate appropriate facets of numeracy and literacy in lessons across the curriculum, with careful attention to developing pupils' speaking skills. Teachers in the same year groups consult closely together when planning lessons both in the long term and when writing weekly plans. Comprehensive plans are written for literacy and numeracy each half term and then expanded into more detail each week. Weekly plans for the non-core subjects show sound coverage and there is generally good progression from week to week, but at present there is no easy way to record that consistently challenging work is regularly planned for pupils of different abilities. Observations indicate that teaching closely follows the planning, unless

assessment during a lesson suggests that the next lesson needs to be modified in order to ensure that pupils learn at an appropriate rate.

29 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They follow the same curriculum as all pupils and have equal access to it. In addition there is good provision for basic skills teaching through small group and individual withdrawal. The school also writes and regularly reviews individual education plans for all pupils with special needs so that work is suited to each individual.

30 There are very good levels of access and opportunity for all pupils. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully provided for in classroom activities, and both adults and pupils throughout the school ensure that pupils from the PDU play a full part in the life of the school. Where possible they have lessons in the main school. They are all present at playtimes when they are included in chat and physically active games; they take part in hymn practices and other whole school events. Their presence adds greatly to the feeling of community in the school, and to the able-bodied pupils' awareness of the needs of others.

31 The curriculum in the foundation stage in the PDU is very good. It is based upon the early learning goals and is suitably broad and balanced. The teacher in charge ensures that the intensive one-to-one teaching needed is balanced by exploratory 'play' activities as well as enriching visits. The unit makes a significant contribution to the multi-disciplinary assessment of pupils under five. In the older class, the full curriculum provided is of a very high standard, the key being that each pupil has a programme designed to suit his or her needs. A balance of mainstream supported learning and unit work ensures the maximum number of opportunities is provided to suit different stages and levels of need. A full complement of therapeutic support contributes to the quality of the curriculum provided. This is sensitively planned so that the therapeutic approach, from physiotherapy for example is incorporated into the work of teachers and learning support staff and pupils are able to gain maximum advantage.

32 The school works hard to ensure that every pupil in the PDU has the same equal opportunities as his or her mainstream peers. In the main this leads to some very good provision where unit pupils attend all school social events, play and often learn alongside their peers. This contributes significantly to the ethos of the whole school and the personal and social development of all the school's pupils. The withdrawal for necessary therapies however, does lead to some pupils regularly missing the same lessons which is not satisfactory and the school is considering a review of the timetable. In addition, some unit pupils, who have to learn in mixed age classes, are ready to attend more mainstream classes if sufficient support were available. However, the school is working hard to increase this inclusion element of the unit's work, which is already very good.

33 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils are given a high priority by the school and its provision in consequence is very good. This is an improvement on the judgement of provision at the time of the last inspection when it was good. Pupils are developed spiritually in a number of different ways. For example, they are given time for reflection and asked to think about God and how they can best serve Him and each other. Time for prayer is a regular feature of the school day in many classrooms and pupils are encouraged to write their own prayers. In an assembly about prayer the teacher linked Hindu artefacts and Christ's teachings to illustrate the different ways in which people pray. Pupils are aware of some of the wonders of God's creation, for example, the awe and wonder demonstrated by pupils when they saw the colours of the rainbow produced in bubbles. The school's provision for the spiritual development of its pupils is not confined to prayer and religious education. Pupils attend church services and have taken part in performances, for example playing recorders, that have a spiritual theme.

34 The school's provision for the moral and social development of its pupils is closely linked. Pupils are made aware of class and whole school rules. They know that it is important to work together and care for each other. For example, pupils in Year 6 help in reception classes and in the PDU. They are aware of their responsibilities in the wider world and have studied the destruction of the rainforests and wetlands. Pupils in Year 6 organised fund raising events to help preserve them. Organisations such as St. Michael's Hospice and Doctor Barnardo's Homes have benefited from fund-raising events held by the school. The pupils have collected shoes for Bosnia and funds for humanitarian aid. Pupils are given the opportunity to exercise responsibility as general class, register and milk monitors. They act as team captains, librarians and elected house captains. Teachers provide good social role models in their relationships with the pupils. Provision for personal and social education including health education is good. Pupils learn about hygiene, sex education and the dangers associated with the misuse of drugs. There is a full programme of study which has elements appropriate to the developing maturity of the pupils. Pupils' education is enriched through its links with the local community such as the local church. Links with partner institutions, such as the high schools that the pupils move on to, are very effective in making the transition as smooth and unthreatening.

35 The school provides many different opportunities for the pupils to develop culturally. There has been a visit from a school in Birmingham that gave performances of Hindu 'Banga', modern Muslim and Afro Caribbean dancing. The school has had visits from a Hindu speaker who demonstrated 'Mendhi' patterns. Pupils from the school took part in the local church fete by giving a demonstration of country dancing. Pupils with special education needs receive the full range of the schools provision in all these areas. Physically disabled pupils performed a dance routine for the rest of the school. The recorder group and choir have performed at a musical evening given by the local church. Pupils have had the opportunity to take part in workshops with a dance company. The school provides a good range of music tuition, which includes violin and cello.

36 The range of extra-curricular activities is very good and is a strength of the school. The school offers a wide variety of sports and other physical activities, and pupils with physical disabilities are encouraged to take part. For example a wheelchair user joined fully in a Scottish dancing class where fellow pupils helped to ensure that she kept in time with everyone. The school sends sports teams to compete successfully in many inter-school competitions. There is also a wide variety of musical activities and pupils have the opportunity to learn to play musical instruments if they show an aptitude. There are library and conservation clubs. All after-school clubs are popular and successful. Each year group has at least one educational visit a year, and the Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils go on a residential trip to London. Again disabled pupils are included if they are of an appropriate age.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37 The school's arrangements for looking after the health, safety and well being of all its pupils are very good. It takes good care of its pupils, who are closely supervised and secure throughout the school day. The school has good child protection arrangements, these include identification strategies and clear lines of communication between relevant persons and responsible authorities.

38 The needs of individuals and groups, including those in reception classes, the PDU and others with special needs, are dealt with sensitively and supportively. *Treetops*, which is a self-funding club, organised in conjunction with social services under the overview of school governors, provides a high standard of after-school care for the children of those parents who wish to use it. Cooked lunches, provided by a local caterer, were started in the

spring of 2000. This initiative, a carefully measured response to a perceived need, has proved extremely popular with pupils and their parents.

39 Attendance at school is consistently better than the national average. Pupils with outstandingly good attendance records are awarded certificates in recognition of their achievements. Registration and monitoring systems are very good and prompt formal action is taken to deal with problems such as the occasional unauthorised absence, as and when they arise.

40 Pupils' general standard of behaviour in school is very good. In classes and corridors there are many low-key reminders of Trinity's well-established codes of conduct. Pupils support these codes and know what to expect if problems arise. Occasional instances of bad behaviour are dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils, parents and staff confirm that bullying is not a major problem. Nevertheless they are well aware of the bad effects of bullying and therefore know how to cope with it when it does arise. Pupils confirm that the innovative idea of making the bully look after the victim is very effective. They approve of it.

41 Teachers are very aware of their pupils' academic and personal strengths and weaknesses. Successes are always celebrated. There is a merit point system and the outstanding achievements of any pupil, whatever his or her abilities, are recognised through, for instance, the *magic maker* awards. These awards are a major and regular feature of whole school assemblies. Pupils and parents regard this as a very successful and fair system. Pupils are spontaneously generous with their praise of award winners.

42 The last inspection found that there were major weaknesses in the school's assessment and marking systems. Since then there have been major improvements in this area. Although there are still some variations across subjects, for example mathematics, English and science are good but ICT, history and art less so, the school is now making very good use of its own teacher-based assessments, SATs results and day-to-day judgements to monitor pupils' progress and plan for the future. There are up-to-date files on each and every pupil, including those with special educational needs plus an excellent portfolio containing samples of work and details of targets. Pupils are also involved in assessment and target setting through their own end-of-year review.

43 A whole school marking policy is in an advanced state of development and staff are working hard to implement it. Comprehensive recording systems for science, maths and English are already in place and a new computer-based system will soon help teachers even more methodically to evaluate and plan pupils' progress across the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44 Parents are very pleased to send their children to Trinity School. They feel welcome and part of a really caring community which is enabling their children to learn, mature and make good progress. They appreciate the way that the school, particularly through its work in the PDU, successfully responds to the widest possible range of educational needs. They justifiably believe that the headteacher and the rest of the staff are very approachable and show real concern for all aspects of pupils' education and general well being.

45 Generally available documents such as the school's information booklet are well produced. They contain comprehensive information about Trinity's aims and objectives and all aspects of school life. Newsletters and notice boards keep parents in touch with dates, day-to-day events and developments.

46 Parents are kept informed of their own children's progress through formal evening meetings, informal contacts with teachers, an excellent recently introduced golden profile

book and end of year reports. The reports are very good. They are comprehensive and provide detailed comments on all aspects of pupils' academic progress as well as covering personal and social development. The reports have improved significantly since the last inspection when they were criticised for not giving clear enough information.

47 Some parents are voluntary helpers, occasionally helping out in classrooms but mainly supporting swimming, extra-curricular activities and trips outside school. There is an active parent teacher association, which organises social events and raises funds to support trips and major developments such as the ICT suite. The elected parent governors play their full part in the governance of the school.

48 Parents' willingly support their children's homework efforts, particularly helping them to read. Their involvement in this and other aspects of their children's education is well set out in the home-school agreement.

49 A minority of parents feels that the school does not keep them sufficiently well informed. However, the inspection team's findings are that the school successfully does all that reasonably can be expected to keep all parents in touch, not only with general developments, but also with individual children's needs and progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50 The headteacher provides very good leadership. He has a clear vision for future improvements that are carefully considered and sensitively introduced. Initiatives are established together, with the particularly close involvement of the teaching and support staff and the governing body. The deputy headteacher and the senior management team provide a powerful complement to the headteacher's qualities. The allocation of available funds properly supports the identified priorities. The initiatives reflect a sustained desire to promote higher standards and the school improvement plan provides a useful structure for implementing such objectives. It sets out a helpful agenda that clearly reflects the school's aims and values. The plan includes useful criteria for ascertaining whether priorities are successfully completed but these, at times, lack the means to measure objectively the degree to which they have been successful.

51 The headteacher has been particularly successful in engendering a spirit of unity within the school. Relationships are very good and all associated with the school share a commitment to work together effectively and to make improvements. Trinity is a large primary school and responsibility for delivering a good quality education is dependent upon a significant number of people. The degree to which this is achieved is a strength of the leadership. The headteacher has very effectively harnessed the qualities, energies and expertise of everyone associated with the school. Good procedures for checking that the quality of teaching and learning is sustained are in place, although the fact that the school is working within severe financial constraints has, at times, adversely affected this programme.

52 The governing body is committed to maintaining and improving the good quality of education which has been established. Governors bring a wide range of expertise and experience to bear on their decisions and are active, aware and perceptive. The governing body has established an effective system of committees in order that its work can be conducted efficiently. This works well. Individual governors have been appointed with specific responsibility for a number of curriculum areas and these members provide meaningful feedback.

53 The governing body has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and the action taken to improve the quality of provision is good. The recent creation of a new computer suite and enhanced ICT training for staff exemplifies such

response. Given the quality of expertise associated with the school, the soundness of judgement and the shared commitment to raising standards, the capacity for further improvement is judged to be very good.

54 The governing body has established a finance committee and has properly defined its role. Governors are fully meeting their responsibilities in relation to budget setting and expenditure is rigorously monitored. The governing body satisfactorily assesses the cost-effectiveness of major spending decisions through the reports of the headteacher, analysis of test data, visits to the school and through discussion. However, the use of more precisely defined measures to evaluate the degree to which priorities have been completed would further assist this process. Governors are very aware of their responsibility to ensure that money is spent carefully and that the best possible value is achieved. Competing quotations are obtained before contracts are issued although governors are mindful that the cheapest price does not always represent the best value. The governing body has managed a contracting budget with care and despite severe pressures the school's finances are stable.

55 Financial control and office administration are excellent and the school's finance secretary discharges his responsibilities diligently and with considerable expertise. The last audit report of the school's finances was satisfactory. It contained only minor recommendations and these have all been addressed. The computerised accounting system supports a secure financial administration and very good use is made of computer analysis in order to monitor spending. There is independent separation of the procedures for ordering and payment. Funds allocated for specific purposes such as staff training and the support for pupils with special educational needs are all properly targeted.

56 Leadership and management of the PDU are also very good. The work of the unit is clearly directed towards high standards and maximum, appropriate inclusion. The head of the unit and the teacher in charge of pupils under five are very well qualified and take care to keep their skills and knowledge updated. Links with similar provision, and other agencies ensures that the direction and purpose of the work is always evolving. An example of this is the links with the Peto Institute, which runs courses in the school during the holidays and is of great benefit to the pupils of the school. The temporary accommodation during the inspection was of a high standard apart from a lack of private provision for physiotherapy. Resources are good and include specialist equipment and teaching aids.

57 Leadership and management of special educational needs in the mainstream are very good. The systems are very well organised by the special educational needs co-ordinator and the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator. In addition the management and training of the learning support staff is very well developed, enabling them to work effectively in helping pupils and communicating with the teachers involved.

58 There is a very good match of appropriately qualified teachers to meet the needs of the National Curriculum and this reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Eight teachers have been appointed to the school since that inspection. The result is a good blend of expertise and experience. Most of the teachers have responsibility for a subject, a year group or a key stage. The school has a high number of well trained and experienced support staff. Appropriate job descriptions are in place for all staff, though some need updating. Good policies and procedures are in place for the induction of newly qualified teachers and for staff new to the school and for the continuing professional development of all the staff. There is excellent administrative support in the school. The caretaker and cleaners keep the school in good condition and the lunchtime supervisors and meals staff all contribute fully to school life. Visiting teachers provide instrumental music tuition.

59 Overall the accommodation is good and it enables the curriculum to be taught effectively. Some of the temporary classrooms are cramped and the school hall is barely

adequate to accommodate whole school assemblies or some classes for physical education. The location of the library limits its use as a research facility. However the school has many positive features such as a swimming pool and conservation area. There are generous play areas and playing fields.

60 There are sufficient resources to support learning in all subjects except for music, where there is a shortage of tuned and untuned instruments. The deficiencies in physical education resources noted in the previous inspection have been resolved. The school has deliberately delayed the purchase of large toys and climbing apparatus for the youngest children until current building work is complete. The teachers make very good use of external resources to enhance learning, including the schools' library service, visits and visitors.

61 Most pupils enter school with knowledge and understanding which is below that expected for their age. The school successfully promotes very positive attitudes and standards in a significant number of subjects are above that expected. The quality of learning is good throughout the school, as is the standard of teaching. Leadership is very good and there has been very good progress in addressing the management issues raised in the previous Ofsted report. When the specific funds to support the PDU pupils are excluded, the financial allocation for educating each pupil is well below the national average. In the context of all these factors the school provides very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62 In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education provided the school should:

- Improve the standards in the data-handling and control and measurement aspects of information and communication technology throughout the school. Ensure that pupils use ICT more frequently across the range of curriculum subjects. Introduce a system to record pupils' attainment and progress in this area of the curriculum.

(paragraphs 6, 12, 22, 27, 42, 100, 108, 137, 142 - 145)

OTHER ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- *The adoption of good marking practices throughout the school.
(paragraphs 22, 42, 43, 98, 107)
- *Resources for physical development in the foundation stage.
(paragraphs 80 - 81)
- Systems for recording and evaluating pupils' reading at home.
(paragraph 101)

** The school already has plans to address these issues.*

THE UNIT FOR PHYSICALLY DISABLED PUPILS (PDU)

63 The school has a special unit designated for 24 pupils with physical disabilities. This includes a pre-school nursery and assessment centre for children under five and a unit for pupils aged five to eleven. There are currently 18 on roll. All pupils of school age attached to the unit have a statement of special educational need. Pupils attend from the whole county of Herefordshire, which is largely rural.

64 Achievement for pupils in the unit is very good for all age groups including progress towards the early learning goals for pupils under five. Pupils show very good progress in their literacy and numeracy work. Pupils under five make good progress beginning to recognise that stories come from books and enjoy their favourite tales. Pupils of five years old progress well by recognising familiar words in text and by the time they are eleven several pupils read independently or with support. They use electronic word processors to learn how to write and show a strong development of skills in spelling, punctuation and composition by the time they are 11 years old. The development of communication skills is very good indeed, with several pupils learning to use supported signing, switches, or electronic phrases to help them join in. Others gradually develop clear speech and understand complex instructions. In mathematics pupils make good progress and learn to use numbers for simple addition and subtraction as well as being able to describe and recognise shapes and do simple measurements. Those who progress quickly learn alongside their mainstream peers, with a few producing work of the highest quality in the school.

65 Pupils' personal and social development shows particularly good progress, pupils who are restless, learn to sit and focus on their work and emerging communication skills quickly lead to good social relationships with peers in the unit and mainstream. Progress in

all other subjects including science is equally good overall with each pupil attaining skills better than would normally be expected for pupils in similar units. In addition mobility skills develop very well and pupils are helped to extend their strength, flexibility and balance to be as independent as possible.

66 The quality of teaching is exceptional. In all lessons observed during the inspection teaching was either very good or excellent. Lesson planning is very good and is detailed for individual pupils and based upon careful assessment, which is used to plan the next learning steps for every pupil. This means that each pupil learns according to his or her ability and is helped to make maximum progress. The work of learning support staff is very well planned and highly skilled, enabling pupils not only to grasp the point being taught, but also to focus and pay attention where this is difficult. The pupils respond well to the sharp pace of the lessons, retaining an enthusiasm to learn and answer questions. The quality of relationships between all staff and the pupils creates a trust, which underpins the hard work pupils have to do to make such good progress. Teachers provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to show their understanding so that each of them takes a pride in the contribution that they are able to make. Where pupils are supported in the mainstream, learning support staff usually take care to allow them to mix with their peers and feel part of the group. Their skill and knowledge contribute significantly to the very good quality of learning taking place in the mainstream. Occasionally however, the proximity of a learning support assistant appears to segregate the unit pupil and limit his or her independence. This inconsistency of approach limits full equal opportunities for a few pupils.

67 The curriculum for the under-fives is very good. It is based upon the early learning goals and is suitably broad and balanced. The teacher in charge ensures that the intensive one-to-one teaching needed is balanced by exploratory 'play' activities as well as enriching visits. The unit makes a significant contribution to the multi-disciplinary assessment of pupils under-five. In the older class, the full curriculum provided is of a very high standard, the key being that each pupil has a programme designed to suit his or her needs. A balance of mainstream supported learning and unit work ensures the maximum number of opportunities are provided to suit different stages and levels of need. A full complement of therapeutic support contributes to the quality of the curriculum provided. This is sensitively planned so that the therapeutic approach, from physiotherapy for example, is incorporated into the work of teachers and learning support staff and pupils are able to gain maximum advantage.

68 The school works hard to ensure that every pupil in the unit has the same equal opportunities as his or her mainstream peers. In the main this leads to some very good provision where unit pupils attend all school social events, play and often learn alongside their peers. This contributes significantly to the ethos of the whole school and the personal and social development of all the school's pupils. The withdrawal for necessary therapies however does lead to some pupils regularly missing the same lessons, which is not satisfactory and the school is considering a review of the timetable. In addition, some unit pupils, who have to learn in mixed age classes, are ready to attend more mainstream classes, if sufficient support were available. However the school is working hard to increase this inclusion element of the unit's work, which is already very good.

69 The care of pupils, welfare, health and safety procedures are all very good as well as links with parents. Each pupil has a home school link book, which communicates events as well as helping parents to support the work of the school at home.

70 Leadership and management of the unit is also very good. The work of the unit is clearly directed towards high standards and maximum, appropriate inclusion. The head of the unit and the teacher in charge of pupils under five are very well qualified and take care to keep their skills and knowledge updated. Links with similar provision, and other agencies ensures that the direction and purpose of the work is always evolving. An example of this is

the links with the PETO institute, which runs courses in the school during the holidays and is of great benefit to the pupils of the school. The temporary accommodation during the inspection was of a high standard apart from a lack of private provision for physiotherapy. Resources are good and include specialist equipment and teaching aids.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	97
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	51

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	18	52	29	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 – Y 6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	572
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		71

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y 6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		29
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		132

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	49
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	95.5
National comparative data	93.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	35	45	80

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	30	30
	Girls	42	41	42
	Total	72	71	72
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 [78]	89 [84]	90 [81]
	National	82 [77]	83 [81]	87 [84]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	30	28
	Girls	42	41	42
	Total	69	71	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 [78]	89 [82]	88 [74]
	National	82 [81]	86 [85]	87 [86]

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	37	45	82

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	26	31
	Girls	40	36	40
	Total	66	62	71
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 [54]	76 [60]	87 [60]
	National	70 [64]	69 [58]	78 [68]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	28	30
	Girls	35	33	36
	Total	58	61	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 [69]	74 [69]	80 [69]
	National	68 [64]	69 [64]	75 [70]

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	485
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y 6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	24.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.8
Average class size	28.5

Education support staff: YR – Y 6

Total number of education support staff	25
Total aggregate hours worked per week	390

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	881,743
Total expenditure	906,558
Expenditure per pupil	1,599
Balance brought forward from previous year	3,614
Balance carried forward to next year	-21,201

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	575
Number of questionnaires returned	260

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	39	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	50	5	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	50	2	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	52	13	1	2
The teaching is good.	46	49	2	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	46	17	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	35	5	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	40	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	37	47	13	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	57	38	2	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	48	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	39	11	4	11

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

Personal and social development.

71 The children make very good progress in their personal and social development. Most are very young for their year when they first come to school and, although most have had some kind of pre-school experience, personal and social skills are a little below average overall.

72 The children are curious to learn and show increasing independence in selecting and carrying out activities, for example, when they choose freely at the beginning of the day. They move sensibly and calmly from one activity to another, displaying increasing levels of involvement. Many still need the guidance and reassurance of adults at this time but most are gaining confidence and are willing to take risks, such as volunteering in pairs to take the register to the office. They are learning to sit quietly when the teacher is talking and to take turns, for example to play a musical instrument. They help to tidy up after lessons and are becoming increasingly independent when dressing and undressing for physical education. They know the class rules for keeping safe, such as limiting the height of their block buildings, and most observe these conscientiously. They are polite to adults and to each other and respond well to the caring ethos created by the teachers. The children are positive, enjoy the tasks but do not concentrate consistently enough at this stage in their learning to create an atmosphere of busy industry.

73 Teachers place a great deal of emphasis on this aspect of the children's learning. They have a good understanding of the needs of the children and plan an environment that is welcoming and stimulating. Lessons are well planned using the stepping stones identified in national guidelines and teachers work well together as a team to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. All teachers interact well with the children, encouraging them to make choices and supporting their learning through questions and comments that show that they value and respect the children's independent learning. For example, the teacher asks them to make their own decisions about the best way to solve a problem involving mismatched pairs of gloves. Class rules for safety are successful in helping the children to understand the impact of their actions on others and the class 'thought for the day' reminds them of the importance of caring and sharing. Through a wide range of experiences, such as a delightful multicultural event, the children are helped to learn about other cultures and faiths and to reflect on racial harmony. Good use is made of happy/sad dolls and dolls from different races when asking children to talk about feelings.

Language and literacy

74 The children's attainment on entry to the reception classes covers a wide range of ability, but is slightly below average overall. However, they are making good progress in developing their language skills. They listen quietly when the teacher is talking and answer questions appropriately. Children with above average ability talk confidently about their weekend or a recent holiday, and those with average ability are keen to answer questions and to talk about their work. However, some pupils find it difficult to follow simple instructions and lack the vocabulary to express themselves clearly. The children enjoy stories and, in 'mini' literacy sessions, they listen with rapt attention, talk enthusiastically about the pictures and comment on the characters. Most know that print carries meaning and handle books carefully, turning the pages from right to left. These children sometimes pretend to read, pointing to words and pictures. Most children recognise their own names in writing and a few more able children can identify letters of the alphabet and the sounds they make, but a few

are unable to distinguish between print and pictures. Writing skills are below average. Most children when they enter the school have poor pencil control and their drawings are little more than scribble. Some children make a good attempt at copying their names and a few write their name unaided. Through careful supervision, they are learning to use the correct pencil grip and to experiment with a range of writing tools and materials to improve their mark making skills. Most children are enthusiastic and confident learners, as demonstrated by a child who, when asked if he could find the letter 'p' on the page, replied "I 'spec so. What does it look like?" The same child demonstrated his developing knowledge of literature by insisting that authors don't write books – Roald Dahl does!

75 Teachers provide interesting and varied contexts to encourage conversation and to extend the use of language. Resources are used very well to help pupils to develop their language skills. For example, teachers in both the reception classes and the PDU make particularly good use of puppets to promote understanding and to motivate the children. Many practical experiences, such as wet and dry sand play encourage children to ask and respond to questions and provide opportunities for mark making and letter formation. For example, the children make the letter 'p' with play dough. Teachers and classroom support practitioners make very good use of question and answer sessions, in which they treat the children's answers very seriously and refine them sensitively. They comment on children's actions and extend this with questions such as "Which colour will you choose next?" and "What do you think is going to happen?" They are sensitive to the children's needs and provide time for them to think about what they want to say and to have conversations with each other. For example, in a mathematics lesson, a teacher recognised the children's need to talk about the exciting soft toy resources and deviated from her planning in order to allow sufficient time for this. The children are introduced to books at an early stage and all take them home to share with their parents. Teachers encourage activities in which children will need to use writing, such as when they 'write' shopping lists in the role-play area. Teachers understand the importance of repetition and practice and take every opportunity to reinforce previous learning. "Do you remember when we..." is a phrase often heard in the reception classes. Homework consolidates and reinforces learning well, for example when the children are asked to draw something at home that begins with the letter 'p'.

Mathematical development

76 The children make good progress in this area of learning. Most count reliably to five and beyond, and through a range of practical activities, are developing an understanding of the language of shape and measurement; for example when they sort a range of items by colour and size. They successfully sort objects into matching pairs and try to estimate the number of small objects grabbed from a tub. Evidence from past work shows that they develop their understanding of shape well, for example through making shape pictures. By the end of the key stage they name simple shapes such as circles, squares and triangles accurately. A repertoire of number rhymes and songs reinforces their understanding of mathematical concepts. Through interesting sand and water play, they begin to understand the basic principles of capacity and volume.

77 The quality of teaching for mathematical development is good. A range of well targeted activities provides many opportunities for the children to count, to explore number and to enjoy their mathematical experiences. For example, the children giggle with delight when the teacher hangs out her red washing for them to count the items, and when she pretends not to notice the blue 'odd one out'. Number labels are used appropriately to help the more able children to understand that numbers can be represented in different ways. Teachers draw on every opportunity to encourage the children to talk about number and to compare the shapes and sizes of everyday objects. Through model building and other art activities, the children are encouraged to explain their methods and to look for patterns. Teachers use day-to-day assessment well to make judgements about the children's

mathematical development. For example, they watch closely as individuals 'touch count' objects, to ensure accurate one-to-one matching. Art is used very well to develop the children's understanding of pattern and shape. For example when, through a colour mixing/printing activity, the children are introduced to line symmetry.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

78 The children make good progress in learning to understand and make sense of their world. In the role-play area, which may be a home area, a shop or a garden centre, they are beginning to use their imaginations to recreate the outside world, although most are not yet able to sustain role-play conversations independently. They enjoy investigating growing things such as sunflowers and mini-beasts, using magnifying glasses for closer observation. They search the school grounds for autumn leaves that match the colours in their trays and talk about their findings with excitement and pride. Through sand and water play, they investigate mechanical objects such as waterwheels with interest. They are learning that some paper is absorbent and that when they write their names on the paper and wet it by carefully dipping it into water, the ink runs. They watch with fascination as the colours separate. They successfully control a computer mouse to click on icons that reinforce their understanding of numbers and letters and use play dough and other modelling materials to represent their world. They know that water can change from liquid to solid through freezing and back again through melting and call out with delight when they discover the colours of the rainbow in bubbles and a prism.

79 Teachers provide an interesting range of resources and activities to stimulate children's curiosity. Carefully planned activities, such as visits to the school conservation area, enable the children to learn about their world from personal experience and each other and to gain the necessary vocabulary to be able to talk about their new learning. Skilled questioning techniques encourage the children to think more deeply about what they see, hear, smell and touch. Clever ideas such as a colour reference book, in which teachers have compiled examples of children's work, with a table of contents and page references, introduce them to early research skills, which the more able children are proud to demonstrate. Excellent support from classroom support practitioners makes a very significant contribution to the pupils' acquisition of subject related vocabulary, for example when they discuss the changing state of liquids and solids. Evidence from past work shows that visits to a local farm and visitors, such as the 'animal lady' provide the children with rich contexts for finding out about their world. Teachers are safety conscious and help the children to think about their own safety, for example when they talk about how to cross the road safely.

Physical development

80 Within the constraints of limited opportunities to develop their physical skills, the children make broadly satisfactory progress. They are making good progress in developing fine control through the manipulation of construction kits, small apparatus and tools for writing, cutting and gluing. In physical education lessons they follow instructions appropriately, as they learn to control and refine their movements, whilst gaining an awareness of space and of the presence of others. They move in different ways around a marker, jump forwards, backwards, sideways and balance on the spot. In a games lesson, they work enthusiastically with apparatus such as hoops, bats and balls of different sizes, for example trying to aim a ball through a hoop, with varying degrees of success. However, there are not enough opportunities for the children to move spontaneously over under and through purpose made apparatus, or to practise large-scale movements through the control of wheeled toys. This was a weakness at the time of the previous inspection, but the school development plan shows that it is to be addressed in the near future.

81 The quality of teaching for physical education is satisfactory but opportunities are missed to compensate for the current lack of outdoor resources. Playtimes are staggered to enable the younger children to use the playground safely but there are few activities offered to them during this time. Teachers pay due regard to safety when organising physical activities and planning for physical education lessons is closely matched to the 'stepping stones' identified in recent national guidelines. The children are introduced to the school swimming pool in the second half of the autumn term, a learning experience not often found in reception classes.

Creative development

82 From a below average base, the children make good progress in this area of learning. Through daily activities they respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel. They happily explore and experiment with a good range of materials and media that includes, painting, modelling, cutting and gluing. They also develop their creative imaginations well through role-play and music making. They investigate colour through a wide range of activities, including visits to the outside conservation area. Through a favourite story, they learn about black, white and 'camouflage' and these concepts are reinforced through newspaper collages and pictures of black and white animals which, with support, they sort according to whether they live in hot or cold climates. They contribute items to the 'red' table and paint monochrome pictures for their display. They mix black and white successfully to make tonal pictures, in readiness for more advanced artwork at Key Stage 1. In music lessons they learn a variety of songs, listen with interest to fast/slow/happy and sad music and play musical instruments to represent different animals with much enthusiasm. In a very interesting assembly they listened keenly to African music.

83 The quality of teaching is good. Particularly effective use is made of classroom support assistants, whose contributions are very effective in promoting the children's learning. These practitioners encourage the children to choose from a range of materials to investigate and experiment. Well-targeted questions and comments help the children to become independent in their learning, to explore and to experiment. For example, when they are asked, "What do you think will happen when we mix these two colours?" Lessons are well planned and well prepared with very clear learning outcomes identified.

ENGLISH

84 Results from the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that pupils were in line with the national average for both reading and writing. The results were also average when compared with schools whose pupils come from similar backgrounds. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection. Results over time show reading and writing to be close to national averages or sometimes above, over the period 1996-99. Girls outperformed boys in reading and writing in 1999. However, this is not consistent over time. The inspection findings for Key Stage 1 show that the majority of the current Year 2 pupils are in line to achieve at least nationally expected standards in English by the time they are seven, with a significant proportion expected to exceed the expected level 2.

85 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were above the national average, both when compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. Findings from the inspection show that the current Year 6 pupils are in line to achieve similarly high standards, and this is supported by the results of the most recent national tests, in which a very high proportion of pupils achieved the higher level 5. There are no major gender differences in pupils' attainment, although girls did significantly better in the tests than teachers had anticipated.

86 The various data show that children entering school fall below the average for the county but consistently perform above the county and national standards at the age of eleven, which indicates that they make good progress in both key stages.

Speaking and listening

87 In Key Stage 1, pupils' speaking and listening skills are average overall. Their listening skills are good. Most pupils listen very closely to the teacher's introductions and explanations and show by their responses that they understand what they have heard. They answer questions sensibly and appropriately and most are keen to talk about their work. They respond well to the teachers' expectations that they will speak in full sentences, and although limitations in their vocabulary sometimes restrict their ability to explain their ideas more fully, the majority have a reasonable grasp of Standard English. Progress overall is good throughout the key stage.

88 At Key Stage 2, they make good progress in their speaking and listening skills and standards are above average. They are very attentive, listen carefully to the teacher and each other and respond appropriately to questions or previously expressed opinions, expanding on what others have said. Most pupils are confident speakers and use a good range of vocabulary to help them to express their ideas clearly.

Reading

89 The pupils make good progress in learning to read in Key Stage 1 and, by the end of the key stage, nearly all pupils are in line to achieve the expected standards for seven-year-olds. Pupils in Year 2 are enthusiastic readers. Those with above average attainment are fluent readers and show high levels of interest and understanding. They volunteer opinions about the characters and plot, make predictions and refer to the text when explaining the story. They understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction, express preferences and find information easily. These readers have a range of strategies for solving unfamiliar words. Average readers use the correct vocabulary when identifying 'author', 'title', and 'illustrator' and read at an appropriate level, with reasonable fluency, accuracy and understanding and have good attitudes to literature. They have a secure understanding of rhyme but some are less confident with word building skills. In lessons they show a good understanding that different kinds of text are used for different purposes, for example when they follow instructions and diagrams to perform a magic trick. Below average readers read more slowly, with no expression and do not find word building easy.

90 The pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2 including a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. Above average numbers are expected to reach the expected level for eleven-year-olds by the end of the key stage and a higher than average number read very well and are in line to achieve the higher level 5. They read aloud expressively, observing punctuation such as commas, speech marks and exclamation marks and are beginning to infer meaning. These pupils scan quickly for information and locate books in the library easily. Average pupils read silently with understanding and at speed. They demonstrate an enjoyment and interest in reading and identify aspects of the book that they like or dislike, offering opinions about the plot and characters. Below average readers use their knowledge of phonics to help them with unfamiliar words but read mechanically, without expression. All pupils demonstrate an enjoyment of reading. In Year 4 pupils discuss the purpose, styles and content of different types of texts, such as newspaper reports, poems, letters and diaries, commenting on the characteristics that make them different. Very good teaching at the end of the key stage is successful in inspiring pupils and encouraging them to respond personally to the complexities of such literature as Shakespeare's plays, which most read with good expression and a high level of understanding. Some pupils

display a very good knowledge of how a library works but others are less confident when researching information. Many pupils comment that they seldom use the school library.

Writing

91 In Key Stage 1, from a lower than average baseline, pupils make good progress in writing and attain standards that are close to the national average, although their attainment in this aspect is less strong than in reading. Average pupils in Year 2 are starting to understand the use of full stops and their ideas are generally developed into a sequence of sentences. Simple words are generally spelt correctly and most pupils use their knowledge of phonics well to attempt more difficult words, although not all are confident in this. Above average pupils are already achieving expected levels for seven-year-olds in their writing. A good number extend their ideas logically in a sequence of sentences and are in line to achieve the higher level 3. Handwriting is generally accurately formed, with clearly shaped and correctly positioned letters but pupils have not yet begun to join their letters in their free writing.

92 Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2 and achieve standards that are above those expected nationally. A higher number of pupils reach both the expected level 4 and higher level 5 than in most schools by the end of the key stage. Pupils in Year 5 are able to understand the use of paragraphs and bullet points and above average pupils make use of good expressive punctuation such as speech marks, exclamation marks and commas to separate speech from narration. By Year 6, pupils are beginning to paragraph their work as a matter of course, and most set out direct speech correctly. Writing is generally legible and well formed and spelling is generally accurate. Pupils of below average ability make good use of full stops and capital letters and most produce neat and legible writing, although there are some variations in presentation. Pupils know what they have to do to improve and, with their good attitudes to learning, respond well to the personal targets set for them.

93 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school with the high levels of support they receive and an analysis of pupils' past work shows that they make good gains as they move through the key stages. A wide range of systems and procedures ensure that pupils whose attainment is below expectations receive extra support. These include withdrawal of pupils for additional language support and booster classes, individual and group support in classes from well briefed, highly skilled support staff and activities that are carefully planned to support and challenge the least confident pupils. Where pupils from the special needs unit are included in lessons, they are well supported by adults and in most instances given opportunities to develop their personal skills through working independently with pupils of their own age.

94 The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and never less than satisfactory, although there are variations in both key stages. In the best lessons, the teachers' enthusiasm and very good subject knowledge helps pupils to make very good gains in their knowledge and understanding. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher's reading of an excerpt from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* gripped the pupils' imaginations to such an extent that they became highly motivated to find the meanings of the most difficult and obscure words in order to better understand the text. In this lesson, the teacher's explanations were very clear and interesting, the lesson was delivered at a brisk pace and pupils were sensitively supported in their completion of carefully selected but challenging written tasks. In the least inspiring lessons, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to develop their reading skills, for example when the teacher reads to the class rather than shares the text with them. Occasionally the literature is uninspiring, expectations are lower and the lesson is conducted at a leisurely pace that does not motivate pupils to do their best. Although pupils make satisfactory progress in such lessons, they do not make the rapid gains seen elsewhere.

95 Teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and implement it well. Their technical knowledge is good, enabling good teaching of spelling and grammar. Good methods that draw on pupils' own interests and experiences are successful in promoting learning. For example, Year 1 pupils write sentences based on their own experiences for others to judge whether or not they make sense. Clever questioning techniques encourage pupils to think more deeply, and by varying the level of difficulty of such questions, teachers successfully involve pupils of all abilities in the discussions. A shared commitment to high standards of work and behaviour is clear in the way in which classes are managed. In most classes, a 'hands up' expectation works well in creating a calm, purposeful learning environment. Some teachers modify their voices very effectively, for example to create a desired atmosphere or to calm a class. Teachers provide very good role models in their relationships with the pupils and their high expectations of work and behaviour are reflected in the good attitudes of the pupils, nearly all of whom work sensibly and concentrate well whilst the teacher is focusing on another group.

96 Teachers place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and find many opportunities for pupils to practise. For example, after registration, a Year 2 teacher asks pupils to stand and talk briefly about their weekend, asking skilful questions to encourage them to extend their descriptions and explanations.

97 Many teachers find extra time for pupils to read for their own enjoyment and in most classes this is generally well managed, although there are some variations. Occasionally, in such lessons, a minority of pupils engages in low level off task behaviour, which goes unnoticed and so time is not used to maximum effect. Good practice was observed in occasional lessons in both key stages, where pupils ran their own guided reading sessions, taking it in turn to lead their group, with the help of the teacher's written prompts. Such lessons contribute well to pupils' personal development and provide good opportunities for them to develop their speaking and listening skills whilst learning from each other.

98 Teachers make good use of day-to-day assessment, adjusting their lessons, to take account of their findings. For example, in a reception lesson, the teacher deviated from her planning after perceiving that the children needed more time to talk about their learning experiences. Many opportunities are found for pupils to make choices and to become involved in their own learning, for example when Year 6 pupils are encouraged to invent and share their own rules for spelling difficult words or when they dramatise a scene from a play. In such lessons, they evaluate their own performance and make suggestions about how they could improve. Teachers' marking is often helpful in focusing pupils' attention on what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. However, this is not consistent throughout the school.

99 The school's literacy strategy is well established, thus providing a balanced curriculum and a good model on which to base other subjects. For example, oral sessions at the beginning and end of lessons provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills across all subjects. Parents express the view that the literacy hour is driving up standards.

100 Teachers' termly planning is good and ensures continuity within year groups. Staff plan very effectively together in their teams to create the best learning opportunities for all pupils. Those with particular expertise support less experienced colleagues well and all teachers have the opportunity to make a personal contribution to planning for the content of future lessons. Staff discuss the effectiveness of their previous lessons and use the information well for future planning. An example of this was when Key Stage 2 teachers agreed to postpone their pre-planned poetry lessons to allow more time for pupils to practise newly learned skills. Short-term weekly planning is generally good, with activities generally

well matched to pupils' individual abilities. The subject contributes well to pupils' personal development. Teachers encourage their personal responses in oral sessions and provide many opportunities for them to reflect on what they see and hear. Moral issues are discussed in terms of the actions of story characters and how such actions might affect others. Opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their literacy skills through other subjects such as history, for example when Year 2 pupils dramatise and then write about their experiences as Victorian children, or when Year 6 pupils produce a 'newspaper report' on Carter's discovery of Tutenkhamun's tomb. However, there is not enough evidence of the use of information and communication technology contributing to pupils' language skills.

101 Pupils' learning is consolidated and appropriately reinforced and extended through homework, for example when Year 6 pupils write a recipe for a spell after reading the witches' scene from *Macbeth*. However, parents comment on variations between classes on the regularity and amount of homework set. Although there was no firm evidence of such variations during the week of the inspection, pupils were not always sure about routines. Some reported that homework was mainly completing unfinished work. The school places a strong emphasis on reading as homework throughout the school. However, teachers' reading records lack consistency, some containing detailed diagnostic comments, whilst others are less useful. Whilst some home/school diaries provide a useful two-way dialogue between teachers and parents, this good practice is not consistent across the school.

102 The subject is well led and managed. The Key Stage 2 English co-ordinator is partnered by a Key Stage 1 teacher, and this arrangement helps to ensure that information is appropriately shared with staff in both key stages and enables systematic progress through the key stages. Planning is already taking account of the new Foundation Curriculum for early years children. There have been good improvements in monitoring teaching and learning, with staff released to monitor delivery of the literacy hour. The National Literacy Strategy provides a very good structure for teachers to plan for pupils' systematic progress and the school development plan is very specific about how the school intends to raise standards, particularly in writing. This represents a further improvement since the previous report. The senior management team carefully analyses data from national tests and other assessments in order to identify patterns in attainment and to set targets for group and individual improvement. Pupils are involved with the setting of their own personal targets, which are then shared with parents. The school is aware of a need to improve its book resources, particularly in the library, but good use is made of the local lending service to supplement stocks. Some reading books are becoming worn and a little shabby and the library is under-stocked and under used. There have been improvements since the previous inspection, with books more easily accessible and more attractively displayed but the school acknowledges that there is still work to be done. Some parents expressed the view that progress through reading is sometimes limited by lack of suitable books. Visits and visitors make a significant contribution to pupils' progress; for example, a visit to the Globe Theatre and subsequent written work.

MATHEMATICS

103 By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with the national average, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. From 1996 to 1999, standards were below the national average, though showing some improvement. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 national tests, standards were below the national average and well below average compared with similar schools. The school's implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is proving effective in raising standards and teaching is good. Provisional results from the latest national tests in 2000 indicate a continuing rise in standards, particularly at the higher National Curriculum Level 3. The school has set realistic targets to maintain this improvement. Pupils with special educational needs and those with physical disabilities are achieving well. All pupils including higher attaining pupils are making good progress.

104 By the age of seven, the pupils attain satisfactory standards in mental calculations and in basic numeracy. They can use quick mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 10 and often beyond. They understand the value of each digit in numbers to 100. They are able to recognise number sequences, including odd and even numbers. The pupils use coins to make up totals and most of them can work out the correct change after buying items. Higher attainers solve written problems, including some that involve decimal notation of money, and they can add and subtract three digit numbers. The pupils are able to calculate a half and quarter of simple numbers. Most of them achieve sound standards in shapes, measures and data handling. They recognise and name common two and three-dimensional shapes and they can show any lines of symmetry in the former. They tell simple analogue time and many can relate this to digital time. The pupils are able to classify data using Venn and Carroll diagrams. The pupils often use their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum. For example, in work linked to a topic on houses, Year 1 pupils contribute to a whole class block graph of the types of homes in which the pupils live. In science work concerning balanced diets, Year 2 pupils show their favourite school dinners and favourite types of food by means of accurate block graphs.

105 By the end of Year 6, standards are above average, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection and results of the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 national tests. Standards have risen steadily since 1996, except for a dip in 1998. Provisional results from the latest national tests are not quite as high as in 1999 and targets were not reached. The school has set realistic targets for 2001, in order to secure further improvement. Pupils with special educational needs and those with physical disabilities are achieving well. All pupils, including higher attaining pupils, are making good progress.

106 By the age of eleven, the pupils achieve good standards in mental calculations and in basic numeracy. They use quick mental recall of all four operations of addition, subtraction, division and multiplication to solve number problems, including decimals. They understand and use appropriate written methods for solving long multiplication problems and problems involving decimal notation of money. Some pupils find the concept of equivalent fractions difficult, though many can calculate fractions and percentages of whole numbers. The pupils understand the language of angles and they can use protractors to measure and draw angles accurately. They can use compasses accurately to construct triangles. Most of the pupils can use the standard formula for calculating areas and higher attainers investigate the circumference and areas of circles. The pupils know the approximate metric equivalents of imperial units. The pupils are able to represent data in a variety of graphical forms, including bar charts, scatter diagrams and pie charts. They understand the concept of mean, mode, median and ratio. The pupils apply their numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, in science, Year 4 pupils measure body parts and draw accurate bar charts in science work on the human skeleton. In geography, these pupils draw accurate bar charts to record the results of a traffic survey and Year 5 pupils use coordinates to locate map features and complete bar charts of northern and southern hemisphere cities.

107 Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and this reflects the findings of the previous inspection. In Key Stage 2, 57% of the teaching observed was good or better; in Key Stage 1 the figure was 67%. All the teachers plan and organise their lessons well and they share the lesson's objectives with the pupils. Brisk mental or oral mathematics sessions help the pupils learn to use quick recall of number facts. The teachers make good use of resources, such as number grids and individual whiteboards. A Year 6 teacher made this session fun and generated much enthusiasm in the learning of decimal notation with lively question and answer techniques. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher encouraged the pupils to be ambitious in their answers and this helped in developing confidence in work on multiples. She explored the reasons for some wrong answers and made good teaching points out of this. In two lessons in Year 5, the teachers used 'washing lines' well to help in the learning of

improper fractions and mixed numbers. All the teachers emphasise the use of correct mathematical vocabulary. They match work well to pupils' varying needs and challenge higher attainers appropriately. They use support staff effectively to aid the learning of lower attainers. The teachers monitor the progress of pupils well in lessons and give useful guidance as necessary. The quality of marking in pupils' exercise books, however, is variable and this reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Some marking is helpful in showing how the pupils might improve; for example, a Year 4 teacher's comments included "Check your answer; you have used the correct method but your addition is incorrect". However, much marking is simply a series of ticks with very few helpful comments. The teachers use plenary sessions well to consolidate what the pupils have learnt during the lessons and to give pupils the opportunity to talk about what they have been doing. Generally, the teachers make insufficient use of ICT to enhance the pupils' learning. Class control overall is good, but at times some teachers struggle to get the pupils' attention and, as a result, the pace of learning drops. In the very best lessons, the teachers display a lively, enthusiastic approach. This motivates the pupils to do well. Pupils' behaviour and attitude to work in both key stages are good and, as a result, the pupils are achieving well.

108 Good management is having a positive impact on rising standards. A good policy document includes useful guidance on teaching methods. The co-ordinators have monitored teaching throughout the school, with a view to seeing what works well in the classroom and what does not and to sharing ideas. They have led relevant training for colleagues. There are satisfactory procedures in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. The teachers mark sample pieces of work, with a view to agreeing on National Curriculum levels of attainment being achieved. Assessment is being used well to plan subsequent work. In a Year 6 planning meeting observed, the teachers modified their plans for the following week, according to how their pupils had progressed. There are adequate resources to support learning, except for ICT software. The subject makes a sound contribution to the pupils' social development. Wherever appropriate, the teachers encourage the pupils to work collaboratively, whilst, at the same time, encouraging them to develop independence in their learning.

SCIENCE

109 The 1999 National Curriculum teacher assessments for pupils near the end of Key Stage 1 indicated that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards was slightly below the national average. When compared with the results of schools with a similar pupil intake the standards were well below the average. The results of the 2000 assessments were broadly similar although no national averages are yet available. Overall standards in the 1999 Key Stage 2 tests were similar to the average for all schools although the proportion achieving level 4 was above average. These results were below the average for similar schools. When these results are compared to the same group's achievement four years earlier, the progress is similar to the national average. The Key Stage 2 results for science have shown an overall improvement over the past four years which broadly reflects the gains made nationally. The results achieved in the 2000 tests are similar but cannot yet be compared to a national average. The inspection relates to different cohorts of pupils and evidence suggests that the proportion of pupils on course to achieve the national standards by the end of Key Stage 1 is close to the average whilst it is above average at the end of Key Stage 2.

110 Pupils in all parts of the school are able to conduct scientific investigations with confidence and increasing maturity. Pupils develop a sound understanding of fair testing with older pupils beginning to appreciate the importance of isolating variables. They are able to plan and record experiments using scientific processes appropriate to their age. Pupils are encouraged to design tests, hypothesise, predict outcomes and to reach conclusions based

on evidence, and these investigational skills are good. Pupils acquire an appropriate scientific vocabulary.

111 Pupils in the final year of Key Stage 1 can identify a range of common materials and describe some of the similarities and differences. They are aware of some of the changes that can occur to materials when they are heated. They understand some of the elements essential to life and can undertake simple classification. They demonstrate basic knowledge relating to sound, such as how it travels and the difference between volume and pitch, simple electrical circuits and to sources of light. In all these areas the proportion of pupils with the attainment expected for their age is broadly average.

112 By the end of Key Stage 2 the percentage of Year 6 who are on course to achieve scientific knowledge and understanding expected for their age is above the average. Such achievement relates to the inter-dependence of plant and animal life and food chains; to their understanding of the human body and how it functions; to knowledge of materials and the associated properties; to electricity and why circuits need to be made of conductors; to their ability to classify objects, materials and living things according to given criteria; and to forces such as magnetism and its applications. Most pupils have a keen appreciation of the importance and value of the environment to living things. There is some use of ICT to support the subject but this capability is not sufficiently integrated into the programme or applied systematically as a scientific tool.

113 The majority of pupils enter the school with scientific knowledge and understanding which is below what might be expected for their age. The school works conscientiously to build scientific knowledge understanding and skills and to enrich pupils' experience. These efforts result in most pupils making good progress as they move through Key Stage 1. This good quality of learning is sustained through Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs are sensitively supported and teachers and support assistants work particularly effectively to ensure such pupils make good progress in both key stages.

114 The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good. Lessons are carefully prepared and relate to the requirements of the National Curriculum. The relationships between teachers and pupils are productive and class control is secure. There is effective use of scientific inquiry as a means of developing knowledge and understanding across the various aspects of the subject. This was particularly well demonstrated in a very good lesson relating to an investigation into suitable materials for a 'teddy's rain hat' where clear learning objectives and stimulating activities promoted a delightful working atmosphere and combined to produce very effective learning.

115 Teaching in Key Stage 2 is also consistently good and this is positively promoting progress. Opportunities for genuine scientific discovery are provided and pupils are encouraged to predict outcomes and evaluate their experiments. A Year 6 investigation into electrical circuits exemplified this approach. Teaching is founded on sound subject knowledge with teaching points effectively communicated. Most lessons have a clear focus and are well organised. Class management is secure. These factors were present in a number of good lessons including a Year 4 lesson in which data relating to children's growth was collected, recorded and analysed and in a Year 3 lesson relating to types of teeth where the infectious enthusiasm of the teacher successfully motivated the pupils.

116 Almost all pupils have a positive attitude towards science. Pupils concentrate well and work industriously. Interest in scientific inquiry is demonstrated by almost all pupils. Pupils collaborate productively when engaged in practical work and are keen to demonstrate their growing knowledge by answering in class and by contributing to discussion. Overall, pupils' response to science is good at both key stages. In summary, the consistently good

teaching is a significant factor in motivating pupils and these factors combine to produce the good quality of learning which is present in both key stages.

117 There is suitable balance between the required aspects of the subject and experimental work is given proper emphasis. The subject is well led by the joint co-ordinators who are conscientious and committed to raising standards. National guidance has recently been adopted in order to ensure coverage of the curriculum. The current range of assessments provide useful information and are satisfactory, but they do not necessarily track progress relating to key skills and knowledge through the whole school and do not, therefore, have optimum impact upon learning. Proposed new assessment meets these shortcomings and has the potential to provide a valuable tool in evaluating both individual learning and the effectiveness of the school's provision. A good system for monitoring the curriculum through scrutiny of pupils' work, involvement in planning and observing teaching has been established, although financial constraints have affected the planned programme.

118 Since the previous Ofsted report standards have been maintained at Key Stage 1 and improved at Key Stage 2. The school has satisfactorily addressed the issue relating to the more efficient use of resources at Key Stage 1.

ART AND DESIGN

119 At Key Stage 1, pupils explore texture and select from a range of materials to make collages of natural and man-made materials, including textiles. They experiment with clay and paint to produce different textures. Year 1 pupils explore the technique of paper weaving and make three-dimensional houses from materials of their own choice. Pupils talk about their work with pride and say what they particularly like about it. By the end of the key stage, they have experienced a range of media and techniques that prepare them well for the next stage in their learning. Very good experiences in the reception classes prepare the children well for Key Stage 1 and these skills are systematically built upon throughout the school.

120 At Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils have produced very beautiful effects with tie dying techniques. In a series of lessons on printing techniques they print designs based on the urban landscape using a polystyrene 'press print' technique. They examine the print designs of William Morris, attempting to create similar symmetrical patterns that are based on nature. Throughout the key stage, pupils experiment freely with pattern, colour and tone and develop their understanding of form well through three-dimensional work in clay, papier-mache and other media. For example, Year 6 pupils have produced an attractive display on rainforests that includes well-finished models of flying creatures, suspended from the ceiling against a convincing and attractive collage background.

121 Only two lessons were seen during the inspection. However, evidence from work displayed in the classrooms and central areas, examination of teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers leads to the judgement that pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress overall in Key Stage 2. Standards are at least in line with those expected nationally for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and above for those at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as their peers because of the very good support they receive. Pupils generally talk enthusiastically about the subject and list it as one of their favourites.

122 There was not enough evidence to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1, but the limited amount of teaching seen in Key Stage 2 was good. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the subject and list it as one of their favourites. Evidence from planning and displays indicates that teachers are very clear about the skills, knowledge and understanding they intend the pupils to gain. They work hard together to ensure that

skills are built upon systematically as pupils move through the school and this is particularly evident in displays of work on 'tone'. The youngest children have made black and white pictures, mixed white paint with black to make tones of grey and produced newspaper collages that demonstrate the shades from white to black. The pupils' concept of tone is developed further as they move through the school. For example, pupils in Year 5 explore the idea of light and shade and make newspaper montages of a strongly lit teapot to show how light and shadow creates form. Year 5 pupils produce monochrome still life colour washes in primary colours, demonstrating a deepening understanding of tonal perspective, and Year 6 pupils study tone within different colour ranges, for example leaf shapes, showing tone within the green range.

123 Teaching methods are sometimes too prescriptive; for example in one lesson Year 5 pupils all used the same image to practise the Tudor 'pouncing' technique of reproducing pictures through piercing tiny holes along the outlines of the original, rubbing powder through the holes and joining up the dots. However, such lessons are enhanced by very interesting discussions about the work of artists such as Holbein and the symbolism in portraiture.

124 Pupils use sketchbooks to experiment with different kinds of pencils and drawing techniques. Although these books are not used enough for experimental work or references for future work, they do demonstrate pupils' good learning in observational drawing and mark making.

125 The art co-ordinator leads the subject well. Detailed guidelines help teachers to plan worthwhile experiences that build on pupils' previous learning as they move through the key stages and ensure that all pupils receive equal access to the curriculum. The school is to be commended for its efforts to keep the curriculum for art as broad and balanced as possible, despite the implementation of new initiatives such as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The subject is appropriately timetabled to ensure that it is taught for its own sake, and further opportunities are found for pupils to practise their newly learned skills through other subjects, such as history, religious education and mathematics. For example, Year 4 pupils examine the geometric content of Celtic designs before designing their own string prints. Art and design supports literacy well through oral sessions at the beginning and end of lessons. Resources are adequate and generally accessible, although cramped conditions in a Year 3 class prevent pupils from freely selecting their own materials.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

126 Standards attained by pupils at the ages of seven and eleven are in line with national expectations and the pupils are making satisfactory progress. The standard of attainment and progress at the end of Key Stage 2 (11 years of age) has dropped when compared to that reported in January 1997 when it was considered to be good. The introduction of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies has meant that the school has devoted less time to design and technology. There has therefore been a lowering of the standards of attainment amongst older pupils. Evidence of standards was obtained from a limited number of lesson observations, a scrutiny of pupils' work, an interview with Year 6 pupils and other evidence submitted by the subject manager.

127 Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in their ability to use a variety of materials ranging from construction apparatus to clay. Pupils in Year 2 have used card and paper clips to produce a reticulated caterpillar. They have designed a moving vehicle giving full written descriptions of how they were made. Pupils have also designed a board game and produced written instructions of how to play it. Their written work, which forms a good subject link to literacy, is well produced and shows care.

128 By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have experienced the use of a number of different materials. Pupils in Year 6 when interviewed, demonstrated a good grasp of the design process of planning, evaluation and adaptation. They are able to state preferences and give reasons for them, for example, which of two different coffee jars they preferred. The majority is aware that the designs they produce must be suitable for their purpose and attractive to would-be users. However, there is very little evidence that the school is putting theory into practice and allowing the pupils to develop their planning skills. This gap in the school's provision in the subject was noted in the last report and has not yet been remedied by the school. Pupils at the end of the key stage have produced boats powered with both batteries and elastic bands that were tested by them in the school swimming pool. Cooking is a feature of the school's provision in the subject and Year 6 pupils have produced jam tarts, pizzas and chocolate cake. There was however, no apparent evaluation of the results. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their design and technology work.

129 Design and technology has good links to other subjects of the curriculum, for example, the work done by Year 4 pupils in designing and making musical instruments. Pupils in the same year produced animals in clay after observing wooden carvings from Kenya, thus providing a good link to geography. In a Year 6 lesson pupils extended their work in science and ICT to make an electronic quiz-board.

130 Teaching in the subject is never less than satisfactory and sometimes good. Where teaching is good teachers make effective use of resources and exercise good class control. A feature of the good teaching is the use of reviews at the end of lessons to pick up on any problems that have been met. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and awareness of the design process. They use methods that match the practical focus of the subject. Where teaching is good pupils progress well in their ability to discuss their work and listen to instructions. They demonstrate a willingness to talk about what they are doing and are aware of what they have to do next.

131 The subject is managed satisfactorily and the resources available are adequate. There is a detailed scheme of work but its effect is limited because there is no monitoring of teaching or detailed systems for recording achievement. This lack of monitoring and detailed records of achievement was noted in 1997, but has not as yet been rectified by the school, however the subject manager is aware of what needs to be done.

GEOGRAPHY

132 It was not possible to observe any geography lessons in Key Stage 1, but an analysis of pupils' work indicates that, by the end of Year 2, standards are average for the pupils' ages. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those with physical disabilities are making good progress. Higher attaining pupils are achieving well. All pupils are making good progress in geography.

133 By the age of seven, most of the pupils know the names of the constituent countries of the United Kingdom and they can locate Hereford approximately on a map of the British Isles. Many pupils are beginning to understand the concept of a plan or map as a view from above and the need for a key. They can draw satisfactory plans of the conservation area and their own bedrooms. They use their numeracy skills to locate features on simple plans by means of basic coordinates. The pupils are beginning to use correct geographical terms and locational language. They can follow simple instructions on a large scale plan. Younger pupils use their literacy skills soundly to write their own addresses and they can locate their homes and the school on a local street map. The pupils observe different types of buildings and homes in the immediate environment and they are aware of some of the natural and man made materials which go into their construction.

134 There is evidence that Key Stage 1 teachers plan soundly for work in geography and that they make appropriate use of local fieldwork to enhance learning.

135 By the end of Year 6, standards are above average for pupils of this age, which is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. An analysis of their work indicates that pupils with special educational needs and those with physical disabilities achieve well. All pupils, including higher attaining pupils, are making good progress in the development of their geographical skills and knowledge.

136 By the age of eleven the pupils have learnt from first hand experience about some aspects of the geography of London, such as the River Thames, the Thames Barrier, London Transport and the City. They use their literacy skills well to record their findings. In work linked to history, the pupils know about some aspects of the geography of Egypt, such as the importance of the River Nile in a desert climate. They understand the importance of the world's tropical rain forests and wetlands and the threat posed to them by drainage schemes, deforestation and tourism. The pupils understand how the nature of a river valley changes from source to mouth. Younger pupils in this key stage learn, from direct experience, about the limestone scenery of the Mendips and about aspects of urban geography in Bath and Bristol. They use their numeracy skills to locate features on an Ordnance Survey map by means of four figure coordinates and they use their literacy skills effectively to write about the pros and cons of a bypass for Hereford.

137 The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed in Years 4 and 5 was satisfactory and sometimes good. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher made useful links with science work on the earth's orbit and with mathematics work on fractions and this had a sound impact on the pupils' understanding of the world's hemispheres. The teachers place an appropriate emphasis on the use of correct geographical terms and on the teaching of key geographical skills, such as using an index to locate cities in an atlas and being able to find information from a map. In a Year 4 lesson, the teacher used open-ended questioning well, in order to make the pupils think carefully about how they would plan their village on an outline map. She asked "How will the river affect where you live?" and this helped the pupils to understand both the benefits and the dangers posed by locating settlements close to rivers. Weaknesses in the teaching observed included a failure to match work sufficiently to pupils' varying needs and insufficient use of ICT to enhance learning.

138 The two teachers who have recently been given the responsibility for co-ordinating humanities, have made a good start in managing geography. They monitor planning to ensure a consistency of approach and they have monitored some teaching, in order to share good practice. Procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment are satisfactory. The new humanities policy is clear and offers useful guidance on the teaching of geography and a list of relevant geographical vocabulary. It also includes a list of the school visits which form the basis of much of the planning for geography. This emphasis on learning from direct experience enhances pupils' learning. It contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Some local fieldwork on safer routes to school, for example, led to the installation of a local cycle route and pelican crossing. There is a good range of resources to support learning. The teachers use the schools' library service effectively. There is a reasonable range of geography reference books in the school library, though many of them are somewhat dated now.

HISTORY

139 The previous report found that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 was satisfactory. The present inspection judges these standards to have been maintained.

The interesting visits arranged for each year group add greatly to the pupils' knowledge and enjoyment of history. An outing to Bristol gives pupils sharpened insight into exploration and trading, while the Year 6 expedition to London enables them to visit historic monuments and deepen their understanding of the past. Only three lessons were observed, so additional evidence has been gathered from analysis of work from the last academic year, scrutiny of the present year's work and discussions with teachers and pupils.

140 Teaching in all the lessons observed was good or very good. Teachers make the past come alive through, for example, a dramatic performance of the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb, which was contrasted with a reading of the same event from Carter's diary. These were then used well as the basis for newspaper reports written by a Year 6 class, with emphasis on snappy headlines and clear, succinct phrases. The pupils showed a wide knowledge of Ancient Egypt and good understanding of Carter's methods of archaeological research. The teachers also make very good use of resources to heighten pupils' awareness of differences between past and present. For example in a Year 1 class, pupils discussed a variety of old artefacts such as hot water bottles and candlesticks, learnt about their functions, and deduced why they are not used today. In a mixed Year 2/3 class, while watching a video pupils learnt how Victorian schoolchildren had to pay for their education until 1890, and were surprised to discover that their own education is free! Facts such as this date and the time when education became compulsory in Britain are put on a time-line that helps the pupils to gain an understanding of chronology and give them practice in recognising large numbers. Good emphasis is placed on encouraging pupils' listening and speaking skills, and there were short dramatic dialogues in one lesson which gave pupils valuable practice in speaking to an audience and thinking quickly. However, analysis of last year's work indicates that in some classes teachers rely too much on worksheets and do not ensure that all their pupils are appropriately challenged. The pupils in the PDU follow a similar scheme of work and for instance learn about the Romans at the same time as their contemporaries in the main school.

141 The co-ordinator is very newly appointed. She is well organised and has clear ideas as to the direction in which she intends the subject to move. For instance there are plans in hand to adjust the scheme of work in order to meet fully the new requirements. She has opportunities to monitor pupils' work and to see teaching in progress. Assessment is informal at present.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

142 In Key Stage 1, standards in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) are variable; in some aspects standards are satisfactory, but in others standards are unsatisfactory. Pupils use computers to write and produce text in a variety of settings. Pupils produce short paragraphs, labels, and develop satisfactory skills in writing using computers. In Year 1 pupils use a program to separate images of objects according to the material of which they are made. In these lessons pupils develop their skills in ICT and make meaningful links with their work in science. Pupils do not have satisfactory experience of how to use computers to classify information into tables and charts. There are insufficient opportunities to control devices by entering instructions.

143 In Key Stage 2 pupils reach satisfactory standards in handling text. Pupils are able to merge text with pictures held in the computer memory bank. In Year 6 pupils design and produce holiday brochures for Egypt. They use different types of lettering and illustrate their work with images of pyramids and the Nile. Some pupils feeling restricted by the range of images available decided to use the Internet to extend the range! They did so with confidence and independence. Opportunities for pupils to gather information to produce graphs and databases which can later be interrogated, are infrequent. Standards in this area of ICT are unsatisfactory. Pupils' experiences of using ICT to control events and measure

physical phenomena are limited and underdeveloped. Pupils do have good awareness of computers as a source of information. The use of ICT in some topics is good, as in the history topic on Egypt, and in Year 6 science work on electrical circuits. However, its potential in subjects of the curriculum generally remains unexploited.

144 At the time of the last inspection pupils' attainment and progress were described as satisfactory, with scope for development in data handling and control technology. Inspectors observed that the school did not have systems for recording pupils' attainment and progress. The current picture is very similar and clearly the school needs to address these aspects of its provision with some urgency.

145 The progress of pupils with special educational needs matches that of other pupils. Progress over time is satisfactory in some elements such as word processing and finding information, but unsatisfactory in others such as data handling, where opportunities to develop knowledge and skills are insufficient. However in the PDU the progress of pupils is better and ICT is used effectively to enhance the learning of these pupils. More use could be made of ICT in literacy and numeracy sessions in the main school, and in several other subjects the use of ICT needs to be increased.

146 The teaching observed during the inspection was good with some very good teaching at the top end of Key Stage 2. Teachers were confident in how to exploit the potential of the ICT suite. Teachers plan their work carefully and manage pupils well. In the very best lessons the teaching enthused and motivated pupils to a high degree as in a year six lesson where pupils research information about mineral resources on the banks of the Nile. In other lessons effective feedback from well informed classroom assistants enables pupils to learn well and make good progress. Pupils' behaviour promotes good learning and they work well in groups, collaborating on tasks.

147 The special ICT suite is a very useful facility, however it does not accommodate whole classes easily. Sometimes three or four pupils have to use one computer and this is not an ideal arrangement as it limits learning. Other computers in classrooms were not used regularly during the inspection. The school needs to review its practice in this respect.

MUSIC

148 The previous report found standards to be satisfactory at both key stages, and the school is working hard to maintain these levels of attainment.

149 A skilled music enthusiast has recently left the school and staff now teach their own classes. Due to timetable constraints, only two lessons were observed which is too few to form a judgement on the standard of teaching throughout the school. One of the lessons seen was satisfactory and the other was of very good quality. Both were clearly planned and well managed. In both sessions the teachers explained the objectives clearly so that pupils were able to practise and improve their performances and there was considerable enjoyment of the tasks. In the very good lesson there was a brisk pace to the session and a rich content that carried the pupils forward well.

150 Pupils have a well developed sense of rhythm throughout the school and sing clearly and sweetly although without much enthusiasm or use of crescendo or diminuendo. Hymn practices are used well to promote an awareness of voice production through careful breathing. Pupils in the PDU enjoy using percussion instruments and they too develop a good sense of rhythm. They enjoy singing and join in with enthusiasm. Instrumental extra-curricular activities add considerably to the musical life of the school. There are recorder groups and an enthusiastic ceilidh band which, although still early in the school year, produces a pleasing melodious sound. The choir did not perform during the inspection.

151 The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and extremely hard working. She offers help to less expert colleagues and has time to visit classes to monitor standards. She is updating the scheme of work to bring it into line with the new requirements and also to make it easier for her colleagues to use. She is considering a simple system for recording assessment throughout the school: already in Year 3 there is a formal assessment to judge which pupils would benefit from learning to play musical instruments. The school lacks some specific percussion instruments and is considering how to make storage more secure while maintaining ease of access.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

152 By the end Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils demonstrate a better than expected range of control and creativity of movement in physical activities. They are able to link their movements and to work individually and with others. The number of pupils who have the expected control in catching and throwing is above average. Pupils have good awareness of the changes that happen to their bodies during exercise. Dance was not observed during the inspection but it is clear that this element is properly included in the curriculum.

153 At Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils demonstrate good levels of co-ordination and expression in gymnastics. They are able to practise, refine and improve their skills and to link their movements. They are able to work individually and with others. Games skills such as ball control, passing and tactical awareness are better than those expected for pupils of similar ages. Pupils display good levels of collaboration in group activities. Standards in swimming are excellent. Swimming is included in the programme for every year group and almost every pupil in Year 6 is on course to achieve the expected standard of swimming 25 metres. Most of these pupils are able to achieve this standard by employing front and back crawl as well as breast stroke. Not all elements of the curriculum were observed at Key Stage 2 but other evidence confirms that a particularly full and balanced programme is delivered.

154 The previous Ofsted report was favourable in respect of physical education and the good standards and provision which were noted have been maintained. Criticism relating to insufficient resources for Key Stage 1 has been satisfactorily addressed.

155 The quality of learning is good in both key stages. In gymnastics pupils steadily achieve greater confidence and control in their movements and become increasingly able to evaluate and improve their performance. Good progress is also made in skills associated with games and this is reflected in pupils' increasing ability to display ball control and tactical awareness. The very good facilities for swimming, the consistently good teaching which focuses upon improving technique and the high motivation of the pupils all combine to produce very good progress in swimming ability in both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs, including those from the PDU, are extremely well integrated into the physical education programme. These pupils also make good progress. This aspect was very well demonstrated in a dance activity in which pupils in wheelchairs were fully involved.

156 The overall quality of teaching at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good. Teachers have productive relationships with their pupils and lessons are well organised. Very good teaching is characterised by secure subject knowledge and by the systematic refinement and improvement of pupils' performance. The coaching of back crawl skills in a Year 4 lesson and improving landing technique in gymnastics in Year 1 exemplified this approach.

157 A feature of teaching in both key stages is the degree to which pupils are motivated to work hard and to improve. Pupils' response to physical education is very good in both key

stages. Activities are approached with enthusiasm and almost all pupils work with confidence. The majority consistently strive to attain good standards and there is particularly productive collaboration in group activities. The positive attributes of teaching and pupils' attitudes contribute strongly to the good quality of learning.

158 Opportunities are provided for pupils to participate in a range of sports including soccer, rounders, cricket, rugby and netball and a very wide range of extra-curricular clubs further enrich the curriculum. These activities are made possible by the voluntary efforts of teachers and others and impact favourably upon pupils' enjoyment and learning. Many competitive events with other schools are organised and this aspect of the school's provision is good. Some of the facilities for physical education are good but the hall is of moderate size only and at times learning is adversely affected because pupils have insufficient space to engage fully in activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

159 Standards at the end of both key stages have been maintained since the last inspection with pupils meeting the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Religious education is an important aspect of the school's high level of provision for the spiritual development of its pupils. They are given the opportunity to study the belief systems of a number of different religions through a well planned scheme of work. These aspects when combined with the good teaching that is a feature of most lessons, ensure that pupils make good progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs and those attending the PDU are progressing at a rate commensurate with their abilities.

160 By the age of seven, pupils have a basic knowledge of the important part that symbols and buildings play in the religions of the world. For example, they have looked at Jewish religious artefacts such as the menorah and are aware of the important role that the synagogue plays in the life of Jews. Their work has included the different types of buildings used by Christians and they are aware of the main festivals of Christianity such as Christmas and Easter and the symbols associated with them. Pupils know that Christians believe that Jesus was God's son and have looked at some of His teachings and the stories that He told. Year 1 pupils, for example, have looked at the stories of how Jesus calmed the waves and fed the five thousand. They have re-written some of these stories in their own words.

161 By the age of eleven, pupils have studied the Hindu, Muslim and Christian religions in greater depth. For example, they are aware that the Bible is a collection of different books that individually represent many different writing styles from poetry and letters to simple stories. They know that the Bible was originally written in Greek and Hebrew and are aware of the difference between the Old and New Testaments. In Year 4 pupils are able to discuss the importance of family shrines to Hindus and the artefacts associated with them. Year 6 pupils know that pattern and colour are important aspects of Muslim worship. Throughout both key stages prayer and reflection are encouraged as part of the provision for the subject. For example, in a Key Stage 2 lesson pupils were asked to reflect on they could show love for God and those around them.

162 Teaching in both key stages is good, sometimes very good, and never less than satisfactory. Lessons have a good pace and this maintains the interest of the pupils. Resources are used well by teachers to provide a focus for lessons. Considerable emphasis is put on the development of the vocabulary of the subject and pupils are encouraged to take an active part in discussions. Sometimes teachers allow time for pupils to reflect on the issues they are studying. Teachers maintain a good working atmosphere during lessons. Pupils behave very well in lessons and co-operate with their teachers and with each other. They listen attentively to discussions and take an active part in them, expressing themselves well. During lessons they remain on task demonstrating a good level of enthusiasm.

163 The school has acted to address the concerns expressed in the last report. Religious education is well managed by the subject manager who demonstrates considerable enthusiasm. There is a detailed scheme of work that links the agreed syllabus to a commercially produced set of guidelines. Although the use of ICT is not particularly well developed within the subject it is sometimes used. The subject is well resourced. The subject manager monitors teaching and planning and a system for assessing the progress of pupils has been introduced.