

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **TELFORD JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Leamington Spa

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125556

Headteacher: Mr Roger Mallows

Reporting inspector: Mr Martin Beale  
19385

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> October 2000

Inspection number: 224118

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Telford Avenue Lillington Leamington Spa Warwickshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Tim Lester
Date of previous inspection:	7 <sup>th</sup> May 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Rosemary Hussain 1166	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; the school's care for its pupils; partnership with parents
Clive Parsons 4126	Team inspector	Science, design technology; equal opportunities; special needs; English as an additional language	Curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
Catherine Kennally 20516	Team inspector	Mathematics; art; geography; history	
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Telford Junior School is a larger than average mixed school for pupils from 7 to 11 years of age. There are 359 pupils on roll, with slightly more girls than boys. Almost 7% of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Of these, 14 have English as an additional language; however, none is at early stages of language acquisition. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, is above the national average. Less than 5% of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. The attainment on entry to the school of the current Year 3 is broadly average, being below that in recent years.

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

Telford Junior School is providing a very good education for its pupils and is serving its community well. The high quality of much of the teaching enables the pupils to make good progress and achieve high standards. The strong leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by staff who work well as a team, ensures that there is a continual drive to improve standards. There is a calm atmosphere in the school, where expectations are high and pupils work hard. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- The high quality of much of the teaching is resulting in good progress and high standards.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' work and behaviour.
- The leadership of the headteacher and other staff with management responsibilities has a clear focus on raising standards.
- The broad curriculum is enriched through a wide range of extra-curricular activities, trips and visits.
- The pupils have positive attitudes to their work and behave well in classrooms and around the school.
- The good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress.
- Pupils are treated in a mature way which coupled with the very good provision for the pupils' personal development, successfully encourages their independence.
- Opportunities to develop musical skills are good.
- Parental support and the links with parents have a beneficial effect on the work of the school.

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

- The pupils' attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) could be improved.
- There are some inconsistencies in teaching between classes in the same year group, in particular in the way in which some of the more able pupils are stretched.

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

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

The school has made good progress in raising standards and dealing with the key issues from the last inspection in 1996. Results in National Curriculum tests have risen considerably in all three core subjects. The quality of teaching is much better, with none that is unsatisfactory and a much greater proportion that is very good. The range of work and standards in design and technology have improved. Marking now gives valuable feedback that helps the pupils to identify how they can improve their work. Annual reports now indicate strengths as well as what each pupil needs to do to improve. A programme for the review of policies has been established, linked to the area becoming a priority for development. The school has adopted the national strategies for literacy and numeracy to support teachers' planning. The number of computers was increased after the last inspection; however, the provision has subsequently fallen well below the national average and much of the equipment is now out of date. A new ICT suite is about to be brought on line.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	A	B	C
mathematics	B	A	A	B
science	B	A	C	D

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

Overall results of Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 (the last year for which comparative data is available) were above the national average and close to results in similar schools. The school has been very successful at enabling almost all of its pupils to achieve Level 4 (the standard expected of 11-year-olds), with many achieving the higher Level 5 in all three core subjects. The rising trend in the school's results is close to increases seen nationally, and standards are considerably higher than at the time of the last inspection. There were some differences in results between the three subjects in 1999, with those in mathematics being the best. Mathematics results have improved rapidly over the last four years and were well above the national average in 1999 and above average when compared with similar schools. The recent improvement in science results has been slower than that in mathematics, while over the same period the change in the national results has been erratic. Science results were close to the national average in 1999, but below results in similar schools. Results in English have fluctuated slightly over the same period and were above average in 1999 but close to results in similar schools. There were further improvements in mathematics and science results in 2000, but a slight decline in English. The school's targets have been met in each of the core subjects and were exceeded in mathematics and science in 2000.

The standard of work seen during the inspection largely reflects these SAT results; however, standards in the present Year 3 are lower than elsewhere, reflecting a change in the intake to the school. Pupils achieve well in all subjects, although in some classes the more able make slower progress than they should do. Pupils read well and their writing is improving. Standards of numeracy are very good and improvements are taking place in the pupils' data handling skills. Standards in ICT are below expectations largely because the limited equipment restricts access to computers and results in unsatisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils look forward to coming to school. They co-operate well in groups and pairs, listen well and show respect for each other and the staff.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The pupils are keen and willing learners who behave well both in lessons and around the school. They are polite to visitors and keen to talk.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good and pupils have a sense of pride in belonging to the school.
Attendance	Attendance and punctuality are very good.

The high expectations of good behaviour and attendance through effective and consistently applied policies are producing good results.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged 7-11 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Very good

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

Teaching is very good overall. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and 23% that is very good or excellent. The teaching of literacy is very good. The features of the literacy hour have been successfully introduced in each class and further opportunities are provided to extend writing in other subjects. The teaching of numeracy is very good. The daily mathematics lesson has been successfully introduced and good opportunities to develop number skills are provided in many lessons. The support and teaching for pupils with special educational needs are good, both in classrooms and in withdrawal sessions. Lesson planning is very good, with teachers having a clear picture of what they intend the pupils to learn. Reference is usually made to work undertaken in previous lessons, which helps to focus the pupils' minds on what they are to learn. Bright, lively and enthusiastic teaching, supported by the very effective use of questioning to challenge the pupils and to retain their interest, results in a rapid pace to learning in most classes. This approach also helps the pupils to concentrate on their work and to try their utmost to be successful. The teachers develop new ideas systematically, building carefully on what the pupils already know. The expertise of teachers is deployed well, particularly in the teaching of French and music. In spite of joint planning, there are some inconsistencies between classes in the same year group, which can result in a lack of challenge at times for the more able, or unsuitable tasks for lower-attaining pupils.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and extended through the provision of French in Years 5 and 6. Extra-curricular activities and the opportunities for instrumental tuition are particular strengths.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs receive good support both in lessons and in small withdrawal groups for more intensive work.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The very good provision for the pupils' personal development is successfully encouraging independence and initiative as well as respect for and tolerance of others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	An ethos of care and commitment is generated from the headteacher and by all staff. Teachers and staff know the pupils well and are highly committed to their welfare.

The provision for ICT is insufficient to enable the pupils to make satisfactory progress. Statutory requirements are met. The school has developed strong links with parents. Many are involved in the school and this brings many benefits. Child protection and health and safety matters are taken very seriously by the school and the Governing Body.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides the school with strong and effective leadership. He is ably supported in this by a very effective management team and enthusiastic subject managers.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The recently reconstituted Governing Body is fulfilling its responsibilities well, although it needs to be more involved in developing the long-term strategic plan for the school's improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The analysis of assessment data and the systematic monitoring of the work of teaching staff have been instrumental in the improvements seen in the school.
The strategic use of resources	The very tight budget and all other resources available to the school are used well to bring about sustained improvements.

There is a very strong sense of teamwork in the school, with all sharing a commitment to its future. The range of experience and expertise among the staff is good. Resources are at least adequate and appropriate in all subjects except ICT. The school has done well to maintain this level of resources despite the tight budget. Accommodation is good, with specialist areas for design and technology and music and a covered swimming pool. Facilities will improve further when the new ICT suite is completed this year. Although not formally adopted, the principles of best value are understood and used by the school when purchasing goods and services.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children are expected to work hard and as a result make good progress.</li> <li>• Their children like coming to school.</li> <li>• The school treats their children in a mature way, which helps them to become more responsible.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable about approaching the school with any problems concerning their children's education.</li> <li>• They feel that there is a genuine partnership between home and the school, which works for the benefit of their children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20% of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire are not happy with the amount of homework set.</li> </ul>

Parents value all that the school does and are very supportive of the care and attention that their children receive. The inspection team supports the positive views expressed by parents. As far as homework is concerned, the evidence from the inspection is that the amount and variety set is appropriate and has a beneficial effect on the standards that the pupils achieve.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The school is particularly successful in enabling high standards to be achieved by the pupils in National Curriculum tests. Almost all its pupils achieve Level 4 (the standard expected of 11-year-olds) in all three core subjects, with many achieving the higher Level 5. Overall results are considerably higher than those reported at the last inspection, and the rising trend in the school's results has been in line with improvements nationally. The overall results in the Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 2 were above the national average and close to results in similar schools.
2. There have been some variations in SAT results since 1996 and there were some differences in results between the core subjects in 1999, with those in mathematics being the best. Mathematics results have improved rapidly over the last four years and were well above the national average in 1999 and above average when compared with similar schools. Recent improvements in science results have been slower than in mathematics (while the national results in science over the same period were erratic) and were close to the national average in 1999 but below results in similar schools. Results in English have fluctuated slightly over the same period and were above average in 1999 but close to results in similar schools. The main difference between the core subjects was that more pupils achieved Level 5 in mathematics than in the other two subjects. The progress made overall by the pupils who took the SATs in 1999 from their Key Stage 1 results was above the national average. Particularly good progress was made in mathematics.
3. There have been some variations by gender over this period in English and mathematics. Boys have done worse than girls in English, and apart from in 1998 the difference was greater than nationally. On the other hand boys have done better than girls since 1997 in mathematics, the difference also being greater than nationally.
4. Improvements took place in 2000, particularly in mathematics and science. The school's targets were achieved in English and science and exceeded in mathematics. Although there was a very marginal decline in English, the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 was over 80% with over a quarter of pupils achieving Level 5. Mathematics results improved, with more pupils achieving both Level 4 and Level 5. Results in science in 2000 increased significantly, with 96% of pupils achieving Level 4, and over 40% achieving the higher Level 5. This was a considerable increase in what had been the slower trend in science results since 1996 and can be put down in part to the better preparation of the pupils for the SAT papers.
5. Standards seen during the inspection in English reflect the most recent SAT results. Attainment is lower, however, in the current Year 3, with pupils entering the school with lower Key Stage 1 SAT results than previously. Good progress is made in English lessons, and the development of language skills is also supported effectively in other subjects. Speaking and listening skills are very good. The pupils listen attentively, answer questions at length and use an extensive vocabulary. Many teachers are skilled at providing opportunities for speaking and listening to be developed, such as in French lessons. Most pupils read fluently and accurately with enthusiasm and interest. Parental support, especially in hearing pupils read at home, plays a particularly important part in the progress that the pupils make. Although some pupils confidently search for information, some pupils are less secure in this aspect. Very good standards are being achieved in writing. Most pupils produce a range of writing including, infrequently, imaginative pieces. The school has identified this as an area for development. Grammar and spelling are taught consistently, and by Year 6 most pupils can write at length in grammatically correct sentences. The standard of presentation is high. Most pupils use a cursive style of handwriting and take great care over and pride in the presentation of their work.
6. The standards being achieved in mathematics also reflect the most recent SAT results, with

similarly lower standards in Year 3. Number skills are reinforced very well in many areas of the curriculum. All staff are very skilled at making fruitful links between subjects. Pupils demonstrate that they can readily apply their numeracy skills in new contexts. For example, Year 4 pupils are able to read scales of varying complexity in a range of practical contexts, such as reading temperature scales with negative numbers in science and measuring length to make plans in geography and design and technology. They can read time given a timed task in music and the higher-attaining pupils can read both digital and analogue clocks. They learn to deal with large numbers when constructing time-lines in history. Pupils in most years apply their ability to count accurately and to work out an appropriate scale on a graph when collecting and representing data gathered in geography and science investigations. As they progress through the school they are able to use the graphs to answer more complex questions. For example, in Year 6 science, pupils compare conker data from the last 2 years and calculate the mean mass and circumference. Pupils are required to apply their skills at an appropriate level.

7. The standards in science seen in lessons and in pupils' work also reflect the results of the most recent SATs. Good progress is made in science across the school. The emphasis in lessons is placed on the development of scientific enquiry through practical and investigative work. This ensures that the pupils' enquiry skills develop as rapidly as their knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas. Some good links are made with work undertaken in other subjects such as design and technology.
8. It was a key issue at the last inspection to improve standards in and the provision for information and communication technology (ICT). Budget difficulties have restricted the progress that the school has made in this area, although plans are in place to remedy this weakness. Although teachers do well with the limited resources at their disposal and National Curriculum requirements are being met, standards overall in ICT are below expectations and the pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. Many creative opportunities are being provided for pupils to apply their ICT skills in other subjects, but the time and access they have to computers is too limited for satisfactory progress to be made.
9. The majority of pupils are achieving well and making good progress overall. The standard of work seen in lessons and from an analysis of the pupils' work shows that most pupils are achieving at least the standards expected nationally by the age of 11, with many achieving higher. Standards are well above average in music, with particularly good progress being made in extra-curricular sessions and by the large proportion of the pupils who receive individual instrumental tuition. Pupils are achieving above average standards in history, physical education and art and are achieving average standards in geography and design and technology. Overall, pupils are exceeding the expectations of the local syllabus for religious education. Standards are generally lower in Year 3 in all subjects.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress both in lessons and in the small withdrawal groups where they receive more intensive teaching. Most teachers take the identified needs of these pupils into account when planning activities, although there are times when inconsistencies between classes in the same year group can result in more effective tasks and methods being adopted in a particular class, with greater progress being made. This can also have an effect on the progress made by the more able. The school aims to provide for these pupils through teachers planning activities to challenge and extend; however, this is not always the case and consequently the progress made by these talented pupils can be inconsistent. Good support is provided for pupils with English as an additional language, which enables them to have full access to all aspects of the curriculum provided.

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

11. Pupils look forward to coming to school and are happy, confident and polite hosts. They show pride in belonging to the school community. Parents are particularly pleased with the way in which the school helps their children to take responsibility and feel that this helps them to become more mature.

12. Pupils are enthusiastic learners who behave well in lessons. They listen and respond well and willingly undertake tasks. A good example of this was seen in a swimming lesson where pupils were separated into two groups and responded quickly when their number was called. They listened carefully to instructions and tried very hard to improve their strokes using the guidelines that the teacher gave to them, and watched and learnt from each other. Their attention and compliance with the pool rules meant that every minute of the lesson was productive.
13. Behaviour around the school and at lunchtimes is also good. The pupils are aware of the needs of those around them. They are eager to talk to inspectors and delighted to share their experiences.
14. Pupils relate well to their teachers and to each other. They co-operate well in paired or group work. They take pleasure in helping each other and value others' contributions. They enjoy being given responsibilities and carry these out earnestly. In team games and whole-school events, such as assemblies, they show respect for each other and pride in taking part. A school assembly for National Poetry Day was very successful with each year group contributing its own poem. These poems were warmly received by other pupils and there was a sense of excitement and appreciation throughout.
15. Attendance and punctuality are very good. Figures for attendance are well above the national average. Pupils arrive promptly to school and use the time during registration constructively.

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

16. Teaching is very good overall, and is the major factor in the good progress and high standards that the pupils achieve. All of the teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory or better. Teaching in three-quarters of lessons was good or better and in 23% it was very good or excellent. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection.
17. The teaching of literacy is very good. The literacy hour has been implemented successfully and is supplemented by other activities such as opportunities to extend writing in subjects other than English. Good planning, with clear objectives that build on well from what has gone before, is seen in most literacy lessons. Good links were made to previous work, and the clear lesson objectives were shared with the pupils in a Year 6 literacy lesson to help them to distinguish between biography and autobiography. The lesson challenged all of the pupils and encouraged them to build rapidly on previously acquired skills. In another well-planned Year 6 lesson looking at the work of Dickens, the text and questioning were used skilfully to move learning forward. The teacher generated pace and a sense of purpose, and the work provided for each group offered a challenge to all pupils. The poem chosen by the teacher in a Year 5 lesson stimulated the pupils' interest and consolidated their learning well, while the good working atmosphere in a Year 4 class encouraged the pupils to think of words that would make their text more interesting.
18. Numeracy teaching is also very good overall. The daily mathematics lesson has been introduced effectively, with all of its features operating successfully. Good opportunities are also provided in other subjects such as science and design and technology, to develop the pupils' number skills. Mental arithmetic sessions act as lively and interesting starters to lessons, with a wide range of activities used to develop these skills. Number fans were used to identify numbers associated with measures of time from four clues in a Year 4 class, while a stick was divided to develop an understanding of fractions in a Year 5 lesson. Class teaching of new concepts is systematic, with clear objectives which are shared with the pupils and reviewed at the end of the lesson. Most teachers ensure that the tasks that they provide are pitched at several different levels, such as in a Year 3 lesson on sorting two and three-dimensional shapes. The higher-attaining pupils were expected to record, label and name three-dimensional shapes as well as recording their properties, the average-attaining group worked with support and the least able matched labels to shapes with the help of a worksheet. All pupils made very good progress, extending their understanding, and consolidating their knowledge and vocabulary.

19. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support either directly in the classroom or in small withdrawal groups when they undertake more intensive work. Where teachers plan carefully to ensure that tasks and activities are matched carefully to the needs of these pupils, or where they adapt their teaching approach to help pupils with behavioural needs, good progress is made. The support provided for pupils with English as an additional language ensures their access to all aspects of the curriculum.
20. Many of the teachers have high expectations, which are effectively communicated to their classes. This helps to establish a purposeful atmosphere in classrooms, where lessons are lively and interesting and a sense of enjoyment is developed. The very high expectations and enthusiastic approach of the teacher in a Year 3 science lesson enabled the pupils to make good progress in consolidating the links between temperature and the change of state of materials, such as water into ice. Similarly high expectations of the pupils' performance and behaviour motivated and enthused the pupils in a Year 5 music lesson. The pupils sustained their concentration well, responded to the challenge of the lesson and showed great enjoyment. In another music lesson, this time in Year 6, very good class control coupled with an enthusiasm for the subject and a well-planned sequence to the activities generated a sense of purpose and pace, as the pupils learnt to sing a song in unison and then in two parts. The very good relationships established by the teacher in a Year 3 physical education lesson ensured that all instructions were followed rapidly and with the minimum of fuss.
21. Staff are deployed well to make the maximum use of their particular subject expertise in French and music for example. In a Year 5 French lesson the very energetic teaching balanced the use of the target language and English well. A good variety of written and spoken activities encouraged all pupils to participate as fully as possible. Good subject knowledge, along with high expectations, was used effectively in a Year 5 history lesson on the Tudors. Questioning challenged the pupils and encouraged them to use their investigative skills to form opinions using the evidence available.
22. Questioning is particularly effective and is used to remind pupils of what has previously been learnt. This enables most pupils to build new skills and knowledge systematically and also supports the generally good progress that the pupils make in the long-term. The structured skill development in a Year 3 swimming lesson where the backstroke action was built on systematically with much praise and encouragement, generated confidence in the pupils. In another swimming lesson, this time in Year 4, the clear instructions given by the teacher and good points for the pupils to note so that they could evaluate the quality of their stroke, resulted in visible progress being made. Questions are well targeted to retain the pupils' attention, and this results in most concentrating well, paying attention to their teachers and contributing their ideas and answers thoughtfully. Good questioning and focused interventions by the teacher in a Year 5 art lesson helped the pupils to understand the painting techniques that they were trying to develop. The teacher in a Year 6 geography lesson drew out the pupils' ideas and previous learning during a lively activity on map symbols. Each section of the lesson linked smoothly with the next, with understanding checked through carefully directed questioning. The pupils responded enthusiastically, thinking hard and listening carefully to one another.
23. The only weakness in lessons that were otherwise well taught was that some inconsistencies were observed in the approach and activities used by teachers in classes within the same year group. In spite of joint planning, some activities for higher-attaining pupils do not challenge them sufficiently, and the least able are not always given similar attention in parallel classes. The teacher in one Year 6 class for example, gave a particularly good activity for the weakest group to help them to visualise the relationship between common fractions, decimals and fractions. This activity was not used in a parallel class where the lower-attainers struggled to undertake the work that others were doing, without the background skills to be successful.
24. Teachers give their pupils good feedback on how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work. This is either through careful marking that includes written comments to which the pupils generally respond, or by the dialogue and discussions that they establish with individuals or groups of pupils during lessons. Homework is also used effectively to consolidate and extend learning in most classes.

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

25. A wide range of good quality learning opportunities is provided for pupils. The school has tackled the weaknesses identified in the previous report. All the required elements of a broad and balanced curriculum are included and statutory requirements are met. Natural connections are made between the work in different subjects, such as building electrical circuits in science and designing and making torches in design and technology. The inclusion of French, which provides an enjoyable introduction to the language and culture of another European country, extends the breadth of experience for older pupils. Good use is made of external resources to provide necessary ICT experiences that the school itself cannot provide. The use of blocks of time, such as an afternoon of art for a few weeks and then design and technology for the next few, results in good progress in subjects with a significant practical content.
26. There is a good balance between improving the pupils' knowledge and understanding and developing their skills. Much of their science work, for example, is carried out in a practical and investigative way. Emphasis is placed on using and developing important skills throughout the curriculum. The school's strategies for teaching both literacy and numeracy are good. There are, for example, many opportunities for numerical work in science and geography and language-based work in history and religious education. Access to ICT has been difficult because of a lack of resources, but the school has managed to meet basic needs. The new ICT suite will provide a much needed opportunity to develop the pupils' skills more consistently, and to support learning in other subjects.
27. There is equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They receive effective individual support and guidance from class teachers and additional support staff, both in lessons and in small groups withdrawn for more intensive work. Teachers are generally good at planning to meet the varied needs of pupils in their class, by varying the complexity of the task set or the degree of support and guidance provided. There are occasions, however, when high-attaining pupils should be provided with a greater challenge. Generally the high level of joint planning across year groups and monitoring by subject and senior managers, results in a uniformity of experience for all pupils.
28. There is an extensive range of extra-curricular activities, making a significant contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development. Music and sport are particularly strong, with about a third of pupils receiving instrumental tuition. Trips and visits, including a French residential trip, do much to extend the pupils' experiences. Good use is made of the local environment, including churches and historical buildings. Many visitors are also welcomed into the school, including parents, religious figures, artists and performers. Very good links exist with other local schools and these do much to smooth transitions between them. An excellent working relationship exists with the neighbouring infant school from which almost all pupils transfer.
29. The provision for the pupils' personal development is very good. Sex education and drugs awareness schemes are in place and the school is developing its personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme in line with the new requirements. The very good emphasis on individual development encourages respect and tolerance for other pupils, as well as independence and initiative. Working co-operatively often extends to offering advice and constructive criticism to others about their work. Care with presentation and taking pride in their work is so ingrained that pupils do these things automatically. The pupils are presented with many opportunities to take responsibility, such as acting as monitors in their classrooms. A strong moral ethos is evident throughout the life of the school, with subjects such as history and religious education reinforcing this well. The strong influence of music and personal reflections in art support the pupils' spiritual development. This aspect is also fostered in assemblies, which do much to engender a sense of community both within and beyond the school.

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

30. Telford Junior School provides a happy, secure environment where pupils feel valued as individuals. An ethos of care and consideration is transmitted by the headteacher to all the staff. Teachers and staff know the pupils well and are highly committed to their wellbeing. Parents feel that the school cares and they appreciate the commitment of staff.
31. Effective procedures for looking after pupils who become ill whilst at school are carried out by a trained support assistant and administrative staff, who deal with pupils in a concerned and sensitive way. Child protection procedures follow the local authority guidelines and teachers are instructed on how they should be implemented. Health and safety procedures are secure and risk assessment is carried out regularly. The relevant governors' committee takes its responsibilities very seriously and deals quickly with any matters arising from regular audits of the premises.
32. The high expectations of good behaviour and attendance, through effective and consistently applied policies, produce good results. The emphasis is on self-discipline and consideration for others. House points and merit badges are used to recognise good work, extra effort and good behaviour and are celebrated at Friday assemblies. Absences are rigorously followed up and the headteacher discourages holidays in term time.
33. The procedures for monitoring the pupils' personal development are very good. The pupils' personal profiles include self-evaluation and defined objectives. Teachers are aware of pupils' targets and give encouragement to achieve these.
34. The school has developed a very good framework for monitoring and supporting the pupils' academic progress. The teachers' planning has a very strong emphasis on what the pupils are expected to learn and this enables them to evaluate general progress, as well as individual strengths and weaknesses. This in turn is then well used to plan future learning, for example in developing the school's strategy for numeracy. The procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs and producing individual education plans are good. There is very good involvement of class teachers in this process, particularly concerning pupils with less severe and transient difficulties. The school uses more formal assessments, such as reading age tests and optional tests in English and mathematics produced by QCA to monitor progress. The pupils' responses to SAT papers at the end of the key stage are evaluated to identify strengths and weaknesses. This analysis is then used well to modify and adapt the curriculum and hence raise attainment in the tests for subsequent cohorts.

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

35. Parents responded very favourably to the questionnaire and at the parents' meeting about all aspects of the school. They feel in particular that their children are expected to work hard and as a result make good progress. They value the close way in which the school tries to work with them and feel comfortable about approaching the school if their children have any difficulties. The school enables staff and parents to meet informally as well as on more formal occasions such as parents' evenings and school functions.
36. The considerable strength of this partnership between school and home shows how a close working relationship can significantly benefit pupils. Many parents help in school on a regular basis and activities such as swimming could not take place without this valuable support. They also support teams and accompany visits, including five days to France with Year 6 pupils. The thriving parent teacher association makes significant financial contributions each year. Recently a sizeable sum was raised towards the new ICT suite, which has enabled this to be started much sooner than would have been the case. Parents also make contributions in kind, for instance one parent who works for a publisher donates books to the school library, which helps to increase the range of reading material available for the pupils.
37. Information from the school and liaison with parents are very good. Newsletters and supplementary year group letters giving details of the curriculum to be followed are useful and informative. Some

year group letters, though, are more detailed than others, and more consistency is desirable. In the last inspection it was noted that there were some weaknesses in the annual reports and since then the format has been updated. These now clearly state what pupils can do, the National Curriculum levels achieved and attendance as well as the work covered. Some parents still dislike the computer-generated statement banks, but nearly all appreciate the hand-written comments by the teacher, which are personal to the individual pupil. The home-school agreement indicates the responsibilities of school, parent and pupil. The prospectus is informative and complies with statutory requirements. Attendance at consultations is good. Parents praise the mid-year profiling sessions, which help the pupils to focus on improvement. The home-school diary is an important vehicle for day-to-day communication, and is used well.

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

38. The change of status from middle school to junior school in the last four years has placed a considerable burden on the school budget, and its income has decreased considerably. The budget remains tight, with little excess of income beyond that needed to maintain the current level of provision. Careful financial planning and the support of parents have enabled the funding available to be used to provide satisfactory resources in most areas.
39. Over this period the headteacher has provided the school with the continuity needed to deal with the change, while remaining focused on the task of raising standards. He is demanding of the staff and provides strong and effective leadership. A very effective management team and enthusiastic subject managers support him very well in this. Senior managers have skills and qualities that complement each other, and they work well as a team. There is a shared commitment to raising standards by all associated with the school. Subject managers play an important part in supporting and advising their colleagues and in monitoring standards in their subjects. They have a high level of expertise in their area, but because of budget constraints have not always been able to be released, as the headteacher would wish, to work alongside their colleagues in the classroom.
40. Until the start of the year there was a joint Governing Body with the infant school. Following their reorganisation into separate groups, several governors, particularly those in key positions, have remained and provide expertise, continuity and effective leadership. Some governors are new and have limited experience, and although they are learning quickly, have not had the opportunity to undertake training in the role that they are to fulfil. There are also some vacancies for local education authority representatives. The committee structure operates effectively in spite of these difficulties; however, terms of reference have yet to be completed for the new structures and need to be completed as a matter of urgency. Governors are fulfilling their responsibilities, although the Governing Body needs to be more involved in developing the long-term strategic plan for the school's further improvement.
41. The analysis of assessment data and the systematic monitoring of the work of teaching staff, have been instrumental in the improvements seen in the school. Monitoring procedures are very good. A careful analysis of assessment data is used to set individual pupil targets and to identify areas of strength and those needing development. Planning is monitored by the headteacher and this process is used to improve the quality of the curriculum being offered. There has been some effective monitoring of teaching, so that the management has a clear picture of most strengths and has taken steps to bring about improvements where necessary. The budget has been very tight and this has meant that time is not always available for staff to model lessons for others.
42. The resources available to the school are used well to bring about sustained improvements. The process of creating the school improvement plan has enabled the school to identify clearly the priorities for future development and to provide annual action plans for subject managers. This has been instrumental in managing both school improvements and the difficult financial position. Financial planning is careful and thorough. The school has a clear picture of the long-term implications for its budget of changes in pupil numbers, and has managed the transition from a middle school well in spite of having a deficit budget for a short period. Although not formally adopted, the principles of best value are understood and used by the school when purchasing goods and services.



43. Staffing levels are satisfactory. The range of experience and expertise of the teaching and non-teaching staff is good. The arrangements for the induction of new staff are a strength of the school. Resources are at least adequate and appropriate in all subject areas except ICT, where plans are in place to increase considerably the number of computers in the school. They are good in physical education and music and are used well resulting in good progress being made. The library is also a useful resource and along with selections of books in classrooms is used effectively. The school has done well to maintain this level of resources. Accommodation is good with specialist areas for design and technology and music and a covered swimming pool. Facilities will be even better when the new ICT suite is completed this year.

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

44. To continue the improvements made since the last inspection, the school should:
- raise standards of information and communication technology by: (paragraphs 8, 26, 43 and 84-88)
    - completing the plans for the introduction of the new ICT suite
    - ensuring that all pupils have access to the equipment to develop their ICT skills and to use these skills to support their learning in other subjects
    - providing training for all staff using New Opportunities Fund resources
    - establishing a systematic process of monitoring to ensure that pupils are receiving a coherent and challenging experience in ICT and that standards are as high as in other core subjects
  - seek to achieve greater consistency in teaching between classes in each year group by: (paragraphs 23 and 27)
    - ensuring when joint planning takes place that teachers identify clearly the tasks and activities that are to be used by each group in each class
    - identifying the more able pupils in each class and planning lessons so that they are challenged and extended
    - monitoring planning carefully for consistency between teachers and evaluating the lesson outcomes achieved.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	22	51	24	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	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	359
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	89

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	14

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	50	42	92

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	38	40	42
	Girls	38	35	38
	Total	76	75	80
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	83 (87)	82 (83)	87 (84)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	34	35	36
	Girls	28	25	29
	Total	62	60	65
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	67 (78)	65 (81)	71 (71)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	-
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	
Indian	24
Pakistani	-
Bangladeshi	-
Chinese	2
White	330
Any other minority ethnic group	-

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	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: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.2
Average class size	29.9

#### **Education support staff: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	103

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	555225
Total expenditure	557897
Expenditure per pupil	1594
Balance brought forward from previous year	-24601
Balance carried forward to next year	-27273

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	359
Number of questionnaires returned	249

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	41	6	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	44	48	5	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	55	8	2	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	51	15	5	1
The teaching is good.	36	52	7	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	47	10	2	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	40	5	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	39	3	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	37	48	8	2	5
The school is well led and managed.	41	46	7	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	45	6	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	40	11	2	12

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

### **ENGLISH**

45. The results of National Curriculum Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 were above the national average and in line with those of similar schools. The proportions of pupils achieving at least Level 4, the standard expected for their age and the higher Level 5 were above the national results. English results were above those in science but below those in mathematics. Results in the subject have improved significantly since the last inspection. Results in the subject in 2000, as yet unconfirmed, indicate that there has been a slight decline. Girls have achieved better results than boys in English since 1997.
46. The evidence from this inspection shows that the school has sustained high standards in the subject especially in view of the fact that national standards in the subject have risen considerably over the last three years. By the end of the key stage, the pupils are achieving levels of attainment above national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to the individual targets set for them.
47. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are very good by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils make very good progress in this aspect of English as they move through the school. Pupils listen with attention and take notice of the needs of listeners when speaking in whole-class sessions. Their speaking skills are advanced and mature. They answer questions at length and by the time they reach Years 5 and 6, they answer in great detail using an extensive vocabulary. Throughout the school, pupils participate well in class discussions, listening carefully and expressing their opinions confidently.
48. Good progress is made in the development of reading, and standards are good overall. Most pupils read with fluency and accuracy. In Year 3, pupils use their phonic knowledge to build new words. Pupils read with interest and enthusiasm, and some pupils read with great enthusiasm. Younger pupils can retell their favourite stories and by the time they reach Year 6, they can discuss their favourite books and authors and compare texts. They enjoy reading fiction and non-fiction. The range of literature which pupils read is wide and they are encouraged to read appropriate books of their own choice. Whilst some pupils have developed higher order reading skills and are very confident about how to search for information, some pupils lack confidence in this aspect. Reading has a high priority in the school, and parental support, particularly in hearing pupils read at home, contributes to the progress made.
49. The pupils make good progress in the development of their writing and very good standards are achieved; however, there are occasions when higher-attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged in the use of writing to explore feelings and ideas, focusing on the creative use of language. Pupils throughout the school learn to write for a wide range of purposes. Standards of accuracy are well developed because grammar and spelling are taught consistently. Pupils learn to apply this knowledge by planning, re-drafting and proof-reading their own work. By the time that they reach Year 6, most pupils can write at length using grammatically correct sentences with punctuation. Most pupils produce a range of writing including poems, letters and reports. There are some examples of imaginative writing, but these examples are limited. The school has identified this aspect of writing as one that needs to be developed. There are some very good examples of formal writing in other subjects, for example, sequenced writing in history. Throughout the school, most pupils use cursive handwriting. The standard of presentation in the subject is very high, because most pupils take great pride in the presentation of their written work from a very early stage in the school.
50. Teaching is good overall and in 40% of lessons it is very good. The school has sustained the high standards reported in the last inspection. This proportion of high quality teaching ensures that the pupils make good progress throughout the school. The main features of this good teaching are careful planning that identifies specific targets, instruction that emphasises pupil involvement, and

well-structured activities that guide all pupils in applying and extending their knowledge. The pupils' progress is secured over time because the achievement of each group is closely monitored and lessons to follow are adjusted appropriately to meet their needs. Teachers are confident enough to seize learning opportunities. An example of this was in a Year 5 class when a pupil identified the possessive noun through questioning. The teacher encouraged the pupil to enlarge these ideas and involved the whole class in spontaneous learning. A few occasions were noted when questioning could have been extended to enhance learning.

51. Teaching follows the recommended structure of the literacy hour very closely. As a result, lessons have a good pace and clear sense of purpose. Pupils have been well trained in literacy hour routines so that little time is wasted. Teachers have good subject knowledge. The pupils are told the target for each lesson, and co-operate well because they understand what is expected of them. Levels of co-operation in sessions are high.
52. Activities are well organised and effectively managed. Tasks are well designed to focus the pupils' attention and extend their use of key skills. Standards of behaviour are very good, which enables pupils to concentrate on tasks, and they work very well together in their group activities. Lessons are harmonious and productive, and teacher intervention is effective, resulting in higher levels of attainment. The final whole-class review is used well to reinforce the learning target. The school's policy on marking is consistently applied. The pride that pupils take in their work results in the subject making a very good contribution to their personal development.
53. The commitment to raising standards has been pursued with determination. Careful monitoring of teaching standards and pupils' progress has secured significant improvements. There is a high degree of consistency in teaching the National Literacy Strategy, and the commitment to careful analysis of the school's results, both internal and external, is a very good feature of management. Literacy is developed through the other subjects in the curriculum; however, a dependence on worksheets in some of the foundation subjects, for example religious education, sometimes limits the opportunities for pupils to extend their writing and develop their own thoughts in the subject.

## **MATHEMATICS**

54. SAT results for 11-year-olds in 1999 were well above the national average and above the average for similar schools. These results were better than those in English and science. Results in mathematics have climbed steadily from 1996 to 1999 and at a faster rate than nationally. This trend continued in 2000 with more than 40% of pupils reaching a standard above the level expected for this age group. Boys attain slightly higher results than girls and more so than nationally.
55. The pupils' work broadly reflects these improving standards. Standards in number skills are particularly high. This is in part because of the development of teachers' skills in teaching mental mathematics, and the efforts that they make to ensure that the pupils' misconceptions and difficulties are identified quickly through thorough marking and that time is set aside to discuss them. Standards in using and applying mathematical skills and in handling data are also improving. These were identified as weaker areas through the school's monitoring and review procedures. As a result, teachers are giving pupils more experience of interpreting and solving problems and of using graphs to analyse information. There is limited evidence in books of attainment in the understanding of shape, space and measures, although there are very good examples of the application of these skills in other subject areas. For example, pupils' understanding of metric measures, right angles and parallel lines is demonstrated well by Year 4 pupils in their design and construction of buggies and frames for mosaic pictures.
56. The majority of pupils make good progress throughout the school with some higher-attaining pupils making very rapid progress in Year 6, because of very effective teaching in extra classes provided to prepare pupils for the national tests. This indicates that they have previously made slower progress than they could have done. Lesson observations suggest that this is owing to inconsistencies across classes in the teachers' provision of challenging work for the more able and in how they group children to allow support and extension work to be efficiently distributed. Pupils

with special educational needs make good progress in the majority of lessons, particularly where tasks are designed to match their abilities and support their understanding. For example, in a Year 6 class, the lower-attaining children were given a practical activity to help them to match equivalent fractions, decimals and percentages, whilst others undertook a written activity and further challenge was provided for the higher-attaining pupils.

57. The school has used the National Numeracy Strategy effectively to support progress and to structure planning. The daily mental mathematics sessions are enjoyed by the pupils and have contributed to their good recall of number facts and their ability to use them flexibly in new contexts. They learn to use a range of mental strategies, such as doubling and halving, counting in tens and multiples of tens and to recognise mathematical terms. Pupils in Year 6 are beginning to recognise common fractions and their equivalence in percentages and decimals.
58. The pupils listen and concentrate very well in these sessions and are eager to contribute. The teachers are skilled in involving the majority of the class at an appropriate level. They use whole-class teaching to introduce new skills and concepts and to keep old ones in use, to assess pupils' understanding before progressing to further work and to revise topics covered previously. The sessions are conducted at a brisk pace and keep skills sharp. Pupils are often encouraged to explain their working out and this is particularly effective when methods are compared and recorded on the board to show clearly the mental strategies used in an appropriate horizontal format.
59. The quality of teaching is good overall and a third is very good. The main lesson activity is introduced effectively. Teachers make helpful references to previous work and check recall before introducing new ideas. They make clear to the pupils what they are to learn and usually return to these objectives at the end of the lesson to reinforce learning and assess progress. Staff have worked to develop a thoughtful marking policy which is linked to clear target-setting in each lesson and leads to very constructive feedback. The majority of lessons provide work matched to different levels of ability. Where they do not, the higher ability pupils work on tasks that do not provide sufficient challenge or move them through the curriculum at sufficient pace. New concepts are usually introduced carefully and well illustrated. For example, a Year 3 class was introduced to a range of brightly coloured two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, which they explored together through a series of well-sequenced questions. The pupils were then provided with well-resourced activities at three different levels through which these ideas were reinforced and extended. The lower-attaining pupils were able successfully to match names to shapes, whilst the higher-attaining pupils could name three-dimensional shapes amongst a collection of well-selected everyday packaging and identify and record their properties. In a few lessons, tasks were set which were not sufficiently well modelled by the teacher to enable groups to work independently, or had an over-reliance on undemanding worksheets.
60. In general, the teachers' discipline and classroom relationships are good. They give careful attention to orderly presentation. This leads to the pupils working efficiently and taking a pride in their work. The quality of presentation is uniformly very high. Pupils are sometimes encouraged to work together in pairs to discuss methods and support one another, and this works well.
61. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. Standards have continued to rise. Careful monitoring has identified areas for development, such as providing further challenge for the more able pupils and the continued development of data-handling skills. Improvements could be made with more detailed sharing of lesson planning within the year teams and by sharing the good practice already established in the school. Existing ICT facilities are used well but the teachers' skills will need to develop as the facilities are upgraded. Resources are generally adequate, although there are gaps in the provision of basic classroom resources to support practical work and investigations.

## **SCIENCE**

62. Results in the 1999 Key Stage 2 tests were close to the national average overall, but with a higher proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 than did so nationally. These results were below those in English and well below mathematics. The average level achieved has improved



steadily since 1996, but at a slower rate than nationally. In 1999, performance was below that of similar schools. There has been no significant difference in performance by gender over this period. A careful analysis of the 1999 SAT papers has resulted in a more sharply focused curriculum, with greater emphasis placed on key aspects. The Year 6 pupils were also more fully prepared for sitting the SAT papers in 2000 than previously. Results in 2000 rose significantly, particularly the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5; however, none of this was at the expense of a broad and balanced science curriculum and the emphasis continues to be placed on scientific enquiry through practical and investigative work.

63. In lessons nearly all pupils are working at or above the expected level; however, overall attainment is lower in the present Year 3 than elsewhere in the school, with most pupils working at, rather than above, the expected level. Most Year 6 pupils can explain that the bulb in an electrical circuit will not light if a piece of plastic is also placed in the circuit, and use the terms 'conductor' and 'insulator'. Higher-attaining pupils are quick to detect patterns in their results and offer explanations and generalisations, such as 'this will conduct electricity because it is made of metal'. Attainment is high because the teachers are very clear about what they expect the pupils to learn and the activities used are well designed to achieve this. There is also very good reinforcement of ideas through other subjects, such as Year 3 work on electrical circuits being used to make torches in design and technology. Similarly, good connections were made in Year 4 with the pupils' work on animals in literacy sessions. The emphasis on a practical approach, relating activities to the pupils' own experiences, ensures that they are involved and keen to learn, such as using toast-making in Year 3 to study non-reversible changes. It also means that the pupils' enquiry skills develop at the same rate as their knowledge and understanding, and attainment is comparable across all aspects of science. The pupils consequently make good progress throughout the key stage. There is particularly strong progress before the SATs because of the effective review period, where pupils have been able to revisit the key ideas and consolidate their understanding before the tests.
64. The teachers, as in Year 6 lessons on electricity and a Year 5 lesson on forces, place an emphasis on developing the language of science. There is a careful development of the correct use of words and an understanding of their meaning. This helps the pupils to express their ideas with accuracy both verbally and in writing. There is also a good use of number in many lessons, with science making a contribution to developing the pupils' number skills, often through the collection and analysis of data. A Year 4 lesson on temperature was very effective, for example, in developing the pupils' experience and use of negative numbers through measuring temperatures in cold places such as the school's freezer. There is some use of ICT, but the lack of sufficient resources restricts the use made of these skills in science. In particular more needs to be made of CD-ROMs and the Internet as information and data sources and of sensors to monitor physical data.
65. Teaching is usually good. It is never less than satisfactory and sometimes, as in a Year 4 lesson using thermometers, it is very good. The teachers have very high expectations and manage the pupils well. A variety of approaches, with demonstrations and questions and answer sessions, interests and motivates the pupils. The pupils apply themselves well and work independently, co-operating well in small groups. This means that teachers can spend time with other pupils, answering questions, solving problems and removing weaknesses, thus enabling them to make good progress. Particularly useful activities such as 'brainstorming' are used, which enable the teacher to identify the pupils' ideas quickly; however, sometimes the opportunity to extend higher-attaining pupils is missed. The next, deeper, more challenging question is not asked, or the insistence on a pupil basing a prediction clearly on their scientific knowledge not made. Sometimes the pupils' prior knowledge is identified, but not sufficiently developed.
66. The careful management and monitoring of the subject has enabled standards to rise since the last inspection, and considerably so in 2000. A careful review and analysis of planning and the pupils' work has resulted in a more focused curriculum, whilst retaining a broad approach to teaching.

## ART

67. Standards in art are above average in most strands of the subject; however, there are weaknesses in some areas such as in the use of ICT and in the pupils' evaluation of their own work and the work of others. The teachers and pupils make good use of the current topic theme as a stimulus and resource for collecting and exploring visual information. For example, Year 3 created a lively and sometimes alarming display based on close observations of mini-beasts in their science topic. These were interpreted using a range of materials and techniques and showing a good awareness of texture, colour, pattern and shape. A Year 5 class selected and enlarged patterns from the costumes of Tudor figures and used them as the basis for detailed and vivid paintings, which extended their skills of colour-mixing, composition and use of brush.
68. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school. They develop their skills in using a variety of materials and techniques, sometimes combining more than one technique or medium very effectively to make two and three-dimensional work. They learn to work in a variety of scales, from small line drawings to a huge wall hanging of Queen Elizabeth I, complete with lace cuffs and jewelled fingers. The pupils become familiar with a range of artists, styles and traditions, often linked to the place or period that they are studying in their topic. They are able to apply this knowledge to their own compositions. There are not enough opportunities, however, for pupils to evaluate their work and use this for further development.
69. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is generally good and sometimes very good. Classes are managed well and lessons are prepared and resourced carefully with the result that the pupils are highly focused in art lessons, keen to contribute their ideas, and are thoughtful and careful when working on their own or in groups. The majority of teachers place a strong emphasis on choosing the right tool for the task and on the value of close and careful observation. Most teachers support pupils in developing their art work by providing constructive and informative feedback using the appropriate specialist vocabulary, so that they understand exactly how to improve their technique. The pupils concentrate well and respond to this advice. Photographs are used regularly to collect information in narrative form about, but visits have not been fully explored as a technique for recording observations and images.
70. The school's training days have been effectively used to support the development of teachers' skills. This has led to good progress since the last inspection, with examples of very good practice in some lessons. Further attention needs to be given to sharing good practice to develop all teachers' skills to the same consistently high standard, with a particular emphasis on the use of ICT and the improvement of pupils' evaluation skills.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

71. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection, with most pupils working at the expected level. Pupils in Year 3, for example, are able to use pictures to describe their designs, such as when preparing to make sandwiches. They choose suitable materials from the range available and combine them to make their finished products. By Year 6 the pupils are working with increased accuracy and they pay appropriate attention to the quality of their work, when joining lengths of wood for example. Consequently the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress across the key stage, working with a variety of materials, including wood, food and fabrics. Inadequacies in the curriculum identified in the previous report have very largely been tackled and the pupils' experiences and attainment now cover the expected range of activities. Good use is made of resources outside the school to extend this experience where possible, such as intensive courses for older pupils covering aspects of control technology to supplement the work possible in school.
72. Teaching is good overall and is never less than satisfactory. Teachers place appropriate emphasis on ensuring that the pupils plan and evaluate their work, rather than simply focusing on making and working with materials. There is a logical and progressive development of ideas, so that the pupils can make informed choices and decisions when necessary. Year 4 pupils for example, had experience of different ways to produce movement before starting to design their own moving page.

Reference was made here to 'real' books, so that the pupils could see how these ideas are used in published materials. The introduction of focused practical tasks has helped the pupils to develop a good range of skills, as well as a secure understanding of the principles involved in designing and evaluating their products. The very clear planning to show what the pupils are expected to learn means that lessons are sharply focused. The interesting contexts and activities used ensure that the pupils want to be involved and concentrate well. They work co-operatively, and willingly offer advice and guidance to their peers, encouraged by the teacher to do so. Teachers are then able to spend time with individual pupils, checking their ideas and developing their skills to a good level. The pupils' learning is enhanced by teachers drawing upon and using the pupils' experiences in other areas, such as designing torches in Year 3 after studying electrical circuits in science.

73. Good subject management has resulted in improvements in provision and standards. The curriculum is now more coherent. The clear focus on what the pupils are intended to learn has brought a sharpness to lessons and ensures that the pupils now make satisfactory progress over the key stage.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

74. Standards in geography are in line with national expectations. This is due to the geographical emphasis placed on the topics, which provide a rich source of inspiration and unifying thread through the curriculum. Some of the topics have a geography focus or are history based with geographical skills and knowledge providing strong support. Visits to local sites and a Year 6 residential trip to France substantially enrich the opportunities provided to develop skills and understanding. Work emanating from these visits sometimes exceeds national expectations.
75. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils can locate features on a map using six-figure grid references and use atlases and maps of a variety of scales and perspectives well. Map skills, which were criticised in the last inspection, now develop steadily throughout the school and the subject co-ordinator has ensured that the map resources are of a good quality. This is now an area of strength. The pupils learn to research and record characteristics of contrasting locations, such as how land is used and climatic variations, and communicate information in an interesting variety of ways. They draw on skills and knowledge from other subjects effectively to do this. For example, in Year 6, rainfall and temperature variations in Brittany and Leamington are plotted on graphs. Pupils produce observational drawings and paintings of the environment, construct scale models and investigate the historical development underpinning changes to the locality.
76. The pupils demonstrate a higher level of understanding and reasoning in teacher-led discussions than they do in their written work. They can give a clear written account of their visits and their findings; however, they sometimes do not use the information that they have gained sufficiently to analyse differences and changes in localities and then use this to construct reasoned arguments or to suggest improvements.
77. The quality of teaching is good. The teachers' enthusiasm for the subject is conveyed to the pupils, who are interested and willing to participate. All activities are thoughtfully resourced and lessons well paced and sequenced. Teachers use a range of effective strategies and activities for involving children, and in most lessons provide activities which are well matched to different abilities. For example, in a Year 3 class pupils learned to identify parts of the school from plans of the school building and to follow a route through a plan, whilst a group of pupils with special educational needs followed a route through the building itself, locating various places.
78. The school has responded effectively to the criticisms in the last inspection report, with the result that good progress has been made. Resources have been improved and the school's monitoring procedures have been used effectively to ensure that map skills develop progressively through the school. The new National Curriculum requirements, which involve developing topics in more depth may mean that the number of places currently studied needs to be modified.

## **HISTORY**

79. Standards overall in history are above average with some slightly weaker areas. This is because oral work is often at a higher standard than written work and the use of ICT for recording and analysing information is not fully developed. The areas of strength found in the last inspection have been maintained and the pupils' skills in researching and recording have improved.
80. The pupils have a good understanding of key historical events, such as Henry VIII 's dispute with the Pope, and can present their ideas in various ways. They can apply their knowledge effectively to other subjects. For example, Year 5 pupils were able to relate their knowledge of the Tudors to their making of a Tudor Rose design in fabric in a design and technology lesson, and recall how the Wars of the Roses were brought to an end. They seek information well, using a variety of sources to gather information. For example, pupils studying the Second World War used a questionnaire to gather first-hand information from their relatives and friends.
81. Many topics are linked to a well-planned visit using a site of local historical interest where pupils can develop their fieldwork skills. They develop their ability to make notes and to read and compare maps from different periods. These visits bring their studies to life. This is evident in the work displayed around the school, which draws on a range of subject skills. Pupils make close observational drawings of buildings and artefacts and make scale models of them. They build a vocabulary of words relevant to their period of study and use this to recount what they have found out. They study the art and lifestyles of the period and, in ancient civilisations, investigate the mathematics. Observations and displays show that pupils can compare and contrast evidence from different sources when supported in teacher-led discussions and sometimes suggest the effect of events. There is less evidence of this being taken further, into more extended and independent pieces of writing, in which pupils give reasoned arguments about cause and effect, with the evidence to justify their judgements.
82. Teaching is good overall and enables the pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress. It is generally good with some very good teaching. Lessons are structured well and teachers draw on a lively range of resources and sources to stimulate thinking. They are skilled at eliciting ideas from the pupils and encouraging them to answer questions and use their own knowledge and thinking skills; however, the ideas expressed orally are often not recorded in a systematic way which will provide a structure and support for the pupils' independent writing. More use could be made of literacy strategy frameworks for organising and analysing information and constructing reports and persuasive writing. For example, a Year 3 teacher led a class discussion on what it was like in London during the Blitz. She set the scene very effectively by reading an extract and then, together with the pupils, building a model Anderson Shelter and comparing it with two other types of shelter. Through very good questioning she encouraged the pupils to hypothesise, empathise, predict and explain. Pupils were able to contribute information they had gleaned from the Internet and books and from questioning older relatives about the war. They were able to make sensible predictions about how the shelter might have been used and what provisions might be needed. The level of discussion was high, but ideas were not recorded.
83. Much improvement has been made since the last inspection, although there has been no systematic evaluation of the subject. Research and recording methods are now a strength, except for the use of ICT, which is an area identified in the school development plan. Although lesson time is used very effectively to explore and develop ideas, some teachers find it difficult to cover some of the higher level skills. There are plans to review the scheme of work next year and it will be important to assess how far it meets the new National Curriculum requirements and how manageable it is within the time available.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

84. The school was required to improve both the provision for ICT and the standards that the pupils achieved as a key issue for development from the last inspection. This was tackled rigorously by the school within its budget constraints immediately after the inspection, but developments in the subject nationally have subsequently overtaken it. There remains, however, a strong commitment

from both staff and governors to increase the number of new computers. The computers purchased to support ICT provision have become outdated and are insufficient in number to support fully the greater emphasis that needs to be placed on ICT. This has been recognised by the school, and great efforts have been made to ensure that the full range of National Curriculum requirements are being taught and that the pupils have opportunities to apply their skills to support learning in other subjects. As an example, a local firm has been booked annually to enable pupils in Years 5 and 6 to have access to some of the more sophisticated elements of ICT such as programming the sequencing of traffic lights and the movement of vehicles.

85. At present there is usually one computer in each classroom, which severely limits the opportunities for the pupils to develop their skills in sufficient depth. Consequently, although National Curriculum requirements are being met, standards in most aspects of ICT are below expectations overall and the progress made by all pupils is unsatisfactory. Year 6 pupils were seen learning how to enter formulae into a spreadsheet, having previously interrogated a database. Although some good collaboration took place, some pupils lost concentration as the task was not sufficiently demanding. These pupils had a wide variety of keyboard skills and could use the correct instructions for creating simple formulae. Some opportunities are taken to use other ICT equipment. A useful session introducing typing skills in a Year 3 class took place using laptop wordprocessors. Although the teacher gave some good examples and tried hard to get the pupils to concentrate on good posture, some pupils had difficulty following instructions and made limited progress.
86. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers provide regular sessions where they teach particular ICT skills and then give the pupils access over the next few days to the computer to complete a specific task, which will be associated with work being undertaken in another subject. Demonstrations with pupils sitting around one computer have their limitations, but most teachers are able to use these sessions to give to the pupils some insight into the potential of the software being used. The pupils are keen and enthusiastic, but find these sessions rather frustrating, as they want to have an opportunity to use the machine themselves. In a Year 3 class, the introduction to a simulation program was greeted with interest by the pupils, but their concentration waned after a short period. These pupils, new to the school, had weak keyboard skills and were unsure how to load or close the programme.
87. Because of the limited hardware several activities have to be of a pencil and paper variety, with pupils planning what they intend to do in the limited time that they have available rather than creating their solutions on the screen. Pupils in a Year 5 class were observed trying to develop repeated patterns with symmetrical effects. Those who had the opportunity to use the computer had a reasonable understanding of the potential of the software, but were unsure of some of the basic skills such as saving their work. Some staff use early morning sessions to provide pupils with access to computers. Two pupils in Year 5 were observed investigating a CD-ROM while two more designed and printed labels. The pupils were familiar with most aspects of the computer and the software and were competent in their use of the mouse and the various menus, but the task was fairly limited and did not move their skills forward at any great pace.
88. The refurbishment of a room to be the new computer suite has just been completed, and when other building work is finished new computers will be installed. Internet access will be provided and staff will receive up-to-date training to enable them to teach in greater depth the full range of ICT skills and to provide further opportunities for the pupils to apply their skills in other subjects. The school should then have a very useful resource for teaching ICT skills and to support their use across the curriculum. The ICT subject manager is supported by other subject managers, to monitor the impact of ICT in their area through teachers' planning. In an effort to raise the standards achieved and to put the school into a stronger position when the new facilities become available, recent appointments to the school have been based upon their level of ICT expertise. Once the computer room is completed, a systematic programme of monitoring will need to be introduced to ensure that the school is getting the maximum value from this expensive resource.

## **MUSIC**

89. Standards in music are well above average. The pupils enjoy their music and make very good progress. Younger pupils learn about pulse and pattern, how to sing in parts and to appreciate music by famous composers, such as Saint-Saens. Older pupils can listen, appraise, perform and compose their own music. By the time that they reach Year 6, they are performing with confidence. They can identify the number of beats in a bar quickly, explain musical terms and identify differing kinds of music, such as syncopated rhythm. They confidently sing songs in unison and in parts. Instrumentalists accompany their classes whilst they sing and others use percussion instruments sensibly and thoughtfully. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The high standards noted in the last inspection have been sustained.
90. The quality of teaching is very good overall. It is at least good and often, very good. Teachers have good class management skills. Teachers who are less secure in the subject are well supported by taped lessons, which they use very well, pausing to reinforce teaching points and replaying where they feel pupils need more time to understand. Throughout the school, teachers are careful to introduce and use appropriate vocabulary. Music is introduced into other subjects, for example numeracy lessons.
91. There is a very high commitment to music in the school. More than a hundred pupils receive music instruction in brass, woodwind and strings. Many more are on the waiting list. There is a large school orchestra, which also includes percussion and drums. Each year, a Year 6 band is formed involving all of the children, with non-musicians being included in the percussion section. Pupils take part in the annual county music festival, and every spring they perform in a school concert. Links are being formed with a local secondary school in order to use the facilities there for access to music through ICT. Parents are very supportive of the school's musical emphasis. They have purchased a large set of drums for the school and are currently raising money for an electric piano.
92. The school has very good resources for the subject including a room where music is taught. The strong links with the peripatetic team and the opportunities offered to pupils to participate with other schools and to perform regularly to audiences greatly enhance their musical experiences. Music is used as pupils enter and leave assemblies and they sing in assembly with enthusiasm. The subject makes a considerable contribution to the pupils' personal development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

93. Standards in physical education are good, although dance is under-represented in the aspects covered. The school is committed to retaining a broad physical education curriculum. Teachers plan lessons that are challenging, to which the pupils respond by working hard and with interest. The provision during the school day is extended by a good range of extra-curricular sporting activities, which also provide opportunities for the pupils to participate in competitive team games. A professional football club provides weekly coaching sessions, which are open to any pupil.
94. A particular emphasis is placed on swimming. The school's indoor learner pool is used throughout the year to teach swimming to the younger pupils. This enables them to gain confidence in a secure environment and to learn the basic swimming strokes. The school receives invaluable support from parents, who help with the supervision of the pupils during these sessions. The teaching by the class teachers during these sessions is good and made more effective by the small groups of similar standard swimmers that they take in each session. Most of the lower-attaining group from a Year 4 class were able to swim a width on their back with a float behind their head at the beginning of a session to develop the backstroke. By the end of the lesson four of the more able could swim one width with a well co-ordinated backstroke, heeding the points made by the teacher about body position. By the time that they go to swimming lessons in the larger local pool in Year 5, the majority can swim using at least a very basic stroke while others are competent with the front crawl, breaststroke and backstroke. Regular lessons for the older pupils enable most to reach, and some to exceed, the requirements of the National Curriculum by the age of eleven.
95. Weekly games lessons are a particular feature of the pupils' physical education experience. This

enables them to develop a good range of ball and athletic skills, which they learn to apply in competitive situations. Teaching ensures that these skills are developed systematically and at a good pace. Good progress was made in a Year 3 lesson on football skills, where the important technical points of how to dribble the ball were emphasised by the teacher. Most pupils tried hard to improve, with some showing particularly good control. The lesson developed to include passing and then moved into a small game in which the level of challenge increased. The element of challenge was also built up in a Year 4 lesson to develop attacking and defending skills in netball. This enabled many to begin to understand the need to find space, while helping to improve their throwing and catching. Several pupils in another Year 4 group showed some skill when trying to dribble the hockey ball past an opponent. Good activities were also set up in a Year 6 rugby lesson, where the pupils were learning how to pass the ball. The pupils were keen and interested, working hard to improve, and showing an understanding that the ball has to be passed backwards.

96. Teaching is very good overall. Most teachers have a good level of subject knowledge and technical skills, which they use well in planning activities that are effective in developing skills, and when giving demonstrations and coaching advice that help the pupils to improve their own technique and performance. In a Year 3 gymnastics lesson for example, the teacher encouraged the pupils to make all movements interesting as they linked jumps and stretches across low apparatus. Praise was used well, which helped to retain the pupils' attention, ensuring that they worked safely. The variety and quality of the movements improved considerably with the emergence of good sequences from some pupils. The development of balance work in Year 6 benefited from the co-operation shown by the pupils and their enjoyment of the challenge provided by the teacher. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall.
97. The good standards in physical education reported at the last inspection have been maintained. Physical education is to be a focus for monitoring and development during the next term, when the policy is to be reviewed and the impact of the new National Curriculum evaluated.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

98. Attainment in religious education is at least in line with the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Key Stage 2, and is often better. Evidence from this inspection confirms that the good standards reported by the last inspection have been maintained, and that the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
99. Pupils in Year 3 understand that the Bible is the holy book of the Christian religion; they also know that it is divided into two parts, an Old and a New Testament. In Year 5, a Muslim parent came in to talk to the children about aspects of her faith and talked about the Qur'an. Pupils showed their understanding of the importance of the book to Muslims. They showed respect for the differences between the religions and could identify similarities. In the introductory part of the lesson they showed that they had retained a great deal of information about Muslim religious practices from the parent's previous visit, such as praying five times a day. Pupils in Year 6 showed interest in the book of Proverbs and gave some very perceptive answers to questions posed by the teacher. By the time that they reach Year 6, pupils have a secure knowledge of Christianity and a growing awareness of other religions.
100. Teaching is good. Planning of lessons is thorough and teachers ask relevant questions to ensure that the pupils build on their previous knowledge and understanding. In the Year 6 lesson observed, the teacher had prepared an activity that stimulated pupil interest and provoked thought. Teachers have a secure command of the subject. Pupils have a very positive attitude and show respect for the beliefs of other peoples. There are occasions when the pupils' written work is limited by the worksheet used to support the subject.
101. Religious education makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development. Subject management has ensured that the policy is reviewed regularly and the locally agreed syllabus is used effectively to support progress throughout the school. The subject is well resourced. Assemblies also support the provision for the subject, and the pupils' development throughout the

school.