

INSPECTION REPORT

**BLANFORD MERE COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Kingswinford, Dudley

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103792

Headteacher: Mrs. N. Miller

Reporting inspector: Mr. G. J. Martin
21563

Dates of inspection: 6th – 10th November 2000

Inspection number: 224246

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Mimosa Walk
Kingswinford
West Midlands

Postcode: DY6 7EA

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. A. Weaver

Date of previous inspection: November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr. G. J. Martin 21563	Registered inspector	Mathematics Religious Education Geography	Characteristics and effectiveness of the school. The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management Key issues for action
Mr. D. Russell 13746	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils Partnership with parents and carers
Mr. A. Hardwicke 14991	Team inspector	History Music Art Physical Education Design and Technology	The quality and range of learning opportunities
Miss. T. Kenna 30205	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Education in the Foundation Stage	
Mrs. P. Weston 7994	Team inspector	English Special Educational Needs Equality of opportunity	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Blanford Mere Primary School is a larger than average community primary school of 280 pupils, plus 15 part-time children who attend the 'Squirrels' unit of the reception class each afternoon. The school is situated in Kingswinford between a housing estate of mainly privately owned dwellings and an industrial estate. Of the full time pupils there are 143 boys and 137 girls in classes from reception to Year 6. The pupils are predominantly from English speaking backgrounds and only one does not speak English as a first language. Seven and a half percent of the pupils on roll are from Traveller families and, as a result, pupil mobility is higher than that found in other schools in similar areas. The number of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is 20% which is similar to the national average. Three of the pupils have full statements of special educational need. When they join the reception class most of the children under five have sound language, mathematical and social skills and, overall, attainment on entry to the school is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Blanford Mere Primary School is a good school with many very good features. By the age of 11, the pupils reach satisfactory standards in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science and in information and communication technology and religious education they reach good standards. Standards are also good in art, geography, design and technology and physical education and very good in music. The teaching in the school is very good overall and sometimes excellent. The headteacher and governors provide very good leadership to the school. In partnership with the hardworking staff team, with the pupils and with parents, they manage the school very well, providing a caring and welcoming school where pupils can achieve the standards they are capable of. Although the school has a slightly above average income per pupil it nevertheless provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The very good leadership and management of the headteacher and governors, and the excellent shared commitment to succeed, gives a clear direction for the school to continue to improve and to raise standards.
- Very good teaching in all subjects, and especially in literacy and numeracy, has a positive impact on the attainment of all pupils
- The excellent range and quality of extra-curricular activities enhances the very good breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- There is very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The partnership established with parents is very good and impacts positively on the welfare and attainment of the pupils.

What could be improved

- The children in the Foundation Stage need better access to large play equipment and a discrete outside play area to improve opportunities for their physical development.

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 continued to improve well since it was last inspected in November 1996. The National Curriculum results of the last two years show a slight dip in the percentage of children achieving level 4 or above by the end of their time in the school. However, following a careful analysis of the data, such as late transfers in and the below average attainment of a proportion of the children from Traveller families, the inspection team is satisfied that these factors account for the dips in attainment in 1998 and 1999. The results for the end of Key Stage 2 tests in 2000 are encouragingly higher in English, mathematics and science, exceeding the schools own agreed targets and the national averages. The school has made good progress in its work to address the key issues from the previous report. There has been good improvement in the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in the English, mathematics and science, and in how the information gained informs planning and teaching. This good practice could now be extended into the non-core subjects. The governing body, working in close partnership with the headteacher and senior management team, is now fully involved in monitoring the impact of their decisions on the school. In this way, the governors make a very positive contribution to school improvement. Provision for the spiritual development of

pupils is now very good and shows a marked improvement since the last inspection. In assemblies, and in many lessons, teachers make very good use of opportunities for pupils to reflect on the mysteries and wonders of the world. Investigations into religion, the miracle of creation and the place of humankind in the natural order of life help the pupils to ask fundamental questions about their place in the world. From this experience, pupils gain a great deal of understanding about how precious is human life.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	B	C	E
Mathematics	A*	A	D	E
Science	A*	B	C	D

Key	
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

The national test results at Key Stage 1 in 1999 show that standards were high in English and mathematics and satisfactory in science when compared with all schools nationally. Standards are satisfactory when compared with similar schools, except in reading which was below the average for similar schools. At Key Stage 2 the corresponding results for English and science were satisfactory in comparison with the national average for all schools but below the national average in Mathematics. The national test results for the Year 6 pupils in 1999 were low in comparison with schools in similar contexts to Blanford Mere. However, the inspection team agreed that, when factors such as pupil mobility and the number of families who fail to register their eligibility for free school meals are taken into account, the school performed as well as could be expected in comparison with similar schools.

Results in English and science at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 showed attainment broadly in line with the national average but below the average in mathematics. The upward trend in attainment taken over the four years 1997 to 1999 is above the national average. Provisional analysis of the results of the Year 6 tests in 2000 show a marked increase to well above the national average in the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 or above in English and science and a small increase in the percentage of pupils attaining this level in mathematics. They also show a significant increase in the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in all three subjects tested.

Evidence from lessons and pupils' work seen during the inspection confirms that standards in English, mathematics and science are satisfactory overall. The school has markedly exceeded its own agreed targets for attainment in English, mathematics and science in the 2000 tests, following the steady upward trend of the previous four years. Standards are very good in music and good in information and communication technology, geography, religious education, physical education, art and design and technology. In history, standards are satisfactory. The children under five learn well and they make good progress towards the early learning goals for their areas of learning by the end of the foundation stage, particularly in the key areas of language, literacy and mathematics.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes are very good. The pupils are keen to learn and have very positive attitudes to everything they do in school
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The standard of behaviour throughout the school is very good. Pupils are courteous and considerate. They co-operate thoughtfully with others and play sensibly together in the playground.
Personal development and	The pupils relate well to one another and with the adults who help them in

relationships	school. Older pupils regularly help those younger than themselves. All pupils show consideration for the views and needs of others.
Attendance	The rate of attendance is satisfactory and close to the national average. Unauthorised absence is similar to that found nationally. There have been no exclusions.

The very good attitudes to learning and the positive values held by the pupils make a very strong contribution to their learning. Consequently, they benefit well from the high standards of teaching they are fortunate to receive. The school's positive approach to encouraging good attitudes and behaviour has a significant impact on the ethos of the school. Within this context, relationships are very good and the pupils respond well to the very good ethos for learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	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 predominantly very good and never less than satisfactory. Very good or excellent teaching accounts for just over half of all lessons. Six per cent of lessons are excellent, 47 per cent very good, a little over 45 per cent good and just over one per cent are satisfactory. The overwhelming number of lessons in English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, is good, often very good and occasionally excellent. The skills of literacy and numeracy are, therefore, taught well. Teachers plan and organise lessons effectively. They set targets for their pupils which indicate high expectations and they make good use of available resources. Teachers keep good order in the lessons, which enables pupils to concentrate well on their work. There is good assessment to guide planning and teaching, and assessment is used particularly well in English and mathematics. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach and of the needs of their pupils. Pupils learn well, therefore, from the interesting and stimulating lessons provided.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, well balanced and enhanced by a very good range of extra curricular activities, all of which are excellent in quality.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The overall provision is very good. Planning and teaching for special needs pupils is very good, as is the support given from non-teaching support staff.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The very small minority of pupils whose first language is other than English, receive appropriate provision.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The overall provision is very good. There are very clear, effective and well understood systems for successfully promoting all aspects of the pupils' personal development. These make a strong contribution to the quality of relationships in the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school shows very good care for its pupils. There is a strong ethos of mutual respect and there are clearly defined systems for promoting good behaviour and eliminating unacceptable behaviour. There are very good systems for monitoring pupils' learning and assessing their attainment.

The school's partnership with parents is very good. They are provided with very helpful and regular information about their child's learning. The quality of reports sent to them about their children is good. Parents appreciate the opportunities that the school provides for their child to be involved in

review meetings at parents' evening. Homework diaries and reading records are used effectively as a means of communication between home and school. The school makes very good use of an adviser from the Local Education Authority's Traveller Education Service to support the school's work with families from the Travelling community. Parents are actively encouraged to help in the school and many give good and helpful support. There is also effective support for the school through the Home and School Association, which raises substantial funds to benefit all pupils. Parents are justifiably proud of the way in which the school's very good extra curricular activities enhance the National Curriculum. This is a school which cares very well for all pupils and values their potential highly.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher and senior management team is very good. Positive role models are set for the professional development of all staff. Roles are clearly defined and set in a very strong shared commitment to whole school improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well informed and it provides good leadership and support. It meets its statutory obligations and makes an effective contribution to the overall management of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is very effective in its self evaluation. There is regular analysis of pupil performance and there are clearly structured processes for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are well deployed and effectively used. Financial resources are efficiently managed and used appropriately to meet the priorities of the school. There are insufficient resources for the children in the foundation stage to use for outdoor play activities.

There is very good leadership in the school and the whole-staff commitment to school improvement is outstanding. The good management of the school enables all staff to contribute effectively to school improvement. The accommodation is satisfactory and well maintained, although, to minimise any disturbance to lessons, the school has to give careful thought to the timetables of Key Stage 1 classes working in the open plan area. Resources are generally good and there is a well organised library which is made good use of. The children in the Foundation Stage would benefit from having some large play equipment to use in an enclosed play area, thus contributing to their physical development. The governing body gives careful thought to any spending commitments and is making good progress in applying the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The standards achieved by the pupils The level of care shown to the pupils and how they are encouraged to achieve their potential as individuals. The musical achievements of the school The quality of communication between school and home The way in which the school complements the attitudes and values of parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A few parents would like to see pupils in Years 5 and 6 given more homework, in preparation for secondary education. Some parents would like to see further improvement in the level and quality of lunchtime supervision, with provision of more activities to keep the children occupied. A few parents feel that there is a need for better communication with families who may have a child with special educational needs.

The inspection findings agree with what pleases the parents most. The homework provided to children in Years 5 and 6 at least meets the minimum recommended for children of their age. The homework tasks set are of good quality and link closely to the work being done in class. The school has recently increased its number of lunchtime supervisors by one, the limit which can be afforded at

the present time. Supervision on the playgrounds at lunchtime was seen to be satisfactory. The pupils are clear about which activities can be played where so that conflicts of interest are avoided. Lunchtime supervisors have received training recently and some were seen to be encouraging the children to play group games sociably. The co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) has appropriate procedures in place to keep parents informed of their child's progress through the stages of the special educational needs code of practice.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Standards in English, mathematics and science are similar to those seen at the time of the last inspection. Standards in information and communications technology, art, geography music and religious education have improved since the last inspection, especially music, which now has excellent standards. In all other subjects, standards are similar to those seen when the school was last inspected.
2. In the 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds, standards were close to the national average in English and in science. In mathematics, standards were a little below the national average. At the higher Level 5, performance was close to the national average in English and mathematics and above the national average in science. One pupil attained the higher Level 6 in the English and mathematics tests, a rare occurrence nationally and therefore a credit to the pupil concerned and to the school.
3. When compared with schools said to be similar, that is having less than eight per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals, performance at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 was well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. At the higher Level 5, performance was close to the average for similar schools in science but well below the average for these schools in English and Mathematics. The inspection team agreed, however, that it would be appropriate to take into account data provided by the school which shows that a significant number of pupils, including those from Traveller families, do not claim their entitlement to free school meals. If claimed for, this would put the school into the next benchmarking group and improve the school's overall performance in comparison with other schools when using average National Curriculum points score data.
4. The performance of seven-year-olds in the 1999 national assessment tests and tasks shows performance well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of seven-year-olds attaining the higher Level 3 was below the national average in the reading and writing tasks but close to the national average in mathematics. In comparison with schools said to be similar, performance in writing and mathematics is close to the average for these schools and below the average in reading. The teachers' own assessments of the pupils at seven years old show attainment which is well above the national average in reading and writing, above the national average in mathematics and close to the national average in science.
5. Provisional analysis of the 2000 national test results shows that standards at Key Stage 1 are similar to the national average in mathematics and writing and below the average in reading. At Key Stage 2, results show performance well above the national average in English and science and a little above the national average in mathematics, with a statistically significant number of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in all three subjects. Against similar schools, analysis of provisional results shows some improvement in mathematics and science and significant improvement in English, more so if the results are analysed against the benchmarking group for schools with eight per cent or more free school meals. The inspection team agreed this to be a more realistic comparison for this school's results.
6. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are satisfactory in English, mathematics and science at both key stages, and that pupils are appropriately challenged to achieve their academic potential. The school is meeting its suitably challenging targets and, indeed, exceeded them in the end of Key Stage 2 tests for 2000. Although the school faces fluctuations in the performance of its pupils in national tests, the underlying trend is one of improvement through both key stages. Overall, achievement is improving, aided by the pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and the significant proportion of

good and very good teaching in lessons. Progress through the school is satisfactory overall and pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their individual learning targets.

7. Over the years 1996 to 1999 a comparison of the attainment of boys and girls at Key Stage 1 shows very little variation, except in mathematics, where boys have outperformed girls by a small margin. At Key Stage 2, performance margins between girls and boys are also very small over the four years, although in the 1999 tests girls achieved higher standards than boys, particularly in writing. The attainment of both girls and boys has exceeded the national average in English, mathematics and science over the years 1996 to 1999, and this trend has continued in 2000.
8. There is a wide range of attainment when children enter the school. Most have had some nursery education and start school with language, mathematical and social skills which, on average, are of a level normally expected for children of their age. The children achieve well in the part-time 'Squirrels' group and the full-time reception class. They make good progress in their personal, social, emotional and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In language and literacy, mathematics and numeracy and in their physical development, the children make sound progress.
9. Learning is sound in the Foundation Stage and by the end of their Reception Year, most children speak well, listen attentively and have very good attitudes to learning. Many can write their own names and form their letters well when attempting to write words and simple sentences. When asked the first letter of a word they are trying to write, most can name the sound of the letter they need to write. They can count sequentially to ten and beyond and some can count in reverse order, taking one off each time.
10. Learning is sound in English at Key Stage 1 and the pupils make satisfactory progress in this subject. Their speech is clear and they use articulate sentences to convey their ideas. They develop a good knowledge of phonics and most use a full range of sound clues to help them with their reading. By the end of the key stage, most pupils produce extended stories using imaginative ideas, they write accurate reports of their experiences and make good attempts at imaginative poetry. The standard and quality of the pupils' written work is sound and compares favourably with that found in similar schools. Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading and there is a strong ethos for encouraging the pupils' interest in fiction and non-fiction books. Handwriting skills are developed well, influenced positively by the very good role model set by all teachers. Attainment is influenced well by the positive impact of the good use of the literacy hour and the very good teaching that results.
11. Progress is also satisfactory through Key Stage 2 where the quality of learning is sound in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Pupils use extended and imaginative vocabulary when speaking and they hold thoughtful and intelligent conversations. They express their ideas, feelings and opinions well and show confidence when speaking to an audience, such as when giving an illustrated presentation about the Victorians. In discussion, pupils show a genuine interest in the views of others and listen carefully before taking their turn to respond to someone else's point of view. This contributes well to their social development.
12. The majority of pupils read well and they show a clear interest in a wide range of authors, stories, poetry and non-fiction. The pupils have a sound knowledge of the structure of English, such as how to describe a setting in a play script, and of grammatical terms, such as idioms and other figures of speech. Written work is well presented, both in books and on wall displays, with accurate spelling and appropriate use of punctuation. Some good story writing is developed over a period of time, with pupils learning well how they can review and evaluate their own work, refining it systematically to improve its quality. The pupils make good use of non-fiction texts for independent and group research, using the information they gather to produce good accounts of what they have learned.

13. Overall, progress in mathematics is satisfactory through the school. Learning in this subject is sound. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 have a secure understanding of number. Most pupils in this Year 1 order and sequence numbers accurately, can deduce a missing number in an algorithm and acquire a sound mathematical vocabulary. In Year 2 there is an increasing understanding of place value and pupils begin to make simple calculations mentally. The pupils partition numbers accurately and make good progress in representing data in tables and constructing bar charts. Good progress is made by Key Stage 2 pupils in mental calculation, and good lessons based on the numeracy strategy promote the development of mental calculation skills well. Key Stage 2 pupils have a good understanding of the four rules of number, and a good knowledge of number facts, including times tables, to help with their speed of working when making mental calculations. Their understanding of shape, their use of co-ordinates and their knowledge of fractions and decimals are all sound. Year 6 pupils understand the principles of positive and negative co-ordinates when translating shapes on the four sectors of a quadrant grid.
14. In science, the pupils make satisfactory progress overall and their learning in this subject is sound. They attain good standards at Key Stage 1 and sound standards by the age of eleven. There are good opportunities for experimental science in both key stages, which give the pupils an interest in science as an investigative activity. The pupils knowledge of scientific facts and principles is sound. Year 1 pupils show a fair knowledge of the properties of materials and Year 2 pupils consolidate their knowledge of living things when comparing and contrasting the attributes of insects and birds. In Key Stage 2 there is a clear notion of making and testing hypotheses, such as when Year 3 pupils test incomplete circuits to find a fault. The principle of making fair tests is clearly established by Year 6 so that, when devising ways of measuring lung capacity, pupils develop methods which will be both fair and accurate.
15. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory in Key Stage 1, good in Key Stage 2 and good overall. Key Stage 1 pupils use the computer keyboard and mouse effectively to control images and text. At the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils have developed good skills of text, image and data handling and they make very good use of up-to-date technology, such as Powerpoint, when giving an illustrated talk about the Victorians to their class.
16. Standards in religious education are good in both key stages, and compare very well with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have a good knowledge of some of the important festivals of Christianity and other major world faiths such as Hinduism. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a clear knowledge of the rituals of faith and the importance of these rituals in, for example, preparation for prayer.
17. Standards in music are very good at both key stages. The pupils make good progress and by seven and 11 they achieve good standards in geography, art, physical education and design and technology. In history, pupils attain the standard normally expected for their age.
18. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress. All pupils with special educational needs are suitably challenged and provided with the support and encouragement to meet their challenges. The pupils with special educational needs have very positive attitudes to their work and respond well to the support and guidance they are given to encourage their willingness to learn. The pupils needing additional or specialist support are identified early and set suitable targets for their learning. Those pupils who attend the school from Traveller families also make good progress from the extra support and encouragement they are given by all staff and they too respond and learn well. Gifted and talented pupils make good progress and benefit from the clear targets they are set for their learning based on the teachers' accurate assessments of their abilities. The school only has one pupil whose first language is other than English. This pupil is supported well, makes good progress and is fully involved in the life of the school. For example, the contribution this pupil made to a lesson

about Diwali, a religious festival celebrated by the pupil's family, gave the pupil a very real sense of involvement in the learning of other pupils in the class.

19. Discussions with pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from Traveller families, show that the pupils themselves believe that they are achieving well and that the school gives them a good education. They feel that their teachers have realistic expectations of them and that they are always encouraged to do their best. This confirms the views expressed by the great majority of parents at the meeting for them before the inspection, in the completed questionnaires and in discussions with them during the inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

20. The school has been very successful in promoting very high standards in pupils' attitudes, values and personal development since the last inspection. This improvement has been realised through the commitment and diligence of all members of staff at the school. Parents give strong support to the school's work in this area and they are impressed with the way the school promotes the attitudes, values and personal development of their children.
21. In general, the pupils are very enthusiastic when coming to school. There was very little evidence of pupils arriving late during the inspection week. All pupils show a very keen interest in lessons and the teachers provide a challenging environment in which successful learning can take place. The pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning. Teachers clearly explain their plans and objectives to the pupils and they respond well to this. The good practice of clearly informing the pupils of the criteria for their learning is a very good feature of the teaching. From this the pupils identify with the aspirations of the staff in achieving effective lessons and they respond positively.
22. During lessons the pupils' concentration is good. Key Stage 1 pupils working in an open plan area sustain good levels of concentration and happily work independently when asked to do so. The noise levels in this area can be high but careful timetabling and good control of the pupils greatly reduces the adverse effects. The pupils get on well together. They enjoy collaborating on tasks and show good patience when working together on difficult practical activities, such as constructing electrical circuits.
23. The pupils enjoy learning and take great delight when something new or different is introduced in to lessons. Teachers plan a good range of stimulating and challenging activities for their lessons. For example, some of the younger pupils were given very intricate articles to draw in an art lesson and they responded very well. The standard of work produced was of a very high standard. The pupils take great delight in sharing their achievements with other adults. The system of rewarding success and sharing achievements is a very good feature of the school which makes a highly successful contribution to the pupils' personal development.
24. The pupils work very well independently and thrive on personal study. The good opportunities that are also given for pupils to work in pairs or small groups on clearly defined tasks encourage them to work well together and help each other to complete tasks. The pupils' positive attitudes have a marked impact on the quality of learning and the standards attained. All pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 benefit from ability set groups for mathematics and English. They respond well to lessons which are planned to be appropriate to their learning needs. Similarly, the very good support provided for pupils with special educational needs is met with a good response from these pupils.
25. The pupils' behaviour in and around the school is very good and there have been no incidents of exclusion over the last three years. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour or bullying, racism and sexism at the school. Any unacceptable behaviour is dealt with immediately, effectively and according to a policy which is understood by the pupils and their parents. The pupils are encouraged

to talk about things which may be bothering them and to share their feelings with staff. The very good behaviour in the school has a direct, positive impact on the progress, attainment and the learning of all pupils.

26. The behaviour in and around the school is very good. The pupils are polite, willing to share their opinions and show their feelings. They are tolerant of each other's points of view and of each other's requirements. For example, they understand the need for some pupils to have a designated area for playing football at playtimes. The levels of self-discipline are very high and the need for intervention by the staff is rare.
27. The pupils show a high level of care for their school and its environment. For example, on identifying a damaged bench in the playground, pupils took the initiative to partition off the area with coloured cones so that no-one would be injured. Pupils work and play well together. Relationships amongst pupils are very good. The older pupils are always willing to show the younger pupils that they care for them by helping them at lunchtime and at other times.
28. There is clear evidence around the school of respect for people and property. Proper use is made of the waste bins at playtimes and the inside of the school is always clean and tidy. There are sufficient opportunities for pupils to undertake responsible tasks around the school. These range from distributing the registers each morning and afternoon to preparing the overhead projector during the assemblies and clearing up at lunchtimes. There are fewer opportunities of this kind for the younger pupils.
29. Attendance is satisfactory. The attendance levels and unauthorised absences are broadly in line with the national average. The attendance and the promptness of the pupils have a good impact on the attainment and progress. Classes are rewarded if they have a week of full attendance. Good liaison with the families from the Travelling community helps to ensure that the absence of pupils from Travelling families is minimised. The school has maintained satisfactory attendance rates since the last inspection. Registration procedures are efficient and statutory requirements are being met.

HOW WELL ARE THE PUPILS TAUGHT?

30. Teaching is a clear strength of the school. The overall quality is very good, with just over half of lessons observed as very good or excellent. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and, in fact, 98% of lessons are good or better. This represents a good improvement on the last inspection. Teaching is consistently good or better across all subjects and in all key stages.
31. The quality of teaching is very good for the children in the Foundation Stage. The children are provided with a very good range of opportunities to develop in all of the areas of learning, other than in their physical development, where lack of provision of large play equipment denies them that extra dimension of challenge to their developing co-ordination and motor skills. Very good teaching in the Foundation Stage is characterised by lessons which are planned well and which provide for the needs of all pupils. Very good use is made of extra adult support. The highly developed skills of the nursery nurse, working in partnership with the teachers of reception children, make a particularly strong contribution to the very good teaching.
32. There is a good knowledge of how young children learn in the Foundation Stage, with language and literacy skills developed through focused teaching on the relationships between letters and sounds, work on controlling hand and eye co-ordination to aid the use of pencils and on reading awareness. Teachers extend speaking and listening skills with careful questioning, such as asking children to describe colours when sharing the class story about a fish with rainbow coloured scales. The teaching of numeracy skills is good, with careful links made with the class story to make lessons

relevant and interesting, such as when sharing out the rainbow scales with other fish to learn about subtraction.

33. At the heart of the school's very good teaching lies an over-arching ethos of care and respect for the needs of pupils as individuals. There is consistent application of the school's policy for positive reinforcement of good behaviour and attitudes, resulting in good class management at all times. As a result, good levels of concentration, co-operation and effort are encouraged. Teachers in all key stages show high expectations in the way that they address their pupils and in the use of teaching vocabulary appropriate to the subject and to the age group they teach. The targets for learning set by teachers at the beginning of lessons are clearly understood by all pupils, who happily work hard to please their teachers by striving to meet the targets set. Teachers have very good knowledge of the subjects they teach and they enjoy their teaching, which makes lessons interesting, challenging and stimulating. A particular feature of very good and excellent lessons is the way in which pupils are questioned about their knowledge and understanding of a topic and the teachers assess responses to ensure that all children are learning appropriately from the lesson.
34. At both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Key Stage 1 teachers focus appropriately on the basic skills which form the necessary building blocks of reading, writing and number. There is good assessment of the pupils learning of these essential tools, which leads to appropriately challenging extension work for more able and talented pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported to encourage them to become effective in the use of basic skills. The teachers at Key Stage 2 build well on the early learning from Key Stage 1, consolidating and extending the pupils' knowledge and understanding. Also at Key Stage 2, setting pupils for literacy and numeracy lessons has a very good impact on the overall quality of teaching. In this way, the teachers can plan and teach according to the ability of the pupils in each group, thereby meeting their specific learning needs. The good teaching at both key stages ensures that all pupils make good progress in literacy and numeracy and achieve their learning potential.
35. The pupils with special educational needs benefit from good teaching, both within the class with their class teacher and when working individually or as part of a small group with a specialist teacher. Teachers work well to ensure that the pupils from Travelling families also make good progress as a result of the good teaching they receive. The learning of the pupils from travelling families is carefully assessed and monitored. Teachers liaise well with the advisor from the Traveller Education Service if they have concerns about the progress of an individual pupil.
36. Lesson plans show a clear understanding of the individual needs of all pupils, and a determination on the part of teachers to ensure that all pupils, including those with special needs or from Traveller families, feel that they are fully included in any lesson or activity. Thus, a child who finds it difficult to maintain attention for an extended period is gently encouraged by his teacher and the classroom assistant to refocus his attention if his mind wanders. Similarly, he is encouraged to develop his attention skills in the knowledge that, like the other children in his class, he will be expected to contribute to class discussions and respond to his teachers questions and that there are good support systems to help him to do this.
37. Teachers' planning is good. Clear schemes of work and medium term plans developed by co-ordinators give good support to the weekly planning for lessons. There is a whole-school commitment to reviewing planning against the new National Curriculum 2000 documents and the school is making good progress with this work. Teachers plan and use lesson time effectively and this is reflected in the quality and quantity of work produced by the pupils. In a very good literacy lesson, the teacher made the timing of the lesson absolutely clear to his class and used a clock, which could be clearly seen by all pupils, to focus them on completing a writing task in a specified time.

38. The teachers know their pupils very well. It is clear from how questioning is used in lessons that teachers build up a good picture of any strengths or gaps in their pupils' knowledge and understanding. Good use is made of the information gained from formal and day-to-day assessments. The teachers use this information to identify differences in learning for particular groups of pupils, such as Traveller children, or boys and girls. This information then informs teachers how to plan and teach to meet the differing needs of all pupils. For example, in a very good lesson on mathematical translations, the teacher's questions enabled him to identify which pupils needed individual help to understand negative co-ordinates in quadrants. Similarly, the needs of more able and talented pupils are met by planning extension work which takes their learning well beyond the average.
39. When pupils are working on their independent tasks, teachers carefully focus on each group to provide extra support, encouragement or challenge. Good and very good lessons end with time for the learning to be reviewed and opportunities for pupils to say or show what they have gained from the lesson. Good marking with both positive comments and suggestions for improvement contributes well to the teaching and learning. A regular pattern of homework provides good opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend their learning at home, often with the supportive help of parents. There is most often a clear connection between set homework and the current work in school, and consequently the pupils' response to homework is generally good. Overwhelmingly, parents regard the teaching in the school as good, as do the pupils, who voice their opinion daily by enjoying their lessons and the opportunities they give for good learning.

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

40. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all groups of pupils, and statutory requirements are fully met. The teaching of religious education is fully in line with the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus. The school has worked hard to ensure that the full range of subjects incorporating the expressive arts has been preserved, while at the same time responding fully to the national initiatives of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The strengths in music, design and technology and physical education, which were identified in the previous report, have been sustained, and standards in art are now also above national expectations. Standards in music have improved, from good in the previous report to very good now. To have preserved and improved these strengths is a credit to the school.
41. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, standards have remained broadly in line with those found nationally, although there has been a greater than usual variation from year to year, due to the characteristics of the different groups of pupils involved. Planning in all subjects is now much more systematic and the co-ordinators monitor standards effectively. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and the school has worked hard to respond to the requirements of Curriculum 2000. The curriculum ensures equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The pupils with special educational needs, and children from Traveller families, are well provided for and fully included in all aspects of the curriculum.
42. The previous report highlighted the good quality of the school's extra-curricular activities and this feature is now a considerable strength of the school. An excellent range and quality of activities is offered to pupils of all ages. Teachers work very hard, along with parents and friends of the school, to sustain many exciting and inspiring activities. Much spare time is given up to run activities such as the school's choir and orchestra, sporting activities, computer club and an excellent art club for the Key Stage 1 pupils. The quality of the activities provided in these clubs is excellent and high standards of performance and participation are achieved. The school's music curriculum is very well supplemented by a range of peripatetic instrumental and vocal classes which involve a large number

of pupils. The school's recorder groups, choir and orchestra are all active and enthusiastically supported. They play and sing in assemblies and other school activities regularly.

43. The provision of these activities makes a very strong contribution to the school's curriculum. Opportunities for learning are enriched by this provision and all of the school's pupils benefit. These experiences also make very good contributions to the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, promoting a sense of empathy and consideration which reflects the very positive ethos of the school. Parents welcome the chances their children have to enrich their learning and their time at school with such opportunities. There is strong support for extra curricular activities from the parents, many of whom express their gratitude to the teachers and other helpers for giving up their valuable time to make these opportunities available to their children.
44. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. As well as specific lessons on this aspect, these aspects of learning permeate the curriculum. Sex education and drugs awareness are part of the work covered in science lessons. The school nurse also deals with personal problems, thus contributing effectively to the curriculum and the teaching provision in the school.
45. Links with the local cluster of schools and other partner institutions are good. The school has recently been involved in the local 'Making a Difference' project, looking at facilities in the local area and how they could be improved. This project brings together pupils from local primary and secondary schools and includes good links to global environmental issues. The work in this area makes a strong contribution to the pupils' personal development.
46. Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and it is a very real strength of the school.
47. The school fosters very good spiritual development through promoting the pupils' awareness of the beauty of art, music and literature. Opportunities are taken in all subjects to give pupils an appreciation of the wonders of life and the world. The practice of lighting a candle at times of quiet reflection helps to focus the pupils' attentions on the deeper meaning of what they are doing. It is used well in assemblies and a range of lessons. Good assemblies, which include prayer, reflection and singing, underpin spiritual development. In assemblies the pupils reflect on themes such as Remembrance Day and they hear stories of how ordinary people made extraordinary sacrifices to preserve freedom. The teachers leading assemblies make very good use of opportunities for pupils to reflect on the mysteries and wonders of the world. Similarly, in religious education lessons, teachers focus the pupils' attention very well to encourage them to think deeply about how and why people have a faith commitment and the way in which they respond in their worship. Good links with the local Christian church and with local places of worship for other faiths help the children to understand about the diversity of spiritual life. Investigations into religion, the miracle of creation and the place of humankind in the natural order of life help the pupils to ask fundamental questions about their place in the world. From this experience, the pupils gain a great deal of understanding about how precious is human life.
48. The provision for the pupils' moral development is very good. Teachers and other adults in school provide good role models for the pupils' moral development. The quality of relationships and the mutual respect between pupils and adults demonstrate the success of the moral teaching in the school.

Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong, and, in many aspects of their work, they consider moral issues such as the effects of their actions on others.

49. Opportunities for the pupils' social development are also very good. The older pupils are encouraged to care for those lower down the school and there are also many examples of pupils learning to work together and to consider the opinions and feelings of others, with very good inclusion of those with special educational needs. The school holds an annual residential visit for the Year 6 pupils which makes a valuable contribution to their social development. The school raises money for various charities, and poppies were being sold in school during the inspection in aid of the British Legion Poppy Day appeal.
50. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. Impressive displays around the school, including work the pupils have done about cultures and religions other than their own, provide clear evidence of how the school teaches the pupils about the diversity of experience of people around the world. Many of the displays in classrooms give the pupils a very good idea of the variety of dress, food, family life and daily routines of people from differing cultural backgrounds. Very good celebrations of music from other lands help the pupils to gain a deeper understanding of how musical styles evolve and how they represent particular aspects of a culture. Many very good opportunities for cultural development are offered through, for example, the excellent work of the school's own orchestra and choir, who perform concerts in school, at other schools and in concert halls. Performances for an invited audience, such as the Year 6 production of 'Oliver', written, produced and staged by the pupils themselves, provide very good opportunities to experience expressive drama.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

51. The provision for ensuring the pupils' welfare, health and safety, including the arrangements for child protection, are very good. The school has maintained a very high level of care for its pupils since the last inspection. There has been a very good improvement in the use of assessment to plan the curriculum in English, mathematics, science, information and communications technology and religious education. The school has recognised the need to extend this work into the monitoring and assessment of all other subjects. A systematic approach is being adopted to meet this objective, as recognised in the school improvement plan.
52. The school is a very caring environment in which pupils can learn effectively. The very good ethos of the school as a place where each pupil's contribution is valued has a positive effect on the standards that the pupils achieve.
53. A lot of emphasis is placed on health and safety and the school is dealing well with identified safety matters. The governing body is very active in providing a healthy and safe school. A governor responsible for health and safety is currently being sought. The health and safety policy has been carefully devised and is of a high quality. The policy is reviewed regularly by the governors.
54. Very extensive risk assessments are carried out to judge the overall safety levels of the school and to respond to identified needs. Safety requirements are recorded and appropriate actions taken. The school has not yet carried out an access audit to show how it would meet the access needs of handicapped pupils and visitors.
55. Fire drills are carried out systematically. Practise evacuations of the school in the event of emergencies have been shown to be very effective and completed in a very short period of time.

56. There is a designated medical room at the school. This is well equipped and easily accessible for the trained first-aiders. Detailed records of accidents are kept. Consideration is being given to fully analysing the type and frequency of accidents so that improvements may be made in specific areas of the school.
57. Child protection procedures are very good and implemented sensitively. There are three members of staff allocated to dealing with child protection with the headteacher being the main designated person. The staff are fully informed of potential problems and these are very thoroughly monitored. All staff are aware of the requirements for child protection but the school is aware of the need to bring recently appointed staff up to date with training in this area. The child protection policy is effectively laid out.
58. The procedures for monitoring attendance are very good. The follow up of absences is rigorous and all parents are aware of their responsibilities to notify the school when absences occur. Registration procedures are rigorous. The neatness and accuracy of the registers is a very good feature. The regular preparation of attendance statistics assists in identifying trends so that the school can respond appropriately. Monitoring of attendance by the school identified that a relatively high proportion of pupils is absent for holidays during term time. This is a concern to the school and parents have been informed of the impact of absence on their children's learning.
59. The procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are very good. Detailed records are kept of all incidents of inappropriate behaviour. The rewards and sanctions system in operation for promoting good behaviour is very good. It is understood by all staff and pupils and it promotes good standards of behaviour and positive relationships. Pupils and parents understand the schools' code of conduct well and consequently behaviour is very good. Teachers have very effective strategies for promoting good attitudes and behaviour and they use them consistently well.
60. The home and school partnership agreement is used very well to promote good behaviour whilst at school. The school has good arrangements for communicating concerns to parents who are keen to co-operate if their child misbehaves. For example, a pupil was experiencing difficulty in settling into school routines and the child's behaviour was a concern to the teacher. Discussion with the child's parents led to an agreed programme of daily records of behaviour using a "smiley face" sticker system. This has proved to be very supportive and motivating for the child and there are evident improvements in this pupil's ability to concentrate.
61. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very clear and provide a good system through which teachers can respond to the pupils' needs. The very good extra curricular activities provided are beneficial to the personal development of all pupils. Although the school does not have a school council at present, pupils' feelings and opinions are clearly understood and shared with the adults who help them. The Youth Club, which meets in the school hall every Wednesday evening, is popular with pupils and very well supported by parents and helpers.
62. There are very good systems in place to monitor and support pupils' academic development in English, mathematics, science, religious education and information and communications technology. The compilation of Data Profiles, which give clear assessment information about each pupil in each year group, is good practice. These profiles contain key information describing the progress a pupil has made throughout the year. From their records, teachers construct a class overview at the end of each year. The overall academic status of each pupil is clearly defined in categories such as coasting, able, more able or special educational needs. The class overview also shows where careful monitoring of Key Stage 2 pupils is needed as they may need to be transferred into a different ability set. The good work done by the teachers to develop these systems is now being continued into the other subjects.

63. Teachers know the pupils very well and are constantly giving them advice about their performance in lessons or homework. Good use is made of classroom assistants in monitoring the contribution that pupils with special educational needs make to lessons.
64. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. Assessment time is built into the timetable, which emphasises the importance staff place on the need to assess regularly and accurately. Good use is made of the assessment information gathered during classroom observations and of the records made from these observations.
65. Baseline assessments of the children in the reception class are used very effectively to identify what areas of each child's development need particular attention. The information from these assessments provides teachers with a clear view on how to plan the curriculum for children in the foundation stage.
66. Very good use is made of standardised tests throughout the school. The analysis of information from these tests is used well to identify what the school needs to do to raise educational standards. Comparisons of the performance in tests of boys and girls are used effectively to decide what teachers need to concentrate on to bring attainment closer together where gaps exist.
67. The school's policy for assessment is a very clear professional document and it is well understood by all teachers. Key learning objectives for each subject are identified and the success criteria for accurately assessing attainment are clearly stated. Each objective is sub-divided into easily identifiable tasks and, before assessments take place, pupils are informed of the criteria for success against which they will be awarded marks. This approach leads to a very rigorous and successful assessment programme and helps the pupils to become self-evaluating of their successes.
68. The assessment co-ordinator works systematically to maintain uniformity of assessment throughout the school, leading team meetings and updating portfolios of pupils' work which has been assessed against National Curriculum standards. The portfolio of work done by pupils from Year R to Year 6 in religious education is, for instance, a very good example of the expected quality of work which sets a benchmark for standards in the subject. As Curriculum 2000 is established, the school plans to extend its good practice of assessment in English, mathematics, science, religious education and information and communications technology into the other subjects of the curriculum.
69. The school has an effective policy for promoting equality of opportunity. Equal opportunities are regarded as high priority. This is reflected in the school's aims and objectives. Pupils have full access to the curriculum, educational visits, extra curricular activities and, when appropriate, to peripatetic music lessons. The achievement of all pupils is very carefully analysed and efforts are put in to ensure that all pupils are given every opportunity to develop their full potential. For example, the school has recognised that more able and talented pupils need appropriately challenging tasks and so planning is structured to provide different tasks suited to the particular learning needs of pupils.
70. The one pupil whose first language is other than English is fully involved in all aspects of school life, making appropriate academic progress and encouraged by the teachers in all aspects of personal development. Similarly, a good awareness of the cultural background of pupils from Traveller families has helped the teachers to plan and teach specifically to the needs of these pupils. Teachers have a clear knowledge of the needs of individual pupils in relation to their circumstances. The children from Traveller families receive good quality teaching, positive encouragement of their learning and very good support of their progress. The very good communication between the designated liaison officer, the school, the Travelling families and their children has a positive impact on the pupils' attitudes to learning and on their inclusion in the full range of opportunities the school provides.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

71. The view of most parents is that they send their child to a good school where pupils thrive and receive a good standard of education. The majority of parents say that their children like school and learn well. Most parents hold the opinion that the teaching in the school is good, that they are kept well informed and would feel happy to approach the school if they had a problem. They are genuinely supportive of the school and can identify with the school's drive for improvement and its aspirations for their children.
72. Parents are very pleased about how all groups of pupils are encouraged to reach their full potential and the very strong ethos of inclusion within the school. They are also pleased with the detailed reports received about their children's progress. There is generally widespread support for the school from parents but a small number ask that the school gives more homework to pupils in Years 5 and 6 in preparation for secondary education. A few parents express concerns about isolated incidents of poor behaviour but most know that the school deals with such incidents promptly and effectively. Most parents understand how the school responds to the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are more able and talented. A very small number of parents would like better communication about the stages of the Code of Practice for special educational needs.
73. The partnership with parents and the community is very good. The home and school agreement is very effective, reflecting the varying demands placed on children at the different key stages and their differing needs. It also communicates clearly the responsibilities parents have as partners with schools in their child's education. There is a strong presence of parents and grandparents around the school giving good help. These helpers feel very welcomed to the school. They are given good briefings by teachers to help them to be effective in their work with the pupils.
74. The generous funds donated to the school recently by the Home and School Association helped the school to establish the computer suite. This is having a good impact on standards of information and communication technology and contributes well to the quality of education provided, including extra curricular education. For example, the Computer Club makes good use of the computer suite and gains access to a wealth of knowledge and information through the internet.
75. The school has maintained, and in some areas greatly improved, the very good partnerships with parents. Parents welcome the high quality of communication they now have with the school and feel that they can be influential in their child's education. The quality of information provided for parents in all aspects of school life is very good. Newsletters are presented in a very cheerful, positive way and convey very meaningful information. The information given in the school handbook and in the governors' annual report is also very good. Careful thought has been given to presenting this information in a way which makes it readable and easily understood.
76. The progress reports sent to parents at the end of each school year are particularly good. They describe clearly what the child has achieved and give good guidance on how parents could help their child improve by clearly stating targets that are realistically challenging. Parents also value how the school invites pupils to come with them to discuss their progress each term at parents' evenings. Many parents encourage their children to take this opportunity, believing it to be a good way of helping their child to recognise strengths and see how parents and teachers work as partners to the child's benefit.
77. The school is open to parents at the start and end of the school day, allowing parents to discuss with teachers any concerns they may have about their child. Many parents welcome this early opportunity to speak to teachers about their concerns for their child.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

78. The headteacher leads the school very well and vigorously promotes whole-school commitment to continued improvement. She is ably supported by an experienced and knowledgeable deputy headteacher and senior management team. Their loyal and dedicated work makes a very strong contribution to the overall leadership of the school. Effective systems are in place to enable all staff to use their professional skills well, both as subject co-ordinators and key players in school improvement. There are regular whole-staff, key stage team and subject co-ordinator meetings which result in positive action to maintain school improvement. The roles and responsibilities of all staff are clearly defined and there are good opportunities for professional development. Professional reviews are held regularly between the headteacher and her colleagues that help teachers to identify their training needs and to plan ways of putting their professional skills to best use to benefit the school.
79. The governors work well with the school on a day-to-day basis. Their support of the school and its continued improvement, their regular visits and their interest in the school's success are welcomed by the headteacher and staff. The school improvement plan is a quality document and governors monitor progress on its priorities regularly. The governors have a good awareness of the strengths of the school but they are never complacent, always seeking ways to support the staff in the drive for continued school improvement. A good number of governors give direct practical help to the school, including the chair, who has attended for a number of years as an adult helper on the pupils' annual residential visit.
80. The headteacher and senior management team has very effective procedures for collecting and analysing information about the progress and attainment of each pupil. This information is shared freely with the rest of the staff team and with governors. It is used well to evaluate the impact of teaching on attainment and to plan initiatives to achieve further improvement.
81. Subject co-ordinators have worked very hard to review and evaluate teaching and learning in their subjects, and the impact of their work as leaders of their subjects is very good. Some recently appointed co-ordinators lack the experience to be confident about promoting their subject and they would benefit from additional professional support to increase their confidence. They could learn much from the highly developed organisational skills of the senior management team and more experienced colleagues. Good support systems exist for this to occur.
82. Improvements in the school are well supported by clear financial planning, which focuses on specific priorities and sets out a clear strategy for improvement. All staff contribute to school improvement planning and the governing body monitors and evaluates the plan itself, the ongoing work to implement improvements and whether their spending on school improvement priorities is good value for money. Administration and financial procedures are good and the school's most recent audit indicates sound financial probity. Grants for specific purposes, such as funds for pupils with statements of special educational need and for the installation of a network of computers, are spent appropriately and 'topped up' from the schools' own delegated budget to maximise impact on pupils' learning. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to support the efficient management of the school.
83. The governing body keeps a careful check on expenditure and makes every effort to ensure that best value is gained when purchasing services and resources. The school is generously staffed and good value is gained from setting Key Stage 2 pupils by ability with the teaching support of the deputy headteacher.

84. The accommodation is adequate for the school's present needs. Overall, its use makes a satisfactory contribution to the quality of education provided and there are particular features, such as the library and the computer suite, which make a strong contribution to teaching and learning. The staff working with early years pupils are fully aware of the need to plan timetables carefully to minimise disturbance to each other's lessons in the open plan Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 area. The school grounds have not yet been developed as a resource for outdoor education, nor for providing an enclosed space where children at the Foundation Stage could use large play equipment to promote their physical development. The outside areas have lots of potential to be developed for outside education.
85. Good use is made of resources beyond the immediate school environment, and of support services, such as the very good liaison team working with children from Traveller families, to enrich the quality of education provided to all groups of pupils.
86. This is a school with a very strong commitment to self-evaluation and it has very good capacity for self-improvement. Although the school has slightly higher than average costs per pupil, it is clear that the high quality of teaching, the effective use of available resources and the very good leadership and management of the school contribute to the school providing good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

87. The governing body, headteacher and staff should:

Improve the facilities for the physical development of children in the Foundation Stage by:

- Providing large play equipment for use in a discrete enclosed play area.

(Paragraphs 31, 84, 104)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	67
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	47	45.5	1.5	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	287
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	52

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	19	26	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	18	19
	Girls	24	25	25
	Total	42	43	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (72)	96 (78)	98 (97)
	National	82 (80)	82 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	19	17
	Girls	24	23	24
	Total	43	42	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (89)	93 (95)	91 (95)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	24	23	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	13	17
	Girls	20	17	21
	Total	35	30	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (79)	64 (73)	81 (91)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	13	17
	Girls	20	17	21
	Total	35	30	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (85)	64 (76)	81(91)
	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	1
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	1
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	
White	287
Any other minority ethnic group	5

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.2
Average class size	26.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	150

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	531,198
Total expenditure	514,301
Expenditure per pupil	1749.32
Balance brought forward from previous year	8642
Balance carried forward to next year	25539

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	279
Number of questionnaires returned	99

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	26	1	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	59	39	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	46	3	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	42	7	4	2
The teaching is good.	60	37	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	42	4	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	26	1	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	33	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	52	40	5	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	56	34	2	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	38	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	60	34	3	0	3

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

88. The Foundation Stage refers to children from the time they enter the nursery at three until they reach the end of their Reception Year. At this school, there is no nursery and the children enter the reception class in two intakes. Those whose fifth birthday is between September and February enter the school at the beginning of the Autumn Term and those whose fifth birthday falls between March and August join the school at the beginning of the Spring Term. The school organises a 'Squirrel Club' which children may join one term before their entry to full-time school; this operates two afternoons a week during the Summer Term, and five afternoons per week during the Autumn Term. The aims of the 'Squirrel Club' are to involve children in Foundation Stage activities prior to their admission to the school and to familiarise them with the school, its staff and their future classmates. The club achieves these aims well. At the time of the inspection there were 22 children in the Reception Year, 14 in the reception class, and seven in a mixed age class with Year 1 pupils. There were 13 children in the 'Squirrel Club'.
89. The initial assessments undertaken on children when they are admitted to the reception class show that there is a wide range of attainment on entry, with children drawn from various types of playgroups and nurseries. Overall attainment on entry is average. Most children start their full time education with skills that are average and below in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and in their personal, social and emotional development. The children make at least satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. Most are on course to attain at least the expected early learning goals by the time they reach the end of the Reception Year.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

90. The children make good progress in this area of learning and achieve well. Most are on course to achieve above their expected goals by the end of the Reception Year.
91. Some children show good levels of skill on entry to the reception class, the 'Squirrel Club' making a strong contribution to this. They settle quickly into the routine of school life and they relate well to each other. They talk to one another about their work, some show great confidence by joining in a 'show and tell' whole school assembly and presenting their work to the school. They learn to take turns as they share equipment and resources, stirring the mixture when making biscuits for their 'Friendship Party'. The children show increasing levels of independence and concentration and they keep on task well, especially when supported and encouraged in their activities by adult supervision. For example, when taking turns marbling paint on to paper in a water tray.
92. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development is very good. The associated skills are planned very well into the daily activities. All staff consistently re-inforce the need for good manners, for sharing and caring, and, when playing word and phonic games, not to speak unless holding the toy. Equal Opportunities and access to the curriculum for all are emphasised by the staff as the children are taught to take account of the views and needs of others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

93. The children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. Most achieve well and are on course to reach the learning goals expected of them by the end of the reception year.

94. The children often start the day with reading activities, recognising common words and letter sounds. Songs are sung and games played to promote language development. Support staff help to lead word and phonic games. All children participate fully and confidently in these activities. They listen well and many express themselves clearly and confidently when answering questions. All reception children join together for these activities. Most children recognise their names and are beginning to write them. Most letters are correctly formed and the children are developing fine motor control when using pencils, crayons and paint brushes. By the time children reach the end of their reception year, most are on course to be writing their own simple sentences, and while a small minority are on course to become fluent readers, most will be developing fluency.
95. The quality of teaching is very good. The teachers and nursery nurse question the children skilfully and encourage them to speak, and to read and write, at increasing length.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

96. The children make satisfactory progress in their mathematical development, and the majority are on course to achieve the early learning goals expected of them by the end of the Reception Year.
97. They are able to sort colours and shapes into simple sets and successfully complete jigsaws. Most understand numbers to five and can count to 10 and beyond. They know 1 more and 1 less when counting the "Rainbow fish's scales". All reception children come together for mathematical activities. Children are on target to solve simple addition and subtraction problems recording numbers to 10. Most are on course to know the names of common shapes and create symmetrical patterns by the time they reach the end of this year.
98. The quality of teaching is very good. The staff intervene effectively to promote mathematical thinking. Tasks are well-planned and organised with due regard for the National Numeracy Strategy.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

99. Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They achieve well and many are on course to achieve at least the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year.
100. They are able to talk about their families and have knowledge of the features within their immediate locality. Regular visits to the surrounding area extend the children's knowledge of their local environment. Such experiences provide a good foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning. The children are developing a good understanding and concept of time as they sequence daily events and explore the autumnal changes happening around them. They use the surrounding area well in exploring the features and needs of living things, describing the class goldfish and feeding him each day. They have regular use of information and communication technology and use the computer mouse independently to control simple computer programmes such as 'Henry's Party'.
101. The quality of teaching overall is good. The staff plan for a wide and interesting range of activities very effectively, confidently making use of technology to benefit the children.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

102. The children make satisfactory progress in their physical development. The majority are on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of their year in the reception class.
103. In their lessons the children develop a good appreciation of space. Most can move around independently without bumping into one another. All children are confident when participating in their lesson in the hall. They are very attentive and listen well to the instructions given by their teacher on how to roll a ball, for example. The children hop, skip, jump, sit down and walk forwards and backwards with increasing confidence on command. The staff provide very good role models and manage the children very well, motivating, encouraging and providing effective challenges; for example when imagining taking a walk in a meadow where obstacles are encountered. Most children have a good sense of direction and balance. They are confident and demonstrate good self-control. The children are aware of the effect of exercise on their bodies as they warm up and slow down at the beginning and end of their lessons.
104. There are good resources for indoor physical development. Provision for outdoor physical development is, however, limited. There is no outside secure play area for the exclusive use of reception pupils and there are few large toys for outside use. Consequently pupils do not have regular opportunities to experience the stimulation and sensations felt when developing control over their bodies and the way they move when pedalling, pushing, pulling and experiencing other large scale movements.
105. The quality of teaching is very good. The curriculum is well planned to enable children to develop their skills with construction materials, cutting, sticking and threading beads, which effectively promotes their hand/eye co-ordination and fine motor skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

106. The children make good progress in this area of learning and the majority are on course to achieve the expected early learning goals by the end of their first year.
107. There is a very good range of creative activities available for the children. They are able to explore colour through painting and printing and they have good opportunities to use their imagination through role-play, music and stories. Opportunities are provided for the children to explore their feelings and express themselves. Many are confident to do so whether in a small group or in the whole class. All children are well supported in their activities by their teachers and classroom assistants.
108. The quality of teaching is very good and activities are well planned.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

109. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. During the term, teachers establish very good routines for children to follow. All reception children work together for communication, language and literacy and mathematical development activities. These routines have a very positive impact on the children's learning. Reception teachers receive very good

support from the non-teaching assistants. The children gain great benefit from the effective working partnerships between the teachers and nursery nurses in the early years.

110. Lessons are very well planned to meet the needs of all reception pupils, particularly in the mixed age class, where very careful regard and attention is paid to the early learning goals. Good and very good teaching challenges the children and encourages them to enjoy their learning. Skilled questioning promotes extended thinking and reflection on the task in hand. Pupils respond very well to all staff and clearly feel very happy at school and confident in the adults who work with them. Very good use is made of time and resources for the children in the reception year. Good links are frequently made between different areas of learning. The staff identify children with special educational needs early and intervene with appropriate support swiftly and effectively. Able and talented pupils are able to work at Level 1 of the National Curriculum where appropriate. Up to date records of the children's progress and learning are regularly shared with parents, who say that they value the information they are given about their child's learning in this early stage.
111. Since the last inspection the high standard of teaching and learning in the reception year has been maintained. Assessment has improved and is now very good. Baseline assessment measures are revisited regularly during the year to track each child's progress against the standards for their age. Day to day assessment is used well, both to monitor each child's learning and to inform planning for the next stage of learning. The school has not developed its full capacity to develop the children's gross motor skills as there are limited opportunities for them to use large play equipment outside. The school has very good procedures for introducing the children effectively to the start of their education through the 'Squirrels Club'. The parents are supportive of the school and the teachers have good systems for encouraging parents to help their children at home. Parents are of the opinion that the Squirrels Club and Reception Year provide a very good start to their child's time at school.
112. There is effective management of this early stage of learning by a very capable and committed team, led by a very knowledgeable, experienced and committed co-ordinator.

ENGLISH

113. Standards in English are similar to those observed at the time of the last inspection. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests show that by the age of seven, pupils' standards in reading and writing are well above the national average. A comparison with other schools said to be similar shows that the pupils' attainment in writing is close to the average for these schools but below the average in reading. The results also show that the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 is below the national average in reading and writing. The teachers own assessments of the seven-year-olds show attainment to be well above the national average in reading and writing although the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 is below the national average in writing and well below the national average in reading.
114. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards are close to the national average in the test results for 11-year-olds and in line with the national trend. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 is also close to the national average. When comparison is made with similar schools the results indicate that pupils' attainment is well below the average for these schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 is also well below the average when comparison is made with similar schools. The inspection team agrees, however, that comparisons with schools said to be similar may be unrealistic, as a number of pupils, such as those from Traveller families, do not apply for an entitlement to free school meals.
115. The school has done well to exceed its targets for 1999 and 2000, maintaining improvements on the previous year's results and increasing the percentage of pupils attaining both the expected and higher

levels to above the national average in 2000. Forty two per cent of pupils attained the higher Level 5 in 2000, which is well above the national average of twenty nine per cent.

116. This year's test results show that girls achieve higher standards than boys, in particular in writing. These results came as no surprise to the teachers who are aware, from their assessments, of lower attainment by boys within this year group. The general trend nationally is that boys perform less well than girls and staff have taken time to analyse their test results and adjust the curriculum accordingly. Teachers plan the curriculum using this evidence and target boys in particular. A very good example of this is the area in the library which has been devoted to new, exciting and interesting books to draw the attention of boys to stimulating opportunities for reading.
117. Throughout the school there is a very wide range of ability which is very successfully catered for. The current Year 2 pupils' attainment overall in reading, writing and speaking and listening is at the level expected for their age with a good number achieving above. Approximately two thirds of Year 6 pupils are attaining at least the levels expected in reading, writing, speaking and listening. A significant number are achieving above this level in reading and writing and have been set the target to attain at least Level 5 in the national tests. Of those not yet achieving at the level expected by the end of the key stage, a good number will be achieving at the expected level by the time of the end of key stage tests. This is because of the very good teaching and the deliberate policy of setting the pupils into ability groups, thus enabling teachers to carefully match lessons to suit the needs of all pupils. These teaching groups are reviewed frequently and pupils are moved from group to group when necessary.
118. Since the last inspection report, the introduction of the literacy hour is having a positive effect on standards throughout the school, particularly in reading and the use of phonics. It is helping to raise standards of teaching in other subjects as teachers follow a similar lesson structure, setting targets and making good use of plenary sessions to discuss and assess whether the learning objectives have been achieved.
119. At Key Stage 1 good use of questions enables pupils to respond well in discussions. When reading from the 'Big Book' good role play activities involve the pupils in the text and engage their interest in the story. They enjoy retelling stories that they have heard and are confident speakers eager to recount their own experiences, as one pupil did when speaking quite knowledgeably about fishing. At Key Stage 2 teachers use very good resources, including newspapers, to encourage pupils to study and discuss text. The pupils consider the key points to a passage and through good questioning techniques are able to think for themselves and enter into classroom discussions. An example of this was when studying the sinking of the Titanic, one pupil describes to others what it was like on board the ship. They answer questions thoughtfully and join in the discussion well. When considering the ways of improving the safety of the access road to the school, the pupils listen to each other's point of view, consider the effect of, for example, a speed table on the local community and are able to express their own point of view clearly and concisely.
120. Reading overall is good at the end of both key stages. All pupils have a good attitude to reading, are encouraged to take their books home regularly and are provided with a wide and interesting range of school library books to choose from. Teachers monitor reading very well, books are well chosen to match the needs of the pupils and they encourage the development of good reading skills. In Key Stage 1 average pupils read with confidence, self correct and use phonics to sound out words such as 'ground'. Lower ability pupils read more slowly but accurately, follow punctuation and use phonics and rhyme well to aid them when reading. Higher achieving pupils read smoothly and accurately;

they follow punctuation and read text with expression, they have favourite authors and are able to retell the stories that they have read. On occasions some average and below average pupils have difficulty recalling the general thread of the story that they have read. There is a wide level of ability across the key stage. Pupils in Key Stage 2 enjoy reading. By the end of the key stage average pupils read fluently with appropriate expression and have good phonic skills to decode unknown words. They choose their own books to match their own interest and ability. They can locate parts of previously read text quickly and easily without combing through each page. Lower ability pupils read regularly and have good understanding of the stories in their books. Higher ability pupils are self-motivated and capable of tackling demanding text and they read with good understanding both fiction and non fiction books. Very good use of library skills is in evidence across both key stages with all pupils showing confidence when using the very good library and classroom libraries. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils were not as well able to use the dictionary as they were when using other tools such as research skills.

121. By the time pupils are seven, they form their letters correctly and write legibly. Teachers present good role models and their own writing is always of a high standard for the pupils to follow. Teachers pay good attention to spelling and link this to the teaching of sounds and letter strings. The pupils regularly take spellings home to learn. When writing interesting stories such as 'Jonah and the Whale' they show good understanding of the structure of writing by making sure that their stories have a beginning, a middle and an end. They write in sentences, punctuated by full stops and capital letters, with higher achieving pupils using speech and exclamation marks. They are beginning to extend their style of writing to include writing for different purposes such as poetry, letters and reports on visits. Lower ability pupils make good attempts to write and spell independently. Most Key Stage 2 pupils write well using fluent, joined and legible handwriting. They use a wide range of vocabulary with a good number of pupils presenting their work in the form of good paragraphs with interesting dialogue. All are developing their journalistic style of writing with, for example, younger pupils producing a very good newspaper story under the heading, 'Blanford Mere School's Harvest Visit', which contained very good detail and illustration. There are good examples on display of the use of information and communications technology to aid presentation; here pupils change font, text, style and colour. Teachers plan lessons to enable the pupils to practise these skills and because they present the work in different forms all pupils learn and achieve as well as they are able.
122. Half of all lessons seen in Key Stages 1 and 2 were very good and, when taking into account the language, literacy and communication lessons seen in the Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching overall is very good. Good teaching was seen in all other lessons and because of this good and often very good teaching, very good learning takes place.
123. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and use this well when teaching other subjects to extend the pupils' English skills. Science in Year 2 was a good example of this, with the class teacher extending the pupils speaking and listening skills by using very good questioning and subject specific vocabulary as the pupils studied and compared fish with other creatures. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and provide effective challenges for them. In Year 5, the lower attaining pupils achieve well when reflecting on the rhyme and imagery of poetry and are challenged to write a poem based on the picture of 'the sink after painting'. When considering the school hall after lunch one pupil describes how the 'brush tickled the floor like a slow snail sliding across the floor'. Teachers have good pupil management skills and most pupils behave well; in particular Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils. Good timetabling in this open plan area ensures that lessons are not disturbed when other classes need to have a noisy activity, such as music. Neither teachers nor pupils allow other activities to distract them from the lessons and the pupils behave very well in the limited space.

124. Every effort is made to ensure that all pupils have good and often very good quality teaching and learn well. The very good use of initial assessments and then ongoing assessment enables teachers to set work at appropriate levels for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, the pupils from Traveller families and the more able and talented pupils. All pupils make good progress towards their learning targets. Lower attaining pupils benefit from the very good provision of support offered to them through additional classroom support staff, setting for literacy in years 3, 4, 5 and 6 and the 'Additional Literacy Support' for lower attaining pupils in Year 3. Resources are very good and very well used. Marking is good and frequently includes encouraging remarks and stickers.
125. Overall there is very good co-ordination of the subject. All staff work well together in order to implement the National Literacy Strategy throughout the school. Planning and assessment are regularly monitored by the subject manager and there is good planning across year groups. Challenging targets are set for all pupils and these are closely monitored. Information and communication technology in pupils' research and in the development of their reading and writing skills is developing and with the provision of the new suite should develop further and make a strong contribution to the pupils learning. The centrally based library is a joy to see, containing amongst other literature very good anthologies of pupils own favourite poems. Books, equipment and displays of work in the library and around the school promote good awareness of the diversity of cultures around the world and challenge stereotyped views. The library is very well managed by the grandparent of one of the pupils. During library time she patiently explains to the pupils how to use the library and its tracking system effectively, thus supporting the work of the teachers in helping the pupils to develop good library skills

MATHEMATICS

126. Standards are satisfactory in both key stages. The results of the tests for seven-year-olds in 1999 show that pupils' attainment was well above the national average, and close to the average when compared with similar schools. The proportion of Year 2 pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. The test results for eleven-year-olds in 1999 show that attainment was below the national average, although the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was close to the national average and one pupil attained the very high Level 6. Provisional results from the 2000 national tests show that standards have been maintained at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, national test results for 2000 show that standards are above the national average, an improvement from the previous two years. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 at this key stage is also above the average in the 2000 test results.
127. The school experienced dips in the number of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 or above in the 1998 and 1999 tests for Year 6 pupils. Evidence from the inspection confirms that these dips were due to factors outside of the school's control, such as late transfers in and the effect of low-attaining pupils from the Travelling community. The improved results for 2000 are a clear indication of the school's commitment to raise standards and to help every individual pupil to attain his or her potential. Provisional analysis of the 2000 test results show that results are above the national average at the expected Level 4 and identical to the national average at the higher Level 5.
128. The previous inspection reported that standards in mathematics, on the basis of national test results, were better than the national average at both key stages, although not so strong at Key Stage 2. It was reported that Key Stage 2 pupils, whilst learning their times tables, could be quicker in their mental calculation. Evidence from the current inspection shows that attainment has been maintained when using national test result measures. It is clear from observing lessons, from talking with pupils and from looking at their work that changes to the teaching of mathematics following the introduction of the numeracy strategy are having a positive effect on standards in mathematics. This is particularly so

in the improvements in pupils' ability to make rapid and accurate mental calculations, including the use of times tables.

129. Teaching is good at both key stages and in some cases it is very good and excellent. Of the twelve lessons seen, half were very good or better, with one excellent lesson seen at Key Stage 2. All other lessons seen were good. At Key Stage 1, good teaching promotes a clear understanding of number and the pupils knowledge of number is secure by the age of seven. By the end of the key stage most pupils add and subtract to ten, count accurately in twos and partition two digit numbers. They know that subtraction is the inverse of addition and that repeated adding of the same number to itself leads to multiplication.
130. The technical vocabulary of mathematics is consistently and appropriately used. Teachers explain mathematical terms very well and encourage the pupils to use them accurately and in the right context. This has a beneficial effect on the standards of English. In an excellent lesson seen at Key Stage 2, pupils were set clear targets for the lesson and were given positive encouragement and support to achieve the planned learning objectives. The national numeracy framework is followed closely as the subject planning structure and this promotes good continuity of learning and progression of skills. Teachers use day-to-day assessments well to provide the pupils with progressively more challenging work. Regular formal assessments provide teachers with a clear knowledge of the progress their pupils are making and how well their pupils are attaining in relation to the targets expected nationally.
131. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress with their skills of mental calculation and by the end of the key stage they have accurate and speedy mental arithmetic skills. They have a good knowledge of number facts, including multiplication tables, and they use a range of strategies to calculate answers accurately, often checking answers by using alternative methods of calculation. Mental and written methods of calculation are used well to solve problems accurately. A good standard of work was seen at Year 6 in the use of quadrants to translate shapes using positive and negative co-ordinates. The lessons for both of the set Year 6 groups were seen and it was clear from the observation of these lessons that the teachers had pitched their teaching very accurately at their pupils' level of understanding. Such careful planning of work to suit the needs of all pupils is a good feature of lessons throughout the school and promotes both good learning and a good level of interest in mathematics from the pupils.
132. The mathematics curriculum is structured well, with a good balance between the teaching of facts and knowledge and opportunities for pupils to use the skills needed for investigation. There is good application of mathematics in other subjects, such as when Year 3 pupils use the computer suite to set up a database using different fields, or when weather data from forecasts is used to decide on good places to have a relaxing holiday in the sunshine! Teachers' planning is good and emphasises the importance of giving the pupils a rich and varied mathematical diet, so that they are keen to learn and to explore the challenges of mathematics with confidence. This is reflected in their overall positive attitudes to school and to learning.
133. In both key stages pupils enjoy mathematics and they respond well to the challenge of their lessons. When asked if she enjoyed mathematics, one Year 4 child said that she did because her teacher had spent lots of time explaining fractions to her and so she understood them better. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and they try hard to make sure that they understand what their teachers are explaining. They respond with enjoyment to the first part of each lesson where they are expected to think quickly in response to mental arithmetic questions. Similarly, they take pride in their work during the second part of the lesson when they show their skills and knowledge in independent work. The pupils are diligent and conscientious when working independently and they co-operate very well when they are given problems to solve in groups. They talk with interest about mathematics, explaining what they like or find challenging using appropriate mathematical terms and many pupils

in different year groups say that mathematics is their favourite subject. The interest and enthusiasm shown for mathematics, in an atmosphere of trust in their teachers and confidence in their developing abilities, contributes very strongly to the pupils' attainment and learning.

134. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support and learn well as a result. A pupil whose work was tracked through from reception to Year 4 showed good year-on-year gains in attainment, despite having below average mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding. The school is actively promoting higher attainment for more able and talented pupils. Teaching in set groups at Key Stage 2 gives pupils of all abilities, including those with special needs and those who are more able, opportunities to learn at a pace and level well matched to their needs and talents.
135. There is good co-ordination of the subject. It is appropriate to the schools determination to raise attainment in mathematics that the co-ordinator is a member of the senior management team with good experience of piloting the numeracy strategy in her previous school. There is a strong whole-school commitment to raising standards in mathematics, supported by the effective work of the co-ordinator. By monitoring the impact of teaching on attainment, the co-ordinator makes a strong commitment of support to her colleagues which helps them in their drive to raise standards. The school development plan places improving attainment in mathematics high on its list of priorities, with a clear view of what action needs to be taken. The school is making very good progress towards achieving its own high expectations.

SCIENCE

136. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with what is expected nationally. In 1999, the teachers' own assessments of the pupils' attainment show attainment to be similar to the national average at the expected Level 2, but below the national average at the higher Level 3. Currently, the seven-year-olds are working at the level expected. They understand how their bodies change as they grow and they recognise the differences between dead and alive things such as when studying dead and alive fish and making comparisons. They use appropriate scientific terms when labelling diagrams and the more able pupils record their findings.
137. Standards of attainment in test results at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 were close to the national average and show an overall improvement of four per cent over the previous year. These results are broadly in line with what is expected nationally, although they are below the average of similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was above the national average in 1999. When compared with similar schools nationally, these results show performance close to the average for the higher Level 5.
138. Provisional analysis of the results for 2000 shows attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 which is above the national average and which well exceeds the schools own challenging target for this group of pupils. For the pupils attaining the higher Level 5 the results show attainment close to the national average at this level.
139. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are working at the level expected. They understand that blood circulates around the body and that heart and respiration rates increase following exercise. They predict and then devise methods to measure lung capacity. More able and talented pupils are encouraged to take notes during lessons, and do so with growing confidence and expertise. They also

undertake their own research and investigations into topics set, and present their findings to the class. Information and communications technology is used by all pupils to generate graphs of heart rates both before and after exercise. Younger pupils at Key Stage 2 discover what is needed to make an electrical circuit complete and how to investigate faults in circuits. In both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make good progress and attain well in relation to their potential. More able and talented pupils are given appropriate challenges to extend their learning and their understanding of scientific principles and investigations.

140. Overall, teaching is good. In nearly 50% of lessons, teaching was very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teachers have high expectations and pace lessons well. They encourage their pupils to share ideas and investigate hypotheses. In good lessons, pupils remain focussed on their learning and they use appropriate scientific vocabulary accurately. The use of terms such as ‘circuit’, ‘flow of electric current’ and ‘negative and positive terminals’ extends pupils’ awareness of the vocabulary of science. The pupils’ knowledge and understanding of what is needed to complete an electrical circuit is clearly shown in their use of batteries, wires, bulbs, connectors and switches. Good use is made of day-to-day assessments to inform teachers of what next steps their pupils need to take to consolidate or extend their learning. Where teaching is good, lessons are paced well and teacher knowledge is good. Skilfully, teachers direct pupils into making the discoveries that were planned for the activity. Where teaching is very good, it homes in on the interests of pupils in order to stimulate their enthusiasm, such as when measuring their own respiratory rate. In lessons such as this, pupils make very good progress.
141. In lessons observed attitudes are good. Pupils have good responses to their teachers’ high expectations and they make good use of the time given to complete a task. They work well together, sharing equipment and discussing their ideas well. These lessons contribute well to the pupils’ social development. One pupil was very keen to help another group when their circuit failed to work, suggesting that they try his wires as ‘sometimes they get broken inside’. Good attitudes to learning result in good discussion taking place when, for example, Year 2 pupils are thinking about how the physical attributes of birds are adapted for different environments. There are good links to other subjects, such as when pupils look at what factors influence the weather when studying the climate of other countries in geography. Spirituality is developed very well through science. A very good example of this was seen when a Year 2 class wondered at the beauty of bird flight when watching a video film of Japanese cranes. The good and very good attitudes of the pupils have a significant impact on their learning; by listening well and with interest, and by working hard to investigate and experiment, they develop a good body of knowledge and better understanding of scientific principles.
142. Since the last inspection satisfactory standards of attainment have been maintained. Clear targets of achievement for pupils’ learning have been set. A very structured cycle of planning, assessment, recording and monitoring has been established. Procedures for assessment are well established, identifying the range of achievement clearly, so helping teachers to plan well to address the needs of all pupils. Knowledge and skills are, therefore, progressively developed. This is evident in the improvement in pupils’ levels of scientific enquiry.
143. The subject co-ordinator has a very clear vision for the future development of the subject. Planning and assessment are regularly monitored, detailed criteria for assessment are in place and teacher’s expectations are high. A very well co-ordinated rolling programme of planning has been developed to ensure that pupils taught in mixed age classes receive the full curriculum. Resources are good and well organised. They are held centrally in topic boxes for each year and are regularly renewed and replenished.

ART

144. At the time of the previous inspection standards were judged to be in line with those expected nationally at both key stages. The finding of the present inspection is that standards are now above national expectations at both key stages. The school has therefore shown good improvement in standards in art since the last inspection.
145. At Key Stage 1 pupils are given experience of the full range of art activities. They learn to mix colours and to work in a good range of media. Displays of pupils' work around the entrance foyer and the Reception and Year 1 class base show good quality examples of collage, painting, tie-dying, hand-prints, drawings, self-portraits and 3D models. All are displayed with care and the effect is of high-quality presentation of pupils' work. The Key Stage 1 art club also makes a valuable contribution to the subject. Some 40 pupils attend regularly and parents come to help. The pupils are given a wide range of exciting art activities in the club, and all participate with enthusiasm.
146. As they move through Key Stage 2 pupils continue to develop their art skills. They keep regular sketch books which show the improvement of their skills over time. Year 6 pupils are studying the work of William Morris and pupils of all abilities are challenged to use his ideas and style to design tiles. There are good links to religious education and mathematics in the way in which Islamic patterns have been investigated in relation to the repeating translations of Morris designs. Support staff are well used, and one, who is also a local artist, helps pupils to develop their sketching techniques. Such support particularly benefits those pupils who have a gift for art. The lesson was well taught and the pupils were engrossed in their work. The result is that pupils of all abilities produce good work.
147. The teaching of art is very good overall. One excellent lesson was seen at Key Stage 2 and all other lessons are good or very good. Half of the lessons seen were very good. Teachers generally are imaginative in their choice of activities. They are very good at teaching about the lives of famous artists, so that pupils develop an understanding of how works of art are conceived, and how events in the artist's life can effect the work. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, pupils learn about the life and work of Vincent Van Gogh. The pupils discuss the same ideas as inspired the artist, and very good teaching enables them to learn well about the artist's feelings and background. Skilled use is also made of display to enhance the quality of work produced. Teachers work hard to produce colourful and varied displays which make use of pupils' work, books, photographs and both pictures and written work produced on the computer. These high quality displays make a very good contribution to the standards achieved. More able and talented pupils have good opportunities to show their skills and produce work of a high quality, such as the complex symmetrical patterns designed by the pupils in Year 6, which link to their work in mathematics. The pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the subject and produce work of good quality, often to the good of their self-esteem when they display their work with pride.
148. Although space is restricted in some classrooms, particularly in Years 3, 4 and 5, teachers work well to minimise the negative effects on practical activities. The subject is well co-ordinated and resources are good. Assessment procedures are informal at present, but plans are in hand to give attention to this area. Recently work has also been done on ways of achieving better integration of aspects of information and control technology into art. This work needs to continue so that fuller use is made of information and communications technology as a tool for work in this area of the curriculum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

149. The school's previous inspection found standards to be above those found nationally. The result of the present inspection is that the standards found in the school are still better than average. The school

has therefore maintained good standards over the intervening time. Although little teaching of design and technology was seen during the inspection, evidence from pupils' previous work seen, displays around the school and discussions with teachers and pupils are sufficient to show that standards are above national expectations at both key stages.

150. As they move through Key Stage 1, the pupils are given a range of worthwhile experiences which develop their design and technology skills and introduce them to the process of designing, making and evaluating in a range of contexts. In a well-planned Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils design and make their own sunglasses. The teacher challenges them to say what tools they will need and how they will cut out the central holes where the lenses will need to go. The teacher shows good subject knowledge and is skilled in promoting very good learning for pupils of all abilities. The pupils work well together, sharing and co-operating well in their practical work.
151. By the time they are at Key Stage 2, pupils are undertaking more complex tasks that need higher levels of skill. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils are developing their designs for a rainforest collage. In previous lessons they have worked through the design process, and are now ready to begin their own pictures. The lesson is well taught and the teacher reminds pupils of the challenge by referring back to what has already been decided. The teacher provides a range of interesting and stimulating resources which make a positive contribution to the quality of the work. The pace of work is good throughout the lesson, and pupils of all abilities are fully included, and learn well. The standards of attainment seen in this lesson are above those expected nationally. Pupils have had good experience of the whole design process, and are now able to work with some accuracy in a range of materials, paying good attention to function and quality of finish. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress and receive good quality support to help them to achieve success. More able and talented pupils learn well from the opportunity to investigate the relationship between planning and designing an item and refining their design before committing time and effort to making it.
152. Other work seen shows that pupils work on the whole range of the design and technology curriculum. In a Year 6 classroom pupils have been working on structures which require to be strengthened. Pupils have been exploring a range of techniques for joining materials, and evaluating the different methods.
153. Only two lessons were seen, one of which was very good and the other good. Overall the evidence shows that the basic skills of design and technology are well taught, the work is well planned, and teachers generally have high expectations. Some teachers lack confidence in teaching some areas of the design and technology curriculum, and although the school's good planning and monitoring procedures ensure that good practice is disseminated, there is still a need for ongoing in-service training to ensure that all teachers update their knowledge and skills regularly. The range of topics chosen is good, and the interesting practical activities stimulate the interest of pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs. They are also taught to pay due attention to safety as they work and to use tools and equipment carefully.
154. The school has a good range of resources, and most are of good quality. They are conveniently and safely stored, although the area is rather too small for the equipment stored there. Some classrooms are also small and lacking in space for work on practical activities. Teachers, however, show ingenuity in minimising the effects of the lack of space, and standards do not suffer as a result.

GEOGRAPHY

155. At the time of the last inspection standards were found to be satisfactory at both key stages. Now, standards in geography remain satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and they are good at Key Stage 2, showing an improvement from the last inspection.
156. By the age of seven, pupils know about their local area and identify key amenities of a community, such as the school, shops, the church and the local post office. Eleven year olds can place the important cities of the United Kingdom on a map and they know the global position of the major countries of the world. They identify key amenities in their locality and investigate what could make their community safer and more environmentally appealing.
157. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils work in books and displayed on walls shows that pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum in the subject and make sound progress in their acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Good use is made of visits to sites away from the school, including a residential visit for Year 6 pupils to Dorset, to compare and contrast the pupils' home environment with others elsewhere. They talk with fondness about these visits and show a keen awareness of the value of them as part of their own learning.
158. Three lessons were seen, one of which was very good and the others good. In one good lesson at Key Stage 2, pupils used an extensive range of non-fiction resources to compare and contrast weather patterns and, on a cold November day, they enjoyed thinking about the sunnier climes of the Caribbean! Year 6 pupils investigating the flow of traffic around their school made very intelligent suggestions for traffic calming measures, taking into account the safety of pedestrians and the needs of vehicle drivers. This well planned activity gave good opportunities for the more able and talented pupils to extend their thinking and decision making skills when considering the impact of traffic calming on a housing estate.
159. The scheme of work is used well to inform planning. It is supportive of good teaching by providing a good knowledge base from which teachers can develop and extend their own subject knowledge. The co-ordinator has worked hard to provide support to her colleagues so that the subject can be taught well throughout the school. A good scheme of work and supporting documentation sets a high standard for teaching and learning and effectively contributes to continued improvement of the subject. Procedures for reviewing pupils' progress and assessing their attainment are still in the very early stages. The model of assessment provided by, for example, the science curriculum could provide a good guide for the development of assessment in geography.

HISTORY

160. The school's previous inspection found satisfactory standards in history. At both key stages the present inspection found standards to be in line with expectations. The school has therefore maintained satisfactory standards in the subject.
161. As they move through the school pupils are given a series of worthwhile experiences as part of the school's two-year topic cycle. They develop their understanding of chronology and of the differences between their own lives and those of people in the past.
162. The teaching of history is good overall. Of the three lessons seen, one was very good and the others were good. Teachers carefully plan exciting work and activities that are well matched to their pupils' abilities and interests. The teaching motivates the pupils well, they apply themselves with enthusiasm and show much interest in their work. In a Year 1 lesson pupils learned about the great

fire of London. The teacher tells the story well and the pupils are fascinated by the events described. They participate well in the role-play of being people living in London at the time and are absorbed by the account retold from the diary of Samuel Pepys. The lesson shows good development of awareness of chronology and of the differences between life now and then. When the teacher asks what they would have done if they had seen the great fire of London, one child replies that he would 'phone the fire-brigade'. This leads to a very useful discussion of whether this would have been possible, which the teacher handles very well. The discussion provided a good opportunity for pupils with a particular interest in the subject to think deeply about anachronisms between periods in history.

163. In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to develop their historical awareness. Year 6 pupils are investigating Victorian school life. The teacher uses a very good range and extent of activities to engage the pupils' interest. Pupils undertake a role-play to explore how they would have reacted to Victorian conditions. Then they watch a computer presentation about Victorian life, prepared and presented by a group of pupils themselves. It is presented with confidence and enthusiasm, and shows excellent use of the up-to-date information technology hardware and software used by the pupils themselves to develop the presentation.
164. The subject is effectively co-ordinated. Although the co-ordinator is new to the role she has already made a good start to her duties, and is now looking at ways of tracking coverage of the history curriculum within the cross-curricular topic cycle. Other areas for development, planned into the co-ordinator's subject improvement plan, are the development of assessment procedures and the more systematic and extensive use of information and communications technology as a tool for work in the subject. The school's resources for history are satisfactory, and they are centrally stored and easily accessible.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

165. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make sound progress in their learning and, by the age of seven, their attainment is satisfactory. By the age of 11, pupils' attainment is good and they make good progress. Their command and use of information and technology skills are good. Overall, there is good improvement in the standards attained in comparison with those found in the previous inspection.
166. By the time they reach the age of seven the pupils show confidence in using computers. Their ability to store and retrieve work is sound and they can communicate information using simple computer generated graphs. The youngest pupils gain effective control of the mouse through practise with suitably challenging programmes.
167. By the age of 11, pupils use computers to prepare slides using the 'Powerpoint' programme and present a talk on the Victorians using these slides with a projector linked to the computer. They input information to produce line graphs when investigating heart rate as part of a science topic. Year 5 pupils use photographs taken with a digital camera to help them to suggest ideas about how the outside areas of the school could be improved. All pupils show confidence in using this technology and applying the skills they have been taught such as using menus and tools within programmes. Their skilfulness and use of information and communications technology to support and extend their learning in other subjects is very good. Younger pupils at Key Stage 2 acquire good knowledge, understanding and skills, such as when Year 3 pupils entered data on personal characteristics into a database programme for retrieval and analysis later. All pupils in the class achieved the target set for the lesson and saved their data. Later in the week, the same pupils were seen to retrieve their information and accurately answer questions set by their teacher.

168. Two lessons were observed at Key Stage 2 one of which was very good and the other good. Little direct teaching was observed at Key Stage 1 and in the Foundation Stage. Evidence was gathered from a range of sources, such as discussion with pupils and staff, scrutiny of pupils' previous work and observations of pupils working at the computers. Teaching is very good at both key stages. Where pupils were seen to receive instruction, teachers gave very good support and encouragement, demonstrating very good depth of subject knowledge and understanding of the pupils' needs. Pupils in turn show a keen interest in the tasks and enthusiasm for their work.
169. Many opportunities are provided to use information and communications technology to support work in other subjects, such as history, mathematics, science and English. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They have a very good response to the subject and they work well collaboratively. Pupils work very well on computers and they handle the equipment carefully. There is a very well equipped central computer suite and it is used extensively to the benefit of all pupils. Additionally, all rooms and bases have at least two computers. All are networked with access to the Dudley Grid for Learning.
170. There are two extra-curricular computer clubs. The commitment and interest shown by pupils and adults working together in these clubs is outstanding, whether when designing a poppy for Remembrance Day in the Key Stage 1 club or, as in Key Stage 2, tracking the course of a hot air balloon, a Dudley Schools project, as it makes its way around the world.
171. The co-ordination of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator promotes positive leadership. A very significant amount of curriculum development has taken place in a short period of time. The scheme of work gives teachers clear support by providing a progressive programme for the teaching of specific skills. Assessment procedures are in place and a portfolio of levelled work is kept. An action plan is being developed, the main purpose of which is to develop staff awareness of the use of information and communications technology across the whole curriculum. There are regular meetings between the co-ordinator and her colleagues to discuss planning and there is a strong commitment to the continued development of the subject throughout the school.
172. Good progress has been made in the provision of this subject since the previous inspection. The school has been successful in raising achievement, particularly at Key Stage 2. Standards of attainment by the age of 11 are now good. Resources are very good with the addition of the computer suite, networking of the system throughout the school and access to the world-wide information system on the Internet.

MUSIC

173. Music was judged to be above national expectations overall at the time of the previous inspection. Standards are now well above those attained nationally, and the school has therefore shown good improvement. The quality of the school's provision in this area is excellent and music permeates the work of the school, enriching the cultural and social lives of all its pupils. Very good use is made of the Local Authority peripatetic music service, with lessons being given in singing, strings, brass, woodwind and keyboard. These classes enable the higher attaining pupils to achieve well, and the school identifies gifted and talented musicians so that their needs can be fully met.

174. The school also has an active choir, orchestra and recorder groups, and these are enthusiastically attended by large numbers of pupils. Teachers give up their spare time to extend these activities outside of the normal school day and this work contributes significantly to the standards achieved.
175. At Key Stage 1 pupils sing well, learning about pitch and rhythm. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils explore different sound sources, to develop their understanding of pitch. They use different percussion instruments, and take turns to accompany the class in improvised rhythms. Pupils are excited and involved in the activities, they work well and are eager to participate. The very good teaching enables pupils of all abilities to make good gains in learning.
176. In the Key Stage 2 classes, pupils continue to develop their knowledge of music and their understanding of its beauty and complexities. The range of music used in lessons and assemblies enables them to experience music of a wide variety of styles and genres and from an extensive range of world cultures. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils learn about the blues style of music played by black Americans.
177. The quality of teaching is excellent overall. Two out of three lessons seen were excellent and the other was very good. Excellent teaching challenges pupils of all abilities. Teaching is very well informed by a high level of subject knowledge and expertise. This motivates the pupils extremely well and promotes maximum involvement and participation. When composing their own blues music, for example, using a wide range of instruments, pupils work together well, sharing the instruments, listening to each other's performances and working out ways to improve. There is an impressive sense of creative music-making and very high standards are achieved.
178. The school has been successful in spreading good practice in music teaching throughout the teaching staff at both key stages. The music co-ordinator is a music specialist, but she has worked alongside colleagues over a long period to ensure that there is a consistency of approach which promotes high standards at all stages. This has led to a very strong commitment to teaching music throughout the school which contributes to the high standards achieved. New and less experienced teachers are well supported and they develop the confidence to make an effective contribution to the high standards
179. The subject is excellently managed and led, both by the co-ordinator and by senior management who ensure that the work reflects the school's ethos. The work of the co-ordinator is of high quality and provides inspiration for both colleagues and pupils. She promotes the subject with great enthusiasm and ensures that music permeates, enriches and extends the curriculum. Resources for music are very good and all areas of the curriculum are well catered-for. The school has a range of good quality resources which enable it to reflect music from a wide range of different cultures. This contributes well to the pupils' awareness and developing knowledge of cultural traditions besides their own. Pupils take part in local Dance and Music festivals, and go out of school to perform in a range of community musical activities.
180. At present there is little assessment in the subject. The school is addressing this issue and plans to move ahead by putting systematic assessment procedures in place which will enable teachers to use assessment information to inform their future planning.
181. Work is in hand to find more opportunities to use information and control technology in music. A 'music station' is being set up in the information and communications technology suite, and this,

together with more widespread use of information and communications technology in class music lessons, will provide more frequent experiences for pupils in this area.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

182. Standards in physical education were above national expectations at the time of the last inspection, and they were found to be similar overall in the present inspection. The school has therefore maintained good standards. There is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls and all are given equal access to all areas of the curriculum, including pupils with special educational needs.
183. In the Key Stage 1 classes pupils develop their skills in dance, gymnastics and games. They join in with enthusiasm, as, for example, when Reception and Year 1 pupils work on different ways of moving around the hall. They discuss how the activities make their hearts beat faster and the reasons for this. They show very positive attitudes towards being creative, and the teacher gives them turns at observing each other and commenting on performance. The teacher maintains a lively pace throughout the lesson, and her good subject-knowledge enables her to ensure that pupils of all abilities are fully involved and challenged by the work. The pupils are developing good understanding of basic gymnastic skills and of the effects of exercise on their bodies.
184. At Key Stage 2 the development of skills continues well. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, pupils respond in dance to the moods suggested by music. The teacher participates fully in the lesson, and her enthusiasm is communicated very well to the pupils. They discuss body shape, level and sequence of movements and the contrast between happy and sad music. The pupils respond very well to the music and are good at putting the ideas suggested by the teacher into practice. They applaud spontaneously when someone demonstrates an idea well, which typifies the good attitudes found throughout the school. The teacher leads a discussion of what pupils have done, how they could improve it, and how well they have learned during the lesson.
185. Also at Key Stage 2 pupils swim at the local secondary school pool. The lessons are taught by a local authority swimming teacher, with the class teacher and classroom assistant helping. The less confident pupils are well supported, and all abilities are given appropriate activities to develop their swimming skills. There is an atmosphere of enjoyment in the lesson and the pupils' behaviour is good throughout. They respond well to effective instruction which enables them to be safe and confident in the water. By the time they reach the end of the key stage all pupils achieve the 25 metres award. Those pupils who are well able or have a talent for swimming go on to achieve much higher levels.
186. The teaching of physical education is good overall at both key stages. Of the four lessons seen, one was very good and the others were all good. Teachers generally are enthusiastic and lively in their approach. The work is well planned, and all areas of the curriculum are given appropriate coverage.
187. The co-ordinator is new to the task and this is his first subject management role. He is appropriately qualified, and has an enthusiastic approach. He has made a start to an inventory of resources and new schemes of work in line with Curriculum 2000 are in place. Overall the subject is effectively co-ordinated. Resources for the subject are good. They are sufficient in quantity and most are of good quality. The school has good facilities for all aspects of PE. The hall is large, and there are grassed and hard-surfaced areas outside which are appropriate for all PE activities. The school's annual

residential visit provides opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities. The use of assessment to inform teachers' planning is under-developed at present and attention needs to be given to this area, extending the good practice which already exists in English, mathematics and science.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

188. The standard of attainment is good in both key stages, when measured against the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection, which found standards to be satisfactory.
189. Pupils are taught about a wide range of world faiths, including Judaism, Buddhism and the Hindu way of life, with an appropriate emphasis on Christianity. They learn much from direct experience, including visits to local places of worship and role play back in school, such as when emulating the precise and complex rituals Muslims practice in preparation for worship and prayer.
190. The scheme of work is well planned. It gives all teachers, including non-specialists, clear guidance on planning lessons and teaching effectively. By using the scheme of work and associated guidance, teachers develop good knowledge of the subject. The content of their lessons is, therefore, very well planned and a good contribution is made to the overall quality of teaching.
191. All lessons seen during the inspection were good. The pupils learn well as a result of the good teaching and their own good attitudes. They enjoy lessons and discuss openly and thoughtfully the fundamental principles that underpin faith commitment. They show very deep respect for the cultural differences which exist between the different faiths of our world and they empathise well with the idea that faith of any kind is a personal commitment, however it is expressed.
192. Religious education makes a very good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils. The co-ordinator has led staff training on how these aspects of pupils' development can be incorporated into religious education lessons. Such training has clearly influenced the way in which teachers organise their lessons. For example, in a year three lesson, pupils came to a better understanding of the Hindu way of life by performing Diwali rituals as a role play in a reverent and spiritually uplifting atmosphere.
193. In the few lessons seen, teaching was very good. The role model set by the teachers makes a very strong contribution to the pupils' respect for, and understanding of, other people's faith commitment. Teachers explain the features of faith ritual and teaching well and encourage the pupils to compare and contrast faiths of the world. This gives the pupils a deeper understanding of how God is seen in different forms in different faiths.
194. Pupils show very good respect for the artefacts associated with each faith they study. They understand very well how these symbols have deep and significant meaning for people. When making their own representations of such symbols of faith, they do so with care and value their importance.
195. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and has a strong personal commitment to promoting the subject throughout the school. There are good arrangements for assessing the quality of pupils' work against measures agreed by all the staff, using a portfolio of good work collected from each year group as the benchmark and collated by the co-ordinator. There are clear signs that religious education is a developing strength of the school.