

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST SAVIOUR'S CE (C) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Talke, Stoke-on-Trent

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124255

Headteacher: Mr S W Humphrey

Reporting inspector: Mr J J Peacock  
25344

Dates of inspection: 16 - 19 October 2000

Inspection number: 224479

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:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Congleton Road Talke Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST7 1LW
Telephone number:	01782 296700
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr David Howe
Date of previous inspection:	December 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr J J Peacock OIN 25344	Registered inspector	Areas of learning for children under five Science Design and technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements How well pupils are taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs S Gurney OIN 9504	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Pupils attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr J Stirrup OIN 2200	Team inspector	English Art Geography Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mrs B Magson OIN 18143	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology History Music Special educational needs Equal opportunities	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Saviour's Church of England Controlled Infant and Junior School caters for pupils from four to 11 years of age and is smaller than other primary schools. There are 73 boys and 89 girls on roll. Numbers have decreased by 20 since the time of the previous inspection. All pupils are taught in three mixed age classes in the junior department but in the infant department, the three classes have single age groups. Almost all pupils come from inside the school's normal zone, which falls inside the parish boundary of St Martin's Church. The attainment of the majority of four year olds when they start school in September in the reception class is broadly average for children of this age.

There are no pupils from homes where English is their second spoken language. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals, 24 per cent, is broadly in line with the national average. The school has 20 per cent of pupils on its register with special educational needs, which is about average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs (1.2 per cent) is below average. The mobility of pupils is not a problem for the school as 14 pupils were admitted and only four left during term time last year.

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

This is an effective school where the strengths far outweigh the weaknesses. Standards have improved in most subjects since the previous inspection in December 1996. This is largely because of the very good leadership provided by the experienced and caring headteacher and the fact that the teaching staff work so well as a team, having been together for over 18 years. Consistently good teaching means that pupils are interested in their work and keen to do well. All pupils show a very good attitude to learning and their behaviour in lessons is good. As a result, almost all are working at or near to their capacity and making good progress. When all these factors are considered, along with the slightly above average level of funding, the school is providing good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve well above average standards in science and above average standards in English, mathematics, art, design and technology and history at both key stages.
- The overall provision and good quality of teaching for children under five.
- The quality of teaching throughout the school is consistently good, helping pupils to learn effectively and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good, with all showing a keen interest and involvement in activities.
- Relationships within school are very good.
- The leadership of the headteacher and key staff provides very good educational direction.
- There is a strong team spirit and the capacity to succeed is very good.

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

- Standards in information and communication technology are below the national expectation for pupils at the end of both key stages.
- Legal requirements in the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are not met.
- The partnership with parents.

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

The school has already identified information and communication technology for improvement in its current management plan and is due to receive a substantial government grant to improve resources shortly.

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in December 1996. There has been a steady improvement in standards, brought about by an experienced and knowledgeable teaching staff. Action has been taken to address all six key issues raised previously, with different levels of success. The headteacher and key staff now provide a clear educational direction for the school, but there is still scope to strengthen the senior management team by including a teacher from Key Stage 1. Standards have improved markedly in design and technology and pupils are given good opportunities to be independent and to work creatively. The quality of the curriculum is monitored and evaluated well and identified weaknesses become priorities for development. These priorities are carefully linked to the availability of the school's financial resources each year. The school has few gifted or talented pupils, but all teachers include work which is sufficiently challenging and of interest to more able pupils in their planning. As a result, pupils are achieving at above average levels at both key stages in six of the ten subjects of the National Curriculum. Little progress appears to have been made to involve parents more in their children's learning and the life and work of the school. It is apparent from the analysis of the questionnaires that some parents remain dissatisfied with this area. Overall, the pace of improvement has been satisfactory. The school has the leadership, experienced staff and commitment needed to continue to improve.

## 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	D	A	A	A*
mathematics	D	C	B	A
science	D	B	A	A

Key	
Very high	A*
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

The consistently good quality of teaching, together with pupils' positive attitudes is having a marked effect on standards, which are improving year on year. The exception was in 2000, when there was a higher than normal proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6. Parents were informed so that they did not link this dip in standards with the introduction of mixed age classes, brought about by the cut in staffing levels. Inspectors noted much progress by the age of eleven, from when pupils started at the school with broadly average levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, despite the limited provision and planning to meet their specific needs. Their progress is wholly attributable to the quality of teaching and support they receive in class from experienced teachers.

Targets for English and mathematics are increased by four per cent and 11 per cent respectively for the next two years. They are realistically based on a detailed assessment of pupils' potential. The table above shows that in 1999, in comparison to similar schools, standards in English were very high and well above average in mathematics and science. The successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is having a significant effect on standards in English and mathematics. The school has also introduced grouping by ability in mathematics and in science, pupils are taught in single age groups. This is helping to maintain high standards in science, which is a strength of the school. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Key Stage 2, Year 6 pupils are on course to achieve above average standards in English and mathematics and standards well above average in science. Pupils also achieve above average standards in art, design and technology and history but in information and communication technology, they are below those normally seen. In religious education, standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The pattern is



the same for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1. Children under five in the Foundation Stage make a good start to their schooling because of the overall quality of the provision they receive.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils respond very well in class to the good teaching they receive and all show an eagerness to learn and take pride in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Pupils behave very well in lessons, but during the lunch break in particular, inspectors noted some thoughtless and unacceptable behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good overall. Most pupils play happily together and relate well to their teachers and to one another. Effective teaching encourages pupils to work well independently and to act responsibly.
Attendance	Satisfactory overall. Pupils' punctuality is very good.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school. It has improved a great deal since the previous inspection when ten per cent was judged to be unsatisfactory. During this inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The quality of teaching was very good or excellent in one third of lessons, with virtually all teachers producing some lessons of this high quality, and good or better teaching featured in three quarters of all lessons. In literacy and numeracy lessons the quality of teaching was good in all classes. Teachers, for example, very effectively taught numeracy skills to groups of pupils of similar abilities at Key Stage 2. The skills pupils gain in literacy and numeracy are well promoted in lessons other than English and mathematics. However, the control element of the information and communication curriculum is not well taught, and with unsatisfactory resources, teachers do not use computers well to support work in all subjects.

The quality of teaching for children under five in the Foundation Stage is good, giving children a flying start to their education. All appear happy and keen to learn. The experienced teaching staff show very good knowledge of the curriculum and an understanding of the way pupils learn. Their careful assessment of the impact of their teaching and the very good use they make of the results ensure that pupils learn progressively. These are the key features in the quality of teaching found at the school. All teachers are extremely conscientious and approach lessons with enthusiasm. Using their experience, teachers support pupils with special educational needs well and they make satisfactory progress in their learning. Sufficient challenge is included in their lesson planning to help more able pupils to reach their full potential. Homework is used well to promote learning for children under five and pupils at Key Stage 1. It is used satisfactorily with older pupils at Key Stage 2. Pupils concentrate very well and work hard to produce neatly presented work. All make good gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding, because of the effective teaching.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. With the exception of the control element in information and communication technology, all subjects meet the statutory requirements. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and the Numeracy Strategy very well. The provision for extra curricular activities is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Unsatisfactory. Many pupils do not have an up to date individual education plan with clear, specific targets for improving areas of weakness. In spite of this, most make satisfactory progress alongside other pupils because of the support their experienced teachers provide.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The aims of the school reflect the Church of England controlled status well. The concern for pupils' personal development and their understanding of good citizenship has a positive impact on the way they conduct themselves in school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils well and provide a caring and supportive environment. Attendance is monitored satisfactorily. Procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour are satisfactory, but there are no clear procedures in place to reduce or respond to incidents of aggressive behaviour. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are good.

The school's response to the previous inspection issue about involving parents more in the life and work of the school has been unsatisfactory and this adversely affects some parents' views about the school. The quality of information sent home, which includes pupils' annual reports is satisfactory.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher's leadership is very good. His expertise, experience and determination to raise standards ensure a clear educational direction. Effective delegation allows the deputy head teacher and subject coordinators to play a vital role in the development of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors provide satisfactory support, but they are not sufficiently involved in development planning or its evaluation. Spending is strictly controlled and the best value obtained in all expenditures. Satisfactory use is made of new technology. Statutory requirements in respect of the Code of Practice for pupils with special needs and information in documents to parents are not met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The quality of teaching is effectively monitored in some subjects and the school is successfully developing strategies to monitor its performance more closely in all aspects and subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Teachers are deployed effectively. Learning resources, with the exception of computers, are used to good effect by teachers. Specific grants are all spent appropriately.

Staffing levels are good. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, but the internal decoration in some classrooms needs improving. The school grounds are spacious with adequate grass and hard play areas but the outdoor area for children under five is under developed. Resources are satisfactory overall, the exceptions being computers and outdoor play equipment for the under fives which are unsatisfactory.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school.</li> <li>• Children make good progress.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school expects pupils to work hard.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils' behaviour.</li> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• Information about how their child is getting on.</li> <li>• The way they are received when they have a problem or complaint.</li> <li>• The school working more closely with parents.</li> <li>• The way the school is led and managed.</li> <li>• The range of activities for pupils outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The school sent out 169 questionnaires and had 89 returned, giving a return rate of 51 per cent. Only four parents attended the meeting for parents prior to the inspection. Inspectors' judgements wholeheartedly support parents' very positive views about teaching, the way pupils work hard and the standards pupils achieve. We fully understand parents' anxieties over the anti-social behaviour of a small minority of pupils particularly at lunchtime and expect the school to develop clear strategies, communicated to parents, to try and deal with it better than they have in the past. The school should also take action to involve parents more and improve parental relationships so that all can feel comfortable about approaching the school, for whatever reason. However, we found the range of activities outside normal lessons to be satisfactory for a school of this size and type, and the amount of homework to be appropriate for the age of pupils. The inspection team strongly disagree with those parents who feel the school is not well led or managed.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 Children enter the reception class in the September after their fourth birthday with levels of attainment which are broadly average for children of this age. A small number have been identified as having special educational needs following a series of assessments carried out within the first two weeks of the term. Most appear to be settling into school well. The school plans work well, in line with requirements of the Early Learning Goals in the Foundation Stage. As a result, the achievement of most children and the progress they make in language and literacy, mathematics, in their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and in their personal, social and emotional development is good. For example, children listen well to all adults, they respond to instructions and sit and listen attentively to stories. They answer questions politely, do not call out and listen to other children's answers in literacy sessions. However, their progress in physical development is satisfactory mainly because of the quality of the curriculum with which they are provided. The lack of a suitably developed outdoor play area and an acute shortage of large play apparatus and wheeled toys adversely affect all children's physical development. Nevertheless, all pupils are expected to attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they are six.
- 2 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment, taking into account test results in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils' work in most subjects, is generally above the national average. This is an improvement since the previous inspection in December 1996, which judged pupils to be achieving standards which were in line with national expectations in all subjects at both key stages except in design and technology which was below. Since the previous inspection, the school has consistently improved standards in reading, writing and mathematics in the national tests for seven year olds at the end of Key Stage 1, keeping pace with improvements nationally. Results in the 1999 tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that, in comparison with all schools, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were above the national average. However, when the school's performance is compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' results in all three areas are well above average. The results for science, based on teacher assessments show 79 per cent achieving the expected Level 2 or above which is well below the national average with 33 per cent achieving the higher Level 3 which was well above average. The results of the last three years show that both boys and girls attained equally well in all areas and that the school is successfully maintaining its high standards.
- 3 The unpublished national test results for the year 2000 show a decrease in the proportion achieving Level 2 or above in reading and writing. The school identified the cause as the higher proportion of boys in the year group. It is a national trend that boys generally do not do as well as girls in reading and writing. In mathematics however, the consistently good picture has been maintained. In the teacher assessments in science, pupils continue to do as well as in previous years and achieve standards, which are well above average.
- 4 Work seen during the inspection indicates that, by the end of Key Stage 1, the standards that pupils attain are above the national average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Overall, standards in English are above average. Pupils' listening skills are generally above average and they are provided with regular opportunities to express themselves in class discussions. This is having a good effect on their ability to express themselves. Pupils make good progress in their speaking and listening skills from when they start in the reception class. Reading is well taught and as a result, pupils develop their technical skills well, reading with understanding. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to write as they retell stories, write letters or poems and explore issues such as bullying. In mathematics, standards of work show attainment to be above average and most pupils appear to enjoy counting and using 'big numbers'. Much work of a practical nature is undertaken in science and with the very good quality of teaching, standards are well above average. Pupils also achieve standards, which are above those normally seen in art, design and technology and history. In geography, music and physical education, standards are in line with those normally seen. However, in information and communication technology pupils' achievements are below national expectations. In religious

education, pupils make satisfactory progress towards the requirements and demands of the locally agreed syllabus.

- 5 The above average standards that pupils attain at the end of Key Stage 1 are a reflection of how well they are taught and their very good attitudes towards their learning. Almost all parents who returned the questionnaire believe that their children are making good progress. Virtually all, 91 per cent, agree that the school expects children to work hard and achieve their best.
- 6 Pupils continue to make good progress in the Key Stage 2 classes. Inspection findings indicate that by the time they are ready to leave the school at the end of Year 6, attainment in English and mathematics is above average and in science it is well above average. The results of National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in 1999 showed that pupils' achievements were well above average in English and science and above the national average in mathematics. When these results are compared with those of pupils from similar backgrounds, they are very high in English and well above average in mathematics and science. Grouping by prior attainment in mathematics, with pupils of similar abilities being taught in four groups and teaching science to four single age year groups is helping to maintain the high standards. The successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is also having a marked effect on standards. In the unpublished results for year 2000, there has been a significant drop in standards. This was anticipated and reported to parents to avoid the wrong conclusions being drawn as a result of the reduction in staffing and the creation of three mixed age classes. A large proportion of the group who took the tests were, or had been, on the school's register for pupils with special educational needs. The trend for the past three years has been one of improvement with more and more pupils achieving the higher Level 5 each year. Until this year, improvements have kept pace with improvements nationally. In science however, pupils at the school appear to be doing particularly well with almost all pupils achieving the expected level for eleven year olds and almost half achieving the higher Level 5. Inspection evidence confirms that standards for the current year 6 pupils are above average in English and mathematics and well above in science. In other subjects at Key Stage 2, standards of attainment follow the pattern found at the end of Key Stage 1, being above those normally seen in six of the ten national curriculum subjects. This shows that the school is effective with the vast majority of pupils making good progress from when they entered the school with levels of attainment which were broadly average. This applies to English, mathematics, science, art, design and technology and history. In geography, physical education and music standards are in line with those normally expected for pupils of this age. Attainment is below the level expected in information and communication technology. The shortage of computers in classrooms and lack of opportunity for pupils to use them in many of their lessons being the main reasons for this. In religious education, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress towards the requirements and demands of the locally agreed syllabus.
- 7 The consistently good quality of teaching is an important factor in the good progress most pupils make throughout both key stages. The successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has undoubtedly helped to raise standards in English and mathematics. Well chosen texts and the teachers' skill in drawing pupils' attention to important differences in style, structure and content improve pupils' reading skills and widens their vocabulary. The partnership between home and school in reading is strong, particularly with younger pupils, and this also contributes effectively to the good progress pupils make. Lower attaining pupils benefit from the additional support they receive in the classroom from their teachers. Inspection evidence shows that pupils have good opportunities to develop their reading skills. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to put into practice the writing skills acquired in the literacy hour in other subjects of the curriculum. This effectively develops pupils' skills in planning, drafting and editing their writing. However, few pupils use computers to perform these tasks. At Key Stages 1 and 2, much emphasis is placed on the development of handwriting skills and work in pupils' books is invariably neat and tidy. When the number of pupils reduced and the school had to introduce mixed age classes in the junior classes, it was decided to group pupils by ability into four groups for mathematics. This is proving to be a very effective strategy and makes a strong contribution to pupils' ability with numbers and calculations.
- 8 Standards of attainment in science are well above the national average by the end of both key stages. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when they were in line

with the average at both key stages. In the junior classes science is taught to pupils in four single age groups, making the number in each group fairly small. The opportunities provided for pupils to investigate and conduct experiments are very good and this is a significant factor in maintaining the high standards. The science coordinator manages the subject well, giving much advice and support to all teachers. All teachers show confidence when teaching science and are guided effectively by the very good programme of work. Boys and girls both enjoy the practical approach and work hard in lessons to complete their work. As a result, there is no difference in the performance of girls and boys.

- 9 Standards of attainment in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory by the end of both key stages. They have not been maintained at the level they were in the previous inspection, when pupils generally attained expected national standards. Most pupils have computers at home and this undoubtedly helps with the development of basic skills. There has been little investment in new computers and as a result, resources are insufficient to meet the demands of the national curriculum. Pupils have few opportunities to use computers as part of their work in most subjects of the curriculum to support their learning. However, a new programme of study has been introduced, but without the computers or an adequate range of programs, its effect is limited. Although teachers' knowledge is unsatisfactory overall, because they do not cover some elements of the curriculum such as control technology, they do have a satisfactory knowledge of most other aspects.
- 10 In the school as a whole, the achievement of pupils is good. High expectations of pupils by teachers, good discipline and control in lessons and meticulous lesson planning result in effective learning in a large proportion of lessons. Pupils' learning is further enhanced by their extremely positive attitudes and very good behaviour. This creates a good atmosphere for all pupils in which to learn. As a result, standards in many subjects, with the exception of geography, music, physical education and information and communication technology have improved since the previous inspection. Targets for English and mathematics are being increased by four per cent and 11 per cent respectively for the next two years. They are sufficiently challenging and realistically based on a detailed assessment of pupils' potential.
- 11 Pupils with special educational needs benefit greatly in this climate for learning and usually attain the standards, which their teachers expect of them with many doing better than expected. For example, 95 per cent of all pupils achieved Level 4 or above in English and science in the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 1999 which was well above the national average. This represents a positive outcome for pupils with special educational needs. In their lessons, most pupils make satisfactory progress. However, many do not have an up to date individual educational plan, which focus on their areas of weakness. Moreover, their progress towards many of the targets set for them is difficult to measure, as the targets are often not very specific. Over the years there have been few gifted and talented pupils, but the school has, in the past, made special provision for them by planning additional work in lessons. None were identified to this inspection team and so no judgement about the provision the school makes for them could be made. It was noted however that higher attaining pupils, who often finish their work first, are given extra work to do, which is suitably demanding and challenging for them. The good quality of teaching affords all pupils every chance to reach their full potential.

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

- 12 Pupils' attitudes to their learning were praised at the time of the last inspection and they were found to be equally praiseworthy in this inspection. All pupils respond very well in class mainly because of the good and often very good teaching they receive from the experienced and knowledgeable teaching staff. They help to promote an eagerness to learn. Pupils are well motivated, concentrate well and take a pride in their work. Good examples were noted in a science lesson where pupils found their experiment really exciting and in a Year 2 history lesson which clearly fascinated them.
- 13 Behaviour overall is good. During lessons, the standard of behaviour was very good but in the playground, particularly during the lunch breaks, some pupils become boisterous towards one another and inspectors noted acts of thoughtlessness and anti-social behaviour. No bullying was seen but there are some instances of bullying recorded. Parents are understandably

concerned over this behaviour, caused by a small minority of pupils. A few parents reported their dissatisfaction with the way the school deals with it at the meeting for parents before the inspection. No pupil has been excluded since the last inspection.

- 14 Personal and social skills for children under five are planned and developed effectively by the class teacher. As a result, children make good progress and are well on target to achieve the expected level by the end of the Foundation Stage. Most children settle happily and confidently to a variety of tasks. Many begin to concentrate well and show perseverance with their work and play. Most are learning to play well together and some are ready to take turns, although many still want to play alone. All relate well to adults and behaviour is very good in the classroom. Class assemblies are used well to promote children's social and emotional development. The personal development of pupils and relationships are good overall throughout both key stages. In lessons many examples were seen of pupils cooperating and collaborating well and supporting each other's efforts. Group work in science was seen as particularly effective. Most pupils play happily together and relate well to their teachers and to each other. As a result, relationships throughout the school are very good. Effective teaching encourages pupils to work independently and act responsibly. A good example was in a Year 4/5 physical education lesson where pupils set out, used and tidied away equipment safely and efficiently. Older pupils undertake various helpful duties about the school such as running the tuck shop and assisting the younger children at lunchtime. Four delegates from Year 6 are currently being given a chance to air their views on how worship in school can be improved. These responsibilities are a very effective way of promoting pupils' initiative and self esteem.
- 15 Attendance levels are satisfactory as they are in line with the average for schools nationally. However, the level of unauthorised absence is well above average. This is in part due to the way teachers accepted and recorded unexplained absence. Procedures have been improved for this year. Pupils' punctuality is very good.

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

- 16 In the previous inspection, ten per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in the school has improved a great deal since then and is judged by this inspection team to be good. The very good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum by teachers and their careful assessment of the impact of their teaching are the key features, which make teaching so consistently good at this school. In addition, all teaching and non-teaching staff are enthusiastic and work very well as a team, showing a strong determination to raise standards.
- 17 During this inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in all the lessons seen and it was very good in one third of the lessons. Examples of good, very good and excellent teaching were seen in three quarters of the lessons, which shows a commendable consistency and confirms that the quality of teaching has improved significantly. It is a strength of the school. Very good teaching was seen in virtually all classes throughout both key stages showing strength in depth. Detailed planning which provided challenging activities for all pupils, good knowledge of the subject by teachers and lessons delivered enthusiastically at a good pace were the main features of the very good teaching.
- 18 The quality of teaching in the 'literacy hours' and during numeracy sessions was good throughout both key stages. Teachers use the skills that pupils have learned in these sessions effectively when teaching other subjects. Pupils in all classes are provided with many opportunities to write or use numbers in order to consolidate their literacy and numeracy skills. In a Year 4 science lesson for example, pupils record in detail the results of their investigation into the conductivity of different metals. However, opportunities to use a computer are limited because of the age of most and a lack of suitable programs.
- 19 All teachers work hard to establish a good working atmosphere and promote effective learning. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are now a strong feature of most lessons, whereas previously too many tasks were given which were undemanding for pupils, particularly those of higher attainment. The pace of learning is good in almost all lessons, with little time wasted. Once pupils have finished the tasks set for them, teachers have additional activities planned and

these sufficiently challenge pupils, particularly those of higher attainment. All teachers have effective strategies to maintain good behaviour and ensure that pupils keep working. As a result, noise levels are low and pupils of all ages concentrate very well on the tasks set for them. Pupils behave well in lessons and have a very good attitude towards their learning. This results in a highly productive working atmosphere in most classes with all pupils making good progress. The criticisms in the previous inspection about the over reliance of whole class teaching methods and the overuse of textbooks or worksheets have been successfully addressed. Pupils now work more independently in pairs or small groups. This was seen in many lessons from the reception class where children baked buns, to Year 6, where pupils helped one another to make simple musical instruments.

- 20 Teachers use assessment well to guide their planning and this helps them to plan work which gives adequate challenge to pupils of all abilities. All pupils' work is marked thoroughly and helpful comments give further guidance to them on how to improve. No pupils were identified to inspectors as gifted or talented but it was noted that pupils of all abilities were given appropriately challenging work. Planning is good in all lessons as teachers clearly set specific learning objectives. As a result, lessons invariably build effectively on pupils' previous knowledge. Teachers are well prepared for their lessons with resources readily available for pupils. In most lessons, the variety of resources gives pupils the opportunity to use their initiative and choose suitable materials to use in their studies. The ageing computers in most classes mean that pupils rarely use modern technology to support their learning.
- 21 The quality of teaching was found to be very good in science and good in all other subjects except religious education and geography where it was satisfactory. In information and communication technology, teaching was satisfactory overall in spite of the fact that one element of the curriculum, control, was not covered well. The lack of up to date resources for teachers and pupils appears to be the main reason for this weakness. As a direct consequence to the quality of teaching, standards in science are well above average and in most other subjects, they are better than those normally seen by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils respond positively to all their lessons, showing much interest, behaving very well and sustaining high levels of concentration. As a direct result, effective learning occurs in virtually all lessons.
- 22 The quality of teaching and learning for children under the age of five is consistently good and on occasions very good. Lessons are planned carefully with close reference to all areas of the curriculum for the under fives. However, the lack of a suitable outdoor area and large toys and equipment limits the provision for children's physical development. No attempt is made to compensate for this with additional lessons in the school hall. The teacher has high expectations of all children and manages the children well in a firm but friendly manner. As a result, there are no difficulties with behaviour and children work well together. The range of learning opportunities, for children under the age of five is good overall.
- 23 The teaching of literacy skills is good. In the literacy hour, teachers use whole class or group teaching sessions well to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing and spelling. Most teachers use large print books effectively and all pupils read the text well. Teachers' expectations of pupils are high in literacy sessions. During individual work on letter sounds, spellings and the use of words in sentences, pupils are set tight time targets to complete work. They have to concentrate and work hard to complete them successfully. Most teachers provide appropriate worksheets for pupils to complete, and pupils write neatly on these. The teaching of basic literacy skills through other subjects of the curriculum is good throughout both key stages with many opportunities provided for pupils to write freely and at length. In the junior classes, pupils often record the results of investigations in science, for example, and write down the similarities and differences that they find between contrasting locations in geography. Pupils' technical knowledge, their use of full stops and other punctuation is generally accurate. Overall, work in other subjects of the curriculum contributes effectively to the development and application of literacy skills.
- 24 The quality of teaching of numeracy is good in all classes. The very effective strategies for teaching numeracy skills with an oral, mental mathematics session at the beginning of the daily numeracy hour are helping to give pupils of all ages more confidence with numbers. These sessions are conducted at a good pace, which helps to focus pupils' attention. Pupils enjoy the



challenge and most try hard to be the first to answer. Pupils' extremely positive attitudes, and the work provided by teachers, which is well matched to individual pupils' capabilities, ensure that most pupils make good progress in developing their numeracy skills.

- 25 Pupils with special educational needs are generally well taught. This is mainly because class teachers are very experienced and have a very good knowledge and understanding of their pupils' needs. They tailor their teaching styles and learning materials to meet the needs of lower achieving pupils really well and as a result, pupils learn with confidence and make satisfactory progress. However, the targets set for pupils in many individual education plans are not specific or clear, making progress difficult to measure. This serves to slow the rate of progress for pupils in specific areas of weakness. Teaching is usually good when pupils receive separate tuition in small groups because of high expectations and teachers' expertise. The very good relationship, which exists between teachers and pupils with special educational needs, has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- 26 Some parents at the pre-inspection meeting were unhappy with the amount of homework their children were expected to do. Inspection findings do not support parents' views expressed at the meeting or those who responded negatively on this aspect in the questionnaire. The quality and amount of homework are both satisfactory for the age of pupils. Pupils are regularly given homework and, overall, it makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, particularly in reading.

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

- 27 The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which meets all statutory requirements with the exception of one aspect in the physical development of children under five and control element of the information and communication technology curriculum. The previous inspection highlighted problems with the design and technology and physical education curriculum but these have been corrected. Pupils now design and evaluate their work design and technology and there is a good balance of activities in physical education. Moreover, more able pupils are suitably challenged in most of their lessons. The curriculum reflects the aims and objectives of this Church of England voluntary controlled school well.
- 28 The curriculum provided for Foundation Stage children is good overall, although a lack of resources and outdoor play facilities means that curriculum opportunities for children's physical development are limited. This was raised as a problem in the previous inspection and has still not been addressed. Provision for this particular aspect remains unsatisfactory.
- 29 In most respects, the school has succeeded in maintaining a satisfactory balance to the curriculum despite the increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy over the past two years. The planning and staff training for literacy and numeracy has resulted in the effective implementation of these national strategies. Time has been much reduced for subjects such as history, geography, music and physical education. However, standards have been maintained at a satisfactory level except in history, where teacher expertise and enthusiasm has resulted in standards better than those normally seen. The provision of a policy for history, recommended in the previous report has successfully been acted upon and this has had a further beneficial impact on standards.
- 30 The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. The school has good links with the local secondary school. This helps all pupils to make a smooth transition from their primary to their secondary stage of education.
- 31 Personal, social and health education is regularly promoted throughout the school. Sex education and drugs awareness are provided within personal, social and health education lessons. The school nurse and the local police make a valuable contribution to these two areas of work.

- 32 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory and this represents a deterioration in the level of provision since the previous inspection when it was judged to be good. All have equality of access to the curriculum along with other pupils but many do not have a specific programme in an individual education plan to correct their identified area of difficulty. Some have targets set for them in an individual education plan but most of these lack detail, making progress or improvement impossible to measure. The lack of detail means that parents are unable to help or support their child and teachers are unable to plan work specifically to bring about a more rapid rate of improvement in lessons.
- 33 All subjects have a person responsible for managing and coordinating it throughout the school. There are clear policies for all subjects. The school has fully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the school has begun a process of incorporating the latest Curriculum 2000 guidelines into existing subject documentation. All subjects including literacy and numeracy are taught on a two year rolling programme in the mixed age junior classes. These programmes of work offer clear guidance for the development of pupils' knowledge and skills. Planning for all subjects is satisfactory, though staff need to more clearly identify and provide for the range of ability groups within the mixed year classes, particularly in English. The headteacher monitors teachers' long, medium and weekly plans and the subject coordinators evaluate pupils' completed work each term in their efforts to identify areas of weakness and raise standards. In addition to this, each governor has responsibility for a subject area and this helps to keep them fully informed about developments. This has helped them to make sure that all areas for improvement, identified in the previous report, have now been properly addressed and put right.
- 34 There is a satisfactory range of extra curricular activities, including both sporting and musical activities. At the time of the previous inspection this aspect was described as good but since then the school has had to lose a teacher because of a fall in numbers. This has increased the pressure on the remaining teachers to continue to raise standards and so the programme of activities provided outside of normal lessons has been reduced. A satisfactory range of visits to museums, field trips and places of educational interest enriches pupils' educational experiences. Regular visits by such people as local clergy, the police and fire service, as well as visits by educational theatre groups contribute to the varied and extended curriculum provided by the school.
- 35 The provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory. All pupils are seen as individuals and are positively valued. This very much reflects the Christian nature of the school. It fulfils all requirements for a daily act of collective worship, and provides all pupils with the opportunity to reflect on the issues and ideas being presented to them. Pupils make a regular contribution to assemblies through their singing and responding to teachers' questions. However, opportunities are lost for teachers to follow up some of the spiritual and moral issues explored in the good quality assemblies within religious education lessons because teachers do not always stay in assemblies. Teachers do provide pupils with good opportunities for spiritual development within religious education lessons when pupils are asked to consider such issues as the importance of worship within the Christian faith, and the symbolic nature of the cross or use of water. In other subjects of the curriculum, there are few planned opportunities for pupils' spiritual development. When they do occur, it is because they are incidental, rather than planned.
- 36 Provision for pupils' moral development is good. There is a strong sense of morality, with pupils having a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils are well aware of the responsibility they have for their own actions, and most show a concern for the well being others. Very good behaviour was observed in nearly all lessons. However, the overall standard of behaviour is affected on occasions by the thoughtless actions and anti-social behaviour of a few pupils at lunch times. The school does not have a clear or consistent strategy to support its work on handling this unacceptable behaviour, which most parents regard as bullying. Opportunities are provided in lessons for pupils to consider and reflect on moral issues such as concern for the environment and the problems of the peoples living in the third world.

- 37 Planned provision for pupils' social development is good. Pupils develop good social skills as they move up through the school. All members of staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff, act as good role models. Pupils recognise the high expectations of them in terms of their behaviour and all but a small minority, respond in a positive manner. Pupils treat the school environment with respect. They move around the school in an orderly fashion and are kind and courteous to visitors. Their understanding of good citizenship is well developed by regular funding raising activities for local and national charities. They are involved in the local community, for example, when distributing harvest festival parcels to local senior citizens. At a wider level, pupils display a simple understanding of world issues through their sponsorship of a young African girl.
- 38 The quality of planned provision for pupils' cultural development is good. In geography, for example, pupils explore their local environment as well as studying various countries around the world. In history, pupils appreciate the changing nature of English society as well as considering other societies in the past. In art, pupils appreciate the work of great painters, whilst in music pupils listen to the compositions of contemporary and classical composers and performers. In contrast, in religious education pupils consider a range of world religions and their own cultural background. However, the range of opportunities for pupils to appreciate and understand the multi-cultural society they now live in are limited.

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

- 39 It was reported in the previous inspection that the school provided a caring and supportive environment where children were happy. This is still the case today. Teachers know their pupils well and personal development is carefully recorded and reported. Records of achievement were been introduced two years ago and encourage pupils to take pride in their successes.
- 40 Attendance is satisfactorily monitored. A successful initiative has recently been introduced to encourage better attendance as the rate of unauthorised absence is well above average when compared with other primary schools nationally. This is because there are no agreed procedures to follow up the reasons for pupils' absence. When teachers are not notified why a child is not at school, the absence recorded as unauthorised. Pupils are punctual but there is no "late book" to enable the school to track the punctuality patterns of any latecomers.
- 41 The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are satisfactory. However, the procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are unsatisfactory. In all classes, behaviour is well promoted. However, the specific behavioural difficulties for some children with special educational needs are not identified and strategies for improvement are not clearly set out in their individual education plans. The school has discipline and anti-bullying policies but there are no clear and consistent guidelines for all teachers to follow to reduce any incidents of thoughtless or anti-social behaviour. The policies merely identify what is meant by bullying or unacceptable behaviour without defining a course of action to be followed when this occurs. Parents tend to regard all incidents as bullying and are not always happy with the school's response. Moreover, many do not feel properly informed about the school's actions when these incidents occur.
- 42 Since the last inspection, a satisfactory health and safety policy has been approved by the governors. Risk assessment has recently taken place and no serious hazards were noted. However, the statutory annual check on electrical appliances is overdue and needs to be carried out. Child protection procedures follow the local authority's guidelines and are satisfactory. Although no pupils are currently on the "at risk" register, the school should ensure that non teaching staff as well as teachers have some basic awareness of procedures.
- 43 The procedures for assessing pupils' progress and level of achievement are good and are having a positive impact on raising standards. Regular assessments take place during the school year using school, commercially produced and statutory tests. An analysis of results is giving a better direction to teaching and learning. In all classes, the day to day assessment of progress is also good. Teachers are skilled at using questioning to identify a range of needs, plan opportunities to assess pupils' work consistently well and take good account of the results

of any assessment to build effectively on pupils' previous learning. Recording systems are in place and are consistent across the school in most subjects. Teachers know and record the level each pupil has achieved for English, mathematics, and science, and these are included in the annual report to parents. In good lessons pupils are encouraged to undertake self evaluation to assess their own progress against planned targets. Good systems record and monitor progress in reading.

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

- 44 Some parents' view of the school is unsatisfactory. The lack of involvement by parents in their children's learning and the life and work of the school was criticised at the time of the previous inspection and it was a key issue for the school to improve upon. Parents' perceptions, following an analysis of the questionnaires, suggest that the situation has not improved much since 1996 when the previous inspection took place. Just over 50 per cent of parents completed the pre-inspection questionnaire this time and although almost all feel the teaching is good and their children make good progress, there were many negative replies to other questions. A sizeable minority did not feel comfortable approaching the school with problems, did not feel well informed about progress, and did not feel the school worked closely with parents. Over half of those who replied were dissatisfied with the range of extra curricular activities.
- 45 Having investigated these concerns, inspectors judge that, although the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents do not contain all the necessary information, parents are now well informed about events in school and about their child's progress. The quality of pupils' annual reports is satisfactory. The school is also making considerable efforts to keep parents well informed about the curriculum to be followed in each class. However, parents of children with special educational needs are generally unaware of the targets set for their child in individual educational plans. Few are regularly informed about any progress made towards meeting those targets. In many cases, the targets are not specific enough to enable parents to support the school or their child. Opportunities for all parents to discuss their child's progress now take place termly. Frequent newsletters are sent home and parents get termly information on the curriculum to be studied with suggestions on how they can help. Extra curricular provision is also satisfactory.
- 46 The school does not have clear procedures to respond adequately to parental concerns, particularly when they involve anxieties over pupils' behaviour. Some parents interviewed were unclear whether or not their concerns or complaints had been properly dealt with and most felt the school's response was inadequate. This badly affects parents' perception about the school and detracts from the very good work the school is doing for pupils academically.
- 47 The school has made some attempt to involve parents in the life of the school with a small measure of success. For example, parents accompany pupils on school visits and help with football and netball coaching. A very small number give valuable help in the classroom. Grandparents have recently been invited to have lunch with the children and this has resulted in more volunteers to assist in the classroom and with playtime supervision. Annual open days are well attended as are class assemblies and school productions are "standing room only". Informative courses showing parents how to help their children to learn have been run by a tutor from a local college, though parental response has dwindled since the courses were started. Fund raising has been undertaken by the parent teacher association but there are few active members on the committee. Only four parents attended the pre-inspection parents' meeting and only one attended the governors' annual meeting for parents. This is indicative of the low level of involvement that parents have at present. The school must deal more effectively with parental concerns, particularly where behaviour is involved and actively develop a closer partnership with all parents to involve them more in their child's learning.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 48 The shortcomings in leadership and management raised in the previous inspection have largely been overcome. Overall, leadership and management are now good. The experienced and dedicated headteacher provides very good leadership for the school. He is ably supported by the extremely hard working deputy headteacher and teaching staff. The headteacher is committed to raising standards and is fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Most of the issues raised by the inspection team, for example, are already identified for attention in the school's development plan for this year. The headteacher has a very good working relationship with all staff, pupils and governors. However, relationships with parents have not improved much since the previous inspection. The introduction of mixed age classes following a reduction in pupil numbers and the school's handling of incidents involving anti-social behaviour from a small minority of pupils have adversely affected a significant number of parents' views, as shown in their completed questionnaires.
- 49 Following the previous inspection, the school produced a clear action plan. All issues have been addressed but with different levels of success. The headteacher and key staff now provide clear educational direction for the school, but there is still scope to strengthen the senior management team by including a representative from Key Stage 1. Standards have improved markedly in design and technology and pupils are given good opportunities to be independent and to work creatively. As a result, pupils are achieving at above average levels at both key stages in six of the ten subjects of the National Curriculum. Little progress appears to have been made to involve parents more in their children's learning and the life and work of the school. There has been an improvement in the amount of curriculum information, but it is apparent from the analysis of the questionnaires that parents remain dissatisfied with this and other areas. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Overall, the pace of improvement has been satisfactory. The school has the leadership, experienced staff and commitment needed to continue to improve.
- 50 The school has clear aims, underpinned by a satisfactory Christian climate for learning. The good standards in learning, resulting from consistently good teaching, coupled with pupils' very good attitudes to school and their good behaviour bears testament to the strong sense of purpose at the school. Results of the National Curriculum Tests are analysed thoroughly and targets are set to raise standards further. By taking decisive action and introducing grouping by ability for mathematics in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, pupils' performance by the end of the key stage national tests in 1999 was well above the national average with pupils doing particularly well in comparison to those in similar schools. Pupils are organised into year groups for science and their achievement in this subject is also regularly well above average.
- 51 The responsibility for the management of the daily work of the school and for the development of the curriculum is effectively delegated to subject coordinators and teaching staff. The subject coordinators have made significant contributions to the development of their subjects in both planning and teaching. Coordinators work closely with the headteacher, to determine priorities for the School Development Plan. Standards of pupil achievement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are monitored through regular assessments and results are used to set targets. Following the previous inspection, monitoring of teaching in most subjects was undertaken indirectly by examining teachers' planning and evaluating pupils' completed work. Teachers have regular contact with one another in this small school so a programme of monitoring teaching during lessons was not implemented until the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies were introduced. Monitoring focused on these two areas over the last two years. Plans are well in hand to introduce more formal monitoring by visiting classrooms during all lessons. This coincides with the introduction of the latest initiatives in performance management which all schools are implementing and which this school is developing well. In light of the current initiative, the school is reviewing its strategies for the appraisal of teachers. Governors are attending training in performance management with a view to setting targets for the headteacher and staff. Good systems are in place to support newly qualified teachers. The school is used on a regular basis for the initial training of teachers.
- 52 There have been changes to the governing body over the past twelve months, the most notable being the appointment of a new chairman to replace the previous long serving chair of

governors. The governors fulfil nearly all of their statutory duties in a satisfactory manner and give good pastoral support to the school. However, there are some omissions required by statute in the information sent out to parents in the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents. They are mainly to do with the provision for disabled pupils and details about training undertaken by teachers. The headteacher is now aware of all the omissions. Governors pay regular visits to the school, the chair of governors visiting the school just about every week to meet with the headteacher to discuss progress on areas identified for improvement. There is a really strong commitment by the governors to attend training sessions and an equally strong capacity for success. A sound committee structure gives adequate support and advice on areas such as the curriculum, buildings and finances to the full governing body. However, strategies for the governing body to evaluate the work of the school are in the early stages of development. At present, the governing body is not sufficiently active in working with the senior management team to determine the priorities for the School's Development Plan or in the evaluation of progress towards identified priorities.

- 53 Financial planning is good with detailed long term forecasts covering the next three years. Good use is made of additional funds and grants to ensure that they provide the support for which they were originally intended. Through the diligent work of the school secretary, monitoring of the school's spending, against allocations made in the Development Plan, are effectively tracked. Satisfactory use is made of new technology to administer the accounts at the school; a development since the previous inspection. The school carried forward a small deficit from 1998 and 1999 caused mainly by the long term absence of some teachers. However, as a result of effective financial decisions, this has been significantly reduced. Governors and the headteacher constantly check that the school is obtaining the best value when placing orders or contracts. The efficiency of staff and standards pupils achieve are closely scrutinised to ensure the principles of best value are applied in the management and use of all resources. An audit of the school's finances and procedures by the Local Education Authority's officers two years ago pointed to a few minor areas for attention. Action has already been taken to rectify these.
- 54 The school has a very experienced teaching staff who are well supported by the non teaching staff. All are well qualified to teach the National Curriculum effectively. Each teacher is delegated to coordinate a subject area or carry other specific school responsibilities. Job descriptions are well matched to the roles and responsibilities of the staff. Good provision for staff training has enabled the school to successfully develop areas of weakness. Regular training in the skills and teaching of information and communication technology is having a positive effect on curriculum coverage and standards. However, the control element of the information and communication technology curriculum is not adequately covered. This is in part due to the lack of up to date resources. Classroom support staff are few and the numbers are low when compared with other schools. The high staffing costs for the experienced teaching staff is the reason. However, the school does not make good use of parent volunteers or students to give added support to teachers. A marked deterioration in the provision in the reception class was noted for example, when the teacher did not have additional support, but there was a pronounced improvement when more than one helper was present. The coordinator for special educational needs has not maintained appropriate records or ensured that the arrangements for the monitoring and assessment of pupils' progress against targets in pupils' individual education plans are carried out regularly. As a result, parents are not fully informed about their child's progress and are unclear about how they can support their child's learning. Statutory requirements in respect of pupils with statements of special educational needs in particular, are not met.
- 55 Overall the accommodation is satisfactory for the school's needs. The main school building is generally well maintained with attractive displays and good internal decoration in most classrooms. However, a few are in need of internal decoration, particularly the spare classroom, which does not present a welcoming learning environment for pupils. The hall roof leaks and some window frames need replacing. There are good library facilities and all classrooms are large enough to provide good accommodation for the number of pupils. Limited facilities are available for disabled pupils and access is not a problem as everything is on one level without steps. There is good sized playing field and the playgrounds are spacious and in good condition. Children under five do not have regular access to an outdoor area where they can take part in adventurous play to improve their skills for the physical development aspect of their curriculum.

- 56 Learning resources are satisfactory overall in range, quality and quantity. They are readily accessible for use by pupils and adults. Resources for science and physical education for pupils at Key Stage 1 and 2 are very good. However, they are unsatisfactory in information and communication technology. While the situation has improved recently with the addition of some new computers, the number of CD-ROM remains inadequate. There are limited links to the internet and insufficient modern computers in the classrooms. Resources for the under fives are satisfactory overall in spite of there being few large toys for children to share in the classroom or outdoors.
- 57 The cost per pupil is slightly below the national average. Considering the high standards of attainment achieved by pupils when they leave school compared with standards on entry, the good quality of teaching, the very good attitudes of pupils and their good behaviour, together with the quality of leadership, this school gives good value for money. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection.

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

The governors, headteacher and staff should include the following key issues in their post-inspection action plan.

1. Raise standards in information and communication technology by:
  - Providing sufficient resources to fulfill the requirements of the National Curriculum.
  - Ensuring that the curriculum is fully covered.
  - Planning opportunities for pupils to use computers in all subjects of the curriculum. (Paragraphs 4, 6, 7, 9, 21, 27, 54, 76, 98, 111, 124 - 130)
2. Improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs by:
  - Fully implementing the Code of Practice.
  - Ensuring all pupils have clear and specific targets for improvement in their individual educational plans.
  - Involving parents more in pupils' learning. (Paragraphs 11, 25, 32, 41, 45, 54, 63, 77, 84)
3. Develop the partnership with parents by:
  - Putting into place procedures to respond more effectively to parental suggestions or concerns.
  - Providing more opportunities for parents to participate in the life and work of the school. (Paragraphs 26, 41, 44 - 47, 48, 49)

The improvement in information and communication technology has already been identified as a priority by the school in the current management plan. A substantial government grant is expected soon to renew the school's stock of computers.

The following less important weaknesses, not included as key issues for action, should also be considered by the school:

- Create more opportunities for children under five in the area of learning covering their physical development so that they can make better progress. (Paragraphs 1, 28, 55, 56, 58, 66, 68)
- Introduce clear and consistent procedures to deal with any incidents of anti-social behaviour and ensure all staff, parents and pupils are fully aware of them. (Paragraphs 13, 36, 41, 46)
- Meet statutory requirements in respect of information provided in documents to parents. (Paragraphs 45, 52)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	31	41	26	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)		162
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		39

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		33

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.6
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	11	13	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	10
	Girls	13	13	12
	Total	21	21	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (93)	88 (90)	92 (87)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	10	7
	Girls	13	12	12
	Total	21	22	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (93)	92 (90)	79 (93)
	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	13	8	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	10	12
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	20	18	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	95 (76)	86 (62)	95 (83)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	13
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	18	18	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (62)	86 (65)	100 (79)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	142
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	27

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

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	22.5

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	272,600
Total expenditure	284,830
Expenditure per pupil	1,705
Balance brought forward from previous year	-2,770
Balance carried forward to next year	-15,000

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

51 per cent

Number of questionnaires sent out

169

Number of questionnaires returned

86

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	31	2	2	6
My child is making good progress in school.	43	48	3	2	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	49	12	1	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	51	13	7	7
The teaching is good.	41	50	5	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	34	22	9	7
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	42	35	15	6	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	47	6	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	13	48	24	13	2
The school is well led and managed.	20	48	16	10	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	23	62	5	2	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	2	24	34	24	15

## **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**

- 58 There has been much improvement in the provision for children under five since the previous inspection and children are given a good start to their education in the reception class. This inspection took place at the beginning of the school year, when children had been in school for less than half a term. Children are admitted each September after they have had their fourth birthday, and attend full time in the one reception class. At the time of the inspection, all, except three are still under the age of five. Most of the children are settling well into the school as the overall provision made for them in the Foundation Stage is good. Good links exist between the school and local nursery school, which most children have attended and this helps to make the transition into school a smooth one. There is a good policy for the education of the under fives and the planned programme of work is thorough for all six areas of learning for children under five. However, the lack of an enclosed outdoor play area and shortage of large play equipment restricts opportunities for children's physical development. This was also found to be the case in the previous inspection. The headteacher and coordinator are aware of this shortcoming but have been unable to improve the situation because of financial restraints.
- 59 In the previous inspection report, standards of attainment and children's progress were described as appropriate and as a result children were provided with a sound basis for their future education. The quality of provision has improved since then. A good policy document is in place, the classroom has been refurbished to improve work surfaces and storage and the quality of teaching is now consistently good. However, the size of the classroom is rather small, making the need for an outdoor area essential to give children more space.
- 60 Children enter the school with standards which are broadly average for those of this age. This has been the case for the past few years, as shown by the results of the assessment undertaken each September, shortly after entry. The assessments for this year's intake have just been completed and show a very similar pattern to previous years. Two children have been identified as having special educational needs.
- 61 The quality of teaching for all six areas of learning for the under fives is consistently good. This is an improvement, as it was described as satisfactory in the previous inspection. Every lesson observed was at least good with some examples of very good teaching seen. Lessons were judged to be more effective when the class teacher had the support of the non teaching assistant and additional help from another adult. All children benefited from the close adult supervision and the teacher was able to challenge and extend children's learning by devoting more time to each group. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum for the under fives is very good. The changes in September from the Desirable Learning Outcomes to the Early Learning Goals in the new Foundation Stage have been implemented very well. The previous criticisms about the over reliance on published work sheets and work set not always being appropriate to individual children's ability have been fully addressed. The quality of children's work in all six areas is assessed constantly and the results are used effectively to plan future work for individual children. Samples of completed work for each child are labelled with dates or comments to illustrate progress and record what has been achieved.

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

- 62 Personal and social skills are planned and developed effectively by the class teacher. As a result, children make good progress and are well on target to achieve the expected level by the end of the Foundation Stage. Most children settle happily and confidently to a variety of tasks. There is evident enjoyment when playing in the café area, listening to story tapes or baking buns. Many children are beginning to concentrate well and show perseverance with their work and play. Most children are learning to play well together and some are ready to take turns, although many still want to play alone. All relate well to adults and behaviour is very good in the classroom. Class assemblies are used well to promote children's social and emotional development. In the story of the Rainbow Fish, for example, children were taught that happiness is gained by friendship and sharing. All put their hands together and closed their eyes for

prayers and knew to say Amen at the end. There are many opportunities to encourage responsibility and independence. Children are involved fully in daily routines such as taking the class register to the office, selecting their own activities or helping at refreshment time. When getting ready for physical education sessions, for example, the teacher gives children the necessary time to undress themselves to encourage independence.

## **Communications, Language and Literacy**

- 63 Children enter the school with a wide spread of ability, although a significant minority has well developed language skills. Some children are articulate and explain themselves well; others distinguish letters from numbers and most will attempt writing at their own emergent level. Nearly all make good progress largely because of the good quality of teaching in this area of learning. However, children identified with special educational needs have not yet been set specific targets to help them to improve and this means that their rate of progress is not as rapid as it could be. All children listen well as a whole class or in a group situation without interrupting, although a few find it difficult to concentrate towards the end of longer sessions. They enjoy stories and poems, and some talk readily about their experiences. Most children can sound some letters, but a few still cannot identify them. Progress within language and literacy as a whole is good. Most children are developing early reading skills, choosing and handling the good selection of books with care. Most talk confidently about the pictures and stories in their reading books. The home reading programme, where parents regularly listen to their children read, is obviously having a beneficial impact on standards. Children enjoy listening to tape recorded stories. Early writing skills are developing effectively, and most children make good progress. The class teacher has adapted the recently implemented National Literacy Strategy well for the under fives and gives good emphasis to teaching literacy skills each day. Activities are planned well to encourage children to use those skills in all other areas of learning of the Foundation Stage. Higher attaining children, for example, label the parts of creatures such as slugs or snails. About half are able to write their own name without help and all successfully write under short sentences prepared by the teacher or support assistants. Relationships are very good and there is evident enjoyment from the children as they set about their tasks. Assessment of children's progress is very good and the results are used well to plan future work.

## **Mathematical Development**

- 64 Children enter the school with mathematical development, which is broadly in line with that for children of a similar age. They make good progress in mathematical skills, which are promoted effectively through various practical activities such as songs and number rhymes. Almost all children count objects reliably to ten; for example they can thread a selection of beads and count them. Some recognise numbers to five and a few more able children go beyond this. Most understand positional words such as 'behind' and 'next to'. The quality of teaching is good, largely because children are given plenty of opportunities to take part in activities, which involve them sorting or counting. In one practical task, for example, children had to find out how many round beads or cubes they could get into a cup, using the terms more or less to describe the outcome. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy last year has also had a significant impact on the quality of provision in this area as a daily session is taught which closely follows the pattern of the numeracy sessions for older pupils. At the end of each activity period, for example, a plenary session effectively reviews key elements in learning from the session for the whole class. The wide range of resources for mathematics helps to extend children's understanding of size and number. Role play in the café area, with a price list and replica coins provides another good opportunity to use numbers.

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

- 65 Provision for this area of the curriculum is good. Planning is detailed and firmly based on the Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage. Children are given an effective introduction to subjects of the National Curriculum such as science, history and geography. They make good progress in their learning. The quality of teaching was judged to be good for this area of learning, particularly when an adult supported each group of children. Topics planned such as 'Myself', 'Autumn' and 'This is me' have the potential to widen children's experiences and understanding when appropriate links with other areas of learning are made. When learning to

name the different parts of their hands, for example, children were set a challenging task to investigate which part of their hands they use most. Wearing gloves of different thickness, they persevered in their attempts to screw on bottle tops and concluded that finger tips and thumbs were used most. Attractive displays such as the tree branch with labels showing the names for different parts or the nature table help to promote effectively children's linguistic skills and raise their awareness of their environment. These links are developed well in teachers' planning. Children use the leaves, shells, acorns or horse chestnuts to count or create different textures on their pictures of an owl. Good provision is made for sand and water play. A computer is available and children learn the skills of mouse control and how to match letters or numbers on the screen using the keyboard. All competently use the tape recorder to listen to taped stories.

## **Physical Development**

- 66 Children's progress in this area of learning is limited by the lack of a suitable outdoor play area and poor resources for use outdoors. Children have few opportunities to use a wide range of suitable equipment for practicing balancing or climbing skills. Opportunities for adventurous play are further restricted as there is no enclosed outdoor play area and no large toys for children to use. In spite of this, all children make satisfactory progress in their physical development. The school hall provides limited opportunities for children to develop this area of learning but surprisingly, they only use it for one lesson each week. Children are excited and eagerly anticipate sessions in the main hall. All manage to undress themselves and when asked, walk like 'Olympic gymnasts' along the corridor. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good and adults interacted well with individual children and small groups to develop their skills. For example, children listened to instructions carefully when warming up and all could explain the effect on their heart and body. Children are becoming aware of space and others, moving with increasing coordination and control. When listening to a tape telling the story of The Bear Hunt for example, they were able to respond imaginatively to the music, running and jumping confidently. They use malleable materials such as dough to good effect and handle scissors or glue spreaders well when creating an owl picture using different materials.

## **Creative Development**

- 67 Children make good progress in developing their imaginative and creative skills because there is a good balance between activities chosen by children and those given by the teacher. In one lesson observed, for example, the teacher's introduction motivated children well to use a variety of natural materials such as leaves and acorns to cover the outline of an owl and create a textured picture. The quality of teaching is good. A wide variety of resources such as cornflakes, pasta and rice are provided to stimulate children's interest and encourage discussion. During the inspection, children were observed painting independently, selecting their own paper, colour and paint to paint their own picture. The class teacher tended to give just the right amount of direction, allowing children time to develop their own ideas. Good opportunities for role play are provided with one corner of the classroom currently set up as a cafeteria. During the past year the role play area has been a shop and a travel agency. Music is used mainly for songs and rhymes, and children sing with enthusiasm. They also have the opportunity to listen and respond to music in physical education sessions.
- 68 Relationships with adults and between children are very good. Children work well within a group, especially when they have an adult to answer their questions or take part in role play. The indoor environment, although rather small, provides an effective learning environment. There are bright, imaginative areas around the classroom where children can enjoy learning on their own or with others. However, the lack of free access to an enclosed outdoor area for adventurous play activities puts pressure on resources and space in the classroom. The range of resources is generally very good with the exception of those for children's physical development. At present they are poor, as there are no large shared wheeled toys or other apparatus suitable for outdoor play. This is having a detrimental effect on standards and the progress children make in their physical development. A scrutiny of completed work shows that the overall quality of learning for children under five is good and the children are well prepared for entry into Key Stage 1.

- 69 Teachers' planning is closely linked to each area of learning and there is a very good knowledge of the curriculum requirements for children under five. Short term plans are sufficiently focused so that activities have a specific purpose and provide a clear criteria for assessment within the Early Learning Goals. Work is provided which closely matches individual children's capabilities and, as a result, almost all make good progress. The coordinator has produced an effective policy and programme of work for the Foundation Stage. Standards are monitored carefully and the quality of teaching is monitored regularly by an evaluation of teachers' planning by the headteacher and an evaluation of children's completed work. However, the quality of teaching is not formally monitored by undertaking visits during lessons. This aspect forms a part of the school's own action plan for improvement, introduced to comply with a new national initiative requiring all schools to monitor their performance.

## ENGLISH

- 70 The large majority of pupils enter the school with broadly average levels of ability in all areas of language and literacy. They then go on to make good progress in reading at Key Stage 1 and achieve above average standards by the end of the key stage. This is reflected in the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 national tests, where reading was above average in comparison to national averages, and well above average when compared to similar schools. Standards of writing are likewise above average by the end of the key stage. This is shown in the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 national tests where writing was above national averages, and well above average when compared to similar schools.
- 71 Standards in English for pupils aged eleven as reflected in the end of Key Stage 2 national assessment tests in 1999 are well above national averages and very high when compared with similar schools. Though standards in reading and writing in the unpublished results for 2000 end of Key Stage 1 are likely to be above national averages, there has been a decrease in standards in the 2000 end of Key Stage 2 national tests with results likely to be below the national average. To some extent this was accounted for by the high number of boys in the 2000 year group, as boys generally do not do as well as girls in English, but the significant number of pupils on the school's register for pupils with special educational needs was the main reason. However, there has been some improvement in English at both key stages since the previous inspection.
- 72 Pupils generally display satisfactory speaking and listening skills when they enter Year 1 at the end of the Foundation Stage and go on to make good progress as they move up through Key Stage 1. Pupils are good listeners and are keen to respond to teachers' questions. Teachers use good open ended questions to promote oral skills and provide regular opportunities for pupils to engage in class discussions about the work they are involved in. Pupils continue to make good progress in their speaking and listening skills as they move on through Key Stage 2 and have better than average skills in speaking by the end of the key stage. Good discipline in lessons ensures that pupils listen politely to what their teachers are saying. Pupils listen to and respect the opinion of others, and often articulate their ideas and opinions in a mature manner for their age. Oral skills are well promoted throughout all areas of the curriculum. However, role play and educational drama does not make a significant contribution to the development of oral skills.
- 73 Reading is well taught at Key Stage 1. Teachers use the commercial reading scheme adopted by the school in an effective manner. Those pupils with identifiable reading problems receive sound support from teachers and make satisfactory progress. Time set aside for guided reading activities during the literacy hour is well used by teachers, with pupils developing not only their technical reading skills, but also their reading for understanding. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils read well with skills generally better than the average for their age.
- 74 Most pupils also make good progress in their reading skills as they move through Key Stage 2 and become competent readers by the time they are ready to leave the school. This is much influenced by the good range of reading activities provided by teachers. Not only do pupils read a good range of fiction books but they are also introduced to some interesting factual and media materials. Pupils read well selected poetry, are introduced to pre-twentieth century poetry and prose including the works of Shakespeare, and read literature from other countries and cultures. All pupils spend some time reading silently each day and regularly read to their class teachers

throughout the whole of the key stage. Many pupils display good reading habits, are members of local lending libraries, and regularly read at home. A number of pupils in Year 6 display high level reading skills, they read challenging books and are able to discuss the characters, story lines and issues in the books they read with confidence.

- 75 Standards in writing for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. Teachers provide pupils with the good opportunities to write about events in their daily lives and to retell the stories read to them in class. They also write simple letters to people and compose their own poems. Basis English skills, including spelling, punctuation and grammar appropriate to their age are well taught. Pupils wish to please their teachers, with the result that handwriting and presentation is always at least satisfactory and often good.
- 76 Written work continues to improve as pupils move on through Key Stage 2. The good reading activities provided by teachers are often used as a stimulus for pupils' writing activities. By the end of the key stage, pupils are able to write for a range of purposes, in different styles and with a specific audience in mind. Pupils engage in instructional writing and explore such contemporary issues as bullying. They write newspaper reports, letters of complaints about environmental issues in the local area, and produce well written poems and creative essays. The challenging range of writing activities provided by teachers raises pupils' interest in the activities they are involved in, and their ability to work with real interest and enthusiasm. While teachers occasionally provide opportunities for pupils to draft and redraft their work, this practice is inconsistent in its use and opportunities are lost to use this all important strategy to support less able pupils and to really stretch the more able. At times there is an over emphasis on worksheets to promote written work, in particular comprehension exercises. The limited space on some of these worksheets for pupils' responses does not allow higher attaining pupils to write very much, even if they wanted to do so. Computer and word processing skills are rarely used in lessons and so the use of modern technology has little impact on pupils' written work.
- 77 Pupils with special educational needs receive sound support from class teachers and support assistants and make satisfactory progress. However, the lack of specific targets for them to work towards makes it harder for teachers to focus work on identified areas of weakness. This is slowing their rate of progress.
- 78 The quality of teaching at both key stages is good. Teachers have responded well to the demands of the National Literacy Strategy and use the literacy hour in an effective manner. Lessons are always well planned and organised, with pupils being told of the lessons objectives for the activity, and what they should achieve by the end of the lesson. There is a good balance between shared reading and writing activities and group activities. The plenary session is used to very good effect to share and celebrate pupils' achievement and to assess their knowledge and understandings. Good relationships exist between teachers and their pupils.
- 79 In the mixed age classes, teachers do not always provide materials and activities to match the needs and abilities of the full range of abilities and occasionally some work is not always appropriate to the needs of more able pupils. Teachers regularly correct pupils' work and apply encouraging comments. Pupils, however, do not correct their own errors, and opportunities are lost for them to learn through their own mistakes.
- 80 Where teaching is good and better, teachers demonstrate a personal enthusiasm for the work in hand and create a motivating environment in which good learning can take place. They demonstrate high expectations of pupils and provide them with a challenging range of group activities, which evolve naturally from the shared reading or writing activity. All this produces an active and rigorous lesson where pupils work willingly and hard to please their teachers and to fulfil the objectives of the lesson. Teachers actively promote literacy skills in all subjects of the curriculum. The large majority of lessons are teacher led with limited opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning skills.
- 81 There is a policy for the subject with the school considering the National Literacy Strategy documentation to be its programme of work. The school uses a good range of assessment procedures to inform them of pupils' attainment and progress. The subject is led by an enthusiastic and well informed coordinator who leads by her own good practice.



## MATHEMATICS

- 82 In the National Curriculum end of Key Stage 2 tests in 1999, results were above the national average for pupils achieving Level 4 or above and also above the national average for the proportion of pupils gaining higher Level 5. There is a gradual trend upwards over several years in the test results of eleven year olds when a comparison is made of the school results with national test results, being close to the national averages over this period of time. In a comparison with similar schools, the results are well above average reflecting a consistently improving picture over time. However this good attainment is not reflected each year and the test results for the year 2000, although not yet confirmed nationally, indicate that above average attainment has not been maintained. There has also been a significant reduction in the numbers of pupils gaining the higher levels. The school analyses their test results closely each year and has identified that differences in test scores can be caused by differences in the size of the year group. If they are relatively small, one pupil failing to perform on the day of the test can and does make a significant difference. Results are also affected by the number of pupils in a year group, who are placed on the special needs' register. For example, in the year 2000, two thirds of the pupils in Year 6 had been included on the special needs' register at some stage during Key Stage 2.
- 83 At the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, standards were above the national average. This was also the case for the pupils gaining the higher level test scores. Over the last four years the performance of pupils has remained consistently above the national averages and in individual results of some year groups, they have been well above the national average. If the results for this school are compared with those for similar schools, then the performance of pupils has also been well above average. The results of national tests for the year 2000, although not yet validated nationally, indicate that this consistently good picture has been maintained.
- 84 Most pupils make good progress at both key stages in all elements of the mathematics curriculum. However, for pupils with special educational needs, progress is often unsatisfactory. Few have relevant individual educational plans in school to focus attention on areas of weakness. Specific targets are not set making it difficult to measure progress for these pupils.
- 85 As a result of the analysis of test results this year, the school has introduced a system of setting for the teaching of mathematics for the pupils aged between seven and eleven years of age. The pupils are now taught in four groups with pupils of a similar ability. Regular assessment of pupils' performance is completed each half term so that pupils can move to another group if necessary. In these smaller groups the teachers are able to offer an appropriate challenge for each pupil based on their ability and aptitude in each mathematical topic. At Key Stage 1, although setting of pupils has not been introduced, there is a regular assessment of the pupils' progress so that each pupil is consistently challenged. The introduction of the numeracy hour has been a positive influence for learning for pupils throughout the school.
- 86 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 can discuss their work using mathematical language and enjoy telling mathematical stories about their calculations. Some pupils find it difficult to apply their mathematical knowledge in everyday situations and when compared with other schools nationally achieve below average results. The teachers work hard to find opportunities to promote number work across the curriculum. For example, each day at registration pupils are expected to answer a range of questions about the numbers of their friends in school or the number absent. Most pupils are confident and participate willingly in these activities. However, some do not listen carefully and some errors occur. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are familiar with numbers to 100 and enjoy counting to and from 100 in 5's and 10's. They have a rapid recall of addition and subtraction facts to 10 with many pupils able to recall number facts to 20. The more able pupils enjoy finding the number patterns for 2's and 3's and can find the number sequence unaided on a number square up to 100. They recognise the odd and even number sequences and enjoy number problems relating to their number street which is set up on a display in the classroom. Pupils in Year 1 can count, order, add and subtract numbers when solving problems. They understand "more than" and "less than" when using a number line. They are able to identify the numbers between 20 and 30. Many pupils can record their work

accurately. They particularly enjoy counting numbers together especially when counting to and from 100.

- 87 By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are secure in their handling of numbers up to 1000 and have a good understanding of place value. They can apply the rules of number to fractions with many pupils able to multiply and divide decimal fractions with 10's, 100's, and 1000's. They are learning how to complete long multiplication and the more able pupils are able to multiply two and three digit numbers using a variety of methods. Through a good emphasis being placed on number problems in class work, many pupils are developing good skills of problem solving and manipulate numbers successfully. Pupils use various methods including calculators to check their answers, and if necessary track back in their calculations. Knowledge and understanding of graphs and data handling is good overall by the time pupils are eleven years of age, and these skills are applied successfully across the curriculum, for example in science. More able pupils are developing a sound understanding of probability. Pupils have a good knowledge of space, shape and measure; they recognise right angles and can name the properties of various regular and irregular shapes using the correct technical terms.
- 88 Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning. Behaviour is good in all lessons. They enjoy the challenges in mathematics and tackle problems with confidence. There is a good level of debate and discussions in group based activities, which help build confidence, and encourage learning through sharing. They concentrate well in all tasks and show good pride in their work. Pupils show initiative when opportunities are given and are developing good skills of evaluation of their own work. This is proving beneficial for the older pupils as they decide the best methods to apply in some of their calculations. Presentation of work is generally good.
- 89 The quality of teaching is at least good in all lessons and in almost half of lessons it is very good. All the teachers have good subject knowledge and committed to good standards of work in this subject. They have high expectations of pupils and give good descriptions of the standards they expect pupils to achieve. In the best lessons the teachers involve the pupils in discussions so that they evaluate their needs deciding when they need further examples to understand a problem, or if they need support material to ensure success. The teachers listen to their comments and respond appropriately to their needs building a good partnership in the learning process. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and most pupils are challenged successfully. However, pupils with special educational needs are often inappropriately challenged because teachers are unaware of their specific needs. There is a very good level of assessment in school and the headteacher rigorously tracks the progress of individuals, of groups of pupils and year groups. The teachers make very good use of this information when planning their lessons.
- 90 During the absence of the coordinator the headteacher has taken over the responsibility for this subject and is providing good direction and vision. There is good monitoring of teaching and learning and new teaching methods are tested if it is felt they could be beneficial. There is a very good commitment to improvement in this subject. Policies and programmes of work are in place. Numeracy is reinforced successfully in most subjects of the curriculum. Resources are of good quality and support learning in all areas.

## **SCIENCE**

- 91 In the previous report, attainment by the end of both key stages was reported to be in line with the national expectation and pupils were making satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in lessons and they make good progress. Raising standards in the core subjects of science, English and mathematics has always been a priority for the school and all staff are fully committed to this. As a way of raising standards, all pupils in the three junior classes are taught in four single age group classes with the headteacher taking one of the year groups. The quality of teaching has also been improved and more able pupils are now given work, which closely matches their level of ability, so challenging them more in lessons. As a result, standards in science have improved significantly since the previous inspection. In the 1999 national tests for seven year olds at the end of Key Stage 1, the results of teacher assessments in science show that 79 per cent achieved the expected Level 2 or above, which was well below the national average and 33 per cent achieved the higher Level 3, which was well above average. In the unpublished results for this year which have not been

compared nationally, there has been a further improvement in pupils' performance in science with figures of 77 per cent at Level 2 but almost half (46 per cent) achieved Level 3. These figures suggest that pupils' performance will again be below average for Level 2 or above but well above average for Level 3. This reflects the trend of continuous improvement each year since 1997, with girls and boys doing equally well in the subject.

- 92 In the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 test results for eleven year olds, almost all pupils achieved the expected Level 4 or above which was well above the national average and about half achieved the higher Level 5, which was also well above the national average. When the results are compared to those for pupils in similar schools, pupils' performance was also well above average. In this years' unpublished test results, 80 per cent of pupils achieved the expected standard but only 12 per cent reached the higher Level 5. The school anticipated this drop in performance, as there was an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. It was noted that seventeen pupils had at some time been on the school's register for pupils with special educational needs. The trend for pupils' performance in the national tests for eleven year olds since 1996 has been one of continuous improvement.
- 93 Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of both key stages, standards are well above the national average with all pupils making very good progress. This represents a significant improvement in standards since the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational do particularly well mainly because of the very good quality of teaching in science, the practical approach in most lessons and the close attention they receive from their teachers.
- 94 A detailed scrutiny of pupils' completed work suggests that achievement throughout the school is very good, with pupils of all ages doing particularly well in the subject and attaining standards which are well above average in all areas. This is mainly because of the very good level of subject knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject shown by all teachers and the clear subject policy document which incorporates the latest Curriculum 2000 guidelines. In addition, class teachers are supported well by the subject coordinator who has much expertise. Following criticism in the previous report about the lack of opportunity for pupils to design and conduct experiments and an emphasis on whole class teaching, many opportunities are now given for pupils to investigate and carry out experiments for themselves in groups. As a result, their interest, concentration and level of independence are very good. For example, in Year 4, pupils work in pairs to set up an experiment to find out if all metals conduct electricity. All pupils were encouraged to predict the outcome and appreciated the need for accuracy when recording results. Pupils showed very good progress in their knowledge of electrical circuits. In Year 6, pupils investigate sound by making simple musical instruments and try to alter the pitch and loudness. All can define changes to substances, which are reversible or non-reversible when substances such as wax, ice or chocolate are heated or cooled. Pupils recognise and name parts of plants such as petals, stamen, carpal, stigma and ovaries competently. Their knowledge of the reproduction of plants is very good, with most able to define the difference between pollination and fertilisation.
- 95 The knowledge, skills and understanding of pupils in Year 2 is generally well above the level expected as they conduct experiments to find the effect of forces on toy cars rolling down a ramp or identify sounds they can hear around school. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils confidently name the external parts of the body, classify materials by their properties and can describe the best growing conditions for plants or seeds. All know about a healthy diet and have a secure knowledge about electrical circuits and 'push or pull' forces. Pupils complete appropriate worksheets neatly to record their findings, but few use a computer to help them with their work.
- 96 The quality of teaching seen in lessons at both key stages during the inspection was mostly good or very good. Taking into account teachers' very good subject knowledge and good lesson planning, the quality of work produced in all classes and the standards achieved, the quality of teaching overall in science at both key stages is very good. Teachers' high expectations and the good pace of lessons help pupils' rate of progress. Worksheets, produced to support pupils' learning in lessons are effective with a good balance between those obtained from commercially produced material and those created by class teachers. Pupils approach their tasks conscientiously and try their best to keep within the time targets set by class teachers. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, enjoy the challenges set, particularly in practical

sessions and respond extremely well. For example, in the Year 4 class, all pupils concentrated well on the task of testing every metal disc to see if it conducted electricity and recorded their results carefully. Their cooperation with each other and their behaviour as they worked independently was very good. Teachers' expertise in science is evident from their detailed lesson plans, which clearly set out what pupils are to learn by the end of each lesson. Although pupils of exceptional ability were not identified as a separate group, there is a strong element of challenge built into all lessons to extend higher attaining pupils. This successfully answers a criticism highlighted in the previous report. A strong emphasis is also placed on learning scientific skills and how experiments should be carried out. Work completed by pupils on solids, liquids and gases, separating mixtures of materials, electrical circuits, insulation and conductivity show a good attention to detail when recording results following a practical approach to their learning. Pupils' command of English is above average and this is further enhanced by teachers' insistence on using the correct terminology at all times. When studying sound, for example, pupils use scientific terms such as pitch, decibel, sound waves and intensity with confidence.

- 97 The school's guidelines for the effective teaching of the science curriculum are very good, enabling all pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding very well. Good links are made with other subjects. This was seen in the Year 6 lesson when pupils made musical instruments from their own design and recorded the answers to their predictions about loudness and pitch in their books. This topic effectively linked skills in science with those in music, English and design and technology. Teachers very carefully and regularly assess pupils' progress and use the results effectively to ensure all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are given work which is sufficiently challenging, but within their capability. By successfully developing a detailed teaching programme and ensuring all teachers are fully aware of its contents, the school has improved standards significantly since the previous inspection.
- 98 Management of the subject is good overall and statutory requirements in respect of the science curriculum are fully met. The knowledgeable coordinator provides good leadership and there is a very good commitment by all staff to maintain the high standards. The headteacher and coordinator regularly monitor teachers' planning and offer advice on how to improve any perceived weaknesses. Although the development of teaching in the subject has been very good, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching is currently undertaken by examining pupils' work or teachers' planning rather than visiting classrooms during science lessons. This is an area to improve. Teachers' use of computers to support pupils learning in the classroom is unsatisfactory. There are few modern computers or suitable programs for pupils to use in science lessons. This severely restricts pupils' access to a computer during their lessons not only in science but also in all subjects of the curriculum. As a result, there was little evidence of pupils' work in science being completed on computers. Most of the graphs produced, for example, were drawn by hand and data collected as a result of investigations was usually hand written. Resources described as good in the previous inspection have been maintained at that level, enabling pupils to carry out investigative work independently.
- 99 The curriculum is enhanced by trips to places of interest, such as Cannock Chase to study the habitat of different creatures, and good use is made of the school grounds to enhance environmental science. A conservation area within the grounds has been developed to provide a valuable added resource and it is used well. The science curriculum and the standards pupils achieve as a result of very good teaching makes the subject a strength of the school.

## **ART**

- 100 It was only possible to observe a limited number of art lessons during the period of the inspection. Teachers' planning, plus a display of good quality art work in classrooms and around the school indicates that by the end of both key stages, all pupils including those with special educational needs make good progress and achieve standards above those normally expected.
- 101 Pupils in Year 2 display good drawing and painting skills as they follow visual clues in a given picture and draw a section which has been blanked out. The good progress made in a Year 1 lesson was much influenced by a high expectation of the teacher. Pupils looked forward to comparing the work they had created to the original. Pupils throughout Key Stage 1 produce

good quality self portraits, imaginative collage work, well drawn observational pictures, and attractive textured wall hangings.

- 102 At Key stage 2, pupils are provided with the opportunity to explore art from other cultures as they consider Aboriginal art, and use this experience as a stimulus for their own work. In an interesting Year 4 and 5 lesson, the good progress was aided by the teachers' provision of a wide range of resource materials, including a video on Aboriginal art. The teacher also provided pupils with the opportunity to link their work effectively to work in other subjects. For example, pupils related their artwork to their study of Australia in geography. The opportunity for pupils to explore an artist's work and to use this experience as a stimulus for their own work in history was observed to good effect when pupils were learning about William Morris. After designing wallpaper and curtain materials in the style of Morris the pupils now turned to designing and creating a plate in the same style. The fact that the pupils actually painted their designs on a real plate, as opposed to a paper plate, did much to retain their interest throughout the whole of the lesson. As in all the three lessons observed, pupils worked with enthusiasm and commitment and displayed real pride in their ongoing work and efforts.
- 103 Work on display around the school and in the very good portfolio of work collated by the subject coordinator, indicates that pupils are provided with good opportunities to engage in all aspects of the art curriculum such as drawing and painting, stencilling and printing, collage and textile work, ceramics and three-dimensional work. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to revisit each of these areas of work in order to explore and refine their skills.
- 104 Pupils in Year 6 study the works of Mondrian, Kandinsky and Picasso amongst others, and use this experience to produce a good range of paintings in different styles. Pupils create some very imaginative work of their own, night scenes of snow on silhouette trees for example, make coiled pots and patterned tiles in clay. Pupils display good observational skills in good quality still life pictures and produce large scale three-dimensional robots and dragons. The very good range of art activities provided by teachers does much to develop pupils' art skills and their ability to transfer an art skill used in one media to another activity.
- 105 The quality of teaching in the limited number of lessons observed is good. Lessons are well prepared, resourced, organised and managed. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, provide them with good support during lessons, without interfering with the ownership of their work, and allow them to share and celebrate their work at the end of lessons. Very good working relationships exist between teachers and their pupils.
- 106 The subject is led by an enthusiastic and well informed coordinator who sets a very good example to all teachers in the quality of her own work. There is a policy for the subject, and an effective and imaginative programme for all teachers to follow. The subject does much to contribute to the attractive and welcoming atmosphere of the school.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 107 Standards in design and technology, by the end of both key stages, are above those normally expected nationally. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve well in all aspects of the subject. This represents a significant improvement from the last inspection, where design and technology was found to be below national expectations at both key stages. This has been brought about mainly because of the efforts of the conscientious subject coordinator who has developed a clear policy and an improvement in the quality of teaching in all classes.
- 108 There is ample evidence throughout the school to show that all aspects of the subject are covered well. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to experience different skills such as printing, weaving and making models with a variety of materials. All pupils are encouraged to plan in detail before beginning to construct models or try out a new skill. Their evaluations when the task is complete are particularly thoughtful and pupils can invariably identify ways to further improve their finished product. This clearly shows that the criticisms in the previous report over the time given to design and evaluation have been successfully resolved.

- 109 By Year 2, pupils have designed and made boats, finger puppets, shakers to be used for making music and pictures with moving characters. All have experienced using different textures to create pictures, printed textiles and used plaster of Paris to make a model of the Isle of Struay, an imaginary island studied in geography lessons. They have also been introduced to food technology through baking sessions. By Year 6, pupils have developed their design and technology skills further with for example, work on weaving techniques and printing. Pupils have a special book for their work, which serves to add importance to the subject on the school timetable. In this book, pupils use their own ideas to produce detailed plans for making containers in the shape of a cylinder or cube. They carefully and precisely disassemble objects such as envelopes, labelling key parts and make comparisons between Victorian streetlights and those seen in Talke today. Pupils continue to improve design skills and carefully evaluate their finished work. There is an interesting display of work in most classes and pupils design sheets are often included alongside their models. A photographic record of work from the last full academic year shows pupils have made working models, Christmas cards and calendars and puppets using a wide variety of materials. Good progress is evident by all pupils, which includes pupils with special educational needs. The practical nature of the subject, design sheets appropriate for their ability and the close support of teachers help them to achieve as well as all other pupils.
- 110 At Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is good. This judgement is based on an analysis of pupils' completed work and a scrutiny of teachers' lesson planning, as it was not possible to see any lessons. All activities are structured well to try and make learning effective for pupils of all abilities. Different design sheets are available to take account of the age and recording skill of pupils and this helps all pupils to fully complete the process of design, make and evaluate. It is evident that teachers now have a very good knowledge of the subject. As a direct result, pupils enjoy the subject and are keen to talk about their models, describing in detail how they were made. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is equally as good. Two lessons were observed which involved pupils in designing and making. The first was a science lesson where pupils were making musical instruments as part of their topic on sound and the other was a design and technology lesson. This shows that the school has taken note of comments in the previous report over a lack of time being devoted to the subject in its own right as it now features on weekly class timetables.
- 111 The work of the coordinator makes a very effective impact on the quality of learning. The subject is organised very well, with plenty of resources for the different topics and a worthwhile policy and programme of work. However, the use of computers in lessons is not well planned and as a result, there was little evidence of pupils' work being done using computers. This aspect of the subject is therefore unsatisfactory at present. The quality of teaching is monitored well by the headteacher and coordinator examining teachers' planning and the standard of pupils' work on a termly basis. Plans are securely in place to visit classrooms to monitor teaching directly when the subject is next included in the school development plan. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and rate of progress are good and give teachers a clear picture of pupils' achievements. This helps them to plan future lessons effectively. The quality and range of resources are good; they are accessible and used effectively. However, some classes are short of a suitable range of tools. The coordinator is aware of this and plans to rectify the situation with the next budget allocation. There has been a very strong commitment by all staff to improve standards in design and technology since the previous inspection and their effort has been successful.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

- 112 While it was only possible to observe one lesson at each key stage, these observations, plus teachers' planning documents, and a scrutiny of work indicate that all pupils including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the subject, and achieve standards close to those expected nationally.
- 113 Pupils in Year 1 display a simple understanding of mapping skills and are able to draw their route from home to school. They have a knowledge of leisure facilities in the local area, can identify them on a map. All are able to draw pictures accompanied by a short statement about an activity they enjoy being involved in.

- 114 In a lesson on 'Boundaries' within a unit of work on 'Place', many pupils displayed an understanding of the importance of boundaries, and were able to give good examples to support their ideas. The satisfactory progress in this lesson was aided by the teachers' good open ended questions which extended pupils' knowledge and understanding, and the ability to highlight the importance of boundaries by referring to contemporary issues and the conflict which often arises through arguments about boundaries. In the lesson, many pupils displayed an understanding of where they live both within the United Kingdom and Europe. A number of pupils, however, have problems in locating major cities in England. In both lessons observed, pupils quickly settled down to their given activities, and worked with interest and enthusiasm. This positive approach to work was a significant factor in pupils' satisfactory learning.
- 115 Whilst the programme of work used by the school to cover all National Curriculum requirements gives pupils the opportunity to study all areas of learning, the scrutiny of pupils' work reveals that they are often covered in a superficial manner. In most classes there is an over reliance on the use of photocopiable materials from commercially produced topic plans. These worksheets often require no more than a short response, offer little challenge to more able pupils and do little to promote individual learning and the development of geographical skills. The scrutiny of work revealed that in the large majority of cases, pupils are involved in the same work, regardless of their age or prior attainment.
- 116 The quality of teaching, on the basis of the two lesson observations and a scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' finished work is satisfactory. The lessons observed were well planned and organised. Teachers had high expectations of pupils and provided them with good individual support within the lessons.
- 117 There is a policy for the subject with the school using the latest Curriculum 2000 guidelines effectively. The subject makes a useful contribution to pupils' cultural development as they study the lifestyle of people in other countries such as India.

## **HISTORY**

- 118 Standards in history are above national expectations at the end of both key stages. Since the previous inspection there has been an improvement in standards at both key stages. Throughout the school, progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. History is taught in two year cycles repeated between Years 1 and 6, and this gives good attention to developing both the knowledge and skills of all the pupils.
- 119 In Years 1 and 2, most pupils show a developing understanding of the passage of time. In Year 1, for example, they can describe in good detail past events in their own lives, from their time as a baby to the present day, sequencing them accurately. By the end of the key stage, pupils' understanding of chronology has improved further and they have good recall of past national events, which have taken place in their lifetime. For example, they were able to speak in great detail about the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Queen Mother, and also remembered vividly the death of Princess Diana. More able pupils are beginning to have some understanding of cause and effect, as they described the recent fuel crisis and its' effects on their own lives and that of the nation. They have good knowledge of the events of the Plague and the Fire of London, and have undertaken research using a variety of secondary source materials. They have studied old newspapers, looked at posters and pictures, and watched videos, and through historical enquiry developed a more accurate knowledge of this period. During the inspection, they participated in school in a workshop about the life of Samuel Pepys, writing with quill pens on parchment, and creating a diary of the events of the fire. All pupils enjoyed this work and made good progress in understanding the events of the period, and also the lifestyle of both rich and poorer people.
- 120 At Key Stage 2, pupils show good progress, building effectively on the understanding and skill development which began in Years 1 and 2. The younger pupils at this key stage study local history, British and European history and also world history. At the time of the inspection, pupils were working on projects about invaders and settlers particularly studying the Viking invasion of Britain. Other pupils at this key stage study the Victorian era. Pupils look at different sources of evidence as part of their work. They have good skills in using newspapers, old photographs and

books for example and build well on their past experiences and knowledge to move their enquiries forward. For instance, in a very good lesson in a mixed class of pupils in Year 4 and 5, they looked at photographs and three dimensional models to work out for themselves the similarities and differences between a Viking longship and Viking knorr. They learnt about the work of an archaeologist and also gained a good insight into the valuable work of museums. Pupils understand that museums piece together archaeological findings in order to have a better understanding of the past. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 have a clear understanding of the importance of enquiry and even bring to school items to support their historical research. They can combine information from several sources in order to come to their conclusions. For instance in a historical study of local industries, pupils recalled previous learning about the development of canals and railways, and recognised that famous local potters such as Josiah Wedgwood needed to establish his industries in places best suited to allow efficiency and access to all transport. In some good work they examined a dish produced by Josiah Wedgwood in 1833 and were able to place its' production in a mental timeline of the events of the reign of Queen Victoria.

- 121 Pupils enjoy history. They are enthusiastic in all lessons and welcome the opportunity to undertake research for themselves. They are perceptive and consistently look for information to support their learning, from the internet, libraries, or from other family members. All are developing a good sense of independence in their study of history. Many bring a wealth of different information to school and they enjoy explaining to their friends the relevance of their discoveries. This gives a good breadth and balance to their own learning. Behaviour in all lessons is good.
- 122 The quality of teaching in this subject is at least good and often very good at both key stages. Teachers have a good historical knowledge and a keen interest in this subject. Through their enthusiasm, pupils are encouraged to learn. The teachers use a wide variety of teaching styles and a good selection of resources to assist pupils in understanding of history. Resourcing of the subject is good and is also well supported by additional resources brought to school by teachers and the pupils themselves. It provides a good partnership between teachers and pupils in the pursuit of historical knowledge. A good emphasis is placed on the development of historical skills and this is an improvement on the previous inspection. Visits out of school are used effectively to give additional opportunities to enrich the curriculum.
- 123 The coordinator has a good understanding of the National Curriculum requirements for this subject and management of the subject is good. Care is taken to keep abreast of professional developments and any statutory changes so that pupils receive their full curriculum entitlement. At present the coordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor the teaching of this subject but monitors teachers' planning termly. Regular discussions take place in school about developments in this subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 124 Standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory at the end of both key stages, when pupils are seven and eleven years of age. The previous inspection reported that the pupils generally attained expected national standards throughout school, but these standards have not been maintained. As some sections of the curriculum are not addressed in school, progress overall is unsatisfactory for all pupils. However progress is good for some pupils in word processing. This often relates to opportunities that exist to practise computer skills at home. Progress of pupils with special educational needs is also unsatisfactory and there are no programs available specifically to support targets identified in their individual educational plans.
- 125 Since the previous inspection, this subject has not featured as a priority area in the Development Plan and consequently there has been little financial investment. As a result, the computer hardware and software is insufficient to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. There are limited numbers of computers available and they are often in need of repair, with the result that pupils have insufficient opportunity to learn new skills and practice independently. The school has no complete audit of any available programs and best use is not made of the material which is available. There are very few opportunities to use computers to support learning in other



subjects. Also the inadequate level of some teachers' subject knowledge in aspects such as control technology is having an adverse effect on standards. These issues are to be fully addressed next year when the quality and provision of computers in the school is to be improved, and training for teachers is due to take place.

- 126 By the age of seven in Year 2, many pupils can use the computer to generate and communicate their ideas in words and pictures. They use the mouse with confidence and know the uses of a variety of keys on the keyboard to support their word processing. They explain both to adults and their friends the processes they are undertaking and are developing good skills of sequencing to ensure their tasks are completed systematically. More able pupils are able to retrieve and store work to disk purposefully. They improve their mathematical skills of computation by practising number bonds and multiplication tables on appropriate software.
- 127 By the age of eleven in Year 6, most pupils can word process their work, changing style and font size successfully. They are able to use the internet and CD-ROM encyclopaedia as an important source of information for their topic work. Good use is made of any opportunity to research using these sources as this offers good help for their work in history, art, and music. Pupils who have access to computers at home or at a library have a greater understanding of the methods to access information. A few pupils have some understanding of e-mail and are able to pass messages electronically. Most pupils understand the purpose of a recycle bin although only a few pupils have actually undertaken this task independently. Equally there are few opportunities for pupils to use spreadsheets to collate, analyse and display information. The school frequently uses a digital camera and pupils are taking pleasure in discovering the benefits of this to illustrate some of their work. At present the pupils have insufficient opportunity to learn about control technology.
- 128 Pupils enjoy developing their information and communication technology skills. They are keen to improve, listen attentively to their teachers, and look after equipment carefully. They take turns, work cooperatively and help each other sensibly. They show good levels of concentration and independence. Pupils welcome the opportunities for additional time to work on computers at lunch times and break times. Behaviour is good in all lessons and when pupils are allowed to use computers unsupervised at break times during the school day.
- 129 The quality of teaching of computer skills to whole class groups is satisfactory overall, but this applies only to the areas taught. The teaching of control technology is unsatisfactory in most classes. The teachers plan lessons carefully. A new programme of work has been introduced this term, but without adequate computers and software programs its' effect is limited. However, the teachers work hard to ensure that skills are introduced systematically to pupils in their class. Each class has a rota to ensure equality of access for all pupils to computers and a register to record coverage of skills. There is no formal assessment system to ascertain pupil success.
- 130 A temporary coordinator is responsible for monitoring the development of this subject during the long term absence of the coordinator. Although the school is aware of the subject's strengths and weaknesses very little has yet been achieved. However, there is a good commitment to improve and the teachers are eager to participate in the planned training.

## **MUSIC**

- 131 Standards of attainment by the end of both key stages are in line with those expected nationally and this is the same as in the previous inspection. Pupils are making satisfactory progress throughout school. Those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in lessons as they are supported well in their learning.
- 132 In Year 1 and 2, pupils enjoy singing and have a good knowledge of nursery rhymes. They know a satisfactory repertoire of songs and action rhymes and willingly attempt unaccompanied singing. They participate with enthusiasm, for example, when singing rounds and chants. Most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of tempo and pitch. They enjoy listening to music and are beginning to recognise popular classical pieces with more able pupils able to name the composers. All pupils are able to play a simple rhythm on percussion instruments.

- 133 Pupils at Key Stage 2 sing with clear diction and have a satisfactory knowledge of the dynamics of music. They can sing songs in two parts, both accompanied or unaccompanied. Most pupils can name some works of famous composers and they are beginning to understand the composer's vision and intentions when creating their works. For example in listening to the "Carnival of the Animals" by Saint Saens, pupils are able to make an accurate assessment and give reasons for the animals the composer has chosen, and also can name the orchestral instruments playing in each section of the music. Each week the school focuses on the music of one composer and through this pupils are developing good background knowledge of classical, popular and jazz musicians. Many pupils can describe their favourite music and give reasons for their choices. All pupils are beginning to learn about notation and are recording their own compositions either in more conventional notation or in other less formal methods. They are able to name the percussion instruments both European and world wide which are introduced by the school.
- 134 Pupils' response to music is satisfactory overall. They are willing to participate in discussions about selected pieces of music and they generally concentrate well. However, some pupils find it difficult to listen for long periods of time, especially when the music does not appeal to them. There are good examples of pupils working collaboratively and gaining effectively from the contributions of each other. Behaviour is good in all lessons.
- 135 The quality of teaching at both key stages is never less than satisfactory and sometimes good. Overall, when all other factors such as teachers' planning are taken into account, it is good. When the teacher is confident and secure about music, the lessons are delivered with good pace and there is a good variety in the tasks. Older pupils are generally taught by a specialist teacher with expertise in this subject. As alternative arrangements are not made if the teacher is unavailable. This leads to inconsistency and can have a detrimental effect on pupils' progress. A recent initiative has been the introduction of brass tuition in the school and this provides good enrichment activities alongside the choir and recorder groups, which sometimes take place.
- 136 The present coordinator has introduced a new programme of work to give additional structure to the teaching of music throughout the school. This covers all aspects of the National Curriculum and gives a secure system of progression. This new programme of study is still being established and plans are in place to evaluate its' success later in the school year. There are no plans in place at present for any evaluation in lessons of the quality of teaching but this will be introduced when the subject features in the school Development Plan. The coordinator is a knowledgeable teacher and is a good ambassador for the subject within the school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 137 Standards, by the end of both key stages, are in line with those normally expected of pupils of a similar age nationally. This was also the judgement reported in the previous inspection in December 1996 for pupils at Key Stage 2 but there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards at Key Stage 1. Since then, the quality of teachers' planning has been improved to provide a better balance of games, gymnastics and dance lessons, assessment is used more effectively and teachers are now guided well by a comprehensive policy statement for the subject. However, limitations imposed by the lack of time allocated on class timetables each week for the subject is adversely affecting standards for all pupils. The achievements for all pupils in the subject are not as high as they could be in spite of the improved quality of teaching. However, in all the lessons observed, pupils were enthusiastic and keen to compete. At the same time, they were considerate of others and worked well individually, in pairs or in small groups.
- 138 At Key Stages 1 and 2, all the lessons observed during the inspection took place indoors with pupils being taught dance, games and gymnastic skills. Pupils are keen to do well at Key Stage 1 and work hard during their lessons. In Year 1, for example, pupils showed a satisfactory level of control when holding their balance using one, two or three parts of their body. In Year 2, pupils practiced throwing and catching a ball with a partner and showed a satisfactory understanding of the principles of attacking or defending in team games, competing strongly against one another. Pupils of all ages listen well to instructions and warm up conscientiously. They can explain the need for this and the effects of exercise on their bodies.

- 139 At Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 4 and 5 demonstrate satisfactory skills when throwing or catching a ball. All know the effects of exercise on their body and sustain energetic activity well. Unfortunately, poor weather during the inspection meant that this lesson had to be held inside rather than on the field. This restricted the amount of movement but all showed remarkable restraint and consideration for others during the session. In a Year 5 and 6 gymnastics lesson, pupils worked hard to develop a sequence of controlled movements which included a balance, jump and roll. By Year 6, pupils have a good awareness of the need to practice over and over again when working with a partner to develop gymnastic sequences requiring balance and rapid changes of speed, height and direction. Pupils of all ages realise the importance of warming up before strenuous activity and how to relax their bodies at the end of lessons. They show confidence when demonstrating for the whole class and sensibly evaluate one another's performance. Pupils display similar standards during playground activities at break times when running, dodging or competing in playground games.
- 140 The provision for swimming is good with pupils getting weekly lessons for one and a half terms each year at a local indoor pool when they are in years 3, 4 and 5. Any pupils in Year 6 who need more practice are included again in the swimming sessions with younger pupils. The school reports that every year, virtually all pupils achieve the expected standards in swimming by the end of Key Stage 2. A scrutiny of teachers' planning shows that statutory requirements for all elements of the National Curriculum are met throughout the year.
- 141 Overall, the quality of teaching in physical education lessons is satisfactory throughout the school. Teachers have a good knowledge of the curriculum and plan their lessons well to include a degree of challenge for pupils. This answers a criticism in the previous report about repetitive activities, which failed to sufficiently challenge pupils. Before and during lessons teachers give clear instructions to pupils, which means that all know exactly what is expected of them. Tasks are sufficiently demanding in their content and their pace to keep all pupils interested and active. Consequently, behaviour is invariably good in lessons. All teachers pay strict attention to pupils' safety and discipline during lessons is always effective. Any inattention or silliness caused by over excitement is dealt with quickly so that the lesson is not interrupted for all pupils. Demonstrations by pupils are used effectively to illustrate skills and encourage pupils to improve their own performance. As a result, the quality of learning in all the lessons overall was satisfactory.
- 142 Pupils' attitudes to physical education lessons are good. They change quickly and quietly and listen well to instructions. All sensibly obey rules to safeguard their own and others safety. Behaviour is good, which means that little time is lost during lessons waiting for pupils' attention. Pupils of all ages and abilities are motivated, hardworking and keen to be involved. There was no shortage of volunteers to demonstrate skills in the infant games lesson, for example, and all were very keen to perform their gymnastic sequence in the Year 5 and 6 class.
- 143 Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved and compete equally well in lessons as class teachers provide a good level of support for them in all activities. All pupils show a satisfactory sense of responsibility and fair play. For example, pupils wait patiently for their turn on apparatus and work well together in small groups during lessons.
- 144 The breadth and balance of the curriculum provides a satisfactory range of activities for all pupils. The detailed policy statement helps teachers in their planning each year and the subject coordinator revised this nine months ago, adding the latest 'Curriculum 2000' guidelines. This effectively provides all teachers with clear guidance to plan work that builds progressively on pupils' previous learning. Satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are in place and teachers use the results well to plan future learning for their pupils.
- 145 Few opportunities are currently provided for pupils to take part in extra curricular activities. An analysis of the questionnaires returned by parents showed a high level of dissatisfaction over this aspect. Many who replied are of the opinion that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside of normal lessons. An annual residential experience is no longer provided mainly because of the escalating cost to parents. As a result, the opportunities for adventurous or sporting activities for pupils are unsatisfactory at present. This restricts their

level of social interaction and the chance to build self esteem. It also denies parents an opportunity to become more involved with the school.

146 The subject is managed effectively by the subject coordinator. However, few opportunities are provided for the coordinator to monitor or evaluate the quality of teaching as it happens in lessons, but the coordinator regularly and carefully checks teachers' planning. The accommodation is good with a large hall and playing field and good sized hard play areas. The level of resources has been increased this year and is very good for all aspects of the physical education curriculum.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

147 It was only possible to observe two lessons at Key Stage 2, and none at Key Stage 1. These observations however, plus teachers' planning, and a scrutiny of work, indicate that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the subject, and are working towards the requirements and demands of the locally agreed syllabus used by the school.

148 Pupils in Years 3 and 4 carefully consider a number of objects and artefacts such as candles and bread and come to a simple understanding of their religious and symbolic significance within the Christian faith. Pupils then move on to reflect on the importance of these objects in Jesus' sayings and come up with possible symbolic phrases of their own which Jesus might have used. The good progress made in this lesson was much influenced by the good range of resources and the challenging activities provided by the teacher.

149 Satisfactory progress is made through Key Stage 2 and in the unit of work followed by pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, they come to appreciate the importance of worship in the Christian religion as they work in pairs to create their own acts of worship. Observation of the acts of worship presented by pupils, indicated that pupils had worked well in a collaborative manner. The activity made a valuable contribution to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. In both lessons observed, pupils were prepared to listen to other peoples' ideas and to respect their opinions.

150 It is not possible to make an effective judgement on the quality of teaching on the very limited number of lessons observed. However, the two lessons were very well planned and prepared. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and promote a reflective environment in which pupils can sensibly consider some of the issues being presented to them.

151 The stories, ideas and issues presented to pupils in assemblies make a valuable contribution to pupils' religious education. They are not always followed up in religious education lessons, as sometimes teachers do not stay in the assembly. The school has good links with its church, with the local vicar, and a good range of visitors from other religious institutions regularly visit the school.

152 The school responds to all areas of the agreed syllabus effectively but, because of the denominational nature of the school, the focus of much work is viewed from a Christian perspective. The opportunities for pupils to study other faiths in any real depth are limited. The well informed subject coordinator is aware of this issue, and is taking appropriate steps to rectify the situation in current planning and practice. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development.