

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SYTCHAMPTON ENDOWED FIRST SCHOOL**

Sytchampton

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116916

Headteacher: Mrs C Evans

Reporting inspector: Mr N Hardy  
29262

Dates of inspection: 13-17 November 2000

Inspection number: 224774

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Endowed
Age range of pupils:	4-9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Sytchampton Endowed First School Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire
Postcode:	DY13 9SX
Telephone number:	01905 620418
Fax number:	01905 621309
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr David Linney
Date of previous inspection:	1 July 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr N Hardy (29262)	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Art and design Geography Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. Teaching Leadership and Management Equal opportunities
Mr R Watts (9399)	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs C Cressey (23453)	Team inspector	English History Music Religious education	How good are the curriculum opportunities offered to pupils? Under Fives English as an additional language Special educational needs

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Alexandra House  
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London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>25</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is smaller than average and currently has 99 pupils organised into five classes. It attracts pupils from a wide area, with some of them travelling more than five miles to attend the school. There is a broad balance between the number of boys and girls. There are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. Currently, no pupil is receiving a free school meal, which is well below the national average. However, the data on eligibility for free meals is unreliable because the local authority does not provide a cooked school meal service. Children are admitted to the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they are five and presently there are 24 children with a teacher and support assistant. Their attainment on entry to school is broadly in line with that normally expected for their age. The number of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs at 13 per cent is below the national average. There are no pupils with statements of special educational needs.

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

This is a very effective school with a large number of strengths. Standards are high and pupils achieve very well. Pupils enter school with broadly average abilities and leave with attainment that is well above the national average and above that achieved by similar schools in English, mathematics and science. This is due to the very good teaching and to the efforts of the headteacher, staff and governors in raising and maintaining high educational standards. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The quality of teaching is very good across the school with many examples of excellent teaching observed; this and the subsequent high levels of learning are strengths of the school.
- Behaviour and pupils' attitudes towards school are very good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The leadership provided by the headteacher and key staff is excellent and the commitment to improve standards by all members of staff is of a very high order.
- The procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' attainment and progress are excellent and a strength of the school.
- Links with parents are very good and the support provided by parents to the school is excellent.

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

- Standards in information and communications technology, while being satisfactory, are below those seen in other subjects in the school; additional facilities are needed to enable the school to improve on the good practices already in place.

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

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

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection in July 1996. The school has continued to raise standards in English, mathematics and science with better than average improvements in reading and writing. The already good and very good standards identified in the previous report have been maintained. The school has clearly concentrated much effort on the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and these are now in place. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. All of the key issues for action identified at the last inspection have been effectively tackled. The governors are now very well informed and play a very active part in the life and running of the school. Further improvements in the quality and use of assessment information have been made and this is now a strength of the school. The governors have, through careful management of funding, been able to provide some time for the headteacher and her deputy to carry out administrative and monitoring duties. The school environment has been improved both internally and externally although some classroom accommodation remains cramped and there is no school hall on site for pupils to use for physical education. Systems to track the attainment and progress of pupils from the reception class to the time they transfer to the next school have been developed and now contribute very well to the teachers' knowledge of pupils. Results of assessments made are now more systematically analysed and this too helps teachers to plan for and provide appropriate work for pupils. This has brought about the continuing revision of schemes of work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science to provide work that more closely matches the needs of pupils.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. There are no national tests for nine-year-olds.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	C	B	A	B
Writing	C	A	A	A*
Mathematics	C	A	A	B

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

Children's achievements in the reception year are good; almost all pupils are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals before they move into Year 1 in September 2001. Achievement in Years 1 and 2, the five to seven-year-olds, is very good in English, mathematics and science. The results of national tests in 2000, for pupils who have now transferred to Year 3, were well above the average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in writing were in the top five per cent of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The results of optional national tests in Years 3 and 4 show that the very good rates of progress seen earlier in the school careers of pupils is maintained and, in English, it is exceeded. The school sets and meets its realistic and challenging targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science. Standards in reading and writing are improving at rates faster than the national trend. Inspection evidence found that standards in all subjects, other than information and communication technology, were above the national expectation. While standards in information and communication technology are satisfactory, they do not compare well with the achievement of pupils in other subjects.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils are eager to come to school and have very positive attitudes to their learning.
Behaviour, both in and out of classrooms	Very good throughout the school. All but a very small minority behave well in lessons and any limited misbehaviour is well controlled by teachers using agreed strategies The school presents a calm and ordered learning environment.
Personal development and relationships	There are excellent relationships between pupils and staff, which have a very positive effect on behaviour and the quality of learning. Very good opportunities for pupils to extend personal initiative.
Attendance	Good with no unauthorised absence.

Most pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about their learning. Levels of concentration are very good throughout the school and pupils settle quickly to their work. The school has an effective behaviour policy and procedures and pupils clearly know what is acceptable and what is not. Teachers know their pupils very well and are able to contribute very positively to pupils' personal development.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

The quality of teaching seen was never less than satisfactory. During the inspection 97 per cent of the teaching was good or better with 62 per cent of teaching being very good and 14 per cent being excellent. Teaching is uniformly good or better in English and mostly good or better in mathematics with several examples of excellent teaching

seen in these subjects. The quality of teaching in science ranges from good to very good. In the very good and excellent lessons, teachers demonstrate very good subject knowledge and understanding and have high expectations of the quality of pupils' work. Pupils respond well, they work hard and enjoy the challenges set for them. Lessons are planned very carefully and teachers usually set differing tasks to match pupils' needs. The introduction of the national literacy and numeracy strategies is having a positive impact on teaching and learning. All teachers have the necessary skills to deliver these strategies. The quality of teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The quality of learning is very good in Key Stages 1, in Years 3 and 4 and equally good for the under fives. Pupils are keen to explore new ideas and they enjoy success in their learning.

#### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum is broad and balanced. The percentage of time spent on all subjects has been maintained. The curriculum meets National Curriculum requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. They are very well supported in classrooms both by the teaching staff and by experienced and skilled support staff.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have the opportunity to learn about other faiths and cultures through art, music, geography and history.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good overall. Procedures for monitoring attendance and behaviour are satisfactory, those providing for pupils' educational and personal support are very good and the monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development are excellent.

Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported through very good quality teaching, a well planned curriculum and work designed to meet their specific needs. Support assistants are very well briefed and add their considerable knowledge and expertise to the quality of provision.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff.	Excellent. The headteacher provides very strong positive leadership and gives the school a clear educational direction. Roles and responsibilities of the subject managers are clearly understood and acted upon.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body fulfils all its statutory duties and is knowledgeable about the curriculum, financial aspects and the strengths and weaknesses in the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses with actions comprehensively planned to improve standards, teaching and the environment.
The strategic use of resources	Good with clear links to development areas in the school plan. The spending of specific grants is carefully considered. There is good control and monitoring of expenditure.

There is a consistent commitment to succeed on the part of the staff. There are sufficient, well qualified teaching staff to meet the needs of the school and they are suitably qualified to teach the age group. Learning resources are well used and appropriately organised. Curriculum improvements are well considered by both the school staff and the governors before finances are allocated.



## 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>• The vast majority of children like coming to school.</li><li>• The behaviour of pupils in and around the school is good.</li><li>• The quality of teaching is good.</li><li>• Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The range and number of extra-curricular activities available to pupils should be expanded.</li></ul>

Pupils are enthusiastic about coming to school and express this in interviews with the inspection team. Inspection evidence agrees with the strengths identified by parents. However the need to improve the range and scope of extra-curricular activities could not be substantiated; clubs such as for science, the choir, line dancing and several sports all run at lunch times provide a very good range of activities which are well attended by pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children enter the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they become five. Pupils have a wide range of ability but overall assessments carried out in the first half term of schooling indicate that they are of average ability. Progress in the Foundation Stage is good; reflecting the very good and excellent teaching, which helps children make rapid progress in all areas of the foundation curriculum. About 90 per cent of pupils are on course to attain or exceed expected standards in each of the nationally agreed areas of learning, with many pupils likely to achieve above expectations, by the time that they transfer to Year 1.

2. Progress in the Foundation Stage in language and literacy is good, with a strong emphasis on the extension of vocabulary and speaking and listening skills. Most children are developing good levels of knowledge in their recognition of initial letter sounds and relate this to reading new words in their books. Number skills are well developed with most pupils confidently counting objects, using appropriate mathematical vocabulary and apply their skills and knowledge to every day situations such as weighing and measuring. Children develop their understanding of the world around them well through the use of technology and learn about the changing of the seasons and appropriately link this to the lives of people in other parts of the world, their lives, faiths and cultures. Creative development and physical development are well catered for and pupils experience a wide range of experiences such as music, art, dance and imaginative play. They learn to control their bodies and are able to demonstrate good balancing, jumping and climbing skills. Progress is very good in these two areas. Children make very good progress in their personal development with very well planned sessions to enable pupils to share, consider the needs of others and to take pride in their work and conduct.

3. At Key Stage 1, the 2000 national test results for pupils of seven years of age in English were well above all schools nationally, in both reading and writing. When compared with similar schools, results in reading were above average while results in writing were well above average. The standard of current work at this key stage is well above average. Although the inspection is early in the school year, the pupils' work so far, their performance in lessons, and teachers' records indicate already that results are likely to be maintained this year. It is also expected that the proportion of pupils attaining the more difficult level 3 will remain well above average in both reading and writing. Pupils are given a very good start in the reception class and progress is maintained at Key Stage 1 through very good quality teaching. At this age, girls are out performing boys, sometimes significantly. The trend in results in both reading and writing over the previous four years, despite some fluctuations, has been an upward one, rising at a rate faster than the national picture.

4. At Key Stage 2, pupils take optional national tests in English in Years 3 and 4 because there are no compulsory ones for pupils of this age. An analysis of the results indicates that the pupils who took the optional tests made good and often very good gains in English between the ages of seven and nine. The standard of work for pupils currently in this age group is well above average. Their books and performance in lessons show that progress in English for pupils at Key Stage 2 is good and, for many pupils, it is very good. Teachers' assessments of pupils' abilities are very accurate, a testimony to the excellent systems in place in assessment and recording of pupils' learning.

5. Key Stage 1 results in mathematics in 2000 were well above the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving level 3, which is higher than that attained by the typical seven-year-old, was above the average for all schools. Teacher assessments for the number of pupils attaining level 2, the level of a typical seven-year-old, were very accurate but the number reaching level 3 was a little over estimated. Results in mathematics show a steady upward trend at roughly the same rate as results nationally although, as in English, there have been dips in performance in some years, reflecting the varying abilities of cohorts of pupils. The standard of current work in mathematics among seven-year-old pupils is well above average.

6. A similar picture to that seen in English emerges at Key Stage 2 in mathematics, although to a slightly less positive degree. The results show that some 50 per cent of pupils made better than average progress, with 30 per cent of pupils, most of whom were on the special educational needs register, making less satisfactory progress by the end of Year 4. Of these pupils, half were on the schools special educational needs register. These judgements relate to pupils leaving the school at the end of Year 4, in 2000. Current standards are well above average.

7. Inspection evidence indicates that the pupils' in Years 3 and 4 continue to make good progress overall with pupils achieving above the level normally expected in Year 4. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy and this is having a positive effect on standards. Lessons are well planned, take account of the specific needs of all pupils, both higher attaining pupils and those for whom mathematics is more difficult. Science results are based on teacher assessments of pupils' abilities at Key Stage 1. The number of pupils achieving level 2 was very high in comparison with all schools and the percentage of pupils reaching level 3 was well above the national average. Results remain at these high levels when compared to similar schools.

8. The work shows that pupils have very high levels of knowledge and understanding in all areas of science except experimental and investigative science, where standards are at average levels. The school has recognised this and is now making significant efforts to raise attainment in this area. Evidence would indicate that they are being successful in this. In Years 3 and 4, optional national tests are not used for science although the school intends to use these for future assessments. Observations in lessons and a scrutiny of pupils work indicates that very good progress is maintained both in their knowledge and understanding and in their ability to apply what they have learned.

9. There is high quality support from teachers and learning support assistants for pupils with special educational needs. This enables pupils to make good progress against the targets set for them in their individual education plans and to achieve national standards. Where pupils are withdrawn, they make very good progress as a result of carefully planned lessons focussing very clearly on specific targets to move their learning on.

10. Standards in information and communications technology are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4. Insufficient opportunities to gain hands-on experience and a restricted quantity of appropriate software limits progress. Standards were good in all other subjects where it was possible to make a judgement on pupil attainment, with art being well above national expectation.

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

11. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They eagerly come into school in the morning and at the end of break times. In the opinion of parents, virtually all pupils enjoy school and this is borne out by conversations with pupils. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They appreciate the efforts of the staff to give them an exciting and rewarding experience and teachers can start promptly because all pupils are keen to 'get on with it'. They listen to instructions very carefully in anticipation of being expected to work at a fast pace. They move quickly to start their individual or group work because they enjoy it and are keen to learn more. They concentrate well and work hard to solve problems. They are enthusiastic about taking part in additional activities outside the classroom, and are eager to be involved in extra-curricular activities.

12. Pupils behave very well both in lessons and around the school. In lessons, teachers need to spend very little time on keeping pupils' attention and can concentrate fully on their teaching. This has a very positive impact on the good rate of learning seen in the majority of lessons. The pupils move around the school and sit in assemblies in a very orderly manner. Behaviour whilst eating their packed lunches is good and the meal gives pupils good experience of social interaction. Pupils have the opportunity to discuss the reasons behind school rules and fully accept their validity. There were no exclusions of pupils from the school last year. Pupils treat all the things they work with and the property of others with great care. Books and other resources are valued and treasured.

13. The personal development of pupils and the relationships within the school are excellent. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities offered and volunteer to clear up or help around the school. A strong rapport between adults and pupils is a very noticeable feature of almost all lessons. Pupils are confident that the teachers are there to help them do their best and respond by giving of their best. Pupil relationships with all adults in the school and between pupils are excellent. Within lessons, there is no sign of laughter if a pupil makes a mistake. In the playground, pupils of all ages play well together and older pupils respect the needs of younger ones. There are very few even minor incidents of conflict, either deliberate or accidental. Within lessons pupils work well to support each other, discussing problems and making suggestions to each other about improving their work. They recognise that, although theirs is largely a mono-cultural school, there exist many different ways of life and beliefs. They have discussed these and willingly accept the equality of all and the right to choose their own way of life, within the constraints of consideration to others. No incidents of bullying or social exclusion were observed during the inspection. Pupils confirm that these are rare; minor incidents are handled with sensitivity and rigour by the school.

14. The overall attendance last year was above the national average for primary schools and there is very little unauthorised absence. Very few pupils arrive after the official start time and lessons can start promptly. This has a very positive impact on pupils' learning.

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

15. High quality teaching was observed throughout the school, making it a significant strength. It results in very good levels of learning and high levels of achievement in most subjects by the time pupils leave the school. More than three-quarters of the teaching was judged to be very good or better with almost one lesson in every seven providing excellent teaching. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Compared with the last inspection, which reported that teaching at Key Stage 1 was mainly satisfactory or good, with good and very good teaching in Years 3 and 4, this is a clear improvement.

15. Teaching and learning in the reception class is very good. The class teacher has a very good knowledge of the learning needs of individual and groups of pupils. She meets these needs through a sensible, well balanced mix of direct teaching and practical learning activities carefully designed to consolidate pupils learning and to begin to “discover” things for themselves. The teaching of basic skills is excellent with detailed planning identifying areas of learning clearly. This results in lessons that ensure high levels of learning and rapid improvements in children’s ability to read, write and handle numbers comfortably. Children have a very good understanding of the standards the teacher expects of them both in the work they produce and the behaviour they exhibit. The organisation of the classroom for learning and the effectiveness of the methods and strategies employed by the teacher translate into learning that is thorough and exciting. The teacher ensures that pupils experience a balanced and full range of activities leading to them being able to organise themselves and learn independently. Support staff are very well briefed and form an integral part of the team enabling the teacher to maximise the levels of learning. Very clear detailed records are kept on each child so that the strengths and future learning needs are well documented. The quality of assessment and recording are a strength of the school, not only in the reception class but also across the school. Homework is used very well at this stage and pupils are eager to discover things for themselves as well as to read and become more familiar with spellings and number.

16. At Key Stage 1, teaching is consistently very good with occasional good and sometimes excellent lessons observed, a picture that is repeated in Years 3 and 4. Teachers’ subject knowledge and their ability to explain sometimes difficult ideas is very good. The school organises itself so that teachers’ curriculum strengths are fully utilised, for example in the teaching of science and design and technology. Both the literacy and numeracy strategies have been successfully introduced to the school and the benefits of these are showing through in the raised standards seen in national and optional tests. In these areas and in other areas of the curriculum teachers planning and delivery are very good. What pupils are to learn in each lesson is clearly set out. This information is shared with pupils at the beginning of each lesson so that they know what they are going to learn. Teachers are careful to check what pupils know and can do through very good questioning both during and towards the end of lessons. Pupils are usually managed very well and teachers consistently apply good strategies to focus pupils’ attention. In a very small number of lessons where explanations are unclear and the level of challenge is not totally appropriate for the most able pupils levels of learning are reduced.

17. The teachers’ use of support staff is very good. Support is provided for the most part in classrooms. It is very well organised and the knowledgeable and experienced support assistants are very well briefed to carry out their tasks. This is a significant factor in the very good progress being made by pupils with special educational needs. Teachers’ planning for pupils with special educational needs is very good and this ensures that they participate in the full curriculum. Account is taken of their specific needs in drawing up their individual education plans and these are translated into appropriate tasks to meet needs and ensure progress. Plans contain good detail on the small individual targets for improvement and progress is measured carefully. As a result of this often very good teaching, pupils with special educational needs make rapid progress.

18. Teachers regularly assess what pupils know both on a daily basis and through regular assessments of what they have learned so that they can gauge the success of their lessons. Evaluation of their own lessons is also carried out noting areas for improvement or for further re-enforcement in a future lesson. This is an example of the very good practice seen across the school.

19. Teachers know the needs of their pupils very well and tailor their work to meet educational and personal needs. For example, shy pupils are gently encouraged to give answers in lessons or read out pieces of work. The contributions of pupils are valued and this improves their self-esteem. Homework is structured well and increases appropriately as pupils move through the school. It supports pupils learning well especially in literacy and numeracy.

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

20. The broad and well balanced curriculum including those areas provided by extra curricular activities makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good. Since the previous inspection, the curriculum has continued to meet the needs of the pupils' learning and ensures that it will be continuous and progressive as they get older. All statutory requirements are met and the literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented with enthusiasm and rigour. The school is improving the curriculum for information and communications technology and meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. In addition, the curriculum has been reviewed to take account of the Curriculum 2000 and, as a result, the school has a very broad and balanced curriculum that is stimulating and challenging.

21. The curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage continues to be of a very high quality and prepares children well for the next stage of their learning. It is based on the six areas of learning and emphasis is placed on pupils' personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; and mathematical development. Relevant parts of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced into the curriculum for children in the reception class.

22. Arrangements for pupils' personal, health and sex education are very good. The development of citizenship is apparent throughout the curriculum and there are agreed policies for health, sex and drugs education in place. Time is made available each week to develop these areas in ways which are appropriate for the age of the pupils. The school has a clear commitment to equality of opportunity and access for all pupils including those with special educational needs. The curriculum prepares pupils very well for the next stage of their education.

23. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school maintains an appropriate register for special educational needs, complies with the national code of practice and meets statutory obligations. The organisation of the curriculum is well co-ordinated. Support is provided in small time-limited withdrawal groups, individual support or in-class support. Detailed individual education plans, which describe the school's strategies for supporting pupils' progress towards clearly stated, specific and appropriate targets, are drawn up for all pupils requiring them. The class teacher carries out reviews of individual educational plans and the parents are invited to attend these. This good provision has a positive impact on the pupils' progress.

24. Some parents expressed concerns over the level of out of school activities. The view of the inspection team is that, considering the size of the school and the small number of teachers, the school does extremely well in providing a very good range of extra-curricular and sporting activities to enrich the curriculum and enhance personal and social skills. There are clubs for art, recorders, play readings, choir, science and line dancing in addition to football, netball and rounders. Activities are very popular and often take place at lunchtime and all staff, including support staff, take part in these activities.

25. The school's links with the community are very good. The use of visitors and visits to museums, concerts, theatres and galleries promote pupils' interest and extend their knowledge and understanding. A visit from a professor of Egyptology captured pupils' imaginations and increased their fascination with ancient Egypt as he involved them in a workshop. Local industry has provided the materials for a sculpture to be created in the conservation area and there are very good links with the local farming community. Links with local schools are used effectively to enhance pupils' learning in a range of subjects such as music, art and drama and an awareness of other cultures and religions. Before pupils transfer to their middle school; information on pupils' progress is exchanged. Teachers from the receiving school visit pupils in their class and pupils are able to enjoy a day at their new school in the summer term.

26. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection. The school's values and principles are very apparent throughout the whole school and have a positive effect on the quality of the teaching and learning. Provision for spiritual development is very good. Assemblies provide pupils with very good opportunities for reflection and prayer. Pupils are encouraged to think about other people's feelings and how they can contribute to the happiness and well being of their friends, families and the community in which they live. Quiet times are provided in assemblies when pupils reflect on issues raised. Pupils are encouraged to explore their feelings of anger, fear, disappointment, joy and pleasure. A millennium quilt provided a very good example of how everyone in the school is valued and respected as each person produced a quilted square which reflected not only their own contribution to the life of the school but the wonders of creation as well. Pupils encounter the awe and wonder in the world through their appreciation of the environment around them and, for example, in an extra-curricular activity some pupils experienced when they made "volcanoes" using vinegar and bicarbonate of soda to create an "eruption".

27. Provision for moral development is very good. There is a general expectation that pupils will behave well and rules and regulations are aimed at ensuring pupils' care and safety. Each class decides on their own rules. This ensures that rules are suited for the different age groups and are realistic and achievable. A reward system supports these expectations and the whole school shares and celebrates in pupils' social and academic achievements during special assemblies. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with promptly either by the class teachers or the headteacher depending on the seriousness of the misdemeanours. In assemblies, issues such as kindness, friendship and caring are taught well. Emphasis is placed on developing pupils' awareness of the differences of right and wrong and of treating each other fairly. Issues of bullying, racism and violence are discussed and pupils are made very aware of the codes of conduct.

28. Provision for social development is very good. Pupils have very good opportunities to develop responsibility, self-confidence and independence through well planned lessons. The very good relationships apparent in these lessons ensures that pupils feel comfortable discussing sensitive issues which concern them. They are made very aware of their responsibilities to the school and their local community. A system of 'playground friends' encourages older pupils to care for younger ones or pupils who are in need of extra care and attention. A sense of citizenship is developed as pupils take part in local sport and arts festivals, invite senior citizens to carol concerts and collect money for local and international charities. During the inspection, the local radio station recorded older pupils singing a specially written song for 'Children in Need'.

29. Provision for cultural development has improved and is now very good. Pupils have opportunities to learn and appreciate the richness of their own and other people's culture through music, art and design, geography and history. Through religious education lessons pupils study the major world religions and all pupils are made aware of important festivals such as Christmas, Divali, Eid and the Chinese New Year. Local artists are invited into school and workshops and visits to local places of interest bring culture alive for the pupils and stimulate their interest in traditions and events.

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

30. The school has good procedures for ensuring that its pupils are well cared for. First aid-trained staff are always on hand and if pupils are ill or have accidents at school they are well looked after. Informal checks on premises are carried out by vigilant staff but systematic health and safety risk assessments are only carried out annually, which is not frequent enough. Equipment checks are carried out and the school is a safe environment. Each subject co-ordinator has done a thorough assessment of risks within the subject but the possible risks involved with external visits are not recorded, as they should be. Child protection procedures, which meet local guidelines, are in place and the designated teacher has been trained in their use. The absence of bullying is a consequence of the school's appropriate emphasis on a caring and good relationships, and robust action should any incident occur.

31. Staff use their very good knowledge and relationships with their pupils to monitor their personal development, which is then recorded in the pupil's report. This information is maintained in a pupil's personal record. Procedures for maintaining the very good behaviour are simple but effective and well understood by all pupils. Registers are completed at the start of each session. In a few cases, they are left open too long and pupils who are late are given an attendance mark without any indication of lateness. This does not allow the school to record lateness in order to assess its impact on learning. Otherwise, the school has effective systems for monitoring attendance that maintains this at its present good level.

32. Monitoring and recording procedures in the school are excellent and a very real strength of the school. Systems have been reviewed and revised in the light of previous experience. The senior management team with the full backing of the governors have developed systems to track the attainment of pupils from the time they enter school until they move to the next school. Records in English, mathematics and, to a slightly lesser extent, science now track the progress of pupils giving end of year targets and comparative levels attained. Teachers' files contain a detailed analysis of results at Key Stage 1 and links them to results across the education authority. This data helps teachers to identify quickly and accurately pupils not achieving their full potential. Careful analysis of reading standards year on year highlight areas such as letter recognition, enjoyment of stories, the pupils' ability to read common words and what they can read and understand. Similar levels of information are kept on pupils in both mathematics and science. The school effectively supports pupils with special educational needs through well-established procedures for the identification, monitoring and evaluation of pupils' educational needs. The staff's support for pupils with special educational needs ensures that most pupils make good progress and many successfully achieve their specific learning objectives, which enables the school to remove them from the register. The school has appropriate links with outside agencies and keeps parents well informed throughout the process.

33. The school carries out pupil questionnaires to gauge what they find interesting and exciting in their learning and use this information to modify the curriculum. Very good records of scientific coverage and understanding are kept with teachers' files containing examples of assessments carried out on this and other subjects. The school is constantly looking for ways to improve its systems and make them more useful and manageable and have highlighted the improvement of teachers' moderation skills as an area for development.

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

34. Parents are very satisfied with what the school provides and achieves. A very high proportion of parents returned the questionnaire and the views expressed there were very positive. The detailed analysis of the parents' questionnaire is provided later in the report. The only minor concern was the narrow range of extra-curricular activities. The comparatively large number of parents who attended the meeting before the inspection was also very enthusiastic about the school and had few concerns. Informal discussions with parents outside school at the end of the day were also very positive. These very positive views are confirmed by the inspection. Extra-curricular activities are, in fact, of good range and quality and are better than those found in most schools of this size and for this age-range.

35. The school's links with parents are very effective. Overall, the quality of information the school gives parents is good. Parents are provided with booklets telling them about how their child will be taught when they start in the reception class and giving advice on supporting them at home. Parents find these very useful. They are kept well informed of what is happening in school with regular newsletters and each teacher gives curricular information every term. Pupils' annual reports give satisfactory information about what the pupil has achieved that year in the main subjects. There are brief comments about the subjects as well as a good insight into the pupil's personal development. However, they do not give a clear view of attainment against expectations except at the end of each key stage. Written targets for improvement during the following year are not always included. Attainment is not always reported in Information and Communication Technology or Design and Technology. Parents have the opportunity to comment in writing. Parents are further able to support their child through extensive discussion with the class teacher on both formal and informal occasions. Access to staff is very good. All parents take advantage of this.

36. Parents have an excellent impact on the progress of their children at school and at home. Most parents support their child's learning by hearing them read at home and supporting homework. The school provides materials for support at home, for example mathematics games and English story packs, and these are used well. The school has issued a Home-School Agreement after consultation. Most have been returned but, in the opinion of the school, the exercise has had no additional benefit to the already exemplary support. There is a strong parents' association that raises enormous amounts for the school and organises social events. The current focus is to raise money for a school hall and they well on the way to their target. Many parents help within the school, for example with hearing pupils read and in practical lessons and this support enhances the already very low adult: pupil ratio, which is very beneficial to learning.

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

37. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management. There is a continuing focus throughout the whole staff on seeking out ways to improve the already very good standards achieved by pupils. The headteacher has a considerable teaching commitment and leads her staff by the very high standards of professional expertise and skill she displays as a classroom teacher. She knows the pupils very well and is deeply involved in the daily life of the school. She is committed and enthusiastic about the education of all the pupils in the school. The deputy headteacher and all the staff very ably support the headteacher and share a collective desire to improve their teaching and the quality of the wider educational provision that the school offers. Effective management systems ensure that teachers are well supported, strengths of individual teachers are maximised and planning and monitoring of performance, both of pupils and staff is very effective. The quality of their work as a team is very apparent and together with governors and the whole of the school staff they form a very effective partnership. The excellent quality of leadership has been maintained since the last inspection report.

38. There are excellent structures in place to monitor and support teaching. Regular monitoring takes place to an agreed format and teachers exchange ideas and plan very professionally. In some instances subject co-ordinators plan lessons and the coverage of the full curriculum for all classes. In science and design and technology for example, the subject co-ordinators take many of the lessons across the school thus utilising their skills to the best possible effect. Very effective systems are in place to share the planning of the curriculum and this too enables the

school to make the most of individual teachers' knowledge and expertise. Some work remains to be done on the moderation of pupils' work so that accurate assessments in non-core subjects can accurately take place. Co-ordinators carry out their roles very well. There has been very good co-ordination in English, mathematics and science and in the majority of the other subjects in the curriculum. This has not always been easy because, as in other small schools teachers take on a number of subject responsibilities. The staff have been remarkably successful in this due, in large measure, to their hard work and their desire to see improvement to the curriculum and the education offered to the pupils.

39. There is a very caring atmosphere that pervades all aspects of the school's daily life. Pupils are valued both as individuals and for their contributions to the harmonious and excellent relationships found at all levels throughout the school. The positive aims and values of the school are strongly reflected in its work and staff, both teaching and non-teaching demonstrate a firm commitment to the improvement of pupils' educational and personal development.

40. Governors are very committed to the school and fulfil their responsibilities very well. Some criticism was directed at the role of governing body in the previous inspection report. This has now been rectified so that the governors now make a considerable contribution both in supporting the school and in planning and monitoring priorities for development. The governing body is very well organised and its committee structure works very effectively. Governors are extremely knowledgeable about the school. They receive good quality information from the headteacher that enables them to make informed decisions, judge progress towards targets and monitor the academic work of the school. Some of the governors work regularly in the school making a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, for example the literacy governor working with groups of pupils on play scripts. Individual governors make regular visits to lessons and provide written reports on what they find for the full governing body.

41. The quality of the school development planning is very good and accurately identifies priorities for development in the improvement of education. Costing of these improvements is included where relevant. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have had training in the self evaluation of schools and show considerable skills in this with a clear focus on raising standards. This knowledge and understanding brought about the improvements in assessment and monitoring to a point where it is now a strength of the school. Realistic targets have been set based on the evaluation of assessment data and good strategies are in place to meet these. The headteacher and governors closely monitor the implementation of development plans.

42. Financial management is very good and the headteacher and governors work closely to identify priorities and savings. The finance committee meets regularly and has in place rigorous systems to monitor the school's budget and the various grants received to improve training, resources and the fabric of the building. In this, they are very ably supported by the parents, who make considerable efforts to raise large sums of money to fund improvements, for example, learning resources, and the building of an additional classroom and a school hall. Improvements in the provision of learning resources are well considered and costed. Appropriate additional funding provides, for example additional reading materials to enhance the teaching of reading. Grants provides for specific purposes such as the support of pupils with special educational needs and those available to improve computer technology are used effectively for this purpose. The governors, largely through their experience in their professional lives have a very good understanding of the principles of best value and carefully research new initiatives and training before implementing them. They also conduct questionnaires on the effectiveness of provision so that they can further monitor value.

43. The headteacher undertakes a heavy load within the school, which includes an 80 per cent teaching timetable, the monitoring of teaching and everyday management of the school. The headteacher is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher and by an efficient secretary, both of whom are able to reduce the load, especially in administrative tasks. The school is yet to use information technology effectively to aid administration, particularly finance. The methods used to record and analyse pupils' attainment and progress does not fully use information technology but significant improvements are being made in this area.

44. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The headteacher and governors ensure that class sizes are as small as possible and together with the provision of sufficient resources and staff enables teachers to devote good levels of attention to the needs of these pupils. Support staff are very effective and skilled in the provision of additional help, are very well briefed by staff through daily logbooks and add significantly to the quality of education provided. The special educational needs co-ordinator gives good leadership to ensure the identification of pupils with special educational needs and to ensure that resources are efficiently and effectively targeted at those pupils with the greatest needs. In consultation with class teachers and the classroom assistant she organises the writing and monitoring of the pupils' educational plans. Administrative procedures for special educational needs are good and comply with statutory requirements.



45. Training for staff in literacy and numeracy has been effective, resulting in high quality teaching particularly in English. Levels of expertise across the curriculum are high and the school uses this very well to enhance the learning, especially in science and design and technology. Expertise in the curriculum for children under the age of five is very good and this contributes to pupils making very good progress in their early years. Arrangements to provide staff with additional training in information and communication technology is contained in the school development plan. The classroom support assistant, who provides additional support for children with special educational needs, is very effectively deployed and makes a positive contribution to the quality of the provision. She has a good understanding of her role and is effective in ensuring that pupils make good progress with their learning. She works very closely with the class teachers and special needs co-ordinator to ensure that pupils' individual targets are well met. She is well qualified and has undertaken additional training to improve her skills.

46. The accommodation is satisfactory although currently one classroom is cramped and there is limited space for pupils to gather for acts of collective worship. The layout of the school makes it very difficult for it to accommodate disabled pupils. The use of the community hall for physical education is a satisfactory short-term solution to an existing problem. Plans are well advanced for the school to build its own school hall, which will enable them to extend the range of opportunities for pupils to experience the full range of physical education. The teaching of computer skills is also adversely affected because a lack of space and limited facilities reduces the opportunities for pupils to experience hands-on work to consolidate the skills the teachers are providing. Space in classrooms is generally used well, as are displays of pupils' work, to raise interest and to illustrate the standards of work within the school.

47. Resources for learning are mainly satisfactory and are now appropriate in most subjects. However, there are limited suitable facilities and resources for the teaching of information technology to raise standards, which although satisfactory, could be higher given the quality of work seen in other areas of the curriculum.

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

48. To raise further the standards of attainment and the good quality of provision apparent in almost all aspects of the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- improve the accommodation for and the provision of computers to increase opportunities for teachers to teach the required skills and knowledge of information and communication technology.

48. In addition to the key issues the following less important areas for development should be considered for inclusion in an action plan:

- ensure that all pupils' reports contain reference to both information and communication technology and design and technology;
- ensure that pupils' reports consistently contain reference to targets for the improvement of pupils' work;
- improve the quality of teaching in the mental and oral mathematics sessions so that pupils' skills are improved to match those in other areas of the subject;
- use information technology to increase the efficiency of the administration of the school's finances;
- develop strategies to ensure that the performances of boys more closely matches that of girls in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	29
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
14	62	21	3	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

YR –Y4

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	99
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

Y R – Y4

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	13

#### English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
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#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### **Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1**

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	12	9	21

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	20	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95	95	95
	National	82	83	87

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	20	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95	95	95
	National	82	86	87

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	99
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.2
Average class size	19.8

#### **Education support staff: YR– Y4**

Total number of education support staff	3.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	67

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	187878
Total expenditure	203169
Expenditure per pupil (98 NOR)	2074
Balance brought forward from previous year	25290
Balance carried forward to next year	9999

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	99
Number of questionnaires returned	62

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	87	10	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	69	21	2	0	8
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	32	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	44	5	0	5
The teaching is good.	85	10	0	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	68	21	6	0	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	11	5	0	6
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	23	0	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	56	34	5	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	74	21	2	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	79	15	2	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	47	18	2	8

Where figures do not add to 100 some rounding of percentages has taken place.

## **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**

49. The school's provision for children in the reception class is very good. The curriculum is based on the nationally agreed areas of learning and provides the children with broad and balanced experiences. Emphasis is particularly placed on providing a wide range of challenging and focused experiences to promote the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; and mathematical development.

50. The overall attainment levels of most of the children entering the reception class are in line with those expected nationally. This is borne out by the baseline assessments. Teaching in the reception class is of a very high standard and this has a very positive effect on children's learning. As a result most children achieve well and are in line to reach the early learning goals in all six areas of learning by the end of the reception class, with a significant number attaining them well before they move into Year 1.

51. Teaching in the early years is of a very high quality and as a result children achieve well. The teacher and classroom assistants have a very secure understanding of how young children learn and of the importance of play and first hand experience. Lesson plans are extremely clear and detailed with appropriate learning objectives. Experiences are interesting and challenging and are focussed very closely on what children need to learn. Activities are well organised and appropriate to promote and reinforce communication, language, literacy, and mathematical development. There is a very good balance of teacher directed activities and child initiated ones. Staff provide very effective support for all activities, continually interacting to check and extend children's understanding. Praise and encouragement are used very effectively to promote positive behaviour and personal, social and emotional development. Children are given very clear instructions about what it is they are expected to do. Staff use questions, comments and observations very well to assess children's progress and to plan for future learning. Baseline assessment is used very effectively to help teachers plan an appropriate learning environment for children in their first year in school. A detailed and useful record system indicates the children's progress towards the early learning goals and helps to predict likely attainment at the end of Year 2. Teachers and classroom support assistants work well together, are enthusiastic, and have high expectations of the children. This has a very positive effect on the quality of the learning. Parents are actively involved in their children's learning through supporting simple homework tasks and class topics and this enhances children's learning.

#### **Social and personal development**

52. The priority given to this aspect is very high. Nearly all children are on course to attain or exceed the early learning goals by the time they transfer to Year 1. Virtually all of them enjoy coming to school. They respond well to the rules and routines of school life and are eager to learn new skills and to explore new ideas. Relationships are very positive and children are encouraged to reflect on their feelings, actions and experiences. Emphasis is placed on helping children to develop an understanding of appropriate behaviour and what is right and wrong. Inappropriate behaviour is quickly checked and the staff sensitively explain the consequences of actions, encouraging children to consider the feelings of others and say sorry. Children are learning to share and work together in a variety of situations, such as games, role-play and when making models, such as Japanese kites. They readily tidy away at the end of sessions, carefully putting things in their correct place. Older children work independently for sustained periods of time and take pride in their achievements. Children respond well to the challenge of being the daily helper and take their duties very seriously. There are very well planned opportunities for children to develop a sensitivity and awareness of their own culture and those of other people.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

53. This area of learning is given a very high priority. The high quality of the teaching is leading to standards that are above average overall by the time that pupils transfer into Year 1. There is a wide range of effective experiences and activities that develop and extend children's language and literacy skills. Children become attentive listeners as they enjoy stories and rhymes and join in familiar ones with enthusiasm. Adults and children share conversations and challenging questions. Appropriate interactions extend vocabulary and promote children's thinking. For example, a child's drawing and independent writing about a volcano was used effectively to introduce new words such as lava. Structured play situations, puppets and circle time provide opportunities for children to use and extend their vocabulary. Clearly labelled displays, alphabet and sound friezes and individual name cards help children develop early reading and writing skills. Children are encouraged to make marks on paper as they 'write' stock lists for the class shop or label the toys on sale. During their first term in the reception class children make very good progress

and many are drawing recognisable pictures and writing their own simple words and sentences using familiar letters, sounds and words. Children recognise their own names and write them with increasing accuracy using capital and small letters. A comfortable and inviting book corner promotes a love of books and children are learning to handle books with care. Children are learning to recognise initial sounds and use these to read unfamiliar words in their reading books. The opportunity to choose books is part of their learning activities and all children take books home on a regular basis to share with family members. This has a very positive effect on children's progress in learning to read. Elements of the literacy hour are used appropriately in the reception class and this has a positive effect on the progress children make.

### **Mathematical development**

54. Standards in mathematics are in line with those seen typically among children of this age. Children enjoy mathematics and learn to use mathematical ideas and skills in a wide range of situations. Appropriate elements of the numeracy strategy are implemented and this has a positive effect on achievements. There are very good opportunities for children to compare, match, sort, order, sequence and count using a range of games, routines and experiences. Through well-planned topic work they explore number, pattern, shape and measurement. Teachers place great emphasis on developing appropriate mathematical language and children are encouraged to consider size, shape, and position. They compare each other's heights and weigh out ingredients when baking. Shape and space are explored as children build models with different sized blocks. Ideas of repeated pattern and shape that each child has designed and painted are very evident in Joseph's coat of many colours. Children show a very good understanding of counting to ten and beyond. Most are able join in with the teacher and count forwards and backwards to ten recognising when a number is missing or is in the wrong place. Number rhymes and stories are used imaginatively to develop ideas of counting and problem solving as children work out how many speckled frogs have jumped into the pool or how many gold coins the king has left. Older children's understanding of addition and subtraction is very secure and they are able to record simple calculations independently.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

55. Children are developing a good understanding of the world around them and standards are above average overall. The natural curiosity of young children is enhanced as staff continually encourage them to talk about their discoveries and experiences, to ask questions and to investigate made and natural materials. Information books were used to find out about rockets and how they travel to the moon. Children learn about changes and the passage of time through celebrating birthdays and festivals. Photographs help them to understand how they have changed since they were born. They talk about the days of the week, the changing seasons, and the weather. Visits to local farms extend children's understanding of their own rural community and the natural world. Through religious education, visits and role-play children learn about other cultures and different ways of life. As part of their celebrations of Chinese New Year children dressed in typical Chinese costumes and ate a Chinese meal using chopsticks. The computer is a popular activity and children are confident and competent in using the mouse independently. In their role-play children use calculators and tills to enhance their understanding of technology. Children develop their senses and observational skills as they identify and record what different tastes, smells and sounds they like. Construction toys are used well to encourage children to design and make their own models and to discover how things work. Children make their own decisions as to what joining materials are best suited for different purposes, choosing from such things as sticky tape, glue, split pins, string and staples. Photographic evidence showed children making their own Noah's ark and testing its sail ability in the water tray.

### **Physical development**

56. Standards are average overall. Children's natural exuberance and energy is catered for well considering the limited facilities available they are becoming aware of the importance of healthy eating and physical exercise. Outside an adventure playground provides a very good range of challenging large equipment to develop confidence and skill in balancing, climbing and swinging. There is a wide range of wheeled toys which children manoeuvre well avoiding other children and obstacles as they incorporate them into their dramatic play situations. Children have structured physical education and dance lessons to promote their development. In these lessons there is considerable emphasis on developing and improving skills as children learn to run, hop, skip and jump with increasing coordination and confidence. Children move around the school safely and are able to line up in order to go to different parts of the school. Emphasis is placed on developing children's skills in movement lessons and when handling tools. Children are becoming competent and skilled as they handle a variety of tools, construction toys and malleable materials safely and with care.

### **Creative development**

57. Standards are average. Children enjoy a very good range of experiences in art, music, dance, story and imaginative play. Through such experiences children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and to develop their use of language to express ideas. An excellent range of musical instruments, songs and rhymes helps to develop children's understanding of sound, rhythm and pattern. Children are developing an understanding of simple graphics. They respond to classical music explaining confidently what it reminds them of or why they like it or do not like it. Children enjoy taking part in the many very good role-play situations provided such as the toy shop, post office and puppet show. Colour and observation are used well as children create their own wild poppy pictures in the style of Monet. There are many activities available for children to develop their senses through investigating texture, shape and colour. Baking is available on a regular basis and children explore different tastes and smells of foods. Staff provide materials with interesting real and made textures from which children can choose to create their own designs, pictures, models and collages. They work with play dough, clay and junk materials to create three-dimensional models. Materials such as cereals, sand and water are available for children to explore on a regular basis.

## **ENGLISH**

58. Since the last inspection, standards have remained very good. The improvements in test results since that time have been above the national trend. When compared to the national average and the results in similar schools, the 2000 national test results for seven-year-olds show an overall picture of very high attainment. The inspection evidence indicates that the present Year 2 and Year 4 pupils are again in line to exceed the national expectations and achieve very high standards.

59. Literacy is given a very high priority throughout the school. In this, they are building on the very effective foundation for learning provided for children in the reception class. The school has enthusiastically implemented the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers and pupils are very aware of the skills they are teaching and learning and lessons have an atmosphere of hard work. Pupils are eager to do their best to achieve the highest standards of which they are capable.

60. By the age of seven, the pupils are becoming confident speakers, eager to answer questions and to talk about and evaluate their work. By the age of nine, pupils are able to discuss texts using subject specific vocabulary. They express ideas clearly and use interesting and grammatically accurate language. Drama and role-play are used very effectively to develop speaking and listening skills across the school. Year 4 pupils confidently develop their improvisation skills as they work together to develop imaginative scenarios. Higher attaining pupils are very entertaining as they use interesting and persuasive dialogue to convince their friends of the reality of flying saucers.

61. Pupils make good progress in their reading skills and are enthusiastic readers. The youngest pupils read simple books with accuracy and understanding. They are aware of authors and illustrators and are able to identify the main characters and events in their favourite books. Emphasis is placed on ensuring children have a good grasp of sounds and letters. As a result, they quickly develop independent strategies for sounding out words they are unfamiliar with. Above average pupils in Year 2 use a variety of strategies to help them recognise unfamiliar words, such as letter patterns and sounds, context and pictures. They read aloud with confidence, expression and considerable understanding. By the age of nine most are enthusiastic readers of a wide range of texts and are learning to read them fluently and accurately. Older pupils express a preference for particular authors and they choose books because of particular interests such as humour or adventure. Above average and average attaining pupils understand plot, setting and characterisation. They show a mature understanding of different writers' styles and accounts and are able to make deductions and inferences from their reading. Pupils read to their teachers, classroom support assistants and parents regularly. Pupils are developing good independent research skills as they use dictionaries, thesauruses, encyclopaedias, CD-ROM's and non-fiction books to seek out information they need. Books are very well matched to children's attainment and interest levels and carefully chosen to interest both boys and girls. Staff ensure that individual pupils who are particularly skilled in reading have a challenging range of books to read and are not limited to the reading schemes. A range of non-fiction books is used well within the classroom to support topic work.

62. A significant number of pupils achieve high standards in their writing. By the age of seven the majority of pupils are spelling common words correctly and making good attempts to spell more complex words. They write for a variety of purposes using appropriate layout and vocabulary. Pupils observe the rules of punctuation, using full stops and capital letters to add interest to their work. Above average pupils use question marks, exclamation marks and interesting vocabulary to enliven their writing. Handwriting is given a very high priority. Writing is almost always very neat and well formed. In Year 2, pupils now learn to join their letters and are developing a good style.



63. Pupils progressively develop their ability to write for different purposes using a wide range of styles. Work shows an awareness of the need for different presentational skills and styles. Pupils make very good use of well-chosen vocabulary to enliven stories and accounts to capture the imagination of the reader. They produce diagrams and posters to support their work in other subjects. They write poems, book reviews, character portraits, letters, and scientific and historical accounts. Older pupils write interesting, well-illustrated books showing imagination and an awareness of their audience. Writing is well organised and by the age of nine most pupils show an awareness of spelling rules, grammar and punctuation. Above average pupils invariably use correct punctuation, spelling and complex grammatical structures in their work. They show an understanding of paragraphing and use rich appropriate vocabulary to enliven their writing. By the age of nine, most pupils have developed a neat, flowing and legible style of handwriting.

64. Pupils show very favourable attitudes to learning and enjoy very positive relationships with their teachers. This makes a considerable contribution to their rate of progress and the standards of attainment. There is an eagerness to learn and pupils stay on task and show very good levels of independence and concentration. They work very hard to meet the individual targets set to improve their handwriting, presentation skills and knowledge and understanding of punctuation and grammar. Opportunities to work collaboratively and to develop personal skills are well used. Pupils enjoy English lessons and respond very well to the structure of the literacy hour.

65. All the teaching observed during the inspection was at least good, with half being very good and a quarter excellent. All teachers confidently implement the literacy hour. Teaching is carefully structured and well planned to meet the needs of pupils of all attainment levels. Teachers share the learning objectives with the pupils to ensure they are very clear about what it is they are expected to learn. Throughout the lesson they use praise, comments and questions effectively to check understanding and extend thinking. Speaking and listening continues to be given a high priority. Handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar are given a particularly high priority and pupils knowledge and understanding of basic skills are apparent in their extended writing and when writing in other subjects. When teaching is very good or excellent expectations are particularly high and the teacher's enthusiasm, explanations and knowledge have a very positive effect on attainment and progress. In a Year 2 lesson on developing an understanding of word patterns, the teacher's imaginative use of resources, lively questions, explanations and well chosen examples quickly developed an understanding of the 'ow' letter combination and the language of time. As a result, pupils made rapid progress and by the end of the lesson were able to spell a wide range of words with the letters 'ow' contained in them and choosing more interesting words to improve their stories. Individual targets are effective in reminding pupils of the strategies they need to improve their work such as good handwriting, correct spelling and punctuation. Plenary sessions check understanding and extend their thinking, pushing them just that bit further. Teachers and pupils share the same purpose and there is an expectation on both parts that learning is an enjoyable and challenging activity. Relationships are very good and teachers have high expectations of behaviour and attainment resulting in very good discipline and high standards. Pupils are encouraged to believe in their own ability to succeed.

66. Teachers use a range of appropriate, imaginative and high quality resources to support the teaching of literacy. This has a very positive effect on the quality of the provision, making the teaching and learning of English much more challenging and interesting. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils receive very good support from classroom assistants and teachers and most achieve standards expected for their age.

67. Assessment and record keeping are excellent. Teachers mark work on a regular basis and provide pupils with helpful suggestions on how they can improve their work. National and school test results and teacher assessments are carefully scrutinised to improve standards, track pupils' progress and to set targets for the school and individual pupils. Detailed records on pupils' progress from the time they enter the school provide very useful information on the progress pupils' make and how well they achieve in relation to their prior attainment. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject. Formal monitoring of the teaching and planning takes place and staff are given feedback on how to improve the quality of their teaching. This has a very positive effect on the high quality teaching and learning of English which goes on in the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

68. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy and the subject is planned using an appropriate agreed format. This is helping the school to maintain the well above average standards shown by the tests in both 1999 and 2000.

69. The 2000 National Curriculum test results for the end of Key Stage 1 show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was well above the national average. All pupils attained the expected level 2 or better, with

almost one pupil in three reaching the more difficult level 3. When comparing these results with those of pupils from similar backgrounds, results remain above average. At this stage of their education, boys are achieving slightly above the national average but girls are attaining levels well ahead of this. In the recent past, results in mathematics have risen sharply from a point in 1997 when results were broadly in line with national results to a point now where results are well above national averages. Inspection evidence indicates that well above average standards continue into Key Stage 2. The school continues to carry out assessments of pupils' ability on an optional basis in both Years 3 and 4. These show that pupils make good and sometimes very good progress during this period and leave the school with attainment well above that which is normally expected. Standards have improved since those reported in the last inspection.

70. In both key stages, pupils conduct mathematical investigations and carry out practical work with good levels of understanding of the processes involved. Most pupils complete both written and mental calculations accurately although speed of the recall of number facts is sometimes a little slow. Throughout the school, pupils use and can explain a range of strategies when carrying out calculations.

71. In Year 1, pupils can count confidently to 20 and beyond and are secure in their understanding of terms. Most understand odd and even and are beginning to add 10 accurately to a given number. They are able to work constructively in pairs when solving problems using number lines quickly and accurately. Pupils understand measurement and happily use non-standard measures, for example cubes or paper clips to calculate length. Their mathematical vocabulary is well developed and pupils are able to use terms such as longest, shortest and tallest with good understanding. The pace of progress continues to accelerate in Year 2 where, in a very good lesson on time, pupils used analogue clocks to tell the time to the quarter hour. More able pupils could accurately tell the time to five-minute periods. This knowledge and understanding was well reinforced through a games format which very effectively consolidated their learning. Pupils are developing a secure understanding on money and most recognise and are familiar with the different coins. They count confidently from a given number in 2s and most pupils can quickly and accurately solve simple problems such as  $7 + [?] = 11$ . Although early in the school year, inspection evidence indicates that most pupils are already working at levels in line with those expected at the end of the year when tests are undertaken. By Year 3, most pupils have acquired a good understanding of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and a secure knowledge of place value with numbers to 1000. Pupils are developing a clear understanding of shape and angles, are able to double and halve numbers quickly and accurately and are beginning to acquire an understanding of fractions. On rare occasions, more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and progress is sometimes difficult to gauge because work is not always dated. In Year 4, the teacher continues to develop pupils' mathematical vocabulary well with pupils understanding the symbols meaning greater than/less than. They apply secure knowledge to problems and can accurately measure length and weight using metric units. Their knowledge of shape is well extended and pupils are familiar with terms such as isosceles and equilateral triangles. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. By the end of Year 4, pupils on the special educational needs register are attaining levels broadly in line with the national expectation in mathematics largely due to the very good quality of teaching and the early identification of pupils' problems.

72. Teaching is good overall in both key stages and ranges between satisfactory and very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and how to teach it. This, combined with a good understanding of the needs of individual pupils enables them to provide interesting and appropriate activities and to motivate pupils' to learn. The teachers encourage pupils to use and explain their own methods and strategies and this helps to develop a clear understanding of what they are doing. Skilled questioning, observing and listening enables teachers to find out exactly what pupils know. Regular assessments are completed and this too enables teachers to gauge how well pupils have learned. Future lessons are modified in light of this information. Support staff, when available, are very well briefed and add significantly to the quality of teaching and learning. Mathematics is promoted well in teachers planning for other subjects. Graphs and tally charts appear in science work with accurate measuring seen in design and technology. Pupils develop a good understanding of dates and the passage of time in history and learn about coordinates when studying maps in geography. However information and communication technology are used insufficiently in mathematics.

73. In most lessons, pupils respond enthusiastically to the very good classroom management. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can produce are usually high though there is an occasional lack of challenge for the most able pupils. Teachers have excellent relationships with the pupils, interact with them sensitively and encourage them effectively to make very good progress overall. This helps the pupils to develop the confidence to know that their ideas and answers are valued, to behave well and in most cases work purposefully. Teachers assess what pupils learn and check that pupils understand a variety of strategies to be able to make informed decisions and choices.

74. Good attention is given to the teaching of numeracy. While mental and oral calculation strategies and knowledge are at least satisfactory these sessions could provide greater impetus to the rest of the lesson and ensure that pupils' mental calculation and recall skills are more rapid.

75. There are very effective strategies for monitoring pupils' progress and accurately identifying areas of weakness in pupils' understanding. Work is marked regularly and effectively. Teachers regularly discuss pupils' work with them and indicate how they can improve. Homework is used very well to support the raising of standards. Monitoring of the quality of teaching is regularly undertaken and this improves effectiveness.

76. The subject coordinator has a very clear understanding of the quality of the teaching of mathematics in the school. Regular monitoring of the teaching of the subject takes place. Colleagues planning is examined to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are covered. An analysis of the results of tests is undertaken to ensure that any weaknesses in the curriculum are quickly rectified.

## **SCIENCE**

77. Standards are well above the national average and the pupils' achievements are very good by the time they reach the ages of both seven and nine. The teachers' assessments indicate that in both 1999 and 2000, standards at age seven were above and well above the national average respectively. The standard of current work and the pupils' performance in lessons is consistent with the teachers' assessments in 2000 at both age groups. The number of seven-year-old pupils attaining the expected national level in 2000 was very high compared with all other schools. This is also the case with present pupils and represents an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. The school does not conduct optional science tests in Years 3 and 4. The scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils in Year 4 indicate that both their knowledge and understanding of scientific principles and their ability to apply these is very good.

78. Systems to assess what pupils actually know, understand and can do are in place. They are a planned and integral part of the work done in science. Accurate assessments are carried out which provide useful information to teachers in the planning of further work to challenge and extend pupils' learning. Assessments are part of lessons; teachers ask perceptive questions to gauge what the pupils know. Pupils' knowledge of life and living processes, materials and their properties and physical processes is very good.

79. Examples of pupils' knowledge and understanding are very apparent when they talk about their work. Particular emphasis is placed upon the use of practical investigation. Children talk excitedly about observations of snails and are able to draw conclusions from what they see. They understand that hot air rises and have carried out experiments to prove this. Pupils in Year 4 have a very good detailed knowledge of the human body and can accurately locate lungs, kidneys and liver. They know and can describe how changes in light, water and temperature can affect the growth of plants and know about capillary actions. Pupils have a good knowledge of conductors and insulators and are able to demonstrate very good knowledge of electrical circuits and the effect additional bulbs and switches have. They are able to record their findings accurately and, as part of this, make predictions about what they think will happen and whether their experiments have been fair. In the two lessons observed, both in Key Stage 1, the tasks were practically based. In Year 1, children investigated modelling materials; in Year 2 they studied both reversible and irreversible change. In both lessons, the main teaching point was the need for a fair method of carrying out an experiment. Pupils discussed time, quantities of materials and measurement and, in both groups, most pupils had a secure grasp of what did or did not comprise an appropriate test.

80. The curriculum is very well structured. Reviews of the content take place regularly and most of the planning is completed by the coordinator. Coverage of the curriculum is carefully monitored and evaluation of the quality of teaching is a part of the planning. Questionnaires, aimed at pupils are used to ascertain their knowledge and understanding as well as their enjoyment of science. There are good links with other subjects, with pupils utilising and extending their literacy and numeracy skills through science. No use of information and communication technology linked to science was seen during the inspection. Throughout the school, varying levels of work are provided for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Adult help, provided by either parent helpers or support assistants, is of very good quality brought about through thorough briefing on the tasks to be performed. This good support results in all pupils making very good progress.

81. There is a very strong link between the results achieved by pupils and the quality of teaching seen. Although there were limited opportunities to observe lessons the quality of teaching ranged from very good to excellent. This, together with a detailed scrutiny of planning and pupils' work indicates very good levels of learning and progress across the school with pupils maintaining high levels of attainment through to the end of Year 4.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

82. The previous inspection found standards to be very good, a judgement that is in line with the current findings. Only one art lesson was seen during this inspection and an overall judgement on the quality of teaching cannot therefore be made. However, the lesson in years 3 and 4 demonstrated that pupils have very good levels of knowledge and skill in observational drawing, colour mixing and painting. A high proportion of pupils produce work which is very well advanced and well above that normally seen for the age group. Pupils have very good techniques and skills that they demonstrate very well in observational drawing and in painting. Pencil and brush techniques show a thorough knowledge of light and shade and pupils use brushes and paint to skilfully reproduce portions of Monet pictures. Pupils are not afraid to investigate other media such as chalks and work hard to master this. Still life pictures of fruit show how skilled pupils are at very carefully examining and reproducing what they see. Much of this high quality work is as a direct result of the very high levels of knowledge, skill and understanding possessed by the teachers, who are able to guide pupils into extending their skills.

83. Teachers' planning is very good with clear detail on what pupils are to be taught and experience. Lessons are well organised and pupils manage the materials they use very well. A good range of work is on display throughout the school. Collage work using a variety of different materials and fabrics links well with pupils' studies in science. Pupils' cultural boundaries are extended through work on Indian Mandalas patterns and work murals. Careful ink drawings of Indian gods help to extend this. Australian aboriginal art work also extends their understanding of other peoples and cultures. Experience of Western art is developed through studies of famous artists such as Monet, Van Gogh, George Seurat and Georgia O'Keefe.

84. Discussions with pupils indicate that pupils have a good appreciation of the works and some of the lives of these artists. Photographic evidence of pupils experiencing the use of natural materials illustrates their very good understanding of pattern, shape and form. Evidence indicates that progress in acquiring the skills and knowledge to be able to produce high quality artwork is very good. Teachers keep careful records of pupils' experiences.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

85. Only one Year 4 lesson was observed. Interviews with pupils and scrutiny of both pupils' work and teachers' planning show that standards of work and the range of experiences are above those expected for pupils of this age. No judgements on standards were given in the last inspection report.

86. In the one lesson seen, pupils were learning about the evaluation of products and the extent to which they suited the purpose for which they were made. Pupils provided well considered answers using a wide range of mature technical vocabulary in their discussions about disposable cups. They were able to identify both advantages and disadvantages to these products and linked these ideas appropriately to environmental issues. Pupils examine musical instruments they had made and commented on the design quality, finish and suitability of the instrument. Comments were positive and constructive, a point strongly reinforced by the teacher.

87. There is insufficient information to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching. It is clear that pupils have a wide experience of design and technology tasks, they are able to talk knowledgeably about projects they have covered and how they have evaluated and tested their models.

88. In discussions with pupils they were able to talk about baking and about making fruit salad. They know why some foods are healthier than others, a good link with science, and they had clear ideas about the need for hygiene. They had made purses and tested different fastenings and tested these rigorously. Pupils designed and made pizza boxes using the skills of accurate measuring acquired in mathematics to produce accurate and well made finished articles. Pupils in Years 2 and 4 have a very secure understanding of the design process. On occasions, pupils have disassembled products to investigate how they are made. Pupils have good levels of skill. They can describe the care and concentration required in cutting, gluing, folding and measuring and what they needed to do to make a quality product. They make good links with work they have done in mathematics, science English and art. Progress is good and examples of work seen together with photographic evidence and the descriptions given by pupils of work completed indicate that attainment is above the levels expected from pupils of this age.

89. There is a good scheme of work in place modified to meet the particular needs of the school. Planning is very thorough and mostly completed by the coordinator. Pupils' attainment and their experiences in design and

technology are carefully recorded. The coordinator examines pupils' work regularly and has created an action plan to improve the teaching and curriculum in the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

90. It is not possible to make firm judgements about the standards of work or the quality of teaching because of the limited amount of evidence and because it was only possible to see one lesson during the inspection. From interviews with pupils in Year 2, it is apparent that they have made studies of the local area examining environments and habitats. They are familiar with maps, especially those showing their own local area and can eagerly pick out villages and other features they know. Comparisons between two contrasting areas have formed part of their studies and pupils can point out differences in housing between Sytchampton and Bradford. By Year 4, pupils have learned about developing countries such as India and Egypt and are able to compare and contrast these areas with geographical factors in their own country for example rainfall, hours of sunshine, crops and occupations. This work showed that they have developed good skills in carrying out geographical enquiries. Their geographical vocabulary is well developed and pupils understand and use words such as equator, tropics, evaporation and condensation with accuracy. Pupils have good atlas skills and can name the continents. They can also name oceans, some main rivers and major mountains although struggle to name mountain ranges. Overall they have a good level of knowledge.

91. In the one lesson seen pupils were very interested and concentrated well. This was the result of good quality teaching. They demonstrated their ability to work well together and to ask pertinent questions when they were uncertain about the meaning of words. Progress from the limited evidence available appears to be good. Planning is thorough and clearly linked to the scheme of work. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are developed well especially their knowledge of places and map skills and their ability to understand the differences between their own lives and those of people in contrasting countries.

## **HISTORY**

92. Due to timetabling arrangements, there was insufficient evidence available to make a full evaluation of the subject. However, discussions with pupils, an examination of schemes of work and teachers' planning indicates that the school provides a well-balanced programme of work in the subject and pupils achieve well. The curriculum is well planned. Most pupils are developing a very good understanding of the importance of using a range of information to develop their understanding of past times. From the age of six very good teaching encourages pupils to think as historians and to use artefacts, books, CD-ROMs, the Internet and photographs to find out about how people in bygone ages lived.

93. Excellent teaching in Year 4 provided children with challenging opportunities to research information about the Pharaoh Tutankhamun. The lesson was extremely well organised to enable pupils to work in small groups to research the many different aspects of the life of the young King. After an intense study, pupils discovered a wealth of fascinating information about the curse of the mummy's tomb, the discovery of the tomb and the treasures that have survived. Pupils' enthusiasm for the subject was very evident as they gave a short report to their classmates and included photographs, Internet material and quizzes.

94. History has been maintained as an important part of the curriculum in the school. A scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work indicates that teachers have a very good understanding of the subject. The teaching has sparkle and brings the subject alive for pupils. Older pupils have a very secure understanding of chronology and can name significant events and people from the past. They discuss the Anglo-Saxons, Vikings, Tudors and Stuarts confidently and can name the different Kings and Queens and characters such as Samuel Pepys and Oliver Cromwell. Pupils' attitudes to history are very good. They particularly enjoy lessons that challenge them to think and consider how people lived in past times. They are keen to explore new ideas and exchange these with each other.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

95. Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology are broadly average by the time they leave the school. Progress is satisfactory overall and is partially determined by factors outside school and by the availability of computers in school.

96. Two lessons were observed during the inspection. The quality of teaching in both lessons was good; teachers had appropriate levels of knowledge and provided clear explanations of what pupils were going to learn. Pupils benefited from the direct teaching of the skills they would need and this enabled them to make good progress during the lessons. Through good quality questioning, teachers were able to check on and consolidate pupils' learning. Pupils demonstrated appropriate control skills and knowledge. For example, pupils in Year 2 spoke confidently about the operation of the mouse, how to enter and delete and were able to follow directions on the screen. Pupils in Year 1 developed their control skills well as they directed the robot Pixie round a pre-set course. Overall pupils skills are satisfactory. However, they suffer from a lack of appropriate software to use to extend their skills and knowledge especially in other areas of the curriculum. While teachers provide good teaching to raise pupils' knowledge and skills, the pupils have too little opportunity to practise their hands-on skills and so progress is slowed.

97. There is a good quality policy and scheme of work to guide teachers' planning. Staff have received training and are becoming increasingly confident in delivering the programme of work. Future training needs have been identified by the coordinator and will be met in the near future. Assessment procedures are being developed so that the school will have a good understanding of each pupil's abilities in the subject.

98. Levels of resources, particularly the hardware, have improved and most computers are modern machines. Computers are in classrooms and pupils use them regularly although there is some evidence that they are used because they are there rather than to enhance pupils learning in any particular subject. Insufficient hands' on experience can be seen during the direct teaching sessions, which although good in themselves, do not allow pupils to learn and consolidate skills and knowledge sufficiently.

## **MUSIC**

99. There was insufficient evidence available to make a full evaluation of the standards attained. However, an examination of schemes of work and teachers' planning indicates that the school provides a well-balanced programme of work in the subject, which includes opportunities for performing, composing and appraising. Music makes a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, cultural and personal development. The playing of an appropriate piece of music sets a reverent atmosphere for reflection and worship as pupils arrive for assemblies. All pupils have opportunities to develop their singing skills through whole school singing lessons and hymn practices. Songs and hymns are challenging and pupils sing with enthusiasm. Attention is given to the development of listening skills and in the identification of pitch, rhythm, dynamics and musical notation. Pupils are encouraged to sing with accuracy, expression, controlled phrasing and articulation.

100. Specialist teaching and the enthusiasm of teaching staff and support staff in formal lessons, assemblies and school clubs provide an added dimension to pupils' musical development. The coordinator has specialist skills, which are used very effectively to develop staff confidence. This helps teachers to provide pupils with very good opportunities to extend their creative skills. Assessments are made on pupils' attainment at the end of a unit of work. Resources for the subject are good and include instruments from other cultures to extend pupils' skills, knowledge and appreciation.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

101. It was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection. This does not provide the inspection team with sufficient evidence to make secure judgements on the standards of pupils' work or the quality of teaching. No outdoor physical education was seen due to the difficult weather conditions and indoor lessons are limited because they take place in the local community hall. Plans are well developed to provide the school with its own hall in which dance, small games and gymnastics can take place.

102. An interview with Year 4 pupils reveals that pupils swim regularly. Many are recorded as being very competent swimmers having attained gold standard. Work in the community hall includes apparatus work and pupils describe being able to put out apparatus safely. Small indoor games also take place and these include practice in throwing and catching skills. Line dancing takes place as an extra-curricular activity although dance does not take place regularly in the physical education curriculum. In the summer term, teachers' planning and pupils confirm that they undertake athletic activities and enter into competition with other schools in football, netball and rounders. Pupils confirm that adventurous activities using the external climbing equipment is a year round activity. Coverage of the curriculum is broadly satisfactory. There is a policy document and the work of pupils is appropriately planned. Learning resources are well organised and sufficient to meet the needs of the school.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

103. Due to the school's timetabling arrangements, there was insufficient evidence available to make a full evaluation of work in religious education in Key Stage 2. However, an examination of schemes of work, discussions with pupils and teachers' planning indicates that the school provides a very well balanced programme of work in the subject and that by the age of seven pupils are achieving standards above those expected from the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils who have special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils.

104. A range of challenging topics is covered such as festivals, celebrations, the prophets, parables, the character of God and Jesus as the leader of Christianity. A scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils shows that by the age of nine pupils have a very mature understanding of the subject. They have a very good knowledge of the Christian religion, the significance of Jesus as the Son of God and the importance of ritual and symbolism. Pupils are developing a growing awareness that religion, beliefs and faith can have an impact on people's personal, family and community lives. Year 2 pupils learn about Moses and the Ten Commandments and link these effectively with their own ideas of right and wrong. Throughout both key stages, pupils learn about other religions and their significance to people's ways of life. They show considerable interest in different faiths and are developing a respect and understanding that people can worship God in different ways.

105. In the limited number of lessons observed, the teaching and learning were very good; an improvement on the quality of learning seen in the last inspection. Pupils respond very positively to comments and questions which challenge them and extend their thinking. They have very good opportunities to explore complex ideas such as the character of God and the moral issues in the parables of Jesus. Teachers arrange visits to churches, cathedrals, temples and synagogues to make the learning more interesting and meaningful.

106. The coordinator manages the subject well ensuring that the curriculum provides pupils with a range of experiences and activities to ensure progression and continuity. Termly assessments are made on pupils' responses and written work. Resources for the subject are good and include artefacts from other cultures to extend pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.