

INSPECTION REPORT

WILLINGTON LOWER SCHOOL

Willington, Bedford

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109491

Headteacher: Georgina Gunn

Reporting inspector: Joyce Taylor
4275

Dates of inspection: 13-16 November 2000

Inspection number: 224777

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
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Road Willington Bedfordshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J England
Date of previous inspection:	28/1/97

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Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Joyce Taylor 4275	Registered inspector	Mathematics Religious education History Geography Art and design Music Design and technology	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve? The school's results and pupils' standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? English as an additional language. Pupils under five
Beryl Attaway 19320	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Finance and efficiency
Peter Brock 17969	Team inspector	English Science Information communication Technology Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? Equal opportunities Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is much smaller than most primary schools. There are currently 54 children on roll aged from four to nine years old. About half of the children come from the village of Willington and the rest come from a much wider area, including the town of Bedford. The school was built over a hundred years ago. It is cramped inside and has restricted play and sport areas outside. Four per cent of the pupils are eligible for a free school meal and this is much lower than the national average. One pupil speaks English as an additional language. Almost seventeen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, including one with a statement, and this is about average. The children enter the reception class part-time in the term after their fourth birthday and become full-time two terms later as rising fives. Attainment on entry varies widely from year to year and among individuals. In 1997, the overall picture of attainment on entry was below the local authority average; in other years, it has been both in line with the local average and above the average. Over several years, once variations are levelled out, attainment on entry is broadly average. The present headteacher was appointed just over one year ago and all but one of the teachers have changed since the previous inspection. The headteacher has a significant class teaching commitment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

In broad terms, this is a school where pupils between the ages of four and nine increase their knowledge and skills by nationally expected amounts. The small size of the year groups is leading to wide annual variations in test results at age seven that are primarily linked to differences in the proportions of pupils with special educational needs. In 2000, the results among seven-year-old pupils were affected by an unsettled period caused by staff changes, which has now been stabilised by the headteacher, and current standards at age seven are higher than last year. Nine-year-old pupils were not affected by the staff changes and the overall standard of their present work is above average in reading, mathematics and science. In writing, however, standards throughout the school are not as high as they should be. The teaching is satisfactory overall. The headteacher has already made several successful changes in her short time at the school. Her style of leadership is thoughtful and clear. The cost of running the school is high and so, taking account of the current standards attained, gives satisfactory value for money overall.

What the school does well

- The new headteacher has made a strong impact in the school through good financial control and by setting up arrangements to improve the management of the curriculum, the teaching and the learning.
- The standards in the school are rising.
- There is good support for the children with special educational needs and these children make good progress.
- The children have good attitudes to the school and their rate of attendance is very good. They are interested in their lessons. Their parents contribute well to their learning at home and this complements the work of the school.
- The provision for the children's moral and social development is good. The school ensures there is no bullying and the children are cared for well.
- The teachers keep a good check on what the children can do and they identify clear targets for the future.

What could be improved

- The standards in writing are unsatisfactory across the school.
- There need to be more checks on the lessons to ensure that the calm atmosphere in some classes is extended to them all.
- The more able children need to be stretched.
- The improvement in standards needs to achieve a greater pace.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in 1996, the areas identified for action have all been improved. The range and effectiveness of the reading opportunities for the infant children are now satisfactory. The youngest children have an attractive and exciting new outdoor area for their physical activities and this has helped raise standards. The playtime provision for the children is now good and the children are able to use their imaginations and play with concentration. The governors meet all their statutory requirements. During the past four years, the children's test results in reading and mathematics have generally matched or exceeded the national averages. Sometimes, due to the small numbers of children and the extent of special educational needs, the percentages fluctuate considerably and this happened in 1998 and 2000. In writing, the results have swung from above to below the national average several times but do not show sufficient overall improvement. The standards in mathematics have improved among the seven to nine year olds.

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-old pupils, the oldest at the school.

Performance in:	Compared with All schools				Similar schools		Key
	1997	1998	1999	2000	1999	2000	
Reading	A	C	A	D	A	E	Very high A* well above average A above average B Average C Below average D Well below average E very low E*
Writing	A*	D	B	D	B	E	
Mathematics	A	B	A	C	C	D	

Caution is necessary when interpreting the results when cohorts are small.

When compared with similar schools, the test results for 2000 were well below the national average in reading and writing and were below average in mathematics. They were average in science in the assessments made by the teachers. In all four subjects, there have been annual variations in standards that are primarily related to the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Almost one third of the pupils who took the tests in 2000 were on the register for special needs at the time of the tests. In addition, the children in that year group experienced some disruption to their learning because their teacher changed. These factors go some way to explaining the lower results that year. These pupils are now in Year 3 and the effectiveness of current teaching in that class is helping them to catch up on lost ground.

There are no compulsory national tests for nine-year-old pupils but optional national tests have been used. These, together with the findings from current work, show that almost all Year 4 children are attaining or exceeding the expected national standard in reading and mathematics, with more than half exceeding the standard. Overall, standards in reading, mathematics and science in this age group are above average. The nine-year-olds' writing is satisfactory in terms of spelling, handwriting and grammar but their ability to sustain their independent writing at length and for different purposes is below average.

The long-term achievement of the pupils, a measure of the educational value added over time by the teachers, is satisfactory. The seven-year-olds who took their national tests in 2000 entered the school with attainment that was generally below expected levels and almost one third of them have special educational needs. In the main, they achieved standards that were consistent with their attainment on entry, although the most able pupils did underachieve. Most of these children are now attaining either expected or above expected levels in mathematics, science and most aspects of English. In the optional tests, which the current nine-year-olds took when aged eight, the results for all of them show an appropriate improvement that is consistent with national expectations. Optional national tests for the previous cohort of nine-year-olds shows that their achievement compared to their attainment at age seven was satisfactory. The school has set targets to raise the standards in English and mathematics and recognises the need to give work that is more advanced to the potentially higher attaining children.

Throughout the school, standards in information technology, history, and physical education are average. Standards in religious education are in line with the agreed syllabus. Standards in design and technology, geography, and art and design, are average in the five to seven age group and good among the eight and nine year olds. Standards in music are good among eight and nine year olds; the evidence elsewhere is limited. The pupil with English as an additional language speaks English fluently and does not need extra support. The children with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to their difficulties. The four-year-olds attain satisfactory standards in communications, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development, creative development and mathematics. They attain average standards overall in personal development although they are not learning to work quietly enough and with enough consideration for others. They make sound progress overall in all the areas of learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The children are willing to work hard; they usually concentrate and listen. They like school. They are pleased to help and like to be useful.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. Very good in the majority of lessons but noisy in a minority and then children are distracted from their work. There is good behaviour around school and very good at lunchtimes but lively at playtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory personal development overall. The children have good relationships with their teachers and each other. Occasionally, they interrupt their teachers and need firm managing.
Attendance	Very good. The children come to school regularly and promptly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	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.

Almost all lessons are satisfactory or better. Only 4 per cent, one lesson, is unsatisfactory. The teaching is satisfactory in 65 per cent of lessons; it is good in a further 22 per cent; and very good in 9 per cent. The overall quality is not as good as at the previous inspection. In the Year 3 and 4 class, more than half of the teaching is good or very good. In Year 1 and 2, the teaching is satisfactory, with some teaching that is good and one unsatisfactory lesson. In the Reception class, the teaching is satisfactory. Basic skills are taught well for reading throughout the school. They are taught well for mathematics in the five to seven age groups and appropriately in the seven to nines. In all of the classes, the children are not motivated strongly enough in writing.

The teaching in science is very good in the seven to nine age groups and satisfactory in the infants. There is some good teaching in mathematics and English in both key stages. In mental arithmetic in the five to sevens, the teacher is good at helping the children improve their calculating skills, this is not developed so well after age seven. In English, the teaching of reading is good and appropriate attention is given to improving the children's speaking and listening skills across the school. The children are not taught well enough to write extended pieces of work that include their own views, although the teaching of handwriting, spelling and punctuation is satisfactory. The pupils with special needs are taught well both in classes and when in small groups. The special needs teacher organises this efficiently and the support assistants are good at helping these pupils. On many occasions, the potentially higher attaining children are not given sufficiently challenging tasks and as a result their standards are not high enough. The school has already booked training sessions for the teachers as a means of resolving this problem.

There were a number of particular strengths in the teaching and learning, most noticeably in the Year 3 and 4 class. In the Reception class the imaginative tasks help the new children extend their knowledge effectively but the noise level is sometimes too high and then the children do not work as well as they could; this prevented several satisfactory lessons from being good or better in quality. In the best lessons across the school, much is demanded of the children and there is very good classroom management. The children are able to concentrate well and complete their tasks properly. Where the teaching is not so effective, the class management is not always successful and the children become noisy and easily distracted from their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The provision for the youngest children is appropriately linked to the nationally agreed early years curriculum. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular clubs and good provision for children with special educational needs. Provision for the potentially higher attaining children is not developed enough. There are good arrangements for reading and numeracy, less effective provision for writing. There is sound provision for the other subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Above average provision and teaching, this enables the children to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. There is good provision for moral and social development supported through school rules and high expectations of behaviour in most cases. There is sound cultural development involving children's traditional games at lunchtime, good provision for art and music in Year 3 and 4. Sound provision is made for spiritual development overall with some good opportunities planned for this area.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. Very good care is taken of the children. Personal development is monitored well. Child protection procedures are effective but too informal. There is good checking of the children's standards but more needs to be done to use this information to improve standards.

Statutory requirements for the curriculum are met appropriately and there is a strong emphasis on English and mathematics. The new arrangements to teach the foundation curriculum in the mornings, when the youngest children are all in school, is working satisfactorily. In the Foundation Stage, there is a suitable emphasis on most areas of learning but more attention needs to be given to writing and aspects of the children's personal development. The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents. It tries hard to accommodate the wide views and opinions parents express and the strong support of the Friends Association is very beneficial. The school cares for the children well and the procedures for checking and preventing bullying are very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher has a very clear view of what needs to be done. Good procedures have been introduced by the headteacher for observing teaching, planning what the children will cover and checking how well they have done. There is helpful collaboration among the staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They question and check reports, know what the school does well and what the weaknesses are. They contribute appropriately to policy documents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a clear view of what needs to be done, work has already started in several aspects. More observations of the teaching and weekly planning are needed to raise the standards of children's work and improve the quality of teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Money is used well and has led to improved standards, for example, in reading. The budget is managed and checked well. The developments have been supported by several successful bids for funding.

There are sufficient suitably qualified staff and learning resources to teach the curriculum. The accommodation is cared for well but does not provide appropriate space, having no hall or grassed areas. The headteacher and governors have worked well to improve the accommodation outside and have applied for alterations to a cloakroom and the office areas. The senior management applies the principles of best value appropriately, seeking and comparing competitive costing.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school expects the children to work hard and achieve their best.• Behaviour in the school is good.• The teaching is good.• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.• The children are making good progress in school.• The children like school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities outside lessons.• Closer work with parents.• The amount of work to do at home.• The leadership and management of the school.• The information about how the children are getting on.

There were 54 questionnaires sent out to the parents and 33 were returned. The inspection team agrees with most of the positive views of the parents but feel that the teaching and the children's progress are satisfactory rather than good. The inspectors disagree with several of the criticisms the parents raised. Although a higher than average number of parents expressed concern, the school is led and managed appropriately and there are significant strengths in the leadership of the headteacher. Additionally the school works with parents to a sound level. The inspection team agrees that the systems for informing parents about their children are getting on needs to be improved and the school has already begun this. The range of activities outside lessons and the homework are typical for a school of this size.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children who are in the Foundation stage are on course to attain the early learning goals in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, physical development, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they finish their reception year. Their standards in some aspects of personal and social development are progressing too slowly and they are too noisy. They enter the class with standards that are average overall. They make good progress in speaking and listening and satisfactory progress in the other areas of learning. In previous years, more time has been given to English and mathematics and less work has been planned in the other areas of learning. The school has revised the planning and the learning for the reception children by taking out the children in Key Stage 1 for each morning session. This is giving the youngest children better opportunities to work in all the areas of learning through practical activities.

2. At the end of Key Stage 1, which incorporates the five to seven age range, the 2000 test results for pupils aged seven showed standards were below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools, results in reading and writing were well below average; and were below average in mathematics. This contrasts sharply with the previous year when the test results of the current Year 4 children were much higher. In 1997, the results were very good and in 1998 they slipped down again in English but were above average in mathematics. Over the past four years the results have usually been at least average and sometimes well above average. In each of these years, most of the children attained the expected national level. Recently, the proportion exceeding the expected level has also been taken into account in national comparative data and this has revealed a weakness at the school. The children who took the tests in 2000 show satisfactory progress when their results are compared with their assessments on entry to the school as Reception children. Five of the 16 children were on the register for special educational needs and their teacher changed during the year. These facts explain the lower results to a certain extent but too few of the potentially higher attaining children reached the higher level and this is reflected in the overall test results. The work of the present Year 2 children shows that their reading is above average, and mathematics and science are average. However, writing is below average because the children write too little. The class shows a typical range of attainment but their enthusiastic response to their literacy and numeracy lessons enables them to achieve at a good rate overall although it is too slow in writing. It is likely that an appropriate proportion of them will reach above average standards by the time they take the tests in May 2001.

3. The children in Year 4, which contains the nine-year-olds, took optional tests in the summer 2000 when they were in Year 3. The standards were good in reading and mathematics. When these results are compared to the same children's Year 2 national test results it is evident that all of them have made satisfactory progress. The school's very thorough analysis of the results shows that the boys scored at a higher level than the girls. There are many more boys in the school and in several cases they have the potential to reach higher levels of attainment. The work of the current Year 4 children shows that their reading and science are above average but the standards of extended writing are below average. Their mathematics is above average overall. The higher standards in reading, mathematics and science reflect better teaching. For example the teachers show more confidence and better knowledge of how to teach the subjects in imaginative and stimulating ways that stretch the children and quickly move them forward in their learning.

4. The school has set individual targets for the Year 2 pupils in reading writing and mathematics for the tests in 2001 and has already raised the expected levels for almost all of the children. The targets are now set by analysing what the children are likely to achieve if they are given the right support and there are appropriate targets for the proportion of children to reach the higher level 3.

5. The children achieve at a good rate in mathematics in every year group and in science at Key Stage 2, which at this school contains the seven to nine age group. The rate of achievement in science in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. In both Key Stages, the children's achievements are satisfactory in English, apart from aspects of writing which are unsatisfactory. The school's new assessment systems provide clear information of what the children have already achieved by the end of the summer term. The system does not record how well the children have done during the year so effectively but provides targets for the test at the end of the next year.

6. The pupils with special educational needs achieve well for their abilities and those with individual learning plans make good progress towards their targets. The range of good provision ensures that the children's work is carefully monitored and evaluated as it was at the time of the last inspection. The children who need extra support in their literacy and numeracy lessons are effectively helped. The child with English as an additional language makes satisfactory progress, they are given sound support and their standards are satisfactory. The potentially higher achieving children are not supported properly and their achievement is lower than it should be. Fewer children are reaching the higher levels in the tests than is typical. Over the past five years the boys have achieved at a higher level than the girls in most subjects. During the inspection several of the girls showed good attainment but the boys are usually more articulate and often dominate discussions.

7. The children reach average standards in most of the other subjects of the curriculum. In Key Stage 1, the standards for information communications technology, design technology, art, history, geography, religious education and physical education are in line with national curriculum expectations. In Key Stage 2, the standards for design technology, art and music are above average and the standards in the other subjects are average. Too little work was seen in music in Key Stage 1 and geography in Key Stage 2 to judge the standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The school has continued to achieve good standards in these areas of its work since the time of the last inspection. Most of the pupils have positive attitudes to the school. They enjoy being at school, they come to school eagerly and they settle quickly in their classes. They speak confidently to visitors and are proud of their school, eager to discuss their work and display the playground. Most are attentive and interested in lessons and many are keen to take up the opportunities and responsibilities offered by the school, such as managers of the school bank, ringing the bell and putting our resources.

9. The pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall and it is good or very good when their attention is focused. Behaviour was good overall at the time of the last inspection. The children obey instructions in class and around the school and do as they are told straightaway. They know the standards of behaviour expected of them and have the self-control to meet these standards. Occasionally the younger pupils are too noisy in lessons and their work suffers as a result but usually the children are very good and listen closely to their teachers. Behaviour in the playground at lunchtime is very good. There is a range of activities such as skipping, draughts and hoops, which the children enjoy very much. Skipping practice forms part of physical education lessons and skipping is one of the most popular playground activities; in science lessons the pupils talk about how skipping benefits the heart.

10. The good range of activities available at lunchtime is not provided at morning and afternoon playtimes and, because there is less to occupy them, a small number of the children become more boisterous, with a few older pupils occasionally unaware of the safety of younger ones. There was no evidence of bullying or racist behaviour during the inspection and instances reported by parents were handled firmly by the school. There have been no exclusions in the last year. There is a useful behaviour policy that is well written with clear guidelines for staff on what should be done in different circumstances. Class rules were written together with the pupils and are reinforced as necessary.

11. The pupils' personal development and relationships are sound. They are given an appropriate range of opportunities to develop their social skills and sense of responsibility for the school community and they take these up enthusiastically. Pupils get out the resources and put them away; Year 4 pupils are responsible for collecting lunch boxes and putting them out at lunch and they tidy away after lunch. One pupil is responsible each week for ringing the school bell. Year 4 pupils, with the support of the classroom assistant, operate the Yorkshire Bank once a week, count the money and record it. Most of the pupils are polite and friendly and get on well with one another and with adults. They listen to each other and show concern for the feelings of others. On occasions pupils are too ordered, for example at the end of playtimes when they wait in lines before going inside. They are not being given the responsibility of entering school sensibly.

12. The level of the pupils' attendance at the school is well above the national average, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Most absence is caused by illness and if families do not inform the school of the reason for their children's absence the classroom assistant telephones to enquire. This has resulted in no unauthorised absence being recorded. The pupils' punctuality is satisfactory. Most arrive promptly every morning, although there are very few persistent latecomers each day who disrupt the start of lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has declined. It is now satisfactory overall with 22 per cent good and nine per cent very good. Only one lesson was judged to be unsatisfactory.

14. In the Foundation Stage, the teaching is satisfactory overall although there are some unsatisfactory features. The teacher has a good understanding of the children's needs and this encourages them to have confidence but she is not always sure how to stimulate the children to learn effectively but quietly. The teacher and the nursery nurse give the children good encouragement and provide a wide range of equipment for the children to explore. This helps the children to experiment with resources and learn through investigation and by sampling a range of new situations. The staff work from a planning system built on the recommended curriculum for children of this age and most of it is based on activities chosen by the children. Some of the children will be five this term and the potentially higher attaining amongst them should be provided with opportunities for structured learning for some of their time, particularly for aspects of literacy and numeracy. The staff are good at much of the basic skills work. For example, in the nursery the children enthusiastically joined in a counting rhyme and use the play shop with great enjoyment. However, the teaching of early writing is underdeveloped and the children make too little progress in this area.

15. In Key Stage 1, the teaching is mixed in quality. It is satisfactory overall though it ranges from unsatisfactory to good. The headteacher, who teaches the class in the mornings, has established good class routines and has appropriately high expectations

of the children. She is already enabling the children to achieve well in almost all of their lessons. Her manner helps the children to work hard and raise their pace of learning. In a mathematics lesson, for example, the children struggled successfully with writing and answering number problems for a partner. They used both addition and subtraction and some used very high numbers. They worked well at this collaborative task. There are a few occasions, in the afternoons, when the teaching and learning is interrupted by the over-excitement of a few individuals. Occasionally there is not enough clarity in the planning between what the children are to learn and how they will learn it. The basic skills of mathematics and reading are taught well but more attention needs to be given to writing.

16. In Key Stage 2, the quality of the teaching is good overall. In all lessons, the management of the pupils is good and the children listen and respond well. Where the teaching is very good the expectations are high and, although the work is challenging, the children confidently tackle it and achieve very high standards. This was seen in a science lesson where the children confidently discussed and explained the nutritional value of various types of food. Very good teaching was also seen in music where the children worked collaboratively and thoughtfully adding percussion music to their poems about dragons. When the teaching is good the children are questioned to help them understand what is happening. In art the teacher helped the children understand the work of Van Gogh by asking careful questions and providing a frame to highlight parts of the pictures. Interesting activities that build on earlier learning, for example, in the literacy lesson, help the children deepen their understanding. In the lessons that were satisfactory the work was not always matched properly to what the children could do, for example in numeracy, and some of the children became less interested.

17. In Key Stage 1, the teacher is good at developing the pupils' skills in numeracy through mental arithmetic sessions. She helps the children use correct mathematical vocabulary and shows them how to use the basic skills they are learning in new calculations. In both Key Stages the lessons build accurately on the children's earlier learning. The skills of literacy are not always taught so well. The teaching of reading is better than writing. The group reading sessions support the children well and help them develop new word skills. In writing lessons, there is sharply focused teaching to build on earlier learning about grammar and spelling and the children write about a satisfactory range of aspects. However there is not enough time or attention provided for the children to write at length about their own ideas or the information they have found out. There are too many worksheets provided for the children to fill in rather than planning the work for themselves. In the more ordinary lessons, aspects of the tasks are undemanding and the work does not properly challenge the children and speed their progress, especially the potentially higher attaining children.

18. The pupils with special educational needs are supported well. They have a suitable curriculum in line with their individual educational programmes. These focus appropriately on aspects of literacy and numeracy and on the improvement of behaviour and concentration. The teachers work in collaboration with the special educational needs coordinator to provide appropriate work. The class teachers oversee this work, which is sometimes supported by the classroom assistants. There is very good liaison between the class teachers and the special educational needs coordinator. The pupils receive good support from the special educational needs staff and this allows them to gain in confidence and make good progress. The child with English as an additional language understands and speaks English well. He receives good support and is achieving at an appropriate rate.

19. The higher attaining pupils' needs are not always met well in both key stages. Challenging tasks are not often set to extend the learning of the higher attaining children. For example, in many lessons the tasks are no different for these children and this slows their progress. The teachers plan carefully but only prepare work on two levels, to correspond to the two year groups. Sometimes there are children within the groups who find the work too hard or too easy and these children are not challenged at the correct level.

20. Teaching that is good or better was seen in most subjects. Good quality teaching occurs in English, mathematics, music, art, science, physical education, and design technology.

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

21. Overall, the school provides a satisfactory quality and range of learning opportunities for the pupils although the potentially higher attaining children need further opportunities. The school fully meets the statutory requirements for the curriculum, including the provision of religious education. This is similar to the previous inspection. Since then, the school has improved its outdoor play facilities for children in the foundation stage and at lunchtimes and these are now good. It has also enriched the quality of reading opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 1 through the provision of a suitable range of books and the introduction of the literacy hour.

22. The breadth, balance and relevance of the whole curriculum are satisfactory in all key stages although there are areas of weakness that require further attention. Planning for the longer term in all subjects is secure and for the most part the medium term plans take account of a steady progression of learning for the pupils at each stage of their school life. However, in science and physical education, the schemes of work are not developed in sufficient detail to make sure that teachers plan their lessons in such a way that pupils learn continuously and progressively. In the planning, the teachers do not regularly make sufficient provision for the potentially higher attaining pupils so that, although these pupils cover a reasonable amount, their work is not of

a sufficiently high level to extend them fully. As a result this detracts from the pace of their learning and does not provide equal access to learning.

23. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The register is updated regularly and is in good order. The children's individual work is planned and prepared carefully by the special educational needs coordinator in consultation with the class teachers. These plans are of good value for they identify specific approaches to be followed and they set appropriate dates for review on a regular basis.

24. The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are satisfactory overall. However in English insufficient attention is paid to the direct teaching of writing and too much use is made of printed work sheets in a number of other subjects. As a result, the pupils do not have sufficient regular experience of writing at length in order to develop their ability to form sentences in a logical sequence and with correct punctuation and write in a personal or creative way. In mathematics in Key Stage 2, insufficient time is given to the provision of regular calculation practice. The consequence of this is that pupils do not readily use basic number knowledge with confidence.

25. The provision for extra-curricular activities within and around the school is reasonable. Music tuition is available and the school owns a number of violins and cellos that are available for the pupils to use free of charge although tuition fees apply. The pupils may join a football team in a nearby village if they wish to take up this opportunity. Older children take turns to run the school savings bank and this provides them with good experiences of handling money, dealing with the problems of others and with writing and recording information accurately. Each Christmas, the pupils are involved with riding for the disabled. There is a gardening club and the children grow sunflowers, runner beans and tomatoes in tubs, each pupil in the school had the opportunity to sample the tomatoes. All of the pupils have equality of access and opportunity with regard to the extra-curricular activities they choose to join.

26. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. They are looked after well and teachers have a detailed knowledge and understanding of the individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses. The personal development scheme of work is based on national guidelines and the nursery nurse takes particular responsibility for this aspect of the curriculum. The governing body is currently reviewing the policy for teaching sex education at the school and the headteacher is introducing appropriate aspects to the curriculum. A drug awareness policy has recently been completed and is now awaiting the approval of the governing body.

27. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is similar to many schools and is satisfactory. A few governors join in lessons on a regular basis, including art and design and science; and two parents work with younger children assisting teachers during history and design and technology lessons. A governor, with specific computer skills, makes a valuable contribution to children's learning in information and communications technology. The teachers make sensible use of the immediate locality to enhance lessons in geography and history and the children are involved with the church and harvest festival activities on a regular basis each year, supporting their studies in music and religious education. Local professionals like the police, the vicar and the district nurse visit to enhance the quality of the learning that pupils achieve.

28. The relationship that the school has with partner institutions is also as it should be. The headteacher of the middle school visits each year to talk to the parents and pupils. The children spend a day at the middle school when they join in various activities that include art, drama and dance. There is an appropriate connection with the local playgroup and the reception teacher visits to talk to the parents and children.

29. The provision for the pupils' personal development is good overall. The spiritual aspects are developed in a satisfactory manner in class, through visits and during assemblies. This aspect of their personal growth and developing maturity is strengthened by prayer in class and assemblies, by visits from local clergy and through their learning in various subject areas. Relevant Christian themes are appropriately incorporated as part of the curriculum for the teaching of religious education. The pupils also learn about other faiths; for example, they know about the Hindu festival of light and how the Romans worshipped various gods.

30. The provision for the pupils' moral development is good because the school takes appropriate steps to ensure that they understand clearly the differences between right and wrong. Class rules are displayed in classrooms and discussed and developed with the children at the beginning of the school year. The teachers set a good example in their expectations of good behaviour and pupils respond accordingly. Regular recognition and praise in class for good work and attitudes helps build the pupils' confidence and self-esteem. A good example of this was seen in a personal and social education lesson in the Reception class. The children sat in a circle and were encouraged to develop the theme of why they are special. As the lesson progressed, they learned the importance of sitting quietly and waiting their turn.

31. The pupils' social development is also good. When they first come to school, many of the children do not know how to behave correctly towards others. They often shout unnecessarily loudly and charge about the classroom or playgrounds without any understanding of the welfare of others around them. However, by the time they leave the school, they have developed appropriate social behaviour patterns that help them manage properly in a group. They speak sensibly to each other, help visitors to the school when they see a need and generally treat people and materials with respect. They learn to take responsibility for

their actions and the older pupils have specific duties to perform during the school year and generally help to make the school a pleasant environment in which to work.

32. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Singing games and rhythms with the younger children and good quality music and art with the older pupils help to establish their understanding of various aspects of their own culture. The library is well stocked with a suitable range of reference books that support the pupils' learning in a range of subjects where they learn about both their own and other cultures around the world. There is a suitable range of books that depict other cultural groups. Through subjects like art the children learn about differences in artists' styles, how they vary between cultures, and they become familiar with famous artists like Van Gogh. The pupils' experiences of peoples from different ethnic origins are limited because of the area in which they live although they have experienced aspects of the Islamic way of life through their contact with sixth formers at the local secondary school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school's care for its pupils' personal welfare is very good. The identified aims and values are apparent in the way the staff ensure that the pupils work in a safe and caring environment. The children are well known by teaching and non-teaching staff. Any unexplained absence is carefully checked. The school has made good use of the education welfare officer in the past. There is some instance of lateness that the school is trying hard to remedy. The enclosed play area in the playground for the youngest pupils has provided a safe and secure area for these pupils although its grassed surface limits the occasions when it can be used.

34. A child protection policy, written in 1996, is in place and has worked well in the past. The coordinator is planning to go on two courses, including an update course. Following this, the policy will be rewritten to meet current requirements, for example liaison with social services. First aid training is up to date and playground supervisors have received relevant training. The personal, social and health education policy has been developed recently to ensure that it matches curriculum 2000, the coordinator is enthusiastic and has already booked further training session. The procedures for monitoring and supporting the children's personal development are good and the children show care and concern for each other. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good and have resulted in stronger friendship groups among the children.

35. The school's procedures for ensuring the children's academic welfare are good overall. The monitoring and assessment procedures for identifying the pupils' progress over the long term are good. They are particularly effective for those pupils who are less able. A very detailed analysis of test results has provided the staff with clear comparisons of how much progress the children make from year to year. There is, as yet, no system to monitor the progress and set targets within each term as a means of identifying weaknesses and speeding progress. The analysis of test results has identified the weakness in writing and the school has responded appropriately. Targets for each year group are set through teachers' discussions and a tracking system is being developed to enable the school to predict the level each pupil should achieve. Records of progress are obtained through the scrutiny of the pupils' work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. Links with parents are satisfactory although, since the time of the last inspection, the parents have become more critical. Most of the parents feel that their children are happy at school, that they are making progress and that the teachers are approachable. These views are well founded. The pupils enjoy their lessons and the other activities offered and they learn effectively. The teachers, support staff, administrative staff and the headteacher are all readily accessible to parents and deal with them in a cheerful and friendly manner. Some parents have concerns about the use of homework and about the links the school has with them but the inspection evidence does not support these concerns. Additional opportunities have been created to improve the partnership with the parents, for example, the number of consultation evenings has increased, new information for parents about homework has just been made available and the school now operates an open door policy. This ensures that any concerned parent can go into school and talk to staff at the beginning or end of the day.

37. The worries expressed by some parents about the children's annual reports are partly upheld by the inspection but the school takes these worries seriously and is taking positive steps to give a clear picture of each pupil's standards and what progress they have made. The comments that the parents have written on the form sent out with the reports have been used by the headteacher, along with her own identified areas for development, to improve the reports. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are given every opportunity to find out how their children are progressing and to be involved in their future development.

38. The school provides the parents with a satisfactory range and amount of information. The governors' annual report to parents includes a substantial section on the school development plan and the prospectus contains all the details required by law. The topic letters sent out this term are a good idea as they tell the parents what their children will be studying and suggest ways they can help them. There are regular newsletters, which give details of forthcoming events, for example, a curriculum talk on information technology. The parents have been given a homework schedule, covering all subjects, with expectations for

individual classes and information about reading. The school notice board for parents and carers contains much useful information.

39. Consultation evenings are well attended by about 80 per cent of parents but there is a lack of space in the school to enable all consultations to be held in complete privacy. The school has tried to remedy this situation by introducing timed appointments. Curriculum evenings have been held for literacy, numeracy, and information and communications technology. Most have been well attended.

40. The parents make a satisfactory contribution to the work of the school and their children's learning. A small core of committed individuals works regularly in classes, while a good number are involved with the association for the friends of the school. This organisation raises funds very effectively and there has been an increase in the number of parents who wish to serve on the committee. Many attend parent-teacher consultations, hear their children read and ensure that homework is completed. This supports the efforts of the teachers and helps the children to make progress. The school tries hard too accommodate the wide views and opinions of the parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory. There has been a change in the leadership of the school since the last inspection. The new headteacher has been at the school for three terms and she has already achieved much in this short period of time. She has a clear focus on the needs and priorities of the school and has applied for, and received several special grants designed to improve the standards in writing, the work of the potentially higher attaining children and the work of the staff in the Foundation stage. Her intention is to improve the quality of teaching and learning. She has made a good start in improving management and communication structures. She has begun the process of monitoring and evaluating the work in classrooms and has identified the strengths and weaknesses. She has very successfully managed the budget and improved the schemes of work, the termly planning and the assessment procedures. The headteacher has been capably supported by the teachers and by the governing body, who are committed and hard working. The governors successfully fulfil the responsibilities required by law, this is an improvement since the last inspection. They have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They analyse the school's results with the headteacher, for example, and discuss the reasons for the low achievement in writing. Special needs provision is led well in the school. The coordinator focuses on raising standards of attainment and behaviour and liaises very well with class teachers about the pupils in their charge.

42. The role of the curriculum coordinators in the school has been partly developed since the time of the last inspection. They now all have the responsibility for identifying the needs in their subjects and all contribute to the school development plan. The headteacher is keen to allow individuals to take on responsibility for standards and quality through delegation and the staff help each other with curriculum planning and check each others' completed plans. The headteacher has made a good start in evaluating the quality of teaching in every class and is now well placed to acknowledge some of the very good practice within the school and support areas needing development. The staff are committed to school improvement and have a sense of unity and shared aims. There is an effective system of staff briefings and staff meetings providing a ready structure for communication. There is also an appropriate planned programme of training. The school development planning process is open for consultation amongst all members of staff and governors. The priorities contained in the school development plan are chosen well and are relevant to the school's needs, such as improving writing and the achievement of the most able.

43. There has been training for midday supervisors and this has contributed significantly to the very good provision for the children when playing outside at lunchtime. This is a conspicuous improvement since the last inspection. In line with performance management policy, the new headteacher has conducted classroom observations of the teachers and one personal interview has taken place. The head teacher will be assessed in December and further assessments will take place in the new year. Much of the recent in-service training for the teachers has concentrated on the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, the development of termly planning and assessments of what the children can do. This training has had a beneficial effect.

44. The school's financial management is good. The headteacher has a very clear view of how to use the school's small budget to the best possible advantage. All expenditure is strictly monitored and all avenues of additional funding are fully explored. The standards fund and special needs funding are used well to help improve the standards and provision. The recommendations of last audit report have been steadily and systematically tackled and the school has workable financial systems and the staff involved are fully accountable. The governors are kept thoroughly up-to-date with the school's financial position, enabling them to make informed spending decisions. The secretary provides appropriate support to the school. Further liaison with parents, for example when children are absent, is dealt with very effectively by the classroom assistant. The school applies the principles of best value appropriately. As the school has a small budget, the headteacher and governors have become accustomed to considering the value for money obtained whenever money is spent. They have yet to bring the same level of attention to checking the spending against the standards of attainment and the achievement of the pupils.

45. The school is appropriately staffed by suitably trained and qualified teachers to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. There have been many changes in staffing since the last inspection. The curriculum coordinators' roles have been shared to

ensure that no one member of staff is overburdened with additional responsibilities; a qualified nursery nurse is coordinator for personal, social and health education and is also coordinator for design and technology. She views these roles as professional development and has been supported well by the school. The classroom support staff have a positive impact on the school's work. The teaching and support staff who work with pupils with special educational needs are experienced and well qualified and make a significant contribution to the pupils' progress. There is no staff handbook, but induction of new staff is satisfactory and they are made to feel welcome at the outset and immediately feel a part of the team.

46. Non-teaching staff are strongly committed to the work of the school and undertake duties beyond their expected roles. The classroom assistant has set up a gardening club and the helps some of the Year 4 children in running the Yorkshire Bank each week in school.

47. The quality of the accommodation provided by the school is unsatisfactory overall. There is no hall or grassed playing and sport area outside; there is no staffroom and no-where for confidential conversations. Although the school is small it is well organised to make the most of space available at the present time. A project to make more efficient use of the internal areas by altering some of the toilets to create a staffroom and headteacher's office has already been submitted. The building is clean and maintained in good order and the use of display space is appropriate and attractive. This adds to the quality of the learning environment for the pupils.

48. Although the outside areas of the school are relatively small, they have been attractively developed and are an improvement since the last inspection. The hard play areas are neatly tiled in an attractive brick finish that is unusual and enhances the general impression of the building. The play area is safe for the children and has some markings on it to encourage them to develop playground games. The outdoor play area for very young children is very good and is a great improvement on the situation reported at the last inspection. It now provides the means for young children to climb and explore in safety on a range of large fixed equipment and is an asset to the school.

49. Provision for gymnastics and games is a problem for this school because of its size but the governors have made the best of a difficult situation by successfully negotiating for the use of the village hall and its surrounding field on a regular basis. The village hall committee now permits the school to keep large equipment in the hall for six week each year. As a result, the opportunities for pupils to extend their physical education skills have been increased.

50. Resources for teaching the curriculum are generally satisfactory and their condition and accessibility are reasonable overall. The range and quality of information and communication technology equipment is satisfactory overall, with the number of computers per pupils being good, and it is constantly being improved. The library is stocked with a good range of non-fiction books to support pupils with their studies. The exception is the insufficient number and range of suitable books to support learning in religious education. Resources for physical education are limited because of the space available although there is a reasonable quantity and quality of small equipment. The school makes appropriate use of the services of outside agencies and visiting adults, such as the local policeman, to supplement the teaching resources provided.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

51. In order to maintain the improvements already put in place by the school the following points should be included in their action plan by the headteacher, staff and governors.

- ❑ Raise the standards in writing by:
 - improving the teachers' knowledge about how children learn to write and how to extend their learning as they get older (paragraphs 24, 68);
 - providing more opportunities for the children to write at length and to write about their own views and understandings (paragraphs 17, 68, 100).
- ❑ Monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching to ensure that the children are taught to work quietly and harmoniously in class 1 (paragraphs 15, 42, 87, 114).
- ❑ Raise the standard of attainment and increase the pace of progress of the more able children by:
 - planning and providing more advanced work for them (paragraphs 19, 72, 86);
 - expecting them to reach higher standards and providing clear targets for their improvement (paragraphs 17, 105);
 - reviewing their progress regularly to monitor the speed of their improvement (paragraphs 35, 73).
- ❑ Improve the standards and pace of achievement more quickly by using assessment data more effectively to set challenging but achievable targets for individual children (paragraph 35).

52. In addition to the issues above, the following less significant weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- ❑ Improve the resources for religious education (paragraph 120).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	23
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9	22	65	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) (42 full-time & 12 part-time)	48
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	5	11	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	4	5
	Girls	10	9	11
	Total	15	13	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (100)	81 (100)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	4	2	5
	Girls	9	8	9
	Total	13	10	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (100)	63 (100)	81 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Considerable caution is necessary when interpreting results when cohort sizes are small.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	38
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	44

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	130241
Total expenditure	130665
Expenditure per pupil (based on 51 NOR)	2562
Balance brought forward from previous year	12904
Balance carried forward to next year	12480

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	48
Number of questionnaires returned	33

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	27	12	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	27	58	12	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	42	6	6	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	39	15	12	16
The teaching is good.	24	55	9	0	12
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	55	12	6	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	45	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	49	3	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	15	58	15	6	6
The school is well led and managed.	12	55	12	9	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	24	42	9	0	25
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	6	21	30	18	25

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

53. The children in the Reception classes are reaching appropriate standards overall. When compared with the national guidance most of them are likely to meet the suggested standards by the time they move into Year1. The provision for the children has many strengths but there are also weaknesses. There are 12 children in the class altogether, two stay at school all day and the rest are part-time. The children start school the term after their fourth birthday and stay until 11.30. The following term they stay until 1.00pm and have lunchtime in school. At the start of the term when they become five they stay full-time. The children stay with the same teacher for the next full year and this helps the youngest to make progress. The teacher and the nursery nurse in the Reception class work well as a team and the support staff give valuable and thoughtful assistance to the children, which aids their learning.

54. The children come to the Reception classes from a range of pre-school settings and some have had no pre-school experience. The staff administer a baseline assessment when the children arrive in school and this has shown, for the past three years, that the children's attainment on entry to the school is average overall. The information gained through assessment, including the baseline assessments, is not used sufficiently efficiently to identify specific areas for development for individuals or small groups of children.

55. The Reception curriculum is linked to the national guidance for children under five and the staff plan the children's work from the recommended curriculum. The provision is appropriately designed to meet the needs of the class but there is an imbalance between focused and direct teaching, practical activities chosen by the children or play activities directed by the teacher. There are too few opportunities for the children, especially the oldest, to learn from direct teaching. The opportunities for learning through investigation, exploration and play are good and the creative range of play situations stimulates the children to talk and cooperate together. There is an outside play area that is available for the children and staff but this was not used during the inspection due to wet conditions. Although learning outdoors is included in the planning it is focused on physical development and coordination and not yet used in all the areas of learning to support the curriculum. The planning procedures ensure that opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy are provided. This is having a positive impact on the children's progress but in some cases there are inappropriate expectations of the children who could achieve more. This is linked to insecure knowledge of the early stages of learning, particularly in writing.

56. There is a useful early years policy and scheme of work to help the staff plan and teach an appropriate curriculum. This enables educational play to be integrated constructively into the children's learning opportunities. However the documentation does not aid the staff in planning work that suites the differing needs of the children in the class. One result of this is that the children cover very similar investigative and play centred work in the mornings even though some of them are older and more advanced. Lesson plans include broad learning objectives but do not include enough detail on the smaller developmental steps necessary to consistently challenge pupils at different levels of attainment.

57. The children in the Reception classes make a positive start to their education. They have an interesting and varied curriculum that is designed well by the teacher and nursery nurse. On occasions, when the teacher calls the class together, some of children become restless and unsettled and their learning is less effective. Sometimes the children become over excited when they are playing and do not listen attentively or try hard to achieve the tasks they are given. On these occasions their standards are lower than expected and they do not make enough progress. Much of the time they are allowed some free choice and they work with concentration and perseverance, producing work of sound quality. The children with special educational needs are supported well and learn at a good rate. They achieve appropriate standards for their ability.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. Standards are satisfactory. They are able to concentrate on tasks without continued support or supervision from an adult. There are good opportunities for the children to work alone or in small groups and this has developed their independence very well, for example, during play in their shop the children bought and sold objects and pretended to add up the cost. The children are friendly and helpful; they are inquisitive and eager to talk. Almost all of them are able to dress and undress for physical education lessons by themselves. They are too noisy in lessons and do not listen to each other properly or take care of the resources in a sensible way. The children have good opportunities to make choices about many of their activities and cope with this well but they do not settle down and play quietly and with harmony.

Communication, language and literacy

59. The standards are typical for children of this age in reading and in speaking and listening. In writing, the standards are typical for most of the children but the oldest have insufficient skill in forming their letters and in trying to write by themselves. The children's progress is satisfactory overall. The standards of teaching are satisfactory overall. The children talk confidently about their activities. They explain what they know, for example, that their kite needs a long tail and what they doing during play in the shop. They listen to instructions and questions and volunteer responses about stories and events. Sometime they interrupt

inappropriately and do not hear what the teacher is telling them. Most of the children chat to each other using appropriate vocabulary and conventional sentence structure. Speaking and listening are taught soundly by both of the members of staff and the children have opportunities to speak at length about their own interests. The staff talk to the children as they work supporting their ability to recall and stay on task.

60. The children's standards in reading are satisfactory and they are likely to reach the expected standards by the time they are five. Most of the children are able to handle the books properly and talk about the pictures. They know that the text tells the story and can make up a plausible commentary to match the pictures. Some of the oldest children recognise one or two words and a minority are able to decode simple text and they know the names of some letters which they use to try to work out what unknown words say. The vast majority of the reception children have developed early reading skills but as yet very few of them draw much meaning from the text although they are able to talk about the events in the pictures. Reading is taught effectively and generally the children are making a good beginning. The children learn that the text carries meaning and they are taught how to sound words and letters and how to look at the pictures for clues.

61. The children's standards in writing are satisfactory overall and most of them are likely to reach the expected standards by the time they leave reception. The oldest children can form a few letters correctly but many are still copied wrongly. They can recognise the names of many of the letters but do not use the sounds to help them spell simple words. None of the children are able, even with help, to write a simple sentence spelling occasional words from memory. Most of the children copy the teacher's writing. As a result, there is not enough writing that is a personal attempt to communicate their own information. In these lessons there is often confusion between what the children are to learn during the lesson and the task which will be provided to support their learning. The younger children in the class are at an early stage in their writing and are successfully learning to use the pencil properly and to make marks. They do not write their names often enough as a means of beginning to understand the purpose of writing.

Mathematical development

62. The children's attainment is sound and they are likely to achieve the standards expected by the time they leave the Reception class. Overall their progress has been satisfactory. The teaching of mathematical understanding is sound and some of it is good. The children are learning about the expected range of mathematical areas including numeracy, shape, space and measures. They are provided with a wide range of structured play which is used to reinforce their knowledge of numbers, counting and early measurement. There are good opportunities for practical mathematical problems to be solved or for the children to investigate mathematical situations through exploration and play. This learning is used well in activities like choosing boxes of the right size for their models and finding the right number of toys to use in a game. The oldest children have additional, more structured, teaching each day and this is having a good effect. They can use appropriate mathematical language like more, the same and add. Many of them can count to ten and beyond and recognise the numbers and associate numbers accurately with quantities. Lessons are planned well and set an appropriate pace and the staff have a clear view of what they want the children to learn.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. Standards are sound and most of children are likely to attain the expected standards. They make sound progress. A good range of activities is provided to extend the children's understanding in aspects like science, design and technology, information communication technology, history, geography and religious education. The children experiment with construction resources and experience ways of fastening various materials together in design technology. The staff work effectively to provide a range of opportunities for the children and encourage discussions. Materials such as sand and water are freely available and are used frequently. The use of new vocabulary is encouraged for example, in their shop the children were taught the names of various types of pasta and other food. Learning in information technology is good and the teaching is effectively extending the children's knowledge and skills. For some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world the children have lessons with Year 1 and 2 pupils. On these occasions, for example in history, their learning is not so well planned and the tasks are not always so appropriate. When this happens, the children become restless and do not concentrate very well.

Physical development

64. Attainment is sound and the children are likely to reach standards which are typical by the time they finish the Reception Year. Most of the children make satisfactory progress. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The staff demonstrate how to use a variety of classroom equipment and give clear instructions. This helps the children to use precision tools such as pencils and scissors with confidence and success. They are encouraged to manipulate difficult objects such as buttons and shoelaces and there are good opportunities for them to manipulate an appropriately wide range of resources through practical activities. In physical education lessons the children move with precision and increasing control. They have an appropriate range of outdoor resources including wheeled toys and small physical education apparatus. These help to develop the children's coordination.

Creative development

65. In aesthetic and creative development, the children's attainment is satisfactory and most of the children in the Reception

Classes are likely to meet the expected standards by the time they transfer to Year 1. The teaching of creative and aesthetic development is satisfactory overall. The children experience a range of appropriate resources and they learn how to mix paint. There are fewer opportunities to experiment freely with the paint and produce outcomes designed by themselves. They are able to draw well and produce, for example, good quality pictures of themselves. Their work shows a developing maturity and awareness of detail. However, there are few opportunities for the children to paint pictures of their own choice and select from a range of resources to make pictures. The children can join in with musical activities and listen carefully to a range of music. They can move in time with a rhythm and enjoy singing. There are many opportunities for the children to use role-play and imagine themselves in different situations. They are helped by the teacher to make up stories using small toys and some of the older children do this well.

ENGLISH

66. At the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4, the seven-year-olds the nine-year-olds respectively, standards in English are average overall, although there is a mixture of strengths and weaknesses. Over the past four years, the national test results for reading at the end of Key Stage 1 have been variable but generally good. This is mainly because of the fluctuating numbers of children with special educational needs and the small numbers of pupils taking the tests. In 2000, a third factor, the unstable teaching situation, led to underachievement among the more able pupils. The reading results for 2000 were below average in comparison with all schools and well below average when compared with similar schools. The national test results for writing at the end of Key Stage 1, for the past four years, have also been very variable; again, for the same reasons. They have ranged from very high to well below average. In 2000, in comparison with all schools, the results were well below average and remained well below average compared to similar schools. Current standards are similar to those found at the previous inspection in reading but lower in writing. In broad terms, the strengths are speaking, listening and reading and the weakness is writing.

67. The current standards of speaking and listening are average in Key Stage 1, rising to above average by the time that pupils reach the end of Year 4. They make good progress in their ability to speak clearly and precisely. This is a direct result of the quality of teaching, which allows them many opportunities to express their thoughts and ideas during lessons. When they first enter the school, many of the pupils do not demonstrate the basic codes of sensible and polite conversation. They shout when they speak and often interrupt others in the middle of sentences. By Year 4, virtually all pupils pay close attention in lessons, listen carefully to what is being said, and are happy and eager to contribute to conversations on a variety of topics. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 writing lesson, the pupils spoke with confidence about various ways of writing instructions. They understood the main points of the discussion and debated various aspects with a secure command of formal English.

68. The current standard of reading in both key stages is above average. The children make good progress with their learning of specific skills so that, by the time they leave the school, most read fluently and with good expression. This, again, is a direct result of the secure quality of teaching that ensures that pupils of all abilities are carefully monitored, taught and improved as they get older. The younger pupils read simple text with understanding and learn to use more than one approach to solve unknown words. They are quick to grasp the main points of a story and begin to understand some of the simple rules of spelling. The higher attaining pupils know the purpose of exclamation marks and give examples through the ways in which they read their texts. The older pupils develop their range and knowledge of books and stories, discuss their favourite authors and begin to become aware of some of the deeper meanings behind some of the stories they read. The lower attaining pupils continue to read with some hesitancy but most become reasonably proficient in breaking down unfamiliar words in order to work out their meaning. Most of the children in Year 4 know how to find appropriate information in the library by using the school index system.

69. The standard of writing in Key Stage 1 is below average. In Year 4, although aspects of writing, such as handwriting and spelling, are consistent with expectations, the standard of sustained writing is below average. The progress the pupils make with learning how to write effectively is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1. It improves in Year 4, albeit with specific weaknesses. There are two main reasons for the lower standard in Key Stage 1 and the specific weaknesses in Year 4. Both are connected with specific aspects of the quality of teaching of writing. In Key Stage 1, in particular, teachers make far too much use of printed work sheets. This applies in all classes throughout the school in a number of subjects where writing is required. As a result, the pupils become reasonably proficient at filling in boxes with words and phrases but they lack sufficient experience of writing at length in a logical and systematic way to express their thoughts and ideas. As a result, by the time they reach Year 4, the level of their creative and personal writing is unsatisfactory although other aspects of writing are secure. In Key Stage 1, although the quality of teaching provided for speaking, listening and reading is secure, insufficient direct teaching of how to write correctly is done early enough and neither is it followed up with sufficient practice on a regular basis. As a result, this aspect of pupils' English is under-developed by the time they reach Year 2.

70. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils are beginning to communicate what they mean reasonably in simple sentences. They are aware of the use of full stops and capital letters but do not often use these accurately or consistently. They begin to write for a limited variety of purposes, such as simple instructions and comprehension exercises, but the range of their work is often limited to single word and phrase answers and this does not extend their composition skills sufficiently. Their handwriting is generally consistent in size and reasonably accurately formed although it is not joined. Most spell simple words correctly.

71. By Year 4, the pupils improve their use of punctuation, although a degree of inconsistency remains. At this stage, their writing is often joined and legible and they increase their ability to write stories, accounts, letters and other genres. These include poetry and formal comprehension work but their ability to write freely and extensively remains weak.

72. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in English because teachers take care to set work appropriate for their needs. The progress of higher attaining pupils, however, is not as fast as it should be because the teachers do not make sufficient provision in either their planning or their teaching for pupils at this level.

73. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages with more strengths than weaknesses. The teachers have a sound basic knowledge of the subject and apply this constructively during lessons. The literacy strategy is used effectively for teaching speaking, listening and reading but not for writing. The implementation of the strategy is satisfactory overall. In planning English, the teachers are clear about what they expect the pupils to learn by the end of the lesson. They make sure that the pupils are aware of the objectives as in a Year 2 lesson on writing simple instructions. However, planning has one important weakness connected with higher attaining pupils. The teachers make sure that work is at different levels for pupils in year groups in the same class, although the work set may be on the same theme, but do not make sufficient provision for higher levels of work for more able pupils within a year group. As a result, these pupils do not make as much progress as they are capable of doing.

74. Most of the teachers use an effective range of teaching methods to ensure that pupils concentrate on their work. Attention is paid to developing pupils' ability to concentrate and listen carefully. The teachers use and guide other adult helpers appropriately during lessons, particularly with reference to pupils with special educational needs. They are all positive with their verbal assessment of pupils' work and this encourages the children to feel happy and confident about what they do. Marking of work is variable in quality. Where it is good, as in Years 1 and 2, the teacher makes detailed comments that inform the children what they have to do next to improve. Recorded assessment of the pupils' progress is regular and teachers set appropriate amounts and levels of homework and the records of work covered in reading are secure.

75. The coordinator for English is relatively new in post but she is beginning to have a positive impact on the development of the subject. However, she has not yet had the opportunity to observe other colleagues teaching this subject so that she can monitor the effectiveness of their teaching. Although the teachers are starting to make use of information and communication technology to support the pupils' work in English, the children do not have sufficient regular experience of using computer programs to make any significant contribution to their work. Writing occurs in other subjects but is not planned with specific objectives for learning basic writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

76. The standards achieved by the children at the end of Key Stage 1 are average, as they were at the time of the last inspection, and in Year 4 are above average which is an improvement. In both the Key Stage 1 and 2 classes the children are achieving at a good rate. Most of the children enter Key Stage 1 with average skills in mathematics. For example, they can count to ten and sometimes beyond and can write the numbers and are beginning early addition and subtraction. Most of them have completed work naming simple shapes and have completed early forms of measurement.

77. In the 1999 national tests, the children's attainment was well above the national average and was well above the average for similar schools. The national trends, over the past four years, are upwards and the school's results have fluctuated above and below the national picture. In 2000, the results were average when compared to all schools but fell below average when compared with similar schools. This group had been identified as including several children with lower than average attainment and had changed teachers. In the tests for 2000, all of the children reached the expected national level but the proportion of children reaching a higher than expected level was smaller than other schools. These children are now in Year 3 and learning at a good rate; they have now attained above average standards overall. Over the past few years, the girls have done less well than the boys. The boys achieved at a level well above the national average, this is different from the national picture in which boys and girls usually reach the same level.

78. The previous inspection reported that the standards of attainment were average in Key Stage 1 and in Year 4. The current inspection evidence shows that standards are the same in Key Stage 1 but have improved in Key Stage 2. Throughout the school the children are developing confidence in identifying how to work out number problems and calculations and are able to explain what they are doing. In Year 2, the children are able to use their numeracy skills to recognise patterns both when numbers are arranged in hundreds and when some of the numbers are missing. They are beginning to write their own problems using one and two digit numbers and some of them can explain how they are hoping to catch out their partner with particularly tricky problems. The majority of the Year 4 children use numbers well and can calculate the answers to problems including simple fractions, multiplication using familiar times tables, addition and subtraction with two digit numbers and time. They choose a range of methods when deciding how to work out answers and most can explain their way of working. They are confident enough to demonstrate their work in front of the whole class and change their way of working if they see, part way through, that they are wrong. Sometimes the younger children find the class lessons too difficult and become less interested and this slows down their progress.

79. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory. The teachers are clear about what the children are to learn and they know how to teach it. They have a secure knowledge of mathematics themselves and are able to see quickly any difficulties and help the children. The work is challenging and the teachers plan interesting ways of developing the tasks to keep the children well motivated. As a result, the children, particularly in Year 2 are becoming confident about explaining their calculations or number patterns and they work hard to try to succeed with their tasks.

80. The teachers prepare their lessons well and plan tasks that are appropriate for most children in the group. The children work in mixed age classes. This means that there are wide age groups and levels of attainment in each class and the work does not always suit the needs of all the children. In addition there are several children with special educational needs in the classes and this creates even wider levels of attainment in each lesson. Often the lessons are the same for all of the children in each year group and the potentially higher attaining children are not challenged sufficiently. The support staff are experienced and work very well alongside the teachers to help the children. This arrangement works very well. The children with special needs generally make sound, and sometimes good progress as a result of the careful support they receive.

81. The coordinator works well to support mathematics. She is knowledgeable and teaches the subject well. She has introduced a detailed and useful planning method for mathematics, which ensures that there are tasks for each class to work towards. At the end of each term there are assessments and these are checked to find out how well the children are doing. The teaching has been monitored by both the headteacher and the local authority adviser as a means of raising the standards. There is very little evidence that other subjects, including information communications technology, are used to support the mathematics curriculum and this is an area already identified by the school for development.

SCIENCE

82. The children's standards are average by the end of Key Stage 1 and above average by Year 4. The overall standard is average and these results are similar to those reported at the last inspection. The teachers' assessments for Key Stage 1 in 1999 indicated higher standards. However, the comparisons between such small groups of pupils must be treated with caution.

83. The progress that pupils of all abilities make with their learning is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good by Year 4. The difference is directly related to the quality of teaching within these key stages. In both key stages, there is far too much emphasis on the use of printed sheets for pupils to complete. As a result, they become relatively proficient at filling in single word answers to questions or completing the missing words in sentences. However, this approach restricts their ability to develop and use effectively their literacy skills to express their thoughts and ideas at length. As a result, their ability to think through, and record logically, scientific ideas and processes is limited.

84. The younger pupils understand the basic differences between living and non-living things. They know that simple circuits only work if they are complete and most know the names of various external parts of the human body. They develop a broad and simple understanding of where light comes from and understand some of the common properties of certain materials such as 'shiny' and 'rough'. They know that animals are different from each other and can group these according to common features by the end of Year 2. The pupils know about the five senses and explain the stages of growing up from a baby to an adult.

85. By Year 4, the pupils know that magnets attract and repel objects and understand some of the other basic qualities of magnetism. They describe, compare and contrast the basic properties of various materials and understand some of the principles behind why some substances dissolve and others do not. The children learn to predict what might happen in experiments as with their work on dissolving sugar. They know that gravity has an effect on the stretch factors of an elastic band and use appropriate technical language such as mass and length. They develop a clear understanding of the value of vitamins, proteins and carbohydrates to a healthy diet and know that fibre content is an essential ingredient for the effective working of their digestive system.

86. The quality of teaching is very good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. The teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject. Where this knowledge is good, as in Class 2, regular and confident use is made of correct subject specific words and, as a result, pupils' knowledge and understanding of the technical aspects of science is enhanced. The teachers make clear to the pupils what they expect them to learn by the end of the lesson as in a Class 1 lesson on identifying what we need to eat and drink to stay alive. Where the teaching is particularly good, the teachers expect high levels of behaviour in lessons and set clear targets for achievement in the time available. When this happens, the productivity and pace of working of pupils increased and secure learning occurs. A good example of these strengths was seen in Class 2 lesson on diet. Here the teacher had high expectations of how all of the pupils should listen and participate in the discussion about various groups of food.

87. The quality of the teachers' planning in terms of the content and progress of their lessons is secure overall. However, there is a specific weakness that undermines the overall effectiveness of lessons. The teachers are not always clear about how to plan independent and group tasks at different levels for pupils of different abilities. As a result, this has a negative effect on the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding of higher attaining pupils in particular. Usually the teachers use an effective range of methods to ensure that pupils maintain interest, concentration and independence in their learning. Where the good use

of searching questions is evident, as in Class 2, this extends pupils' intellectual and creative thinking skills and ensures that the pace of the lesson is fast. As a result, the quality of pupils' learning is good and they enjoy what they are doing. This level of questioning is not always evident in satisfactory teaching.

88. The teachers' management of pupils is variable throughout the school. When the teachers expect pupils to work hard in a quiet and peaceful way, the quality of their learning is enhanced and the progress that they make is good. However, where the noise level is far too high, as in a lesson on food and drink, it detracts from the children's ability to concentrate and make steady progress throughout the lesson. The teachers respond positively to the pupils' suggestions and speak to them pleasantly. This encourages the children to become confident and happy with their learning in this subject. The way in which records are kept to inform the teachers about how well pupils are achieving has yet to be developed to the same level as other core subjects. At present, although verbal assessment on a one-to-one basis with pupils is satisfactory, detailed written records on how well individual pupils have mastered specific aspects of science are not in place.

89. The coordinator has made a positive impact on this subject since her appointment. The resources have been sorted and stored so that they are more accessible for specific purposes. The policy has been updated but the scheme of work is not yet in sufficient detail to ensure that the learning of pupils is continuous and progressive from year to year. A record sheet has been introduced for pupils to use during experiments to encourage a scientific approach to the subject but the coordinator has not had the opportunity to observe other teachers at work in order to comment and guide them with their teaching. Although there is some use of information communication technology to support the pupils with their scientific studies, this is not sufficiently planned into lessons or used on a regular basis to make a positive impact on pupils' learning.

ART AND DESIGN

90. The children's attainment is at the level expected at the end of Key Stage 1. It is above average by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4 and their learning develops at a good pace. The children are able to use the media effectively and in the one lesson seen during the inspection they were beginning to develop an appreciation of their own work and that of others. The standards are the same as those seen during the previous inspection.

91. The work seen during the inspection in Key Stage 1 included a good range of resources that have been used effectively. The children are able to work as a group to use collage materials and paint to make attractive seasonal pictures and patterns. Their work is careful and the children position the patterns carefully on the paper. They are able to use crayons and paint to make large abstract patterns and use a computer program to make pictures. Their work is attractive and careful showing good attention to detail and use of colour. The children's drawing of themselves shows good progress, their work is detailed and shows good observation skills. The children are experienced at mixing their own colours and are beginning to understand how to make the colour they need.

92. The children in Key Stage 2 show an increased sense of design and demonstrate greater control of the resources. They improve their skills by looking closely and using the styles of famous artists to develop their own understanding. This helps them to make a strong impact. Their work shows good use of line and shape when using the work of Van Gogh as a stimulus. Their individual styles are apparent, particularly in work linked to that of Hogarth. The children are able to identify and discuss the typical work of these artists and are beginning to understand how pictures are composed. Some of their earlier work shows attractive pictures of the school made in clay.

93. The teachers plan their lessons, using a newly designed scheme of work, to provide the children with a carefully selected range of experiences and the planning shows they expect good standards of work. In the lesson observed the teacher discussed art appreciation with the children and taught them how to start making judgements about their own work and that of others. In both key stages the teachers display the children's work well and there is evidence of a good range of attractive work which shows increasing skills as the children become older. The younger children have fewer opportunities to work as individuals and to develop their own styles and practise their skills independently. The children in both key stages use information technology effectively to support their work. The infant children draw pictures on the computer, selecting colours and positioning the cursor carefully. The older children are able to use the internet and CD ROMs to extend their knowledge of the work of Van Gogh by looking at a wide range of his work.

94. The coordinator leads the subject effectively. The new policy document and scheme of work are clear and helpful. They support the teachers in providing a varied and challenging curriculum that builds on the children's skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. The resources for art are generally good; they include materials for work in two and three dimensions. Assessment procedures are developing appropriately and are linked to the half-termly and the weekly planning. Each year one detailed drawing by every child will be kept and compared with earlier work to judge the improvements in the children's attainment and progress; this is good practice.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

95. Standards in Key Stage 1 are satisfactory and in Year 4 they are above average. This is the same as at the time of the last inspection. Only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 1 during the inspection and none were seen in Years 3 and 4. Other evidence included a scrutiny of the pupils' completed work, the elements of design and technology on display in classrooms and the teachers' planning.

96. The teaching in the lesson observed was satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, the children in Year 2 consolidate their skills effectively when identifying the tools and equipment needed for food technology. For example the children are able to describe how to use the cooking implements using a wide range of terminology such as whisk, twist, beat, squeeze and grate. The children show confidence in their discussions. In Year 1, the pupils join and assemble materials effectively, for example when constructing kites to their own design. The teacher provides appropriate opportunities for skills' development. She draws effectively on the children's previous work, for example, reminding the children about drawing carefully to show the parts of the implements.

97. In Key Stage 2, the pupils design and make monster models with some moving parts. They use air pressure to make the arms and mouths move. They use a syringe, a balloon or blow to create air pressure. Labelled sketches are produced to show detail and use of pneumatics. Older pupils' plans and designs of a moving vehicle are of good quality, showing step-by-step instructions to identify the main stages. The children have also constructed detailed moving models from a commercial kit and have made simple models of Roman buildings.

98. The management of design and technology is satisfactory. The coordinator, who is the nursery nurse, has recently taken responsibility for the subject and has worked well with the teachers to produce clear and thorough schemes of work. These make sure the subject is covered properly. The teachers are confident in the subject and have secure subject knowledge. The programme for each half term is appropriate. The coordinator reviews planning and talks with the staff about what they are doing. This process is not yet evaluative although the coordinator is hoping to observe the teaching in the classes later. There is a good range of resources that will enable the children to work in a wide range of styles and media. There are good links with work in science and history.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

99. The children reach satisfactory standards in history and achieve at a satisfactory rate. Evidence from the two history lessons, from an examination of the pupils' work and discussions with the children, shows work of a quality similar to that found nationally in pupils of their age. No geography lessons were seen during the inspection and there is not enough evidence to make judgements about the standards that the children reach or how well they learn. At the time of the last inspection the standards in geography were the same. In history the standards are the same in Key Stage 1 but In Key Stage 2 the standards were higher.

100. In Years 1 and 2, in history, the children show sound progress in developing knowledge of the life and works of Florence Nightingale; they can identify events in her life and are familiar with the main events of her life. They recall and describe earlier work about the conditions in nineteenth century hospitals and identify differences found in modern hospitals. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils show a satisfactory knowledge of the Roman gods and are beginning to understand why people in the past acted differently from the people of today. They are able to use the computer to find out information. The oldest children can take brief notes from a video about the Roman gods and use these to prompt them in a discussion. Most of the Year 3 children found this task too difficult and relied on their memory. The children copied text from the board and made unsatisfactory progress in recording their own understanding of the facts they had learned. Sound progress is made in geography in Years 1 and 2 where the children discover the main features of their immediate area and draw simple plans and maps. They can locate the main features found on a journey between home and school and some can write a brief statement about the journey. Further sound progress is made by the children in Years 3 and 4 in developing their knowledge of the census process in studying the local neighbourhood. The pupils are able to identify some of the typical features of the area. They are beginning to understand how to use a compass.

101. No geography lessons were seen so no judgement can be made on the quality of the teaching in that subject. In history, the teaching is generally sound although some of it is unsatisfactory. The teachers know about the subjects well and are able to ask the children probing questions. They can answer enquiries from the children with detailed and informative information that helps the pupils to gain in knowledge and understanding. The children show an interest in lessons and concentrate on their work. They ask questions to be sure they understand and, in both classes, are keen to talk about the information they have learned. Where the teaching is less successful, the children are not expected to use their knowledge to complete tasks independently and make decisions based on what they have learned. For example in Years 3 and 4 the children copied writing from the board although they had gained a considerable amount of information for themselves. They had formed personal views about worshipping family gods to keep life running smoothly and were not able to record this in their own way. In Years 1 and 2, the children are able to recall events well but in their role play they spent too long off task and did not develop or consolidate their learning properly. The lesson was too noisy and the children did not concentrate appropriately. In both classes and in both subjects there are too many worksheets used and the children do not have enough time to write about the subjects themselves.

102. The policy documents for history and geography are satisfactory, they are clear and helpful and show the teachers what must be taught and how the subjects will be covered over the course of two years. The teachers plan carefully from these documents and find them useful. The coordinator is well informed and has a clear view of what is being taught in both classes. She has frequent discussions with the other teacher and provides any necessary support. The resources for history and geography are satisfactory. There is a sound range of books to support the subjects and the maps and atlases for geography are of satisfactory quality. Good use is made of the local area to support the work in both of the subjects.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

103. The children's standards are at the level expected both at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4. The quality of the pupils' use, knowledge and understanding of the subject is similar to that described at the last inspection.

104. Most of the children in both key stages make satisfactory progress with the development of their computer skills as they move from year to year. This includes the pupils with special educational needs. Younger pupils have a basic understanding of how to use simple word processing programs and talk about what they can do with reasonable confidence. They know how to use the mouse and basic keys correctly and how to delete words when they make mistakes. They understand that their work can be saved for later use and the higher attaining pupils describe the process they have to follow if they wish to print out their work. Although the children have a basic understanding of how to use computer programs for writing, and for art work in particular, the proficiency of their skills is limited. This is because the teachers do not ensure that all of the pupils have regular practice either at basic keyboard skills or at using information communication technology to find out information that they wish to know. Younger pupils are just beginning to gain a rudimentary understanding of how computers may be used to illustrate their work in bar graph form and they have recently learned how to use painting techniques with an art program.

105. By Year 4, the pupils know how to use the Internet and have used it to research information on the Romans in history lessons and on van Gogh in art, for example. They continue to develop their word processing skills but, as with the younger pupils in Year 2, they do not have sufficient practice on a regular basis to hone their typing and delivery skills in this subject. The children also have contact with other schools via the Internet but they have little knowledge of how to plan and give instructions to make things happen. They have a reasonable understanding of how information and communication technology is used in the wider world outside of school and give examples with confidence. They have insufficient experience at using the computer to draft, check and correct their work in English.

106. The higher attaining pupils do not make as much progress as they should. This is because the teachers do not take sufficient account of the fact that some pupils already have a higher level of knowledge than most because of their experiences at home. The teachers provide secure whole class tuition in new programs but do not then extend higher attaining pupils when they set follow up work.

107. Very little actual teaching of information and communication technology was seen during the inspection. However, discussions with the pupils, teachers, the coordinator and observations of pupils' work, indicate that, apart from the weakness in planning for higher attaining pupils, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In their planning, the teachers arrange to teach a new skill each term and there is a deliberate policy to include information and communication technology in the planning for other subjects of the curriculum. The teachers are making a conscious effort to improve their knowledge and understanding of this subject and it is clear from records that they are taking every opportunity to attend courses and to take appropriate advice from the local authority. When the pupils have the opportunity to work on computers, they work sensibly together and enjoy their experiences. They are willing to help and guide each other but do not have sufficient time to develop either their social or computer skills because teachers do not ensure that computers are used to their full capacity during the school day.

108. The resources for information communication technology are satisfactory. The coordinator has a clear view of the developments needed to support the subject and has a secure knowledge of how to help the teachers improve.

MUSIC

109. During the inspection only one lesson was observed. This was in Year 3 and 4. Evidence from this lesson and from singing in assemblies shows that singing is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. It is not possible to judge the overall standards in music in Key Stage 1. In the Year 3 and 4 lesson the standards reached by the children were above average. At the time of the last inspection the standards were above average in both key stages.

110. The pupils at both key stages have opportunities to sing and develop their musical skills. The Key Stage 1 pupils, according to the teacher's planning, are given opportunities to learn songs, explore sound and experiment with musical instruments. The Key Stage 2 pupils understand how mood can vary with different styles of music. In the lesson observed in Key Stage 2, the children accurately used the rhythm of poems they had written to chant in groups. They selected percussion instruments to beat time as they chanted and the higher attainers were able to build layers of sound as their chant developed. They listened

attentively to each other and after some practice, they extended their chants into one long demonstration of sound and music. They are able to sing well, in rounds and with clarity and feeling. There are appropriate opportunities for the pupils to learn to play the violin and cello and there are plans to restart a recorder club. They listen to and appreciate music in assemblies and remember the name of the composer and the piece of music used during the week.

111. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good. The teacher has good knowledge and expertise and the children are expected to work hard in their groups. The pace of work is good and the children are able to compose an appropriate percussion accompaniment to their chant. The children work with concentration and collaborate well. Their attitudes and behaviour are good and they work hard at the task throughout the lesson extending their knowledge, expertise and performance skills.

112. There is no scheme of work to support the music curriculum although the school is considering buying a published scheme in the near future. The coordinator ensures the children experience a wide range of music by working closely with the other staff to support them. The staff confidently plan and teach music and the coordinator discusses their planning and advises on the lessons when necessary. Peripatetic teachers of the violin and cello come to the school each week to tutor some of the children.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

113. By the time the pupils leave the school, their physical skills are at a level expected for children of this age in those aspects of the curriculum that were observed. This is similar to the levels attained by pupils during the last inspection. The children of all abilities make satisfactory progress in both key stages. The school provides a suitable range of activities for pupils of this age group.

114. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory overall. The teachers have a suitable knowledge and understanding of physical education and apply this appropriately during lessons. Where the pupils' progress is good, as in Class 2, the teacher expects the children to stop quickly, listen carefully and respond promptly. As a result, she maintains a good level of control and ensures that the pace of the lesson is fast so the pupils make maximum gains in their learning of new skills.

115. The younger pupils develop their ability to move accurately and in time to music in their dance routines. They explore and develop simple actions with control and coordination at a level appropriate for their age. They take time to settle down to listen carefully, partly because their teacher does not expect full attention always before giving direct instructions or before teaching the whole class. When this happens, some of the pupils miss the point of the lesson and, as a result, the progress they make is less than it should be. Although the pupils made steady progress with the development of their movement skills during the course of the lesson seen, they did not have sufficient opportunity to discuss their performance so that they could learn from the comments of others.

116. The older pupils make good progress in developing original games to play in pairs or small groups. The teacher is successful in enabling them to develop the confidence to experiment with new techniques. She supports them in learning to discuss and debate the strengths and weaknesses of their work with others around them. They work together with enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment and visibly show pleasure at performing well and demonstrating what they can do to the rest of the class. A majority of the pupils speak clearly and make their points precisely. Children of all abilities catch and throw small balls effectively with good coordination for their age.

117. The curriculum coverage for this subject is satisfactory. The small numbers of pupils in the school and the difficulties with physical space make it difficult for the school to provide the same whole team experiences that pupils have in a larger school. The longer term planning for the subject is secure but the detail of the scheme of work is insufficient to ensure that the teachers make sure that all of the pupils make progress in a continuous and progressive way.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

118. The pupils' attainments are in line with the expectations of the local agreed syllabus for Key stage 1 and for the end of Year 4. This is the same as at the time of the previous inspection. The school uses the locally agreed syllabus and there is an effective scheme to support the continuity and coverage of work. The curriculum is, at times, enhanced by the classroom acts of worship, when these incorporate moments to wonder and reflect.

119. The teaching is sound. The knowledge of the Christian religion and other major world faiths is taught appropriately. In the Year 3 and 4 class the children are familiar with aspects of Judaism and the Year 1 and 2 children recall earlier work about places of worship belonging to some major world religions. The teachers have a sound knowledge of the Christian faith and of other major world faiths. In lessons there is an opportunity to discuss the facts with sufficient time for the pupils to reflect upon the content. This provides time for the children to consider deeper issues such as a sense of belonging and the similarities between different places of worship. Pupils in both key stages are interested in their lessons, especially when photographs are employed, and the work is presented in an interesting fashion. The pupils have a satisfactory attitude to the subject. They

contribute readily to discussion. They can recount stories they have been told, restate information that they have been given and apply previous learning. Sometimes their written work is copied from the board or based on worksheets and this gives too few opportunities to write about their own views and understandings.

120. The resources are unsatisfactory to illustrate and illuminate lessons. There is a small collection of artefacts representing the Muslim faith but there are no others illustrating a wider range of faiths. There are pictures around school to help develop pupils' awareness of the multi-cultural and multi-faith society in which they live but this is insufficient. There are not enough photographs and posters of good quality. Visitors to school, in particular representatives of local churches, and visits to places of Christian worship enhance the resources for religious education. As yet the children do not visit places of worship of other faiths.

121. The coordinator has provided sound guidance and a useful scheme of work that is firmly rooted in the agreed syllabus. She has good knowledge of the subject and helps the other teachers well in their interpretation of the scheme of work.