

## ERRATUM

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The first paragraph under the heading **TEACHING AND LEARNING** should read:

“The quality of teaching is good overall. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good. The teaching is particularly good within Key stage 1 where over three quarters of the lessons are good or sometimes very good **and there were pockets of very good teaching in other parts of the school.** The quality of teaching in the reception class is consistently good and carefully planned to provide these children with experiences appropriate for the foundation stage of their education. There was no unsatisfactory teaching in the school. Teaching of children with special educational needs is good.”

# INSPECTION REPORT

**WEDMORE FIRST SCHOOL**

WEDMORE

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123716

Headteacher: Mr M J Edmunds

Acting headteacher at the time of the inspection:  
Mrs J Chubb

Reporting inspector: Mr Peter Mathias  
21945

Dates of inspection: 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 224857

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Blackford Road Wedmore Somerset
Postcode:	BS28 4BS
Telephone number:	01934 712643
Fax number:	01934 713586
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sheila Paterson
Date of previous inspection:	2nd - 4th July 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr Peter Mathias (219450)	Registered inspector	Under fives English Physical Education Religious Education Equal opportunities	The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Mr Stuart Munns (9784)	Lay inspector		Care Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
Mr Roger Purdom (17995)	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communications technology	
Mrs Beulah Andrews (19507)	Team inspector	Art Design technology Music Special educational needs	Curriculum
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Inspection Quality Division  
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

With 189 pupils on roll this school is about the same size as other first schools. It is for boys and girls between the ages of four and nine years old. Few pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual times of entry and transfer to the middle school. Children's attainment on entry to the reception class is above that typically found nationally and by Year 1 nearly all are ready to begin the national curriculum.

Overall there are 23 pupils who are considered by the school to have some degree of special education needs; this is below the national average. There are 11 pupils between Stages 3 and 5 of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs, which is broadly in line with the national average. Their collective needs are wide-ranging and include some pupils with physical and communication difficulties.

Most pupils come from homes with some degree of social and economic advantage. Some two per cent of pupils are considered eligible for free school meals. This is below the national average. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. Currently the headteacher is absent because of ill health. The governors have appointed the deputy headteacher as acting headteacher.

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

Teaching is successful, particularly within Key Stage 1 and the reception class. The governing body is very committed to the school and is very influential in shaping its long-term direction. Wedmore is an effective school which has made steady improvements since the last inspection. Currently it is well placed to improve further. In the national assessments for seven year olds results are generally high. Children enter the school with above average levels of basic skills. Standards in classes in English, mathematics and science are generally above average. In art and music at both key stages and in design technology within Key Stage 2 standards are above average. In other subjects standards are in line with those expected nationally. By the age of nine when pupils leave for the next phase of their education, many pupils are well on the way to achieving above average standards by the time they complete Key Stage 2 at the age of eleven. The school gives good value for money

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

- The teaching is good, particularly in Key Stage 1 and the reception class.
- Standards achieved overall in English, mathematics and science are high.
- Standards in art and music in Key Stage 1 and 2 and in design technology in Key Stage 2 are above those usually found.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and make good progress.
- Pupils have good attitudes to the school, get on and behave well.
- Provision for children under five is good.
- There are constructive and effective relationships with other schools in the area.
- Parents play a very important part in supporting the school very well.
- The governing body is very effective and fulfils its responsibilities very well.
- There are very good levels of staffing and learning resources.
- The quality of the accommodation is very good.

### **What could be improved**

- Standards in English (in composition and planning and drafting) are average and are not as high as in the other areas of writing.
- Most subject co-ordinators do not have regular opportunities to review the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school does not yet use the information it is now assembling to raise standards further by predicting what standards pupils are likely to achieve and then taking appropriate action to address any areas of weakness.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to become more independent learners and to accept responsibilities.
- Pupils do not use information and communications technology regularly in other subjects to achieve the high levels of skills of which they are capable.
- Standards in design technology within Key Stage 1 and in geography, history, music, information and communications technology, physical education and religious education at both key stages are not as high as in English, mathematics, science, art and music.
- The good quality marking in some classes is not consistent across the school.

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

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

When the school was inspected in July 1996, the standards achieved by pupils were good, the quality of education provided by the school was good. The school's climate for learning was very good and the management and efficiency of the school was good. Since then the school has improved as expected and nearly all of the key issues for action have been successfully addressed.

Standards in the national assessments in reading fell between 1997 and 1999 and have improved in the 2000 assessments. Standards in writing in the national assessments were consistently above average between 1997 and 1999 but fell to average in 2000. The school has recognised a falling off of standards in the quality of composition, planning and drafting and is just beginning to put in place strategies to improve standards in these areas. Standards in mathematics fell to average in 1997 but rose steeply in 1999. In 2000 standards were above average. Standards in history, geography, physical education and religious education have remained the same as at the time of the last inspection. In design technology for pupils in Key Stage 2, standards have risen. In information and communications technology they have fallen.

The acting headteacher and literacy and numeracy co-ordinators have looked carefully at lessons to see how successfully teachers teach and pupils learn. Other co-ordinators have not had such opportunities yet.

There has been a significant increase in the amount of information the school has about individual levels of pupils' achievements. However, the information is not yet used to predict likely future standards to help teachers raise any subsequent underachievement. There is now an agreed school marking policy but it is not used consistently by teachers. The quality of teaching has remained a strong feature. The governing body continues to be involved very effectively in the process of making decisions. In the absence of the headteacher the school runs smoothly. The school is well placed to improve further.



## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999/2000	1999/2000	
Reading	A	A	B-A	D-A	well above average A above average B
Writing	A	A	B-C	C-D	average C below average D
Mathematics	C	B	A-B	B-C	well below average E

This shows the standards in the assessments in the last four years in reading, writing and mathematics are generally above average and often well above average when compared to schools nationally. When compared to schools considered broadly similar in 1999 the results in reading were above average. In writing they were below average and in mathematics they were average. Currently standards in classes within Key Stage 2 suggest that in English, mathematics and science pupils are well on the way to achieving above average standards when they reach the age of eleven.

In art and music in Key Stage 1 and 2 and in design technology in Key Stage 2 standards are high. In geography, history, information and communications technology, physical education and religious education standards are about those expected and pupils achieve well in swimming.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good - most pupils enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good - pupils apply themselves to their lessons well and work hard. They are polite and helpful. There is a strong atmosphere of care and support.
Personal development and relationships	Good - pupils have a good understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others. There are some good instances of pupils being given responsibilities for example, in the school council but there is a lack of a carefully graded increase in pupils' responsibilities and independence as they move through the school.
Attendance	Very good – above the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good. The teaching is particularly good within Key Stage 1 where over three quarters of the lessons are good or sometimes very good. The quality of teaching in the reception class is consistently good and carefully planned to provide these children with experiences appropriate for the foundation stage of their education. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching of children with special educational needs is good.

Particular strengths in the teaching observed were the teachers' detailed subject knowledge, good questioning skills, very good planning, positive relationships with individual pupils, inspirational enthusiasm for the subject and expressive use of language to make the subject come to life.

Areas for improvement are:

Stop the pace of learning falling away, take up missed opportunities to develop skills in information and communications technology in other subjects, give more help to pupils by letting them know what they need to do to improve.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The curriculum for the under fives is good. There is a good number of clubs and sporting activities for pupils of this age.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good; it is well organised and staff are fully aware of the code of practice.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Provision for pupils' personal development is good. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Procedures for the support and guidance of pupils are good, as are procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour. Satisfactory arrangements to support and monitor pupils' academic progress have been introduced recently. These are not used as well as they could be to ensure that pupils are doing as well as their abilities might suggest. Arrangements for monitoring and improving attendance are very good and effective.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	In the absence, through ill health, of the headteacher, the acting headteacher is working effectively to ensure that the school continues to run smoothly. There is a strong commitment from staff to work together to raise standards further. Arrangements for the co-ordinators to judge the quality of teaching and learning are not fully in place and the school has not adopted the good arrangements that they have in literacy and numeracy as models for other subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very effective. It is well led and informed. Many governors are regular visitors to the school and the governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has recently introduced detailed procedures to judge the progress of individual pupils from national assessments and other tests. These are not used sufficiently to predict what standards pupils should achieve in the future and to provide help if they are under-achieving.
The strategic use of resources	The school has well developed procedures for judging the success of its spending decisions and to link its budget closely to its school development plan. The principles of best value are thoroughly understood and applied.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My child likes school.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• My child receives the right amount of homework.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• The staff are approachable.</li> <li>• The school expects my child to work hard.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents.</li> <li>• The school helps my child to become mature and to be responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school does not keep me well informed about progress.</li> <li>• The school does not provide a sufficient range of interesting activities.</li> </ul>

In response to the 202 questionnaires sent out, 82 were returned. The evidence of the inspection generally confirms the parents' positive views of the school. The school provides a good range of interesting activities and clubs for children of this age. There are detailed annual reports to parents.

A meeting was held between the registered inspector and parents; 24 parents attended. On the whole they expressed positive views of the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards within the school are generally above average by the end of Key Stage 1, and pupils within Key Stage 2 are well on their way to attaining above average standards when they reach the age of eleven years. There is no significant variation between the performance of boys or girls at either key stage.
2. In the 2000 national assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 standards in comparison with schools nationally were well above average in reading and average in writing. They were above average in mathematics. When compared with schools considered broadly similar, results in reading were well above average for similar schools but below average in writing. They were average compared with similar schools in mathematics. Since 1996 results in reading, writing and mathematics have been above average although in reading results have fallen between 1996 and 1999 so that they were much closer to the national average in 1999. Since then they have risen. In the tests in writing the trend has been consistently above and following the national rate of improvement until the most recent results in 2000.
3. In mathematics the trend of improvement has been erratic. In 1996 standards were high when compared to the national picture. Since then, standards fell sharply in 1997 but have risen since.
4. Pupils enter the reception class with levels of basic skills which are above those typically found amongst children of this age. They make good progress, so that nearly all at the age of five are ready to begin the National Curriculum. This is reflected in the above average results in reading and writing and the well above average results in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1.
5. Standards in English at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average in speaking and listening and reading and in some, but not all aspects of writing. Pupils within Key Stage 2 are well on their way to achieving above average standards in English by the age of eleven. Standards are about the same as at the time of the last inspection. In speaking and listening in Key Stage 1 pupils talk and listen well in a range of different contexts. They speak confidently and listen carefully showing consideration for the views of others. Within Key Stage 2 pupils have clear speech and a good vocabulary for their age. They can maintain a discussion and express their ideas logically. In reading, nearly all pupils read enthusiastically and have a good knowledge of their favourite characters in the stories they read. They are well on the way to becoming independent readers and are able to use their knowledge of the sounds letters make to pronounce unfamiliar words. Within Key Stage 2 pupils are able to use their skills in finding information quickly and accurately. They read expressively and have good recall of what they have read. In writing, attainment at Key Stage 1 is above average except in the areas of composition, planning and drafting ideas. Pupils within Key Stage 1 have a well developed understanding of basic punctuation and they write neatly. Within Key Stage 2 many have a good written vocabulary and spell correctly using a dictionary regularly. They are developing well formed, joined handwriting and take a pride in presenting their work neatly. However, at both key stages the school has recognised that it has not set aside enough time for pupils to write for longer periods and so to produce well thought out extended pieces of writing for a range of purposes. As a result, standards in composition are average and few achieve as well as they do in other areas of English. Often the writing of pupils lacks sufficient depth

and ideas are not developed fully.

6. In mathematics standards are above average and are the same as at the time of the last inspection. Within Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in numeracy and use and apply their knowledge well. They have a good knowledge of place values to 100 and can measure accurately. Within Key Stage 2 pupils have a good understanding of tables, they can round numbers up and down to the nearest ten and they have a secure understanding of simple fractions. They can recognise and describe regular 2D and 3D shapes.
7. In science standards are above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils are well on the way to attaining above average standards at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards are the same as at the time of the last inspection. Within Key Stage 1 pupils can name the main parts of a plant and of a human being. They can observe and record their investigations accurately. Within Key Stage 2 pupils are able to conduct simple experiments and accurately predict what will happen. They understand the principles of ensuring that a test is fair. They have a good knowledge about what they have studied.
8. Standards in religious education are in line with expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus and pupils within Key Stage 2 are well on their way to achieving the standards expected of eleven year olds. Standards are the same as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils within Key Stage 1 are aware of the importance of rules for life and are beginning to appreciate the existence of different world religions. Within Key Stage 2 older pupils know some of the similarities and differences between the Old and the New Testament and are beginning to build up a detailed knowledge of Christian stories and other world religions.
9. Standards in art and music are higher than those typically found nationally. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are well on the way to achieving standards above those expected of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. Generally pupils benefit well from the rich and varied curriculum and additional activities which are available to them in art.
10. Standards in information and communications technology at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national expectations and pupils in Key Stage 2 are on the way to achieving the expected standards for eleven year olds. Standards do not appear to be as high as at the time of the last inspection. Within Key Stage 1 pupils can word process simple text and use programs to produce data about themselves. They have limited experience of using information and communications technology to solve problems. Currently the school does not use information and communication technology to control events and sense physical data.
11. In design technology, geography, history and physical education, standards are about typical of those expected and usually found amongst seven year olds. Pupils within Key Stage 2 are well on the way to achieving standards expected of eleven year olds in these subjects. There has been good improvement in standards in design technology for pupils in Key Stage 2. In geography, history, physical education, religious education and design technology at the end of Key Stage 1, standards are the same as at the time of the last inspection. Standards in these subjects are lower than in other subjects.
12. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress across the school and pupils are very well supported to reach their individual targets.

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

13. Pupils say they enjoy coming to this school. They are enthusiastic about their work, being very eager to show it to visitors and to talk about what they are doing. They respond well to the clean and tidy environment. Their attitude to the school is good. This is reflected in very good attendance levels and a low incidence of lateness.
14. Behaviour is good. Pupils understand that they are expected to behave well, and they are encouraged to reflect on the possible consequences for others of bad behaviour, which is dealt with quickly and appropriately by staff. These expectations and understandings are supported by an effective system of rewards and sanctions which is understood and appreciated by both pupils and parents. Consequently there is very little bullying or any other form of oppressive behaviour. In class pupils apply themselves well to the work in hand, responding positively to well-planned and well-paced teaching. A large number are also enthusiastically involved in the extra-curricular activities provided by the school. They are polite and helpful to strangers, opening doors for them, and standing aside to let adults through first. Behaviour outside the classroom, at lunch or playtime, is also good.
15. Pupils work and play together well. Relationships between pupils and with staff are good. In the more informal environment of lunchtime they still listen to each other with respect, and when asked a question they will take it in turns to answer rather than all trying to talk at once. They show concern and care for each other, and for each other's possessions.
16. Monitors undertake tasks such as taking registers back to the school office. The system in which Year 4 pupils are allocated to each of the younger classes, and then to represent that class on the school council, is good. This is now extended for the whole of the school year. However, there is a lack of a carefully graded increase in responsibilities for pupils to promote their independence as they progress through the school.

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

17. The quality of teaching is good overall. This represents a similar picture to that at the time of the last inspection. All teaching is satisfactory or better and 63 per cent is good or very good. The high proportion of good and very good teaching is a strength of the school and has a good impact on the way pupils behave and the way in which they learn. The quality of teaching is higher in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, 75 per cent of lessons are good and 5 per cent very good. In Key Stage 2, 30 per cent of lessons are good and 18 per cent very good.
18. In all lessons the teaching of literacy is at least satisfactory and often good or very good. It is well planned to meet the structure of the literacy hour. Teachers have a good understanding of how to teach reading. The numeracy strategy is well implemented and pupils generally respond enthusiastically to its structure.

19. The quality of teaching for children in the foundation stage is good. The reception class teacher, working closely with the teaching assistant, plans conscientiously to provide this class with appropriate experiences in the areas of learning considered appropriate for the foundation stage of their education. The teacher builds systematically on what children can do. Resources, which include a well set out and secure outdoor play area, are good and well organised to support children's' learning.
20. Across the school, where teaching is very good teachers show very good subject knowledge, for example when explaining how to improve a story. The lessons begin with a clear explanation of what the lessons are intending to achieve. Pupils are questioned cleverly to draw out what they remember from previous lessons and the teachers skilfully encourage and praise so that pupils work confidently. Lessons are very well planned so that pupils learn systematically and are given appropriate and increasing levels of challenge.
21. A particularly strong feature is the effective way in which learning support assistants work with the teacher to enable all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, to play a full part in the lesson and make good progress. All staff are very much aware of the individual needs of pupils and always provide them with good support and appropriate help.
22. Where teaching is less successful, the brisk pace of learning is not maintained and pupils are not challenged sufficiently to give of their best. The teachers miss opportunities to develop skills in information and communications technology. As a result pupils complete tasks manually such as handling data when they could have appreciated the effectiveness of the computer in such circumstances to collate and display their findings.
23. The school has a marking policy which sets out realistic expectations of staff when looking at pupils' work. Some marking is supportive and conveys a clear message that the efforts of individual pupils are valued. However, some marking is inconsistent and does not give sufficient indication of what pupils need to do to improve. There are appropriate arrangements for the setting of homework. This was a key issue at the time of the last inspection and has now been addressed satisfactorily.
24. Pupils are eager to learn and there is a strong desire amongst pupils to please their teachers; this is often in response to the warm and caring way in which they are treated, for example when sharing in a reading activity about Red Riding Hood.

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

25. The curriculum at Key Stage 1 and 2 is wide and interesting and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, as it did at the time of the last inspection. Religious education is again in line with the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have full and equal access to all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils withdrawn for extra help with literacy receive appropriate learning opportunities. Sufficient time has been allocated to all areas of the curriculum. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy.

26. At the last inspection, there were no detailed schemes of work. This was a key issue. It has now been addressed successfully by implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and adopting schemes of work for all other subjects, including for children under 5 years of age.
27. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There are good structures in place that fully meet the requirements of the national code of practice for pupils with special educational need. Learning support assistants are well organised and provide very effective support for pupils during lessons.
28. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to take part in a broad range of extra curricular activities. A significant number of pupils attend clubs for sport and music each week.
29. The school makes sound provision for the development of pupils' personal and social skills as related to their health. Time is not allocated separately for this but sound provision is made through the science curriculum and in discussions. Here pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and have opportunities to discuss personal concerns. The school has a sound sex education policy.
30. Provision for the spiritual development of pupils, including the quality of collective worship is satisfactory. Whole school assemblies are mainly Christian in character and collective worship meets statutory requirements.
31. There is a strong commitment by all members of the school community to ensure that the school provides a welcoming and stimulating environment in which pupils can learn. All staff work hard to provide high quality displays giving pupils a clear message that their work is valued. Links with the wider local community are good. Pupils benefit from the strong liaison and support offered through the Cheddar Valley schools consortium. They engage in artistic and musical activities with local school when use is made of amenities such as Wells Cathedral, Weston Super Mare Post Office and Kings of Wessex School. Older pupils are given good opportunities to accept some responsibility and to serve on the school council.
32. The provision for the social and moral development of pupils is good. Pupils develop a strong sense of right and wrong. The staff provide good role models and all have high expectations of how pupils behave. The older pupils are made fully aware of their position and their responsibility to be a good example to others.
33. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about their own culture. The sculptures in the school grounds emphasise this. The observation of traditions throughout the year also makes a good contribution to cultural development. Studies of famous artists such as Picasso and world faiths in religious education give the pupils insight into cultures other than their own.

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

34. At the time of the previous inspection the school made good provision for the care of its pupils, which had a positive effect on standards and on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. This is still the case. The procedures for the safety, security and general well-being of the pupils are good. The staff provide good, caring support for the pupils. All staff know the pupils well and pupils' personal development is monitored.



35. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and keep detailed records of what pupils have achieved. The school has identified the need to use this information to predict future progress and the acting headteacher has been trained to utilise a computer system to do this. However, at the moment this potential is not used to help teachers spot and help pupils where progress is not as great as could be expected. There are good routines and policies to ensure the safety of the pupils. The relevant policy documents are clear, comprehensive and understood by all staff. Accidents and the action taken are recorded appropriately. Details of any individual medical problems which require immediate action are clearly set out, for example for pupils with special educational needs of a physical nature. The school has good arrangements for child protection.
36. Very good monitoring of attendance and lateness supports a tradition of low absentee levels. The average rate of attendance, 95.3%, is above the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence at the school, in the same year, is below the national average. Registration is carried out very efficiently and the start to morning and afternoon sessions provides a positive framework for the following lessons. The registers are maintained very thoroughly. Relationships between staff and pupils, and pupils and pupils, are good. There is a mutual respect for each other which helps to create the positive learning atmosphere of the school.
37. The previous inspection identified the need to improve marking and assessment in order to inform pupils how to improve their work. The school has worked hard to put in place satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress have improved and are satisfactory. The school has a clear marking policy but it is not always followed. The end of year reports generally include a satisfactory amount of comment for each subject, together with specific personal development targets.
38. The care provided for pupils with special educational needs by teachers and support staff is very good and the special needs co-ordinator works closely with the acting headteacher to monitor the provision for individual pupils.

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

39. Parents generally have a good opinion of the school. They are satisfied with what it provides. Information provided for parents is satisfactory overall. They are given detailed information about the school – both in terms of longer term aims and day-to-day news. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are very informative, the former being an especially attractive publication. The contents of both meet all legal requirements. As a result of the last inspection they are now supplemented by an alphabetical Parents' Guide, which is extremely easy to follow and well presented. Regular newsletters are clear and friendly in tone.
40. The help the school gets from parents is very good. They are strongly involved both as volunteers in the classrooms and helpers in after school clubs. Their help is well used by staff, and consequently the overall provision by the school is greatly enhanced. The easy and friendly way in which class teachers can be approached is much appreciated by most parents. The Friends Association provides valuable financial support, both with small and large projects – ranging from the donation of £50 to each class each year for buying odds and ends, to the continued maintenance of the swimming pool and improvements in information and communications technology facilities. Most parents have been willing to enter into home-school contracts. Reading records show that many parents actively encourage their children at home.

41. Relationships between the school and the general community are good, and it enjoys a high reputation within the area. Local people and buildings are well used as resources for learning, for example a local firm which provides support for mathematics, and the school has recently renewed its Investors in People standard. Liaison both with the local playgroup and with the linked middle school is very good.

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

42. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory overall with some very strong features. The school has made steady improvement. At the time of the last inspection the governing body and senior management team provided sound leadership. However, there were some aspects of leadership and management that needed improvement. There was a need to involve co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress and for the school to put in place a programme of teacher appraisal.
43. Since then the headteacher, staff and governors have made appropriate arrangements to meet the current national initiative for the appraisal of teachers and have increased the roles of the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators in line with national and local guidance. In these areas co-ordinators now play a much more influential role. This is because of the good arrangements made for them to visit classes to see how successfully teachers teach and pupils learn in their subjects. However, these arrangements have not been used as good models for other subject co-ordinators to follow. Currently, while the co-ordinators like the idea of exchanging classes with colleagues to judge the standards in their subjects, there are no plans for other subject co-ordinators to review the effectiveness of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility by visiting classes on a formal basis.
44. There has been mixed success in addressing the other key issues which arose from the last inspection. There has been good progress in improving schemes of work in all subjects and the school has adopted the most recent changes in the national curriculum. The curriculum for children under five is well planned and meets in full the expectations set out nationally for the foundation stage for the early years of education. There is now a realistic homework policy which is put into effect regularly. This provides a suitable range of homework for all pupils.
45. Parents are appropriately informed about the working of the school. The annual report to parents by the governing body is detailed and provides parents with an overview of the long-term objectives and progress of the school.
46. The school has been less successful in addressing the issue of marking. Currently the marking policy is not always followed, with the result that the good marking which goes on in some classes is not consistent across the school. Now the school collects a considerable amount of information about pupils' achievements beginning when children first start school. Additional information from national assessments and other tests are added regularly. However, while this information is well used to identify current levels of achievement, the school does not use the system it has recently put in place to predict the standards pupils are likely to achieve in the future. It does not use this level of information to take appropriate action to address if pupils or classes are under achieving. The school has identified this as an area for improvement.
47. Currently the headteacher is absent through ill health and the deputy headteacher is acting headteacher. The school functions smoothly and is effective. Staff morale is

high. Staff are committed to providing a good all round education for pupils and to work co-operatively to achieve this. There is a strong atmosphere of care and concern amongst all associated with the school. The school is well placed to improve further.

48. The acting headteacher visits classrooms on a planned basis in part as literacy co-ordinator and is well informed of the quality of teaching and learning going on. However, the roles of most co-ordinators, with the exception of the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators, are unsatisfactory. They do not have sufficient planned opportunities to work alongside other teachers to judge how standards in their subjects could be raised further and to provide the necessary help and expertise to do this.
49. Funds and resources for special educational needs and statements of special educational needs are well used. Overall support for pupils with special educational needs is well managed and this enables pupils to make good progress. There is very good provision within classes for pupils with some degree of special educational needs to receive good support from the assistants, who are effectively deployed and familiar with their responsibilities. The special educational needs co-ordinator is committed and plans carefully using well the assessment information that is available.
50. The governing body is very effective and is a significant strength of the school. The chair of governors and other governors are particularly well informed and actively involved in the life of the school. They take a full part in making wise, long-term decisions and ensuring that financial resources are well used; for example, the chair of the finance committee is extremely diligent in ensuring that the school achieves best value in its spending decisions. The detailed school development plan is closely linked to the school's budget. There are good arrangements in place for governors to visit the school regularly. For example, the chair of governors often attends some staff meetings and some days set aside for the additional training of teachers. Individual governors visit classes and those governors with a special interest in the curriculum and special educational needs are well informed. As a result the governing body, fulfils its role well as a critical friend of the professional staff of the school. There is a good match and number of staff, including educational support assistants, to the needs of the curriculum. Procedures for the induction of newly qualified and newly appointed staff are appropriate, with a senior member of staff assigned to give help and guidance.
51. The day to day administration of the school is sound and unobtrusive. There were no significant issues raised at the time of the most recent audit. Day to day financial management and control are good. Generally resources are good in quality and quantity and are well used. Specific grants are well used for the purposes set down, for example, in support of pupils with statements of special educational needs. The school grounds are attractive and reflect the value the school places upon the arts. The school holds the Investors in People standard.
52. Pupils enter school with levels of basic skills which are on the whole above those typically found amongst children of this age. By the age of seven they attain above average standards. Within Key Stage 2 many pupils are well on the way to attaining above average standards for eleven year olds. They make at least sound progress in most subjects. Taking this into account and the good overall quality of education provided, including the good quality of teaching and learning, the school provides good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. The headteacher, staff and governors should:-

- (1) Raise standards (in composition and planning and drafting) in English by:-
  - Analysing why standards in these areas of writing are not as high as in other areas.
  - Putting in place strategies to address these shortcomings
  - Regularly evaluating the long-term success of the actions taken, (which the school has itself identified as a priority.) (Para 5)
- (2) Give co-ordinators regular, planned opportunities to visit classrooms to judge the quality of teaching and learning so that the effective arrangements which are in place in English and mathematics are replicated in all subjects. (Paras 43, 46)
- (3) Use the information the school is now assembling through its computer programmes about the standards pupils achieve to raise standards further by:-
  - Reviewing the predicted progress of individual pupils
  - Taking appropriate action to address areas of weakness, (which the school has recognised as an area for development.) (Para 48)
- (4) Raise standards in information and communications technology by:-
  - Providing pupils with regular opportunities to practise and improve their skills in information and communications technology in other subjects. (Para 10)

### MINOR KEY ISSUES

- (1) In the light of new national guidance, review the school's expectations of what pupils should know and can do in design technology within Key Stage 1 and in geography, history, music, physical education and religious education at both key stages. (Para 11)
- (2) Provide pupils with more planned opportunities to become more independent learners and to accept responsibilities. (Para 16)
- (3) Make the good marking in some classes consistent across the school. (Paras 23, 37, 46)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11	54	35	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		189
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		23

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	22	26	48

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20 (20)	21 (18)	22 (20)
	Girls	23 (19)	25 (18)	25 (19)
	Total	43 (39)	46 (36)	47 (39)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (100)	96 (90)	98 (100)
	National	82 (84)	83 (82)	87 (88)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20 (20)	22 (20)	22 (20)
	Girls	24 (19)	25 (19)	25 (19)
	Total	44 (39)	47 (39)	47 (39)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (100)	98 (100)	98 (100)
	National	82	86	87

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year 2000.*

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black - other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	189
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)	8.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	27

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

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66

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

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

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

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

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1998-1999
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	£
Total income	361,182
Total expenditure	358,194
Expenditure per pupil	1,765
Balance brought forward from previous year	1,994
Balance carried forward to next year	4,982

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	202
Number of questionnaires returned	82

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	26	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	41	2	1	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	38	1	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	46	1	1	5
The teaching is good.	63	29	2	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	50	11	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	21	7	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	34	1	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	49	39	7	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	52	35	4	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	40	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	39	9	5	7

### Other issues raised by parents

A meeting was held between the registered inspector and parents; 24 parents attended. They expressed generally positive views of the school. Many felt the school was about the same as at the time of the last inspection. This is borne out by this inspection.





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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

54. Children enter the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they will be five. All children attend school on a full-time basis. Many children have attended some form of pre-school provision. There is a pre-school playgroup on the school site and there are close and regular links with the school. The results of the initial assessments indicate that children's attainment is above the national average when they enter the school and is the same as at the time of the last inspection.

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

55. Children make good progress in their personal and social development because of the very positive and supportive way they are treated and encouraged to mix and feel part of the school. Generally pupils learn the routines of the class quickly and relate well with adults and each other. They are developing confidence and making decisions for themselves, in dressing themselves and in their personal routines. They try hard for long periods, for example when performing a complicated rain dance, and they co-operate sensibly together in pairs and in small groups. They are excited and are eager to give of their best. The teacher sensitively encourages the children to sit and listen to others, which they do well.
56. The quality of teaching in this area is good, the teacher provides good social experience such as role-play, sharing news and taking turns in speaking and listening.

#### *Language and Literacy*

57. Many children begin school with well developed skills in this area and achieve well in terms of the stepping stones set out for them in the foundation stage. Many are well on the way to achieving the early learning goals in this area. Children listen carefully, often for longer periods, for example, when the teacher is explaining the sounds different letters make. They speak confidently, when, for example, re-telling the story of "The Gingerbread Man". They take turns in speaking sensibly showing consideration for the rights of others to express their opinions too. Many enjoy making up reasons and explaining what they are doing, for example when playing with models. They listen with excitement and respond well to stories, songs and other music, for example when singing, "Peter Plays With ...". They know a variety of rhymes and songs. They can recognise "noisy letters" and similar sounds. They are beginning to use their knowledge of letters to write simple words and to read a range of familiar common words. They know that print carries meaning and that text is read from left to right and from top to bottom.
58. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. Lessons are carefully planned to follow the broad pattern of the literacy hour. The teacher is enthusiastic and dramatic in telling the story of "The Gingerbread Man" and provides innovative ways for the children to make and recognise the sounds letters carry, for example in a search for "noisy letters". Work in this area is very well supported by the good use of the learning support assistant.

### *Mathematical development*

59. Children make good progress in their mathematical development and are well on their way to achieving the early goals for learning in this area. They count confidently and reliably up to ten and recognise how to arrange objects in groups according to their characteristics. They can compare two numbers and recognise that one is more than or less than the other. They can describe the shape and size of solid and flat shapes.
60. The quality of teaching in this area is good and good use is made of the extensive range of mathematical materials which are readily to hand.

### *Knowledge and understanding of the world*

61. Children are interested in finding out about the materials they use and achieve well in this area. They question why things happen and some can predict “what will happen if”. They can use tools in different ways, for example when making gingerbread men and when making pictures from different materials. They are beginning to develop skills in information and communications technology, for example, in using the mouse to move objects on the screen. They know that they have changed as they have grown older. They know the major events in their own lives and those of their families. They are beginning to understand the importance of rules in their everyday conduct.
62. The quality of teaching in this area is good and children receive good support in learning how to experiment and how to learn from their own mistakes.

### *Physical development*

63. Children make good progress in all aspects of this area of learning. They move confidently when composing and performing a “rain dance”. They travel “around”, “under” and “over” being aware of the importance of using space and being considerate of others. They know the importance of “warming up” and “cooling down” before they begin their activities and after them. They can follow instructions accurately and quickly and use large apparatus confidently, taking turns fairly.
64. The quality of teaching in this area is good. For example, the teacher controls the pace for the activities skilfully so that the children learn to move to music with different tempos. The teacher uses expressive language well which encourages the children to be confident in their movements.

### *Creative development*

65. Children make good progress in their creative development. They explore the effects of colour and texture mixing paint cleverly to achieve a desired effect. They recognise and explore how sounds change and carry meaning. They sing simple songs from memory and can match movements to music. They play with toys imaginatively and use simple percussion instruments to compose and perform their music.
66. The quality of teaching is good and pupils are encouraged well to take part confidently because the teacher warmly recognises the contribution of all the class.

## ENGLISH

67. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average in speaking and listening and reading and in some, but not all, aspects of writing. Pupils within Key Stage 2 are well on their way to attaining above average standards at the age of eleven. Standards are broadly the same as at the time of the last inspection. However, in writing, while standards are still above average in punctuation, spelling, handwriting and grammar, standards are average in the areas of composition and in planning and drafting ideas. The school has identified this as a weakness and is beginning to put in place strategies to give more time and emphasis to these aspects of English.
68. In the 2000 assessments for seven year olds the percentage of pupils reaching average or above average standards in reading were well above the national average. When compared to schools which are considered broadly similar, standards in reading were well above the average. In writing, standards were average when compared to schools nationally and below average when compared to similar schools. In these assessments the relative performance of boys and girls was almost the same. Since 1996 standards in the assessments for seven year olds in writing have not improved in the same way as the performance in school nationally.
69. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above average. By the end of Key Stage 1 many pupils talk and listen with confidence in a range of different situations. They can put together and appreciate the main points in a discussion. They listen well and speak accurately. Within Key Stage 2 pupils talk and listen confidently when working together in pairs, in small groups and as a class. They are able to concentrate hard for long periods when listening to their teacher. They have clear speech and make relevant contributions to discussions.
70. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment in reading is above average. Nearly all pupils within Key Stage 1 read enthusiastically and accurately from a variety of texts. Many are becoming independent, fluent readers and can use their knowledge of the sounds letters make to pronounce words they do not know. They have a good knowledge of their favourite characters in the books they read and can predict what will happen next in a story. Within Key Stage 2 many pupils are able to use an index quickly and accurately to find out information. They are able to follow the story line in a book accurately.
71. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment in writing is above average except in the areas of composition and in planning and drafting ideas. Pupils within Key Stage 2 often use punctuation accurately; they learn to write their letters neatly and to join them fluently, often with a legible style. They are aware of punctuation and use it accurately in their writing. However, because the school has given less emphasis in the literacy hour recently to developing pupils' skills in writing longer stories, attainment in this area is average and lower than at the time of the last inspection. Within Key Stage 2 pupils are able to write a brief narrative with an audience in mind and develop a sequence of sentences using simple punctuation accurately but few write longer, imaginative stories or write for different audiences. In these classes the school has recently begun to give more emphasis to improving the range and quality of pupils' writing in English and other subjects. At best pupils look critically at their own work to improve their expression, they know what authors do well and can work out a story plan, for example, about "The Truthpaste". However, some pupils have difficulty in finding alternative and more interesting ways of starting a story than "once upon a time". This new initiative has yet to be fully adopted across the school.

72. The quality of teaching is good. In the best lessons the lesson is very well planned so that the lesson builds very successfully on what pupils already know and can do. The teachers discuss constructively with individual pupils what is needed to improve their work and as a result the pupils speak confidently about their ideas and the way in which they could write and plan better. The teachers have a good understanding of the needs of the literacy hour so that the lesson begins with a clear sense of purpose which is shared and understood by all. The teachers hold the pupils' attention very well by the very expressive way in which they read stories. The teachers use a variety of approaches to hold the pupils' interest and the pace of learning is well maintained. Pupils are regularly reminded that "If you keep the speed up, it's more fun". Tasks set for the lesson are carefully planned so that all pupils are appropriately challenged. They learn very well because they work purposefully and concentrate hard for the whole of the lesson. Pupils are successfully encouraged to use their knowledge of the sounds letters make to solve questions involving missing letters and words quickly and accurately. The support assistants are very well deployed so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully involved in the lesson and make good progress. Where teaching is less successful the lesson is slow to start and while pupils make satisfactory progress, the pace of learning and expectations are not as high as in the best lessons.
73. The subject is well led and the co-ordinator has worked hard to review the introduction of the literacy hour thoroughly, for example, by watching how teachers teach and pupils learn in the literacy hour. As a result the school has accurately identified areas which need to be improved. For example, there are plans to provide more organised opportunities for all pupils to write longer stories. This initiative has recently been started in Key Stage 2. There are plans to use the information the school is now assembling from national tests and other assessments to predict standards pupils should achieve in the future. Currently the school does not use these new procedures fully to help teachers address areas of under achievement.
74. There is a good range of resources including reference material and computers are readily available, for example, for word processing. However, there are insufficient opportunities, particularly for older pupils, to use their skills in this area to achieve standards which match their abilities. The library facilities are well organised and appropriately stocked with a colourful range of fiction and non-fiction.

## **MATHEMATICS**

75. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment is above average and this is shown by the 2000 national assessments. When compared with the results of similar schools these results are average. Since 1998 standards have been consistently above the national average and have improved in line with the national trend. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is helping to maintain this progress. The inspection of pupils' work and lesson observations during the inspection show that the overall standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above the national average and pupils in Key Stage 2 are well on the way to reach above average results at the age of eleven.
76. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in numeracy and in the following areas of mathematics: number, algebra, space, shape and measures. The previous report highlighted the need for more work to be done using and applying mathematics and this is being addressed. By the age of seven the pupils have a good knowledge of place value to 100, with some pupils solving problems using numbers to 1000. They learn about number bonds. Their number skills are developed successfully through a range of games and activities, for example singing

- 'ten green bottles'. They know some of the properties of 2D and 3D shapes. They can measure accurately, for example when they are drawing lines. They can use mental recall of addition and subtraction in solving problems involving quite large numbers. Pupils can add and subtract two-digit numbers mentally and use written methods for three digit numbers. They remember their tables.
77. Older pupils within Key Stage 2 have a good knowledge of tables and are encouraged to see patterns in these, for example in the 9 times table. They are able to round numbers up or down to the nearest 10 and 100. They use simple fractions that are several parts of a whole and some pupils can recognise when two fractions are equivalent, for example that one-quarter is equivalent to two-eighths. They are developing their measuring skills. They can use and interpret a range of data, turning it into graphs, for example in a survey of favourite books among members of their class. This provides a good link with information technology when pupils produce their work on the computer. Pupils can recognise 2D and 3D shapes and can describe some of their properties.
  78. Teaching and learning overall are good at both key stages. The National Numeracy Strategy is being used to good effect. The teaching of the basic skills is good. Where teaching is good, teachers have high expectations of the pupils and they manage them well. They use strategies which help pupils to work at a good pace and on activities which develop their understanding and skills. The good subject knowledge of the teachers gives pupils confidence and this results in successful lessons. Teachers identify the aim of the lesson clearly. Good use of questions also gives pupils confidence and encourages them to respond with their answers. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for and all pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed. The reinforcement of learning at the end of lessons is one of the strengths of the teaching.
  79. Pupils are enthusiastic and want to learn from the teacher and also from each other. They respond positively and listen well. As a result they acquire new skills and build on others previously learned. The good progress pupils make in mental mathematics reflects the enthusiasm of the teachers. They use a variety of resources to encourage pupils to answer questions in an atmosphere of fun. Pupils have a very positive attitude to mathematics lessons. They enjoy the challenge. Their positive attitudes and good behaviour contribute well to the quality of their learning.
  80. The good marking of work is inconsistent and not all teachers insist on high standards of neatness. The school has a wide range of assessments but these are not utilised fully to judge the success of the teaching and learning.
  81. There is a good range of resources for teaching mathematics and they are well used across the curriculum.
  82. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has worked hard to successfully introduce the National Numeracy Strategy and to raise standards; for example the co-ordinator has had opportunities to look at teaching and learning across the curriculum in mathematics. The school has been successfully involved in a project to review pupils' achievements. The co-ordinator has been instrumental in enthusing the staff about this project and is maintaining links with a local company. A representative of the company comes into school once a week to help out with Year 1 and this is a successful partnership. These initiatives have helped to raise standards in mathematics.

## SCIENCE

83. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. There is evidence to suggest that the 2000 assessments bear this out.
84. Standards of pupils in the first two years of Key Stage 2 suggest that trend of attainment. Pupils should achieve above average standards when they reach the end of Key Stage 2. The school has made considerable efforts to raise standards in experimental and investigative science. Attainment in this area is now good.
85. In both key stages pupils talk about their work confidently. They have good vocabulary and use terminology correctly. Their ability to express themselves in writing is less well developed. The standard of recording and presentation incorporating the use of clearly labelled diagrams is generally satisfactory and some good examples were seen during the inspection. Examples of the use of information and communication technology by pupils are evident in some work such as graphs to show the range of eye colour in a Year 1 class. However, the use of computer skills for pupils to record, present data, monitor and word process reports is insufficiently developed in science.
86. Pupils in Year 1 can name the main parts of a plant and of a human being. They are able to record what they do and place labels on prepared diagrams correctly. They are aware of making tests fair when they are investigating such as when they grew seeds in different conditions. They have also investigated their heights as well as recording and displaying the colour of their eyes. After looking at a variety of fruit, they have made careful drawings to show the differences in shape and colour. Because of the way topic cycles are organised within the school, Year 2 pupils have also observed and drawn fruit and their results show a marked development from the Year 1 examples. A mixed class of Year 1 and 2 pupils are exploring sound and pupils from both year groups are able to explain that sounds are vibrations and that they get quieter as they move away from the source of the sound.
87. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 can investigate bone development in boys and girls and measure and record satisfactorily. They investigate whether there is a relationship between height and shoe size. When discussing the work pupils are good at being able to turn an idea into a question that can be investigated. Most are able to predict an outcome of the investigation based on what they know already. They also know that when testing they must endeavour to make the tests and measurements fair. Their knowledge and use of terminology is good and they can explain the words they use. For example they knew what correlating their results meant when investigating height and shoe size.
88. Pupils use a good systematic way of carrying out investigations. By the time they reach Year 4 they can ask appropriate questions, predict what might happen, investigate and record, present and interpret their data before drawing any conclusions or making decisions.

89. Throughout the school pupils' progress in science is good. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good due because of the support they receive and the way they are integrated into the class.
90. Pupils show keen interest and enthusiasm in science, and real enjoyment of lessons was apparent during the inspection. Pupils are anxious to take part in the lessons and they are eager to answer questions and contribute ideas for discussion.
91. Teaching in science is good. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly across the year groups, which ensures that pupils of the same year group have similar experiences. They clearly identify what the children are to learn in the lessons. At the beginning of the best lessons teachers make pupils aware of these intentions. In most lessons, teachers return to these intentions at the end to review effectively what has been learned. Tasks are well matched to the differing ability groups including pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils.
92. In the best lessons teachers have a secure knowledge of science, and in all lessons teachers emphasise the correct terminology where it is appropriate, which results in pupils showing that they understand these words when questioned. Teachers question skilfully in order to make pupils think and to explore and apply the knowledge they have. Teachers give good attention to developing literacy and numeracy skills within science lessons and they link science with other subjects where appropriate. They teach pupils to use a good format for writing up their investigations.
93. In all lessons teachers are very clear in the way they give instructions to pupils and they check that pupils understand what they have to do. In the less successful lessons there is an overuse of unchallenging worksheets that require short answers before colouring in the pictures. Pupils have few opportunities to utilise and improve their skills in information and communications technology in their science work, for example in using monitoring equipment.
94. All teachers carry out the marking of work diligently. Sometimes, however, written comments do not inform pupils sufficiently about what they need to do next in order to improve and the good marking which goes on is not consistent across the school.
95. At the last inspection the school did not have a scheme of work for science. This has been addressed and the school now has a newly devised scheme of work based on nationally produced guidelines. This provides a good framework for consistent planning throughout the school. The co-ordinator works hard but is not given time to look at the way teachers teach and pupils learn and to judge the effectiveness of school policies and schemes of work in science.

## **ART**

96. There was little teaching of art during the inspection. Discussions were held with pupils and teachers about their work. Teachers' planning was analysed and the pupils' work was reviewed.
97. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, attain standards at least in line with those expected for pupils by the ages of seven. By Year 4 pupils are on the way to attaining standards above those expected for pupils at the age of 11 years. Standards are about the same as at the time of the last inspection.



98. Pupils have experience of a suitably wide range of drawing materials and resources. They record from experience and imagination. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are able to represent what they see, explore ideas and investigate materials and methods of working in order to design and record what they see. Good examples are seen in observational sketches of a partner and self portraits where pupils have experimented with charcoal to give shape and tone to their portraits. The skills of mixing colours can be seen in the bright, vibrant pictures inspired by fireworks on Bonfire Night. Pupils are developing a knowledge and understanding of artists and are able to combine different techniques to achieve an effect. They are able to talk about the techniques of impressionist artists and the work of Pablo Picasso. Good examples of pupils' work in the styles of different artists are displayed in the hall.
99. Pupils' work is enriched in part as a result of visits by artists. Last year there was a very successful 'Arts Week' in the spring term which emphasises the importance of this subject and shows what can be achieved. Pupils are eager to discuss how they contributed to the creation of a ceramic mural, now displayed in the school hall, and the detailed decorations of a totem pole. Comments from visitors to the school confirm the high standards achieved e.g., "Absolutely wonderful! An exhibition full of colour! All I can say is that it is truly wonderful! "
100. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about her role and keen to improve further the good work that is achieved throughout the school. All teachers are well supported by learning support assistants or volunteer helpers. At the last inspection there was no scheme of work, and procedures for monitoring the work of pupils and how effectively art was taught had not been implemented. Since the last inspection the co-ordinator has updated the policy for art and has introduced an appropriate scheme of work. However, formal procedures for monitoring teaching and learning in art are unsatisfactory.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

101. Standards are in line with those expected nationally as they were at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Within Key Stage 2, pupils are well on the way at least to attaining standards expected at the end of Key Stage 2.
102. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are able to measure and cut, design and plan in order to produce finished article such as kites, model houses and hot air balloons. They are able to talk about their work, what they like or dislike, what will work and why and the different materials used when making models or products.
103. Older pupils are able to design, plan and make good quality photograph frames. They use tools and equipment accurately to cut and shape materials and assemble the different parts of the frame. Pupils are able to draft designs, make decisions about which design is most fit for the purpose, test materials for suitability, and fold, roll and glue paper in order to vary the strength of the paper and evaluate its fitness for its purpose. When questioned they can explain decisions and give their reasons for those decisions. They are creative in design, share ideas and are able to move to designs of greater complexity, clearly shown by the way they develop their draft designs. They show positive attitudes to design technology and take pride in their work.

104. The recently appointed co-ordinator has updated the policy statement for design technology and adopted a new scheme of work. As yet there are no plans for professional staff development. All teachers record and assess the progress and achievement of pupils, but the co-ordinator has no opportunities to judge the quality of teaching and learning by visiting classrooms on a planned basis.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

105. Standards are at the expected levels, which is the same as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
106. No lessons in either subject were observed during the inspection and judgements have been made on pupils' past work and work seen in the classrooms and on display around the school. Years 1 and 2 successfully identify old and new when looking at contrasting pictures of household artefacts and transport in order to develop the idea of then and now. They are able to sequence events in their own lives and identify changes in themselves as well as in young adults and older people. Another example where the idea of change is introduced, is when pupils satisfactorily identify and match jumbled pictures of animals and their young.
107. Years 3 and 4 pupils satisfactorily look at, draw and label maps. They also study their local environment and satisfactorily place Wedmore in context with respect to the Somerset Levels, local towns such as Bridgwater and Taunton, as well in the British Isles. Other map work gives them an insight into other countries and the world by correctly plotting holiday destinations on a map of the world. Their work shows they are developing an idea of themselves within the local and wider environment. A good example of this was seen in work currently being carried out where pupils have brought in press photographs of the recent flooding in various parts of the British Isles. They have satisfactorily marked on a map the rivers that are currently in flood throughout the British Isles. A good link with history is made when they look at photographs of the flooding of their immediate environment over thirty years ago.
108. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 also gain insight into other countries. An example from a previous year cohort showed that they had good research skills for contrasting and comparing their lives with those of people living in Kenya.
109. The co-ordinator for geography and history has a clear vision for the development of both subjects. A revised scheme of work selected from nationally produced guidelines provides a good framework for the school. However, there are no opportunities for the co-ordinator to judge the impact of these plans on standards of teaching and learning in other classes.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

110. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards are in line with national expectations. When the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4 it is likely that they will reach the standards expected of 11 year olds at the end of Key Stage 2. This is a weaker picture than at the time of the last inspection when standards were above those usually found. Since then the expectations for pupils have risen.

111. Pupils can word process simple text, alter the font colour and size, practise underlining, save their work and obtain a print out. Pupils can use picture programmes to produce data about themselves. They are able to use programmes which enable them to re-order words into complete sentences. Pupils can write picture captions for work in history. They are able to produce bar graphs from data they have collected. They use a CD-ROM to enter information and combine text and graphics. They are able to use Computer Art programmes using two lines of symmetry. Pupils are able to demonstrate their skills in control technology by using a roamer which can be programmed to obey certain commands, but older pupils do not use control technology to sense physical data, for example, when measuring heart rates and changes in body temperature.
112. No formal teaching of information and communications technology took place during the inspection. In the total number of lessons observed in all subjects pupils were using computers, in only a small number of lessons, for example, when special educational needs pupils picked out 'contracting' words to spell. In a small number of other lessons pupils used information and communications technology to order the letters of the alphabet, to produce bar graphs from data collected about favourite television programmes and books and to design cards. Too often in all the lessons observed during the inspection the computers were switched on but not used.
113. There are two joint co-ordinators of information and communications technology who are very keen to promote the subject and are working hard to develop it further, for example in improving arrangements for recording what pupils know and can do. However, they currently do not have planned opportunities to work with other teachers to help them use the resources to the full. There is a general level of confidence and competence among the staff and they are very supportive of each other. The policy was updated recently and is in the process of further revision.

## **MUSIC**

114. Standards of attainment in music are above those expected for pupils at the age of seven. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 are well on the way to reaching expected standards at 11 years of age and some are on their way to exceed them. At Key Stage 1 good teaching enabled pupils to engage well in learning to play the recorder and listening carefully to music. Older pupils sang tunefully and were interested in a lesson where they worked on the beat and style of Spanish dances. Pupils sing with sensitivity.
115. Visiting teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to learn a wide range of orchestral and band instruments. This greatly enhances the musical activities of the school. There is a detailed policy and guidelines for teaching and assessing.
116. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are able to recognise members of the string family and identify the different sounds made by the violin, viola and cello when they listen to music. Pupils are able to play basic notes on the recorder and make judgements about the quality of sound produced by themselves and others. They consolidate their knowledge of simple notation and explore musical patterns. Older pupils can recognise the range of tone and structures associated with Spanish dances. They use appropriate terms such as timbre, metre, Tango and Habanera. Pupils sing along with the teacher to recorded music, clapping time to the chorus rhythm and successfully singing in two parts.

117. Pupils listened well to music and show enjoyment; for example, pupils in Year 2 listened to music played by different string instruments, humming and swaying in time to the rhythm and pupils in Year 4 clapped, sang and picked out the metre as they swayed to the throb of the tango.
118. The curriculum is enriched because pupils regularly take part in musical events within the school and join with other local schools to perform at different locations such as Wells Cathedral and Weston Super Mare. Pupils are enthusiastic about their musical activities and show pleasure in their learning and pride in their contributions to group activities.
119. The recently appointed curriculum co-ordinator is keen and plans to provide professional development opportunities for all staff. However, there are insufficient opportunities for the co-ordinator to visit classrooms to assess the standards of music across the school. Records and assessment of the progress made by pupils are satisfactory.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

120. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are at the expected level for seven year olds and remain the same as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils within Key Stage 2 are making steady progress and are on line to achieve standards usually found amongst eleven year olds. Standards in swimming are high and nearly all pupils should reach the standard expected of eleven year olds (to swim 25 metres) and many should exceed it.
121. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can catch and throw accurately. They are able to put together a variety of movements so that they form a sequence of rolls, jumps and balances. They are well aware of the importance of “warming up” and “cooling down” before and after exercise. Within Key Stage 2 pupils are able to devise more complex and fluent sequences using small apparatus. They are able to offer suggestions for improvement in their own and others’ performance. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to begin to learn how to play a range of team games such as netball and cricket through a variety of initiatives. There are well attended after-school clubs, for example cross-country running, which help to enrich the curriculum further for these pupils.
122. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the best lessons, the teachers ensure that the lessons begin purposefully. The teachers give appropriate emphasis to issues of safety, and identify clearly the dangers of using the apparatus carelessly. The teachers praise expressively and demonstrate well so that pupils have a good picture of what they should try to achieve. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to evaluate their own efforts and those of others. As a result, pupils are able to discuss and suggest improvements in what they see and do and consequently perform better.
123. Where teaching is less successful, while the teachers give appropriate emphasis to safety issues and to the importance of “warming up”, the lessons lack pace because too much time is taken up in explaining what pupils should do next. As a result they “cool down” while waiting to begin. The lessons lack sufficient variety of activities. While pupils work satisfactorily at perfecting a few movements, they are not given sufficient scope to exercise in different ways. As a result some pupils become bored and do not give of their best.

124. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and well informed. Currently the school has adopted recent national guidance for this subject. However, the co-ordinator has insufficient opportunities to ensure, by watching pupils and teachers at work that the sound school policy for the teaching of physical education is put into place consistently. Resources are good and include a well equipped hall, outside grassed and hard areas and an outdoor swimming pool. All are well used.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

125. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards within Key Stage 2 suggest that pupils are well on the way to achieving the standards expected of eleven year olds in the locally agreed syllabus. The school has maintained the same standard as at the time of the last inspection.
126. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are aware that "a friend" is a person with particular characteristics to whom they can turn. Pupils know that rules for life are important. They are able to explain why some rules are more to their liking than others. They are beginning to appreciate that different people hold different beliefs. Within Key Stage 2 they can explain why Christians want certain things for a new baby. They can compare the main similarities and differences between the Old and New Testaments and describe the duties of a Christian minister. They are beginning to build up a more detailed knowledge of the stories and traditions of other major world religions and how a persons' beliefs affect the way they treat each other.
127. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the best lessons the teacher has good subject knowledge and as a result difficult concepts such as "prejudice" are clearly and imaginatively explained, for example in describing how segregation was applied in some American states. The outcomes of these prejudices are brought vividly to life in discussions, for example about the life of Martin Luther King. Pupils respond confidently because they know their views are valued. Where the teaching is less successful, while the lessons start briskly and the teachers make telling references to what pupils know and can do, the pace of learning is not maintained. This is because the exercises which are set relate more to the development of pupils' skills in English than their knowledge and understanding of religious issues. Pupils work hard at placing the books of the Old Testament in the order in which they appear in the Bible but learn little about their content or significance.
128. The curriculum meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and staff are enthusiastically led by the newly appointed co-ordinator. The co-ordinator has made a purposeful start and is beginning to bring the school's planning documents up to date. A good range of good quality resources, books and artefacts is readily available.