

INSPECTION REPORT

KIRMINGTON C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kirmington

LEA area: North Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 118014

Headteacher: Mr John Bonham

Reporting inspector: Mr Tom Shine
24254

Dates of inspection: 27th - 29th November 2000

Inspection number: 224907

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	High Street Kirmington North Lincolnshire
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Telephone number:	(01652) 688451
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Karen Pickering
Date of previous inspection:	22 nd - 25 th June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Tom Shine 24254	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Geography History Religious education Equal opportunities	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Wendy Sheehan 19374	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?
Ann Burgess 27363	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Under-fives Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a very small voluntary controlled Church of England primary school for boys and girls aged 4 to 11 years old. It was founded in 1877 and serves the village of Kirmington and beyond, with approximately half the school population travelling from outside the Local Education Authority's (LEA) designated catchment area. There are only 31 pupils on roll, organised into two classes: one for children in the foundation stage (*up to the end of reception*) and Key Stage 1 (*for children in Years 1 and 2*); the other for children in Key Stage 2 (*for pupils aged 7 to 11*). The gender balance is fairly even overall, but, in Year 2 the majority of pupils are girls. Attainment on entry is bound to fluctuate because of the very small size of the cohorts, but, over the last three years, has been slightly below average in English and mathematics. At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and none from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at over 22 per cent, is above the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Kirmington is an effective school and provides well for all its pupils. The school is not ethnically diverse but it does its best to promote pupils' awareness of other cultures. Good teaching and the commitment of the headteacher and staff to high achievement, effectively supported by the governing body, contribute substantially to good standards. The school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- By age eleven, pupils' standards in speaking and listening and reading are above average and are also above average in mathematics and science.
- Overall, teaching is good, with nearly one in five lessons being very good or better; high quality questioning is a consistent feature of the best lessons, contributing effectively to pupils' progress.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and is supported well by the governing body in creating an effective learning environment.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and they have very good attitudes to learning.
- Children under-five are well supported when they enter reception and they make good progress.
- Parents' support for the work of the school is very strong.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the school are unsatisfactory; some teachers' expertise in the subject needs to be developed.
- ICT is insufficiently used to support other areas of the curriculum.
- More opportunities could be given for pupils throughout the school to improve their writing by planning and drafting longer pieces in a wider range of styles; spelling is generally unsatisfactory.
- There is a limited range of appropriate equipment to provide challenging activities in the outside environment for children in the reception class to promote their physical development.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in June 1998, the school has made impressive progress in tackling most of the action points identified in the report. The majority of these centred around the *quality of teaching and leadership and management* which led to the judgement that the school had serious weaknesses. Standards in English and mathematics, for example, are much better than they were in Key Stage 2; this is because teaching has improved significantly, partly because of the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies which have given added structure and rigour to lessons. The appointment of a good part-time teacher has also contributed to a much better level of teaching in Key Stage 2 and in raising standards. Planning of lessons and assessment of pupils' progress is also much improved. Most of the other issues related to leadership and management and these have been successfully addressed. The school management plan is now good and looks beyond the current year; systems of assessment to guide planning are effective and monitoring of standards and teaching in numeracy and literacy is

satisfactory. The provision of homework is also satisfactory. Most of these improvements have been achieved with the helpful support of the LEA. The only issue for action which has not been fully addressed is the lack of appropriate equipment to provide an imaginative and challenging environment outside the classroom.

STANDARDS

The usual table, showing results in English, mathematics and science for 11-year olds, is not included here, as there were only 4 pupils entered for the National Curriculum tests in 2000. Such a small year group makes comparisons unreliable, both with national averages and similar schools, that is, *schools with a comparable proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals*. This is because intakes to most schools tend to fluctuate in terms of ability year-on-year and small variations in a year group, for example in the number of SEN or gifted pupils, can lead to disproportionate percentage changes in the results. These fluctuations are illustrated by the recent results for pupils aged seven when only four took the tests. In the National Curriculum tests in reading and writing, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard (level 2) is in the highest five per cent nationally, but is below the performance of similar schools in reading, and is well below in writing. This is because in this very small year group in the tests, no pupil achieved the high level 3. Results in mathematics were also in the top five per cent nationally and compared with similar schools because most pupils achieved the higher level 3. In science, the teacher's assessments also placed them in the highest five per cent achieving the expected level nationally, but, as none achieved the higher level 3, they were in the lowest five per cent on this measure.

The National Curriculum test results for 11 years olds in 2000 show that the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level (4) in English and mathematics is in line with the performance of other schools nationally, but is below that of similar schools as no pupil achieved a higher level. In science, on the other hand, whilst the same percentage gained the expected level, the school's performance was well below that of other schools, and in the lowest five per cent when compared to similar schools. This is because nationally more pupils achieve the expected standard in science than in English and mathematics, and, in a larger cohort, some pupils would be expected to gain a higher level, which in this group they did not. Taken together, and allowing for some stark fluctuations in the results year-on-year, the overall trend in standards broadly reflects the national trend. An analysis of the current Year 6's results, when they took the national tests in Key Stage 1 (*when they were seven*), reveals that the targets for 2001 are challenging, but, with focused support, should be achievable.

Inspection findings show that standards in English, overall, are typical for pupils aged 11 and are above average in mathematics and science. At age 7 they are broadly average in English and science and are above average in mathematics. In religious education, they meet the requirements of the agreed syllabus in Years 2 and 6. Standards in ICT throughout the school are unsatisfactory. In most other subjects standards are broadly typical for pupils aged 7 and 11. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about geography and music throughout the school and physical education in Key Stage 2. In art and design, standards are above those normally expected. Although attainment is below average in literacy and numeracy when children enter the reception class, they make good progress and are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1, and exceed them in *speaking and listening* and in *personal, social and emotional development*.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very enthusiastic and are keen to come to school and show interest in their lessons. These attitudes help their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent in and around the school. Pupils are polite and very courteous.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with all members of staff. They willingly take on responsibilities in the daily routines of the

	school.
Attendance	Above the national average, although the practice of taking holidays in term time impedes the progress of some pupils.

Pupils' very positive attitudes and relationships and outstandingly good behaviour are very positive features that contribute effectively to their learning.

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.

Teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection when, despite it being satisfactory for children under five and good in Key Stage 1, nearly 13 per cent was unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. In this inspection, in the lessons seen, teaching is good in the foundation year and in both key stages, overall. Teaching is satisfactory or better in 100 per cent of lessons (*there is therefore no unsatisfactory teaching*) and is very good or better in 18 per cent of lessons. Teaching has improved in Key Stage 2, through the introduction of the literacy and numeracy hours and also by the decision of the governors to employ an additional effective teacher in this key stage for two days a week. The teaching of English and literacy skills, in particular, is good throughout the school and examples of some very good teaching were seen in the foundation stage and in Key Stage 1. In mathematics, in general, and in numeracy, in particular, teaching is good, overall. Again, examples of very good teaching were observed in both the foundation stage and in Key Stage 1. In the foundation stage, the teaching in the areas of learning was never less than good. Although, at the time of the inspection, there were no pupils on the SEN register, teachers are well aware of the needs of all groups of pupils and support is targeted well to those who are unsure of some aspects of subjects.

In other subjects, teaching is generally good in science in Key Stage 2. However, in one otherwise satisfactory lesson, the pupils in Year 6 were generally over-directed and ought to have been given more opportunities to move forward at a greater rate, rather than spending too much time copying from the whiteboard. The other science lesson in Key Stage 2 was good. In this two-class school there were insufficient lessons seen to make definitive judgements about the quality of teaching in other subjects. However, based on the standard of pupils' work and talking to pupils and teachers, it is clear that, with the exception of the co-ordinator in Key Stage 2, most teachers are insecure in their knowledge and expertise in ICT. In Key Stage 1, lessons were observed in science, religious education and physical education and these were good.

In the best lessons, high quality questioning is a consistent feature contributing effectively to pupils' progress. This engages the pupils' attention fully and challenges them to remember the knowledge and skills they learned in previous lessons. It also enables the teacher to assess accurately how sure pupils are in the particular aspect of the subject, ensuring that the lesson planned will be well matched to the needs of all pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum covers all subjects for the right amount of time and meets statutory requirements. Within the time available, more opportunities could be given for pupils to practise writing at length and to use ICT more in other subjects. <i>Both these areas are included in the school development plan.</i>

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is sound, although at the time of the inspection there were no pupils on the SEN register.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is good, overall. Areas of the curriculum, such as music, drama, poetry and some assemblies, have a positive effect on pupils' personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a secure and caring environment in which pupils feel safe.

The school works well with parents. The quality of learning opportunities are sound, overall. They would be considered good in the foundation stage but for the absence of large outdoor play equipment for the under-fives. The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills are good, but more time should be given for pupils to write extended pieces. Not enough attention is given to improving pupils' ICT skills. The school's procedures for monitoring and assessing their attainment and progress are good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good leadership and effective management in working to raise standards in teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very supportive and fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively. They are very interested in the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is good. All teachers know their pupils well and track their progress effectively. They are committed to maintaining high standards and improving those not so high.
The strategic use of resources	This is good. The school makes effective use of specific grants, including the standards grant for small schools to fund a part time teacher. Other resources are also used well, except those for ICT.

The number, qualifications and experience of the teaching and support staff are good, expertise in ICT excepted. Accommodation and learning resources are adequate, with the exception of large outdoor play equipment for the under-fives. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has had effective support from the LEA and has benefited from its advice. There is a very good ethos in the school and high staff morale. Financial control is good and the school applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • They make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • Teaching is good. • Parents are kept well informed about progress. • The school is approachable. • It has high expectations. • The school works closely with parents. • It is well managed and led. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views which were also echoed at the meeting. A significant proportion of parents who responded to the questionnaire (31 per cent) was not happy with what the school had to offer for out of school activities. Whilst there is a limit to what the staff can reasonably be expected to do in a small school, inspectors found that the school could do more, perhaps at lunchtime.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. When children enter the foundation stage (*in the reception class*), their attainment varies widely and fluctuates from year to year more than usual because of the very small size of the cohorts. There is an average of four children in every year group and an analysis of the initial assessments conducted with these children over the past three years shows that their attainment is below average in literacy and numeracy. It is above average in *speaking and listening* and in *personal, social and emotional development*. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1 children achieve well and, because of good teaching and effective classroom support, they attain the early learning goals in *mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development* and most aspects of *physical development*. There is insufficient appropriate outdoor equipment to fully extend children's physical development. In *personal, social and emotional development* and in the *speaking and listening* skills of *communication, language and literacy* children respond to very good teaching and are on course to exceed the goals. In the early aspects of reading and writing, they attain the goals by the time they enter Year 1.
2. Judgements about standards based on the National Curriculum tests in 2000, when only 4 pupils took them in both key stages, need to be treated with caution. This is because very small year groups are subject to disproportionate percentage changes in their results because of the inevitable fluctuations to the intake in terms of ability year-on-year. Comparisons with national averages and similar schools are, therefore, unlikely to be reliable.
3. In the recent results for pupils aged seven in reading and writing, for example, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard (level 2) is in the *highest five per cent* nationally, but because no pupil achieved the higher level 3, is *below* the performance of similar schools in reading, and is *well below* in writing. Results in mathematics, on the other hand, were in the top five per cent on every measure, as most pupils achieved the higher level 3. In science, they were in the highest five per cent achieving the expected level nationally based on the teacher's assessments, but for level 3's they were in the lowest five per cent, as no pupil achieved this level.
4. In the 2000 National Curriculum test results for 11 years olds, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level (4) in English and mathematics is *in line* with the performance of other schools nationally, but is *below* that of similar schools as no pupil achieved a higher level. In science, 3 out of 4 pupils (75 per cent) gained the expected level, but as no pupil achieved the higher level, the school's performance was *well below* that of other schools and in the *lowest five per cent* when compared to similar schools. Allowing for some significant fluctuations in the yearly results, the overall trend in standards broadly reflects the national trend. The targets for 2001 are challenging and achievable.
5. Although the judgement about attainment is a difficult one because of the very small size of the year groups, standards of attainment in *reading* and *writing* are typical for seven year olds and this represents good progress, given their attainment when they enter the school. Standards in *speaking and listening* are good. By the time pupils are eleven, their skills in *speaking and listening* continue to be above average and they have made good progress in reading which is above average. Standards in writing continue to be typical for pupils' ages. In the questionnaire responses and at the meeting, parents were happy with their children's standards and progress.
6. At age seven, pupils have good speaking and listening skills. They speak clearly with a good command of standard English when answering questions in lessons. By age eleven, they make good progress in consolidating their speaking and listening skills. Their ability to listen and concentrate has a positive effect on their achievement. They speak confidently and read out their work in lessons effectively. Pupils are encouraged to use correct linguistic and technical vocabulary, for example, they understand the term *sequence* at age seven and, in science, are

familiar with terms such as *insulator* and *variable resistor*.

7. At age seven, pupils read confidently and enjoy talking about their books. Higher attaining pupils begin to read with expression when reporting speech and give their opinions willingly about the text and predict what will happen next. Pupils of average attainment recall points about the story and talk about its characters. All pupils read fluently. Children recognise the importance of their parents' regular written comments about their reading in their homework diaries. In Key Stage 2, reading has improved since the last inspection. At age eleven, a reader of below average attainment reads hesitantly to begin with, but increases in confidence and recognises mistakes. An above average pupil reads confidently and with expression and talks clearly about the plot and characters and makes sensible comparisons with other books. All are able to give reasons for their choice of books, some of which are more profound than others. Pupils of all ages read regularly at home and enjoy books.
8. Standards in writing have improved since the previous inspection; handwriting and presentation are now good. Spelling is still broadly below the standard typically expected of pupils throughout the school. Even higher attaining pupils fail to spell words that would be expected at age eleven, correctly, although the school has introduced a spelling programme to address this issue. By age seven, pupils produce alliterative phrases, such as *Sally Sheep* and *Daisy Dog*, with higher attaining pupils producing more complex alliterations, such as *Gareth Griffiths lives in Grimsby*. Pupils at this age write in a joined style and are able to write a reasonably complex rhyming poem. Although their writing consists of a logical structure and forms a solid base, being broadly typical of what might be expected for pupils' ages, there is little evidence of extended or imaginative writing. Standards in literacy are satisfactory. By the age of eleven, pupils' writing is in-line with national expectations. Pupils complete one piece of extended writing each half term and the assessment sheets, compiled by the teacher, give good guidance on drafting and completing it. The lack of advanced writing skills suggests that pupils would benefit from more opportunities to write longer, extended pieces. Poetry writing is a strength at this age and much work is mature and thoughtful. Standards in literacy overall, at age eleven, are in line with those expected for pupils' ages. Literacy supports learning well in other subjects such as science and history.
9. At ages seven and eleven, standards in mathematics are above average. Pupils' work at age seven shows security in *shape, space* and *measures*. They confidently recognise the geometrical features of shapes such as *triangle, square, hexagon, pentagon* and correctly attach the appropriate names to the relevant shape. They have good skills in *number* and are assured in recognising missing numbers in complicated sequences. Pupils are very secure in mental mathematics and standards in numeracy are good. In the one lesson observed in this age group, pupils show skill and dexterity in working out sums mentally. They understand the relationship between halving and doubling and use mathematical language confidently. Pupils respond well to the good teaching and have made good progress. By age eleven, pupils continue to make good progress in mathematics and their numeracy skills remain good. They are very familiar in the four operations (*addition, subtraction, multiplication and division*) to solve problems. Most pupils are secure in calculating whole numbers both mentally and in written forms. Higher attaining pupils are confident working with complex numbers and are able to add and subtract four digit numbers skilfully. Others in this year group multiply 3 digit numbers by 100 accurately. In lessons pupils use their wits well in response to their teacher's quick fire questions to test how quickly they can calculate mentally. Their skills in *handling and interpreting data* are good.
10. Standards in *science* are broadly typical for pupils aged seven. An analysis of work in their books shows they study *materials and their properties*, with pupils describing clearly the effects of heat on substances such as butter, chocolate, candle wax and ice cubes. Scientific language is used appropriately. In response to the question, "*what will happen if we continue to heat the bread?*" they predict accurately the effects of heat in making toast. In one lesson seen in Key Stage 1, pupils in Year 2 study *life processes and living things* confidently and are also secure in *scientific enquiry*. They predict and test what will happen when various substances are mixed with water and explain why the test was fair. They record their results clearly and explain why their predictions, on occasion, can differ from their findings. At age eleven, standards are above those

typically expected for their age. Work in pupils' books shows an emphasis on *physical processes* and *forces*. They show a good understanding of the relationship between *mass*, *object* and *gravity*. When they study *sound and vibration*, they understand that the pitch of a musical instrument is related to the length of a pipe or the thickness of a string. In lessons seen, pupils show good knowledge of the uses of electricity in *physical processes* and are aware of the health and safety aspects of electricity. In one lesson they learn that the way electricity flows through a circuit depends on how the circuit is arranged and show confidence in building *series* and *parallel* circuits. Pupils use technical, scientific language well.

11. In ICT, standards are below those expected for pupils aged 7 and 11. Whilst they are introduced to computers at an early age, they are not taught to use them systematically and therefore do not make the progress expected by the time they leave the school. Pupils use the mouse and basic keyboard to develop their *word processing* skills, but there is insufficient emphasis on presenting data such as text and tables electronically. However, whilst there are some opportunities for pupils to control devices, such as programmable toys like a Roamer, in mathematics, these are few. By age eleven, pupils have made satisfactory progress in word processing and this is used, on occasion, to support other subjects such as literacy and history. ICT, however, is used insufficiently and inconsistently in supporting other subjects in the curriculum. Other applications, such as *data handling*, *computer control* and *measuring and monitoring*, are under-represented. Progress overall, is unsatisfactory.
12. In religious education, the school, as voluntary controlled, follows the agreed syllabus and generally meets the required standards by ages seven and eleven. At age seven, pupils explore the term *friend* and the qualities friends should have and understand that Jesus was a friend to everyone. In the one lesson seen in Key Stage 1, they recall well facts about Jesus and know that His followers were called disciples and that they helped Him. In Key Stage 2, pupils' written work reveals that they learn about the Bible and sacred texts and why they are important to Christians. Their work covers significant events, such as *The Creation*, *Noah and the Ark*, *Jonah and the Whale* and *Joshua and Jericho*. They show satisfactory knowledge of other religions, such as Hinduism, and why Hindus celebrate Divali. Their written work is satisfactorily presented, although handwriting is good.
13. In most other subjects where it was possible to make judgements, standards are broadly in line with the standards expected when pupils are 7 and 11. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards in geography and music throughout the school and physical education in Key Stage 2. Standards in art and design are above those typically expected by the time pupils are aged 11.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes are very good and they very much enjoy going to school. At the start of the morning session and after lunch, they settle down to work quickly and quietly. In numeracy and literacy lessons in Key Stage 2, pupils keep an effective record of their own personal improvement targets and are, therefore, continuously aware of what they need to do to improve their work and be rewarded. In Year 4, a pupil writes, "*I can make estimates and say why I have done them*". Pupils sustain very good levels of concentration and are keen to answer questions in lessons. They listen very respectfully to each other. At playtimes, older pupils are happy to play alongside younger ones and this helps to foster good attitudes. They are very confident when talking to adults and show good maturity in their responses to questions. The weekly *good work assembly* gives pupils an opportunity to celebrate their work and to evaluate critically why they chose a particular piece of work. Children in the reception class learn to concentrate and quickly become enthusiastic learners. They share well and learn to wait their turn patiently.
15. Personal development and relationships amongst pupils and towards adults are very good. They share their opinions and feelings openly. During a literacy lesson in Year 5, pupils demonstrate very good ability to empathise with the diarist Pepys. In discussion with pupils they say, "*All people should be equal. They may feel unhappy if they are not and I can make them feel better*".

by treating them equally". Pupils perform tasks that help with the smooth running of the school without being asked, for example, a pupil in Year 6 telephones the numbers for lunch through to the catering company without any help and, after lunch, pupils, unprompted, move their chairs to help the catering staff. They show very good support spontaneously for others. When one pupil was a little late finishing some written work, she was helped by the others on the table to catch up. They fetched her reading book and opened it at the right page, ready for the group reading session. Pupils are encouraged to raise funds for others and often approach the school with their own ideas. These have included raising money for victims of the Turkish earthquake and the current *Blue Peter* appeal.

16. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. It has remained at this very high standard since the last inspection. In lessons and at lunchtime, pupils are always polite and extremely courteous to fellow pupils, staff and visitors. Pupils are happy and relaxed and know they could approach any member of staff if they have a concern. They have excellent self-discipline and no examples of poor behaviour or bullying were observed during the inspection. In the questionnaire, all parents were very happy with their children's attitudes and behaviour.
17. Attendance at the school is well above the national average. However, holidays taken during term time detract from the learning opportunities for some pupils.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. Teaching is better than at the last inspection when it was satisfactory for under-fives (*the foundation stage*), good in Key Stage 1 and broadly unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. Over a quarter of teaching in Key Stage 2 was unsatisfactory. In this inspection, the overall quality of teaching is good in the foundation stage and in both key stages. Teaching is satisfactory or better in 100 per cent of lessons. It is good in 70 per cent and very good, or better, in 18 per cent of lessons. In Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory in 25 per cent and good in 75 per cent of lessons. Teaching has improved in Key Stage 2 because of two factors; the first is the introduction of the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy which have given greater structure and rigour to the lessons. The second is the presence of an experienced part-time teacher, employed by the governors for two days a week in Key Stage 2, who also teaches the skills of literacy and numeracy well, and who taught for over half the period of the inspection.
19. In general, teachers meet the needs of all pupils well and good planning effectively ensures that in these mixed age classes, there is no undue repetition in the curriculum. Although at the time of the inspection there were no pupils on the SEN register, teachers plan well with the support staff to ensure that this support is appropriately targeted to those pupils who may require additional help in aspects of subjects they are unclear about. Throughout the school the management of pupils is very good and seems to be almost effortless because of the very good relationships with the pupils.
20. In the foundation stage, some examples of very good teaching were seen in *communication, language and literacy* and in *mathematical development*, although the overall quality of teaching in these, and in the other areas of learning, was good. In the best lessons, there are clear learning objectives: in *literacy*, for example, "*to hear, identify and read initial sound and to write using correct formation*". The teacher uses her good subject knowledge to provide well-planned activities that challenge the children who respond to this good teaching and make good progress.
21. The best lessons in both key stages feature probing, succinct questioning. These questions allow the pupils to think about what they have already learned and enable the teacher to assess the level of their understanding in the topic and their readiness to move on. In a literacy lesson in Year 2, the teacher is reinforcing initial sounds and points to examples from their Big Book, *Dora's Eggs*, such as *Sally Sheep*, and *Penny Piglets*: "*What are we looking at here?*" she asks, pointing to the examples. The pupils are listening well to their teacher and are looking at the examples on the portable white board. They think for a moment and then a shoal of hands is raised; "*alliteration*" proudly announces one girl. In Key Stage 2, the teacher is focused on Years 5 and 6,

while the support assistant is working with Years 3 and 4. The initial part of the lesson is to test pupils' understanding and skill in using multiples of 7, 8 and 9, and the teacher needs to know how ready they are to move forward, "*What does multiple mean?*" Pupils listen well and reply, "*the answer!*" Time now to test their *real* understanding, "*what is the multiple of 9+5? 8+9? 7+8?*" Pupils enjoy the challenge to answer in a very limited time, responding correctly, "45, 72, 56", and the teacher is able to assure herself that the tasks are set at the appropriate level. In the last inspection report, on-going assessment of pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 was identified as a weakness. This is now much improved and is good.

22. Focused questioning is based on the teachers' good knowledge and understanding of their subjects, for example all teachers are very secure in teaching the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. They are technically competent in teaching phonics and the other basic skills in literacy and in teaching the basic skills in numeracy. Apart from the co-ordinator, other teachers lack confidence and skills in ICT and, throughout the school, the subject is insufficiently used to support learning in other subjects. Although the school is well resourced in terms of computers and technology generally, most pupils' skills are inadequately developed by the time they are ready to leave the school. In the last report, teachers' knowledge in ICT was described as "*sometimes very good*"; with the rapid developments in the subject recently, it would be difficult to come to the same conclusion.
23. Planning in Key Stage 2 has improved since the last inspection and is now good. At their meeting, although parents were satisfied with the standard of teaching, some parents were concerned that the two teachers who share the class in Key Stage 2 were giving out mixed messages on whether pupils should learn their tables. Clearly, both teachers have their own individual teaching styles, but inspection found that they plan well together and also work well with the support assistants. All teachers have clear learning objectives which they share with the children. In a science lesson on electricity in Key Stage 2, for example, the teacher explains that "*the purpose of the lesson is to understand that the way a circuit is arranged changes the way electricity flows through it*". The pace in most lessons is well measured but, in one lesson in Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 6 spent too much time copying from the whiteboard and this slowed their good progress. In an otherwise good lesson in Key Stage 1, the teacher failed to have alternative plans when pupils in Year 2 finished their lesson earlier than she expected and they were allowed to spend the remainder of the time in free play when further progress could have been made. However, this one lesson provided insufficient evidence to make judgements about teaching overall, in this key stage.
24. Homework has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory, overall. Consistency in the marking of pupils' work has improved since the last inspection. All work is marked and includes some helpful comments as to how pupils could improve their work in the future. Resources are used well, with the exception of those for ICT which are generally under-used. In the responses to the parents' questionnaire, all parents were happy with the quality of teaching.

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

25. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum and the quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory. All the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. In the Foundation Stage the curriculum is soundly based upon the recommended areas of learning. The exception is in *physical development* where there are shortfalls in the provision of large outdoor play equipment. Statutory requirements concerning religious education and collective worship are satisfactorily met throughout the school.
26. There were no pupils on the SEN register at the time of the inspection, although satisfactory systems and structures for identifying these pupils' needs are in place. Extra funding is targeted at groups of lower achieving pupils and this ensures that any areas of concern are addressed by in-class support for learning.

27. Curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection, particularly medium and long-term planning which are now good, and enhance the quality of opportunities for learning. Planning allows for the wide age ranges and levels of attainment in each class. However, it does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length in Key Stage 2 and, therefore, hinders pupils' progress in this area. Monitoring of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection; co-ordinators now monitor pupils' work in both classes and procedures are appropriate for a small school.
28. Links have been formed with local schools and community groups to enhance the learning opportunities for pupils; for example those in Year 6 visit a local college for a project on structures. Several parents also help in the school. The school has not increased its extra-curricular opportunities since the last inspection and the range is still very limited. In the questionnaire, this was the only aspect of the school that parents were not happy about. There are insufficient pupils to make a residential visit viable. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory.
29. Pupils' personal development, overall, is good and is supported well by the moral, social and cultural development in the school. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory; there are opportunities for pupils to reflect during collective worship and there is a sense that this is time set apart from the rest of the school day. Music is used to signify the beginning and end of assembly. One outstandingly good assembly, for all the school, was seen in which the teacher read the story of the Golden Bird with such good use of her voice that all pupils were entranced and almost spellbound. This uplifting session finished with lighting a candle and a prayer and the singing of 'He's got the whole world in his hands', which was good. Pupils left the classroom very quietly to the stirring music of North American Native chants from How the West was Won. However, this singularly special moment, contributing powerfully to all aspects of pupils' personal development, was not replicated during the rest of the inspection.
30. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Children have a sense of right and wrong and of fair play. They show consideration for each other and know that their behaviour has an impact on others. The youngest children also show respect for each other. This was illustrated well by the behaviour of pupils in the class for Key Stage 1 where pupils knew that, if they were tall, they should stand back so that younger children would be better able to see what was happening.
31. Provision for cultural development is good. Pupils have a sense of their own culture and that of others. The school is aware that, because it and the community it serves is not ethnically diverse, there is all the more need to instil within its pupils an awareness and respect for ethnic, cultural and religious diversity. The school takes the opportunity for children to experience music from other cultures. In religious education pupils learn about the values of other faiths. In Key Stage 1, for example, pupils learn about the Jewish festival of Sukkot and write Jewish-style prayers and make Sukkot cards. In geography, they learn about societies in other countries and the similarities and differences with their own environment.
32. Provision for pupils' social development is very good and is a strong feature of the school. Pupils behave very well and good relationships are evident in all parts of the school. Staff and children have mutual respect and show this by listening to each other and being aware of each other's needs. The school encourages this through its links with the local Cheshire Home where pupils visit to sing and perform. Children of all ages mix well together and are sensitive to each other's needs. This was emphasised in conversation with a child who had experienced personal trauma and who reported that others had been very kind in those circumstances.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. In this very small school the staff know their pupils very well and understand their needs. They act as good role models and show considerable concern for the safety and welfare of their pupils and all pupils respond well in this caring environment. Reception children settle quickly and confidently into the school routines.

34. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are satisfactory. The school has a health and safety policy which, although satisfactory, has little school-specific information. Termly risk assessments are carried out efficiently by a governor and the headteacher and any concerns arising are discussed at governors' meetings and appropriate actions are sanctioned. There is currently only one member of staff trained in first aid and, therefore, insufficient cover if she was absent. The child protection policy is well documented and all staff are aware of the procedures. When new information is received, procedures are effectively revisited and discussed.
35. Statutory requirements for the assessment and reporting of pupils' achievement and progress are met and pupils are involved in the selection of work for their own records of achievement. Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection; there is now clear evidence of assessment of pupils' progress being used in guiding medium and longer term planning. Although there is commercially produced material available for literacy and numeracy, teachers rely on their professional discretion in using this. Pupils' achievements are recognised every week in a *rewards assembly*, which motivates the pupils and recognises their efforts and improves their self-esteem.
36. The school's procedures for recording and tracking pupil progress, which include a portfolio of pupils' written work, are satisfactory. There are comprehensive records of assessment and, from the analysis of this information, challenging targets have been set for English and mathematics. Meetings with a neighbouring school have taken place to agree standards in judging the correct levels of pupils' work. Pupils' work is formally assessed twice a year, based on nationally accredited tests and commercially available reading tests. The headteacher, who is also the assessment co-ordinator, analyses the results and shares these with the staff and governors. Parents are sent additional analysis and information on the school's performance every year. The assessment sheets which accompany the pieces of extended writing in Key Stage 2 provide very good guidance for pupils to reflect on, and improve, their own work.
37. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. The home/school agreement includes a clause on ensuring that pupils arrive on time and in notifying the school of any absences on the day they occur. Parents are fully aware of these procedures. They are expected to complete holiday forms and the school secretary closely monitors these absences. A well-written attendance policy and information on marking registers in the staff handbook support these procedures effectively.
38. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. All staff take a positive approach to behaviour. The school has a simple effective reward scheme based on receiving rewards and certificates in the *good work assembly* on Fridays. Pupils value the rewards and certificates are proudly displayed in their portfolio of achievement.
39. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are satisfactory. As pupil numbers are very small, this monitoring is predominantly informal. Staff know parents and pupils very well and react to personal concerns or worries as they occur. Religious education and collective worship are used effectively, for example, to support messages on how to be a good friend. Pupils are given regular opportunities to exercise responsibility in class and around the school and these have a positive effect on their maturity and attitudes.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. Parents have very positive views about the school and express strong support for the aims and values which it promotes. They are very pleased with the school and the staff, for whom they have a high regard. They feel comfortable about approaching it with a problem and are very confident that their children like school. Parents' only area of concern was the provision for extra-curricular activities, with which a large minority is unhappy.
41. The school has good links with parents. These are also well established with parents before their children start school. They feel they are well informed about school activities and pupils' achievements through letters home and through regular contact at the end of each school day.

Parents are invited to weekly *good work assemblies* that provide a good opportunity for staff and parents to celebrate the work of their children. Yearly reports have improved since the last inspection, especially for pupils in Key Stage 2, and give concise information about pupils' progress, attainment and targets for improvement. These reports are very well supported by pupils' own views on their achievements and their targets for personal improvement. Information evenings on literacy and numeracy have been well attended and a letter, outlining the school's analysis of their National Curriculum test results, shows clearly the school's commitment to keeping parents informed. Parents have recently started receiving topic information on a termly basis that is helpful in explaining what pupils will be doing in the different subjects of the curriculum. The home reading record is a useful two-way communication between teachers and parents. Informative newsletters about the day to day activities are sent out weekly.

42. The involvement of parents in the formal work of the school is good. Several parents and grandparents give freely of their time to come and help with reading, music and fabric technology. Parents give good support to topic work by bringing in artefacts, for example, those relating to the current Victorian topic, and these enrich pupils' learning. The school until recently had a Friends Association which raised substantial funds to improve the quality of the learning environment, for example, through the purchase of bookcases. Although this has lapsed, parents are still very involved in the life of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. At the last inspection, leadership and management in the school was judged to have weaknesses which restricted the quality of learning to pupils in Key Stage 2. Since the last inspection, the school has received an intensive amount of effective external monitoring and support from the LEA. The headteacher, himself, must also be given credit for improving those areas perceived as weaknesses during the last inspection. His leadership and management are now good. Most of the issues identified in the inspection report have been successfully addressed, including those to do with weaknesses in Key Stage 2, such as teaching and standards. The monitoring of standards in literacy and numeracy and improvements to the school development plan (SDP), which was not sufficiently forward looking and did not identify whether developments could be afforded, have also been successfully achieved. These improvements are appropriately linked to pupils' achievements, including improvements to standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT, and reflect the school's mantra, "*investing in all our futures*".
44. The headteacher has taken a systematic approach to monitoring and self-evaluation and has a clear vision of the school's strengths and weaknesses. For example, most of the *issues for action* arising from this report are identified in the SDP. There is a purposeful atmosphere in the school and a good ethos for learning.
45. The governing body is very supportive of the work of the school and fulfils its statutory responsibilities effectively. Although the chair and vice-chair have been members of the governing body relatively recently, and have held their present positions even more recently, they are very committed and have acquired a lot of knowledge in a short space of time. Overall, they are well informed and are willing to go on learning. Three governors have been trained for the new arrangements for *performance management*. The chair, who joined the governing body shortly after serious weaknesses were identified, had the confidence that "*with the right support, they had the staff to put it right*". Findings from this inspection confirm that this confidence has not been misplaced. The governors monitor and evaluate the work of the school well. An impressive file of *Records of Governor Monitoring Visits* shows notes of regular visits to the school and observations on lessons, including English and the Literacy Hour, and numeracy and science. Although some of the reports are over-optimistic about standards, *for example in ICT*, they fulfil their main purpose well. In one report, a governor makes the case effectively that the governors should agree to the headteacher being allowed to buy-in technical support for computers and to add further copies of the control program.
46. Spending decisions are linked well to educational priorities. The governors did well to take the

decision to fund from the *small schools support budget*, an additional experienced teacher who works for two days a week and allows time for the headteacher to fulfil his administrative duties. Other grants are used effectively to fund the classroom assistant and funds have been used from the *National Grid for Learning* to buy computers and link them to the internet. A grant from a local quarry works is to be used to improve the environment at the front of the school. In a small school with a low roll and high fixed costs, it is not surprising that unit costs are very high. In the school's budget for the financial year ending March 2000, there was a carry forward of over 7 per cent. The governors are keen to reduce this to below 5 per cent. The school applies the principles of best value well.

47. The administrative assistant provides good support and ensures that office routines run smoothly. There is appropriate use of new technology for financial control and school administrative work.
48. Apart from weaknesses in teachers' ICT knowledge and skills, the match of teaching and support staff is more than adequate to meet the demands of the curriculum. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. Although the large teaching space for Key Stage 1 is given over to dining at lunchtime and for use for physical education, these arrangements generally work well. Resources in the school, overall, are adequate and those for ICT are good, although under-used. Resources for outdoor play for children in the foundation stage are unsatisfactory, a position that still remains since the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49. To raise standards and improve the quality of education, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- i) **raise pupils' attainment in information and communication technology by:**

- improving all teachers' knowledge and expertise in the subject to ensure it is taught to a satisfactory level throughout the school (*paragraphs 11, 22, 104*);
- providing more monitoring of teaching (*paragraph 104*).

The school development plan identifies the need to develop pupils' skills in ICT by developing the skills of the staff in teaching the subject.

- ii) **extend the use of ICT to enable pupils to support their work in other subjects, especially, but not solely, in literacy and numeracy, throughout the school** (*paragraph 11, 22, 72, 77, 82*).

The school development plan recognises the need for wider range of software for curriculum areas.

- iii) **provide more opportunities for pupils a) to improve their extended writing throughout the school, by planning and drafting longer pieces of writing in a wider range of styles and b) to improve their spelling** (*paragraphs 8, 27, 68, 69, 99, 112*).

The development of pupils' writing style is included in the school development plan. The school has introduced a spelling programme to address this issue.

- iv) **provide a range of appropriate equipment for children in the reception class to provide challenging activities in the outside environment to promote their physical development** (*paragraphs 1, 25, 48, 62*).

This aspect was identified in the last report and has not been addresses satisfactorily.

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL:

- There is a very limited range of out of school activities (*paragraph 28, 40*);
- There are insufficient staff trained in first aid (*paragraph 34*).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	17
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	18	70	12	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	31
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0

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	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.4
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.

The usual tables showing results in English, mathematics and science for pupils aged seven and eleven in 2000 are not included because there were less than 11 pupils in both age groups and the results of such small cohorts would be unreliable.

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	31
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	12.9
Average class size	15.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	47

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	121227
Total expenditure	116524
Expenditure per pupil	2988
Balance brought forward from previous year	3949
Balance carried forward to next year	8652

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	20
Number of questionnaires returned	13

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	38	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	38	0	0	8
Behaviour in the school is good.	77	23	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	62	0	8	0
The teaching is good.	69	31	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	38	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	31	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	46	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	46	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	54	46	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	54	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	54	31	0	0

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. The only area parents were not happy about was the range of out of school activities. Whilst there is a limit to the number of activities a small school can be realistically expected to provide, inspectors found that the range is very narrow and could be extended.

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

50. At the last inspection, the accommodation for children in the foundation stage (*previously the under-fives*) was considered to be inadequate to the extent that it restricted their progress. Since then the accommodation has been reorganised and partly refurbished and it is very spacious. Children now have fuller access to a range of opportunities for role play and “*small world*” play, for example a *farmyard* is permanently set out and is available at all times. Children make good progress and this is mainly because of the overall good teaching, some of which is very good, and effective classroom assistance.
51. When children enter the school, they are taught with pupils in Key Stage 1 in a class with one teacher and a full-time nursery nurse. Children take part in some aspects of the literacy and numeracy sessions and are supported well in the group work sessions by the nursery nurse. Work is planned using the National Curriculum and the literacy and numeracy strategies, which are set in the context of the Early Learning Goals. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1, children achieve well and they attain the early learning goals in *communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development* and most aspects of *physical development*. In *personal, social and emotional development* and in *speaking and listening* they exceed these goals.
52. An analysis of initial assessments over the last three years show that, on entry to school, children’s attainment is below average in literacy and numeracy and is above average in personal, social and emotional development. However, the year groups are very small and attainment on entry, therefore, is liable to fluctuate more than usual. The school ensures that children make a good start to their school careers in a secure but stimulating environment.

Personal, social and emotional development

53. Children’s personal, social and emotional skills are well developed and they exceed the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. The teacher and nursery nurse remind the pupils of informal rules and expectations of standards of behaviour and promote these skills informally, and also provide good role models. As a result, children are confident, well adjusted and enthusiastic in their learning and are not afraid to ask older children if they are having difficulty with a problem.
54. Children take turns and respect each other and have a sense of “*fair play*” and consideration for each other. When asked to gather round a table to observe, children know that the smallest need to be at the front so that they can see what is happening. In a religious education lesson, the youngest children contribute to a discussion about the qualities of a friend, as they are led skilfully by the teacher’s effective questioning. This area of learning is a strength of the school.

Communication, language and literacy

55. Children have above average skills in speaking and listening; they listen attentively and answer questions with confidence. They recognise their own names on labels and books and, with help, are beginning to form letters correctly and in a reasonably consistent size. Their work shows increasing pencil control during their time in school and they use the correct grip when writing or drawing. Children identify letters and sounds and the higher attainers are able to distinguish between upper and lower case letters. They know that print carries meaning and can recall significant features of a story. By the time children are ready to enter Year 1, they are all achieving the early learning goals and are particularly strong in their speaking and listening skills.
56. The teacher plans well and this, together with the very good support children receive from the

nursery nurse, ensures that they make good progress during their first year in school. The teacher's very good questioning skills also have a positive effect on children's learning, encouraging them to speak carefully and clearly and to listen attentively.

Mathematical development

57. Children play a full part in the oral part of the numeracy sessions, questioning is planned well to enable them to contribute. Children use correct mathematical terminology, for example, "*tall*," "*short*," and "*cylinder*". They work well in the group sessions and receive the appropriate support. They are confident in the use of number and can count to ten. In this aspect of their mathematical development, they are achieving the early learning goals. Most children can sort objects according to their colour and shape. They can match more intricate shapes, for example, trees which have minor differences. They can create simple recurring patterns using beads of different shapes and colours and are able to explain which bead they are going to use next and why. By the time children leave the reception class, they achieve the early learning goals, except in oral work where they exceed them.
58. Children's progress is good in response to good teaching and support from the nursery nurse and this is helped by the effective way in which the teacher is able to combine objectives for different groups of pupils in single activities.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

59. Children enter the reception class with a basic general knowledge and, by the time they leave, they attain the early learning goals. Children carry out an investigation into substances that dissolve in water. They can describe the texture of different kinds of sugar and made intelligent guesses about which would dissolve. Although not always correct, they are confident in expressing their opinions. The most able children are able to draw on their previous knowledge of substances in making their predictions about what will happen and are developing independence in their work.
60. Activities are well planned and taught in order to challenge the children. They are given appropriate first-hand experiences and build well on previous work, which is also well planned to take account of children of all ages and abilities. Children are encouraged to explore the world through a wide variety of experiences. For example, in commenting on their starch resistant dyeing, they say, "*Look where the water and flour has been*," and, "*Some splodges were thick and some were thin*." There are insufficient opportunities for children to use computers independently and to use programmable toys to support their learning.

Physical development

61. The improvements to the space available in the area for the reception have enhanced the opportunities for children to move with confidence, imagination and safety. Children show a developing sense of space and move with increasing control and co-ordination. They are able to follow instructions and listen well. In their movement around the school, they show awareness of space and others. In one lesson for physical education observed, the teacher gives clear instructions and provides encouragement and support. The nursery nurse pays particular attention to the needs of these children and this is effective in enabling them to maintain interest throughout the session. Good management of the children helps them to learn well and ensures their safety. Children move the animals on the farm around delicately and with increasing control.
62. The space in the room is used well and is appropriate for the number of children and the nature of the activities. Since the last inspection, the school has been successful in providing more opportunities for outdoor play, although children's physical development is still hindered by the lack of large play equipment. By the time they enter Year 1, they have achieved most of the early goals.

Creative development

63. By the time children leave the reception class, most are achieving the early learning goals for creative development and some are exceeding them. Children's work in art enhances the classroom environment and is displayed with care, showing that the work is valued by staff and children. Children mix their own paint as soon as they start school and become increasingly adept at this. Work on starch resistant dyeing is of a high standard and children are given the opportunity to reflect on their work. These reflections are recorded alongside the work. Work on display includes that from other cultures, for example, prayers and illustrations from the Jewish festival of Sukkot. There is a widespread use of music from other cultures. Children have a good sense of rhythm and are beginning to learn the words of familiar songs and to join in with the choruses.
64. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and her enthusiasm has a very positive effect on the children. Opportunities for creative work are well planned and the children use the good resources imaginatively.

ENGLISH

65. Attainment on entry to Key Stage 1 is broadly average, although pupils' skills in *speaking and listening* are slightly above average and those in writing are slightly below. Although it is difficult to make judgements in view of the very small cohorts of pupils, standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with those expected nationally in *writing and reading* and above average in *speaking and listening*. By the age of eleven, pupils' skills in *speaking and listening and reading* are above those expected nationally and are broadly in line with those expected in *writing*. Drawing parallels with the National Curriculum results in 2000 need to be made with caution because of the very small size of the cohort. At age seven, all pupils achieve the standard level 2 in reading and writing and, on this measure, the school would be doing very well and in the top five per cent of schools nationally. But because no pupil achieved the higher level 3, the school would be doing very badly compared to all schools, including similar schools. At age eleven, the performance of pupils broadly reflects the national picture taking account of those achieving the standard (level 4). However, compared to similar schools it is below, because no pupil achieves a higher level 5.
66. Pupils in Year 2 read confidently and enjoy talking about their books. All pupils read regularly at home. Pupils of higher attainment are beginning to read direct quotations with expression and give their views willingly about the story. Average attaining pupils recall points about the story accurately and talk about the characters sensibly. All pupils read fluently. Parents regularly write comments about pupils' reading in the homework diaries and their children recognise the importance of these.
67. At age eleven, a lower attaining reader begins hesitatingly but increases in confidence and recognises mistakes. A higher attaining pupil reads with confidence and expression, talks about the plot and characters and can make comparisons with other books. All pupils are able to give reasons for their choice of books, ranging from the banal, such as *one who thought the picture on the cover looked interesting*, to the intelligent, as in *one who chose the book because he had read other books written by the same author and thought he would like it*. One pupil talks about the television version of the book he is reading. All pupils read regularly at home and enjoy books.
68. Standards in writing have improved since the previous inspection, handwriting and presentation are now good, spelling is still broadly below that expected of pupils aged seven and eleven, although the school has introduced a spelling programme to address this issue. At age seven, pupils produce alliterative phrases such as *"tall teachers"*, *"confusing computers"*, with higher attaining pupils producing more complex alliterations such as, *"Gareth Griffiths lives in Grimsby."* By this age, most pupils write in a joined style and can write a rhyming poem, for example; *"Lots of children working in pairs; Drawing pictures, sitting on chairs."* Their writing shows a logical structure but there is little evidence of extended or imaginative writing, although the work they have done forms a good basis for more imaginative work. By the age of seven, pupils' writing is in line with the standards expected for their ages. Pupils hold their pencils correctly and write with increasing fluency. Progress within the key stage in most aspects of English is good and

standards in literacy are satisfactory.

69. At the beginning of Key Stage 2 at age eight, pupils identify words used in a bygone age, for example *"Papa"*, *"parlour-maid"* and *"best Sunday dress"*. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 also identify differences between different writing genres, for example *scripts* and *prose*, using concepts such as *"layout"* and *"absence of speech marks"*. In lessons, they show a good understanding of the features of diaries and this is well developed in a subsequent session with another teacher when they have an opportunity to develop their own diary work. There is good progression between the work of simple diary entries which are then expanded to embrace opinions and emotions. By age eleven, pupils use more adventurous language, for example, *"distraught"* and *"chorused."* The presentation of work improves by this age and pupils' writing is in line with the expected standard (*although the attainment of most pupils in Year 5 will be above this by the time they are eleven, if the same rate of progress is maintained*). Pupils complete one piece of extended writing each half term and the assessment sheets compiled by the teacher give good guidance on *purpose and organisation, style, punctuation and grammar, spelling and handwriting*. Pupils have opportunities to redraft their work. The lack of more advanced writing skills suggests that pupils would benefit from more opportunities to undertake sustained writing. Spelling is generally not up to standard throughout the school. Even higher attaining pupils fail to spell common words correctly or to apply common spelling rules, for example *"cobbled"* is spelt *"cobald"*, *"carriage"* is spelt *"carrige"*, *"were"* is used instead of *"where"* and *"didn't"* is spelt *"dint"*. Pupils show above average skills in poetry. A collection of poems *"Winter sunsets"* displayed in the classroom shows mature and thoughtful work. One poem, entitled *"Lonely Tree"*, begins *"The thin branches crawl into the sunset as it fades away into the darkness of night. There it stands 'till morning when it runs over the horizon...."* Words are used adventurously and for effect, one pupil writing, *"the velvety blue red of a rose..."*
70. Pupils in both key stages have good speaking and listening skills and their ability to listen and concentrate has a positive effect on their learning. They are confident in speaking and reading out their work in lessons. Pupils are encouraged to use correct linguistic vocabulary, for example, the term *"ellipsis"* is introduced in Key Stage 1 and is in common use in Key Stage 2. By age eleven, pupils are very comfortable with terms such as *"chronological"*. Standards in literacy by age eleven are satisfactory.
71. Standards of teaching in English are good in all lessons observed in both key stages, and very good in the lesson focusing on children in the foundation stage. The writing of objectives for each session, both on the board and in pupils' books, helps to focus the teaching and is an improvement since the last inspection. Planning has improved overall since then and now takes appropriate account of the wide range of ages and attainments in each class, as well as identifying clear learning objectives. Both these features, good planning and clear learning objectives enhance pupils' learning and ensure continuity and progression between different teachers in Key Stage 2. The pace of lessons has improved and is now good. The assessment sheets for extended writing will also help pupils to improve their writing skills, but there are insufficient opportunities provided for them to make anything other than satisfactory progress in this area. Individual targets are shared with the pupils and kept on the table during lessons as a reminder. All teachers use good questioning techniques to move pupils' learning forward, for example "If I said; 'sequence the sentence' or, 'put it in chronological order', what would it mean?". Pupils think for a moment, remembering what they have already learned, and reply, "Put it in the right order". Teachers build well on pupils' previous knowledge, frequently referring to previous work, for example "What did we learn from this book?". A feature of all lessons is the very good classroom relationships that exist between pupils and adults, and between the pupils themselves. Teachers have an easy manner with pupils and challenge them in an encouraging way, for example, "Come on, thinking caps on."
72. Teachers ensure that linguistic skills are developed throughout the curriculum by encouraging pupils to talk about and evaluate their own work and by the use of correct or technical vocabulary in each subject area. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 use their language skills to describe what different substances feel like, for example *"soft"* to describe icing sugar. Whilst there is some use of interactive talking books to support literacy in Key Stage 1, ICT is insufficiently used to support

learning in literacy.

MATHEMATICS

73. The groups, aged both seven and eleven, who took the 2000 National Curriculum tests consisted of only four pupils. The very small size of these cohorts makes generalisations about standards in the subject unhelpful, other than the standards as exhibited in the test results for that particular year. This is because fluctuations in the abilities of these cohorts have disproportionate percentage changes in the results, with one pupil, for example, representing 25 per cent of these particular year groups. With that caveat, an analysis of the results for seven-year-olds reveals that 75 per cent of the year group achieved the higher level 3 and, if these standards were compared to schools nationally and to similar schools, they would be considered to be very high. By age eleven, standards would be considered to be in line with the national picture for those achieving the expected level 4, but they would not look so good if they were compared with similar schools, as no pupil achieved a level above the expected level 4. It is not surprising that inspection findings do not exactly replicate these results and reveal that, at both ages seven and eleven, standards in mathematics are broadly above average. Taken together and allowing for the year-on-year fluctuations due to the small cohorts, the rise in standards by the time pupils are aged 11 has broadly kept pace with the national trend.
74. An analysis of the work of pupils aged seven for the Autumn term reveals a focus on *shape*, *space* and *measures*, with written work also on *number* and the *number system*. Pupils recognise the geometrical features of shapes such as *triangle*, *square*, *hexagon*, *pentagon* and correctly attach the appropriate names to the relevant shape. They identify accurately which shapes contain right angles. In *number*, pupils show confidence, using odd and even numbers to add up to given numbers such as 12 and 16. They recognise sequences and are able to identify confidently the missing numbers in sequences such as $16 + ? = 25 + ? = 47$. Standards in numeracy are good; pupils are especially strong in mental mathematics. In the one lesson seen for this age group, pupils show confidence in the use of number and are able to quickly place themselves in order according to the number cards they are holding. They understand the relationship between halving and doubling and use mathematical language, such as *estimate*, confidently. Pupils enjoy this lesson and listen very attentively. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and their teacher, are excellent, and there is a very good learning environment in which pupils make very good progress. Over time, pupils have made good progress.
75. By age eleven, pupils have made good progress in mathematics and in developing their numeracy skills that are good. An analysis of pupils' work shows an emphasis on solving problems using *addition*, *subtraction*, *multiplication* and *division*. Most pupils have secure mental and written calculation skills when working with whole numbers. Higher attaining pupils work confidently with complex numbers, for example, $54 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10 = 54,000$ and add and subtract four digit numbers accurately. Other pupils multiply 3 digit numbers by 100 accurately, for example, 350×100 . In lessons, pupils respond well to their teacher's quick fire questions, testing their mental computation skills, and show good mental dexterity. They show a good grasp of *handling data* and interpret the meaning of graphs confidently and, using graph paper, interpret the number of units each square represents. These skills are used well to support learning in other subjects, for example in geography.
76. Pupils have very good attitudes in their lessons and this is a positive factor that helps their learning. They listen very well and respect each other's views and opinions. All are keen to answer questions. They particularly enjoy the sessions at the beginning of lessons that test their mental dexterity. All are extremely well behaved and have very good relationships with their teachers. All are conscientious, both when working alone and in groups.
77. The quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good and is good overall in both key stages. Numeracy skills are well taught and the teaching of these have been improved by the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy with which teachers are familiar and secure. The ground was well prepared for this implementation by introducing formal practice in

mental mathematics two terms earlier than the official introduction of the strategy. Lessons have clear learning objectives. In a lesson in Key Stage 2 on data handling, for example, the objectives were clearly stated: *to know how to convert raw data into a form that can be used to answer a question*. A strong feature of the best teaching is the use of clear, incisive questioning that enables the teachers to assess what pupils have learned, and challenges the pupils to recall quickly their own previous learning. "What do I mean by data?" asks the teacher to Year 6. Pupils think quickly for a meaningful answer; "information" replies a girl. "What does handling mean?" continues the teacher. One pupil replies "sorting out", another replies, "processing information". In both key stages, the teachers plan their lessons well to take account of the wide age ranges in their classes. Occasionally, pupils in Year 6 are left to review work already learned whilst the teacher concentrates on the pupils in the other year groups, when they could be given more challenging tasks. In the class for Key Stage 2, lessons are shared between the headteacher and another experienced teacher who takes the class regularly for two days a week. It is clearly important that these teachers plan well together to ensure continuity in progress and inspection finds this to be the case. In Key Stage 1, the full-time nursery nurse, and in Key Stage 2, the part-time learning support assistant, plan and work well with their respective teachers. ICT is used sparingly. There is evidence of the technology being used on occasion, for example using spreadsheets to make graphs in Years 5 and 6, but such examples are rare and generally pupils are given insufficient opportunities.

78. The school has made pleasing improvement since the last inspection. The school's policy is good and it has addressed well the weaknesses identified in the last report. For example, work on *shape, space and measures* was not adequately represented which it is now. The school has been helped by the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy but it should be given credit for doing this well. Above all, teaching in Key Stage 2, much of which was unsatisfactory during the last inspection, has improved significantly. Assessment procedures are good and this, together with better marking, represents further improvement in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. The school's targets for 2001 are reasonably challenging, but with targeted support, should be achievable.

SCIENCE

79. The National Curriculum teacher assessments in 2000 for 7 year olds show that 100 per cent of pupils achieved the expected level 2. On this basis, the school's performance would be in the highest five per cent, if compared to all schools nationally and also if compared to similar schools. However, account needs to be taken of the unreliability of results arising from very small age groups. This can be seen if the school's performance is compared to those achieving a level above the expected standard (level 3). On that measure, the school would be in the *lowest* five percent both when compared to the national picture and to similar schools. This is because, of the four pupils, none achieved a higher level 3. If one pupil (*25 per cent*) had achieved a level 3, the school's performance would have been in line with the national average and also with that of similar schools.
80. The National Curriculum test results for 11 year olds in 2000 show that the percentage achieving the expected level 4 was well below the national average and also when compared to similar schools. Again, only 4 pupils took the tests and the percentage is low compared to schools nationally and to similar schools, because only 3 pupils (*75 per cent*) achieved the expected level and this is below the average percentage nationally. Inspection findings show that, at age 7, standards are broadly at the expected level, whilst, at age 11, standards are above the expected level.
81. An analysis of work in pupils' books, when they are seven, shows the focus of the term's work so far has been on *materials and their properties*. Pupils describe clearly the effects of heating on various substances such as butter, chocolate, candle wax and ice cubes. Scientific language such as *prediction* is used appropriately. In response to the question, "what will happen if we continue to heat the bread?" they predict accurately the effects of heat in making toast; "it will go brown and get hot". The standard of work is broadly in line with what is expected for these pupils'

- ages. In the one lesson seen in Key Stage 1, pupils in Year 2 study *life processes and living things confidently* and are also secure in *scientific enquiry*. They predict and then test what will happen when substances such as flour, salt and sugar are mixed with water. They explain why the test was fair, “*we put in the same amount of materials and the same amount of liquid.*” They record their results and suggest why their predictions sometimes differ from their findings. They wrongly predict, for example, that tea-leaves will dissolve because their experience of tea at home is with tea-bags. They use clear language and are familiar with scientific terms such as *dissolve* and *fair*. Standards of pupils’ work in Year 2 are broadly average. Pupils are very involved in and enjoy the lesson and make good progress.
82. Work in the books of pupils aged eleven shows an emphasis on *physical processes* with a focus on *forces*. They note that balanced forces prevent movement in objects and record that *mass is the attraction an object has for gravity*. In *sound* they study *vibration* and understand that the length of a pipe changes the pitch of sound; *the thinner a stretched string, the higher the note*. Work is reasonably well presented, and most of this work is good. Two lessons were observed in Key Stage 2, where the focus of observation was on Year 6. Attainment, overall, is above average. Pupils study *electricity* in *physical processes*. In a good brain-storming session, pupils show good knowledge of the uses of electricity, from it *giving light* to making things work. They are very aware of the dangers of electricity and are clear that mains electricity can be dangerous “*because it is high voltage.*” In another good lesson on electricity, they learn that the way a circuit is arranged changes the way electricity flows through it. They work practically, building both *series* and *parallel* circuits, and are secure in their understanding that changing the number of bulbs or other components in a series circuit can make them become brighter or dimmer and make the speed of motors go faster or slower. Pupils have good command of technical language such as *conductor*, *insulator* and *resistance* but have insufficient opportunities to use ICT in their lessons to help their learning.
83. Pupils enjoy these lessons and are very attentive and listen well. They are very keen to answer questions and show off their knowledge. They work particularly well in the practical activities and their behaviour is exceptionally good. In this productive atmosphere, it is not surprising that all pupils try their best and make good progress.
84. Teaching is good overall in Key Stage 2 with a number of strengths that foster pupils’ good progress:
- good planning ensures that pupils are aware of the objectives of the lessons and resources such as *battery holders*, *batteries*, *crocodile leads*, *bulb holders* and *3.5 volt bulbs*, are well prepared;
 - the teachers have good subject knowledge that enables them to ask open-ended probing questions, “*what do you know about electricity?*” Pupils are keen to give their views which range from “*it gives light*” to “*it is used in household appliances*”;
 - monitoring of pupils’ work and progress is detailed and effective. The teachers know their pupils well and target their support to those groups who are less sure of the tasks to be undertaken.
85. Not all parts of all lessons are up to this good standard. In one lesson in Key Stage 2, for example, pupils in Year 6 spent part of it taking too much time to copy from the whiteboard and this retarded what up till then had been good progress. In one otherwise good lesson in Key Stage 1, the pupils in Year 2 finished their lesson earlier than planned because of its snappy pace and the keenness of the pupils to complete their work. However, these virtues were diminished by the lack of alternative plans for pupils to move on to other tasks and, instead, they were allowed free play for about half an hour (*in a two hour session*), thus losing the opportunity for them to make further progress. However, this one lesson provides insufficient evidence to make judgements about teaching in this key stage.
86. Progress in the subject has been satisfactory since the last inspection. Teaching has improved in Key Stage 2 and the policy for science has been updated.

ART AND DESIGN

87. Standards of work in art and design are good, with most pupils at the ages of seven and eleven achieving standards above those expected for their age. There were no opportunities to observe lessons during the inspection and judgements about standards are based on an examination of pupils' work, in folders and on display, documentation and discussions with pupils and staff. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about teaching.
88. There are good examples of tie-and-dye work, as well as starch-resistant patterns by pupils at the age of seven. They are encouraged to evaluate their work and their comments are recorded alongside the work displayed in the classroom; for example, "*Year 2 tie-dyeing didn't turn out the way we expected*" and "*The dyeing was really good.*"
89. At age eleven, pupils show an increasing ability to represent 3 dimensions on paper; their work on *street scenes*, using pencil, illustrate that they have understood the principles of perspective and have made good attempts to depict them. These examples show that many pupils are capable of modifying their work. Pupils use ICT to investigate sources, including the *internet*, to provide information on Victorian tiles. Artwork is used to great effect to illustrate work in other areas, for example the collection of poems by pupils of this age. For example, impressive covers enhance the appearance of laminated poetry booklets and add effectively to the atmosphere of the poetry. This work indicates that the pupils have made clear connections between the writing and the illustration.
90. Pupils throughout the school have opportunities to work in a wide range of media and textures, including paint, pastels, crayons, pencils, textiles, clay and on the computer. Progress in the subject is good. By age eleven, pupils are able to record more detail in their work. At this age, pupils produce pencil drawings that are both detailed and intricate.
91. The co-ordinator is well qualified and effective and both full time members of staff have very good knowledge of the subject and this is reflected in their planning. The current policy and scheme of work, based on nationally accredited schemes, provide appropriate guidance for teachers. Since the last inspection, the co-ordinator has ensured regular monitoring of art and design work in the Key Stage 2 class, by scrutinising displays of completed work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

92. Only a limited amount of work was available for analysis and no lessons were taught during the period of the inspection. It was not possible, therefore, to make judgements about standards of teaching. In Key Stage 1, pupils are developing skills in using equipment (such as scissors) and tools safely. Their fine motor skills are satisfactory by the time they are seven and their work indicates that they have regular opportunities to work with construction toys. Pupils were able to talk about their work sensibly and explain what they had done. The standard of their work is broadly above that expected for pupils of this age and, from the limited evidence available, they have made satisfactory progress this term.
93. In Key Stage 2, the subject is taught for a suitable amount of time, although it is sometimes taught in blocks to facilitate the teaching of food technology. In Year 6, pupils have the opportunity to visit a local College of Further Education for a six-hour session to work on "*structures*". A local helper visits each week to work with pupils in Key Stage 2 in *textiles* and this is an ongoing theme throughout the year. By the age of eleven, pupils' work is above the standard expected and they make good progress. Pupils' planning and development of design ideas shows increasing maturity; they are able to explain clearly in words, pictures and diagrams what they plan and do. They also display an ability to identify appropriate resources and to plan the production process. Higher attaining pupils are able to identify problems and explain why things went wrong and how they can be addressed. Pupils' evaluative skills are good and they are confident in suggesting improvements in the process and the product. In this aspect, a significant number of pupils have more advanced skills than those normally expected for their age. Pupils of

average and below average attainment know that materials must be suited to the purpose; for example, one pupil writes about the difficulties in gluing plastic to the frame of a kite. Another pupil writes, "I found it was difficult to fix the canes together. So we decided to use plastic tubing to connect them."

94. Since the last inspection, the school has developed a policy for Design and Technology which gives appropriate guidance for the subject, and, overall, there has been pleasing improvement.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

95. No lessons in history or geography were seen during the short period of this inspection and, therefore, no judgements about teaching can be made. There was insufficient work seen in geography throughout the school to make judgements about standards as the emphasis in the Autumn term is on history. In Key Stage 1, good links are made in science, geography and history on the topic of *food*. Work displayed on the walls indicates that pupils have begun to discuss the various locations where food originates and that it has connections with other places in the world. A map of the world helpfully shows where favourite foods and drinks come from, for example, tea is identified with India and China and pasta with Italy. A very limited amount of work in pupils' books shows reasonable drawings of *The Farm* using the concept of the bird's eye view.
96. In Key Stage 2, the work in pupils' books on geography was that of the pupils in Year 6 who left the school last year. This shows work of a reasonable standard in the pupils' local study of Kirmington. *Data handling* skills are used well to display clearly information about "where parents work". This shows the names of pupils, their parents' occupations and place of work, and is good, and informative. A survey of land usage in the village makes good use of an aerial map and a square grid to help pupils understand the dimensions covered by significant features in the locality, such as the school, a local business park, the church and church yard and a farm. Maps of the wider area indicate clearly "communications by motorway, railway, air and sea." Similarities and differences are also made effectively between life in an Indian village and pupils' own locality. Good use is made of *bar charts* to compare easily employment statistics between India and England in agriculture, manufacturing and public services.
97. In history in Key Stage 1, the theme of *food* is continued. At age seven, pupils learn about *cooking through the ages*, from the *Vikings* and *Romans*, to the *Normans*, *Victorians* and up to *People Today*. They compare shopping long ago to shopping today, for example shopping in a Tudor market with a market today. They contrast a grocery shop of a hundred years ago with a supermarket today. The overall quality of work is broadly up to what is expected for pupils' ages, but much of it is not very challenging and consists of colouring in pictures. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to express their thoughts in writing. The work that is available is neatly presented and this indicates that pupils take care and are interested in and enjoy their work.
98. In Key Stage 2 pupils study *The Victorians*. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 write briefly about the life of Queen Victoria and contrast the homes in Victorian times of the rich, middle class and poor. They show awareness of *The Industrial Revolution*, including the Railways and the age of steam. There is some good written work. In Year 5, a pupil describes an early photograph of poor children: "The two children....are poor street workers; the one on the left side is very poor. He doesn't have any shoes. He has very ragged and ripped clothes. The reason these children have jagged clothes is they are very poor and if they wore fancy clothes for working they would get ripped."
99. The highlight in history in the Autumn term is a visit to *Normanby Hall*, a former stately home in the locality which is now a Visitor Park and conference centre, and includes a Victorian school room and laundry. The pupils are given the opportunity to pretend to be Victorian children and enjoy the experience of being a pupil in the school room, or working in the laundry. This is clearly a worthwhile, enjoyable visit and the simulated first hand experiences produce some good written work. One pupil in Year 6 writes, "I enjoyed the school room because of the differences between now and then and the teacher being so strict. I also liked the laundry because I found out about each step of washing, drying and ironing". Another pupil writes, "I loved the laundry because it was hard work. You get very tired very soon. It takes a long time to do the laundry". This work is

of a satisfactory standard but most of it consists of brief, but well written, excerpts. Pupils could be given more opportunities to write at greater length. The lack of these opportunities inhibits their progress, which, although satisfactory, could be better as, from their comments, and in discussions with pupils, it is clear they enjoy history very much and are committed to learning. At the last inspection, there was insufficient work seen to make judgements about standards in history by the time pupils are eleven and it is, therefore, not possible to compare progress since then.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

100. In the last inspection report, attainment was described as sound in both key stages. Since then, progress in ICT has not kept pace with the progress made in many schools nationally and, in most respects, standards overall are below average when pupils are aged seven and eleven. This is because pupils' experiences are too narrow and they are given insufficient opportunities to use computers. There was no direct teaching of the subject time-tabled during the period of the inspection and there is insufficient evidence to make judgements about the quality of teaching. Evidence for standards and provision for the subject was largely gained from an analysis of pupils' work, discussion with teachers and pupils and inspection of policies and planning.
101. Pupils are introduced to computers at an early age. Although the computers are switched on during lessons, there is no structured approach to teaching the subject. There is some use of interactive talking books to support literacy, but this is mainly teacher directed. Pupils use the mouse and basic keyboard to develop their *word processing* skills and use these to change a piece of text using the back space, space bar, shift key, full stop and delete. By age seven, pupils have used a computer graphics art program to produce aesthetically pleasing images. Pupils sometimes use control devices, such as programmable toys like a Roamer, in mathematics to give instructions for direction and angles, over chosen distances, but such opportunities are few. Generally, pupils' progress in this key stage is unsatisfactory.
102. By age eleven, pupils have made satisfactory progress in word processing and this is used, on occasion to support literacy and history, although not during the period of inspection; by and large, other applications are under-developed. For example, whilst there is an appropriate program containing a spreadsheet to support *data handling* in mathematics, it was clear in talking to pupils in Year 6, and in observing them at the computer, that few had sufficient understanding or confidence to use computer generated graphs effectively. It was a pupil with a computer at home who had most confidence. Similarly, there is an appropriate CD-ROM for pupils to practise *computer control*. One pupil was able to create, test and modify sequences of instructions to control events by electronically turning on and off a vending machine for fruit juice. The other pupils were interested in the program but lacked confidence. ICT was used in art and design to investigate sources of information, but these examples notwithstanding, progress in ICT, overall, is unsatisfactory.
103. Pupils are keen to develop their skills in ICT and would like more opportunities to do so. In a sample of pupils' reports that were examined during the inspection, a number of pupils wrote, "*I would like to improve my ICT skills over the next year.*"
104. In the school development plan, the school has rightly identified the need to develop pupils' skills and experiences in ICT by developing the skills of the staff in teaching the subject. This recognises the need for more focused teaching of ICT and a wider range of software for curriculum areas. The skills of the co-ordinator are good, but other staff need to update and improve their skills. The co-ordinator does not monitor the teaching of the subject sufficiently. The number and range of computers is good and most are connected to the *internet*. Resources, generally, are good and include a range of software, a digital camera and scanners. The policy for the subject is good as a statement of intentions, but needs to be implemented fully.

MUSIC

105. No music lessons took place during the inspection and there is insufficient evidence on which to make definitive judgements about pupils' standards or the quality of teaching. All pupils in Key Stage 1 receive 30 minutes music teaching each week, and, in Key Stage 2, this is increased to 1 hour. The very limited evidence took the form of singing during two assemblies and a video recording of a school production. The co-ordinator was also interviewed and planning was analysed. Pupils in Key Stage 2 show a good sense of rhythm and most can play untuned instruments, such as tambourines and drums, as well as recorders, in time to music. Pupils aged eleven clap to music, keeping good rhythm. The video recording indicates that the pupils are confident performers, some of them able to combine music and movement. All children have the opportunity to take part in school productions and children of all attainment levels are at ease performing in front of an audience. There is no music specialist in the school but a parent volunteer comes into school regularly to provide accompaniment.
106. Music is used well in many assemblies. All pupils listen well and are able to identify the music as belonging to a particular genre or culture. The school is successful in achieving its aim "*To develop a sensitive response to music.*" The use of music from different cultures in assembly, such as *North American Native* music in the form of chants and in the school concert, contributes effectively to pupils' cultural awareness. In their singing, pupils are enthusiastic and can sing in tune without accompaniment. The youngest children pupils are beginning to learn the words to familiar hymns and join in with the chorus enthusiastically.
107. Older pupils have the opportunity to have weekly music lessons from a peripatetic music teacher at no cost to them. Since the last inspection, a music policy has been written and this is appropriate for the needs of the school. One of its aims is "*To assist each child to develop a positive self-image and self confidence.*" There is every indication that the school is very successful in achieving this and the subject contributes well to the personal, social and cultural development of all pupils, including those with below average musical ability.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

108. Only one lesson, in Key Stage 1, was observed during the period of the inspection. In this lesson, in other contexts in the school, at playtime and in the classroom, pupils aged 7, show satisfactory skill in controlling their movements. They remember and repeat basic skills and actions with increasing control and co-ordination. They find and use space safely, both with apparatus and on the floor. They use climbing apparatus satisfactorily and crawl effectively through tunnel equipment. The Nursery Nurse's time is used well to support pupils in the lesson and the teacher monitors pupils' progress well and shows good knowledge of the subject. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in Key Stage 2.
109. The subject is well planned and the school makes the best of the existing facilities. Although there is no school hall, space is made available in the larger of the two classrooms and this is used well and is large enough for the smaller than usual number of pupils. However, the need to move the furniture and prepare the classroom for lessons is time consuming. Every opportunity to work outside is taken when the weather permits. In Key Stage 2, pupils have good opportunities for swimming and, in talking to pupils, it is clear that standards in this aspect of the subject are well in advance of those expected for pupils aged eleven.
110. The school has the use of a nearby field, although the future of this is uncertain. On the whole, the school provides pupils with satisfactory opportunities for physical development, although these are restricted by the lack of facilities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

111. Only one lesson, in Key Stage 1, was taught during the week of the inspection. In addition to this, judgements about pupils' standards are based on an analysis of pupils' previous work in the Autumn term, and of planning, and an interview with the subject co-ordinator. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about teaching. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus and

meets its expectations by the time pupils are aged seven and eleven. At age seven, pupils understand the term Harvest and the reasons why Christians celebrate and say “thank you” to God. They explore the term *friend* and the qualities friends should have, and understand that Jesus was a friend to everyone. In the one lesson seen in Key Stage 1, they recall well facts about Jesus and understand that Jesus chose special friends. They know that His followers were called disciples and that they helped Him. In this lesson, teaching was good. Planning was brief but clear and classroom management was very good. Pupils enjoyed the lesson and responded well to the tasks.

112. In Key Stage 2, pupils’ written work at age eleven reveals that they learn about the Bible and sacred texts and why they are important to Christians. Their work covers significant events and characters from the Old Testament, such as *The Creation, Noah and the Ark, Jonah and the Whale* and *Joshua and Jericho*. They show satisfactory knowledge of other religions such as Hinduism and why Hindus celebrate Divali. In addition to extending pupils’ knowledge of the important festivals and beliefs of the Christian church, planning shows a good emphasis on the study and appreciation of other world religions. This includes significant leaders and founders of world faiths such as *Muhammad* and why he is important to Muslims and why sacred texts, such as the Qur’an, are also important to Muslims. Their written work is satisfactorily presented and some handwriting is good, although pupils’ spelling at age eleven is below the standards expected for pupils’ ages. Overall, in both key stages, pupils make satisfactory progress. Marking of pupils’ work is satisfactory. On the limited evidence available, standards are broadly similar to those at the last inspection.